



Fig.001 Image of one month of photos of the right hand. Each line corresponds to a day of photographs and the length corresponds to the amount of objects used. The colors emerging from the patterns are also an indication to the amount of light I am exposed to with bright colors in the summer months and gloomy colors in the winter months.

ACTIONS 01

As a young man I had many ideas and dreams and thoughts. I used to annotate them in journals but simply felt defeated when it was time to review them. Once I seriously considered making a book out of them. For the purpose I traveled by land from Canada to a solitary beach in Costa Rica but there felt very depressed. It was around the year 2000 that I started considering writing my thoughts down on a computer but I immediately hated the idea to seat in front of a screen. At last I got the idea to build a computer I could wear on myself and carry along. With my rudimentary knowledge of technology I just ended up carrying a giant backpack filled with equipment. In the end I bought a tiny digital camera and began to use it with my left hand so as to photograph the objects I use with my right hand. The main idea was that rather than having to spend half of my time editing the video-recording of a reality I had recorded in the other half, I could simply bookmark all the activities occurring throughout a day. The photos of the objects I use could become the bookmarks of my life and the alphabet with which human life at large could be decoded. Since then I was able to take an average of 76 pictures a day. It intrigued me that at the end of the project in 2040 I will be 60 and the pictures will amount to one million.



Fig.002 Picture of the camera model I use to track my activities. By using it everyday the camera comes to look more and more like an arm cast where things are applied to it like the signatures of friends. In my case I just put the stickers I accidentally found like the sticker of some strawberries I bought in a tiny village after having walked kilometers across the English countryside.

ACTIONS 02

Since the beginning of my photographic work I followed 3 rules to help me identify when it is time to photograph. One can argue that rules are a rather dogmatic approach in the creative process of individuals but for me the problem was rather the opposite. My life has been a really prolific one and too many were the things I wanted to remember. As a young man I was too excited about learning all the various techniques of being able to live my own life and eventually become self-sustainable. These rules then were a key in creating a sort of testimony of this coming of age. They are as follow: 1. During a life-event every object the dominant-hand uses is photographed once and while used; 2. If an object of the same type is the following item to be used, this object is not photographed unless the life-event changes; 3. A life-event changes as soon as the dominant-hand uses a different object in a different space. Adhering to the above rules I don't have to think when or when it is not time to photograph. It just comes to me as more natural to employ the left hand to photograph the right hand using object, a left hand that is otherwise idle.



Fig.003 Screenshot showing me photographing the right hand while feeding one of my Dutch nephews. Many of these photographs show the evolution of the objects one uses to also take care of others as well as the environment. Generally speaking this type of photographing is always quiet privacy-sensitive in a way that even if the face of someone showed up as the resulting photos are in a miniature format, the face is barely recognizable.

ACTIONS 03

My photographing an object just prior to using it, is an additional procedure to the myriad of procedures contemporary humans ought to undertake in order to accomplish whatever task. For example in order to enter her house Mary ought to first disable the alarm, then she will have to use the key to unlock the entrance door and ultimately she will even have to operate the door handle to open it. My point here is that most of these procedures are meant for the sake of social surveillance, they are meant because humans no longer live in trustworthy communities and they own a lot of mostly superfluous goods that could be stolen. Governance too cannot trust people, it is too far up and the people ought to undergo an innumerable amount of bureaucratic tasks just to reassure a most centralizing state in which they live. My photographing of the objects I use with my right hand is also an additional procedure which I have to execute prior using whatever object with my right hand. In my case however I am not contributing to any form of grand surveillance, on the contrary I testify my journey to become increasingly more autonomous, unfolding the evolution of a human being taking care of his nature and his family, literally then of his ecology.



Fig.004 Pictures of the various wearable devices I built prior 2003 in order to attempt to both capture and categorize my life 24/7. Such devices were in the end used for performance purposes losing the initial intention of the project, later recovered by using simple off the shelf devices. The use of my hand became from the start a dominant feature of these prototypes.

ACTIONS 04

Conceptually I started carrying out this work as a way to generate a DNA code of the activities of a human being over a lifetime. Inspired by the French artist Marcel Duchamp, I developed this work thinking of objects as the ready-made bookmarks marking the events of an individual's life. Rather than recording life 24/7 with all the privacy implications related to it, the photographic record of my right hand only provides the hints of a life which viewers of the photographs will have to actively interpret, as in the work of another French, the photographer artist Sophie Calle. A third French, the writer George Perec also inspired me with his methodology of collecting objects to generate his book *Life a User Manual*. Beside these contemporary examples, a main source of inspiration for my using objects as hints to depict human life was the ancient combinatorial and mnemonic art. Prior to the enlightenment southern European humanists were engaged in developing universal systems in which new type of answers could be divined. In this sense these systems were far more syncretic than the dogmatic type of knowledge production we are by now accustomed to. Now these earlier and more open and more imaginative systems often made use of objects as triggers for not a fixed idea but an open interpretation.

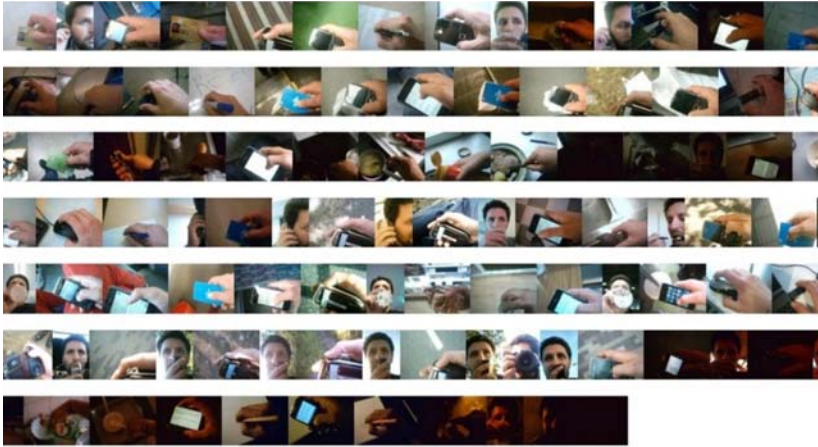


Fig.005 Picture of a detail of a month panel. Slowly smartphones became increasingly dominant, turning obsolete many of the devices I used to carry to produce other instances of my project. This is the case of my dictaphone and video-camera but not of my left hand camera which is handier and faster to use than a smartphone.

ACTIONS 05

In Jonathan Swift's book *Gulliver's Travels* the main characters carries all sorts of objects in a bag so as to be able to communicate with his hosts. While acknowledging the effort behind this object-based communication, I am inspired by how potentially universal it could be talking to humans across time and space. Similarly I have been inspired by the works of Paris-based experimental writers O.U.L.I.P.O. and their ways of generating narrativity using different experimental methods which also involved the use of ready-made objects. In the case of my photographic work, not only the actual objects but also the actual sequences in which these objects are located and the frequency with which they repeat themselves are the keys to decode it. While machines can help highlight certain repetitions, it is up to a human reader to try to interpret what is behind them also in relation to my other works. In this sense my photographing is not intended for machines to read and learn from all these sequences varying through time. An actual meaning can be only made out by human readers because only human readers can relate their experiences to mine. Said this, I acknowledge that those humans trying to interpret my hieroglyphics need to put some effort.



Fig.006 Detail of a poster showing all the toothbrushes used by the right hand in a year. Examples such as this one shows how my work potentially extends that of pop artists like Andy Warhol and of conceptual photographers like Hilla and Bernd Becher.

ACTIONS 06

Contrary to popular belief, my on-going photographic project comes quite naturally. As already mentioned, people around me get quickly used to my behavior. They may find it weird and funny to begin with but soon no one pays any attention to it. My left hand photographing the right hand using an object acts on its own accord, if I am conversing with a friend I just keep doing so and there are no sudden interruptions. Given however that I started this work years before the rise of smartphones and social media, initially people found my photographing ritual awkward, thinking mostly I had diabetes and had to monitor the food I ate. Rather than compulsive however, my photography is a quest of physical and psychological endurance, such as in Tehching Hsieh 1980s one-year-long photographing of every hour on the hour. I do not wish to contribute to any form of data-capitalism but rather my wish is to show a certain self-sufficiency, a certain economy and frugality also in dealing with digital technology. Particularly I have been attempting to maintain a discipline, a self-conceived syntax that shapes my life rather than losing myself in the marketing oriented and politically polarizing algorithms affecting social media users. People may call me selfish but my intentions are all humble and merely poetic.



Fig.007 Photograph of my right hand writing on a mirror. While the backgrounds of the photos are rather narrow it is possible to detect some features and I have to be careful not to accidentally photograph people behind me like in a bathroom where the nudity of especially other people can show up.

ACTIONS 07

While I am quite precise and always photograph when it is time to photograph, at the beginning of the project I lost some data mostly due to a feature in my camera that formats the solid state memory card within it. Thus not paying too much attention when photographing, I had on two occasions deleted the data I collected throughout a day. This occurred once in February 2004 while in a changing room in Sweden and later visiting a park in Shanghai in the fall of 2009. On both occasions I used data recovery software to retrieve most of the pictures and I was able to reconstruct the day. Also on some occasions the camera batteries, which I recharge every night, might run out of power. If for whatever reason I don't happen to have any replacement batteries, I make it to a shop to buy some prior using any objects. By now I also always have some spare batteries with me, in the event I forget to recharge them. Said that I could be using the same pair of AAA batteries for years in a row. The only real problem in my case is when the adhesive around the batteries starts peeling off, causing small electric shocks. Usually then I am not keen to buy unnecessary batteries and as it happens with all my other equipment I try to use it as long as it lasts, always making sure however I have some spare parts.

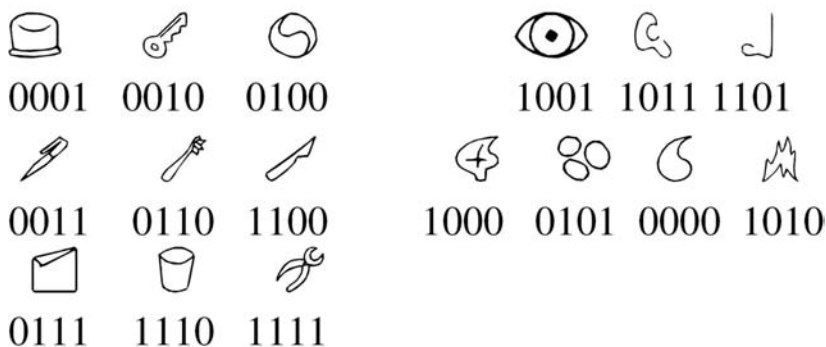


Fig.008 Illustration of the digits I used at the beginning of the project to also label each image according to the kind of object it represented. As an example, an image of my right hand using a toothbrush would be labeled 01100000 with the brush and the water icon. The left and right buttons of a pocket PC were used to quickly input the 0 and the 1 respectively.

ACTIONS 08

Throughout the course of this work I lost my camera twice. Once in the fall of 2007 walking with my oldest son in a forest near his grandparents farm in Sweden. As he fell asleep, I had to carry him in my arms across a plantation of small pine trees which eventually made my camera fall down. The camera was found a year later by a mushroom picker who read my email written on it and contacted me. Despite having the camera spent a whole year in the forest, the memory card inside it still functioned and I was able to rescue the lost data. In the summer of 2018 while working at the time capsule in the Alps that now hosts my life-project, a storm approached and running to repair myself I lost my camera in the high grass and could only find it hours later cutting it thoroughly. While the camera still functioned the lens got all moistened from within and I used a replacement camera waiting for it to dry up. In 2019, while looking after my daughter on a beach in Sardinia I entered the water with the belt. Instantly the salt in the water compromised the electronics of the camera but not the memory card inside it. On other occasions I might forget to close the pouch holding the camera and might drop it especially when laying down or when I run but in the latter case I have learned to hold the left hand on my pouch.



Fig.009 Photos of my right hand showing examples of my interaction with others, in this case my oldest son, through the years. All of my three kids have always seen me photographing my right hand and always regarded this behavior as normal, never questioning it unlike the other kids who are always curious about it and want to know more.

ACTIONS 09

On average I am able to use my camera for two years in a row meaning that I am able to take about 56.000 shots with it after which the button I use to activate the camera breaks. I usually try to repair the button and give some extra life to the camera although the mended button is often less sensitive and I might press it in an awkward angle making the pictures not all that straight at least at beginning when I have to get used to it. Either way the camera is activated while still in the belt pouch by keeping the side menu button pressed. When the camera is fully done for, I switch to one of the many refurbished cameras of the same kind I bought in stock right before they went out of production. It was 2011 then and I was living in the United States and the stock I got was unfortunately from a shop that kept them exposed to the sun compromising the sensor within, thus resulting in a worse image quality. Despite this problem I pursue my day to day photographing ritual. As a result every month I am able to generate a 90 by 30 centimeters photographic panel with different lines representing different days of the month. By positioning the 12 months of a year in a row, by the end of the project I will have achieved a perfect square of 10.8 by 10.8 meters, 36 by 36 feet.



Fig.010 Picture of my 2016 exhibition at the Hasselblad Foundation. Here I exhibited 12 years of all the objects used with each row of panels presenting a year from January to December. While this work has been requested by museums around the world, their limited ceiling height has made it impossible to show more than a third of it.

ACTIONS 10

I have exhibited my photographic work several times in rather important museums such as the O.K. Centrum in Linz where the work got an Ars Electronica honorary mention in 2006, in the Uppsala Art Museum in 2009, at the Frankfurt Museum Angewandte Kunst in 2015 and then at the Hasselblad Foundation and at the Aarhus art museum in 2016. Following these exhibitions the work was shown in San Francisco and the toured India. At this point I began to conceive the idea of a more permanent installation where to present my work physically. I was concerned with the museum context showing repeatedly this work without all my other works. I understood that I had to be the artist photographing his right hand and that both art curators and the public wanted me specifically in this role. Yet life is so much more beautiful and varied than the minimalist approach that was suggested to me. I had beautiful dreams, I had beautiful thoughts, I could draw. Why would I adhere to only one work only for the sake of establishing myself in the art world? At the same time I saw that the same thing was required for me by academia. I needed to specialize and reduce my range. My decision at this point was to try to become autonomous from these cultural institutions and establish my own framework of operation.



Fig.011 Picture of a 2005 performance. While living in a van during a cold Scandinavian winter, I spent a whole month laying out a year's worth of pictures on a library floor. In a Buddhist fashion I later vacuum cleaned all the photos. After a whole year in a copper graphic workshop trying to make my photos archival, I opted to only keep them digital.

ACTIONS 11

It was only at the beginning of this work that I shared my photographic record with the scientific community. Articles were at first well received despite their rather artistic and subjective nature. With the event of social media however and with the privacy implications that they arouse, the scientific community turned generally skeptical of my work. All of a sudden I got caught in a critical discussions pointing the finger at users generating data and by so doing feeding the new data-greedy industry. Suddenly from being an artist fighting for my own autonomy and exploring the beauty and poetry of being self-sufficient in life I was in the opinion of many scholars accelerating a future scenario of massive surveillance and Taylorism. To me this sounded like a generalization especially because this criticism often came from scholars monetizing on the topic and enforcing a line of thought upon which their status is based. So while I was living my simple life longing for the woods and certainly not longing for the any chair of any institution, I came in the middle of a clash between the new digital industry harvesting data from the people and the old academia generating their capital by criticizing such capitalist approaches. Unfortunately in this polarization much of the poetry behind works like mine are lost.

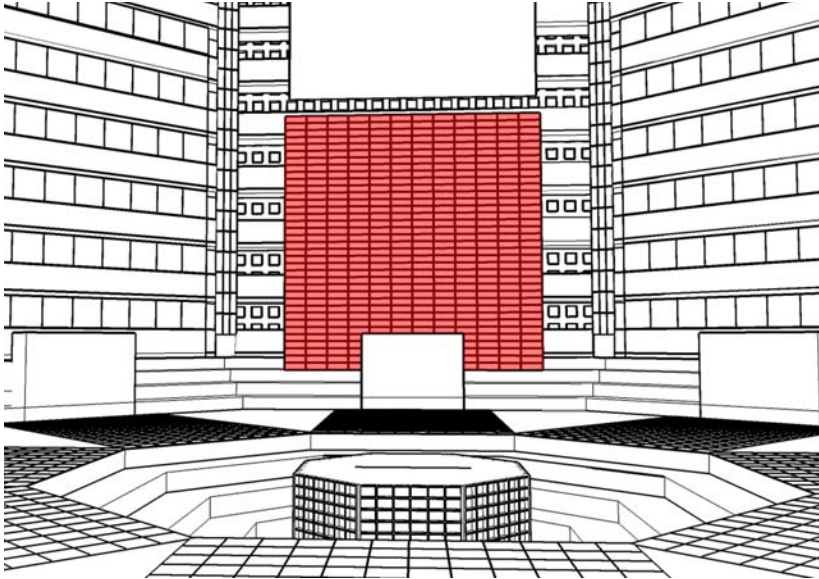


Fig.012 Rendering on how all the resulting 432 month panels should be placed in a memory theater. It is a giant calendar abstracting the life of an individual as images high up cannot be consulted but only patterns like written text are visible. A perfect location to show the resulting 36 by 36 feet work would be the inner wall of Tate Modern in London or in one of the many abandoned churches.

ACTIONS 12

All the 432 photographic panels resulting from this work should be presented in a large self-standing 10.8 by 10.8 meters wall. In the memory theater presenting all my other works, this one should be placed in on the third wall entering the theater to the left. While the wall would not be illuminated by direct sun light so as to guarantee the longevity of the photo panels printed with pigments on archival paper, the edges of the wall would receive the light of the back window which would strongly increase at sunset especially in the summer solstice when the setting sun would directly be in line with the aisle. In such a setting only the bottom images of the work can be observed while the rest of the panels ought to be only imagined or could eventually be observed with a telescope located in one of the corridors on top of the entrance to the space. In this respect the panels acts as a calendar I was able to fill in as the work of a conceptual artist like On Kawara's date paintings, marking the passage of time, yet even more minutely and more in accordance with life rather than the mechanical clock used by another Asian conceptual artist Tehching Hsieh only for a year. The square geometry I conceived can be criticized for being too fixed yet it has given me a great boost to learn and be active and fill it up.

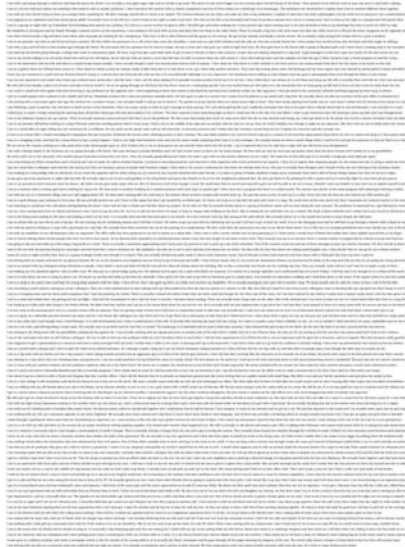


Fig.013 Screenshot of a month of dreams. Notice how the length of each line corresponding to a dream is approximately the same. At the beginning I was not paying attention to this but the length emerged over time. Originally also the line height between each dream was reduced so that the final result would be a cubic publication of 43,2 by 43,2 by 43,2 centimeters.

DREAMS 01

Every day I remember approximately 3 dreams. This amount can actually vary from 1 to 12 dreams according to how regular my day was. The more a day is regular, the more I dream. By regular I mean that I did not do anything extraordinary and I have been rather homey going to bed at the usual hour keeping my brain rather empty without any night work or watching of a screen such as my laptop, or the television or my smartphone. According to my equation then, the less are the events I experience during the day, the more eventful are my dreams or at least those I can remember. On the other hand however if during the day it is for example too rainy outside and I cannot go for my usual walk, I don't get too sleep so well and certainly not so long. As a result during these days I remember only 1 dream. Generally then I can claim that on average every month I write approximately 100 dreams. I do so in a 45 by 60 centimeters page of a book which at the end of the project in 2040 will comprise 43.200 dreams, making it perhaps the largest dream diary a person has ever recorded. Additionally there are no recurrent dreams in my record, making it even more diverse. The more frustrating dreams however are rather similar and are often about losing a plane or unable to fill in a form.

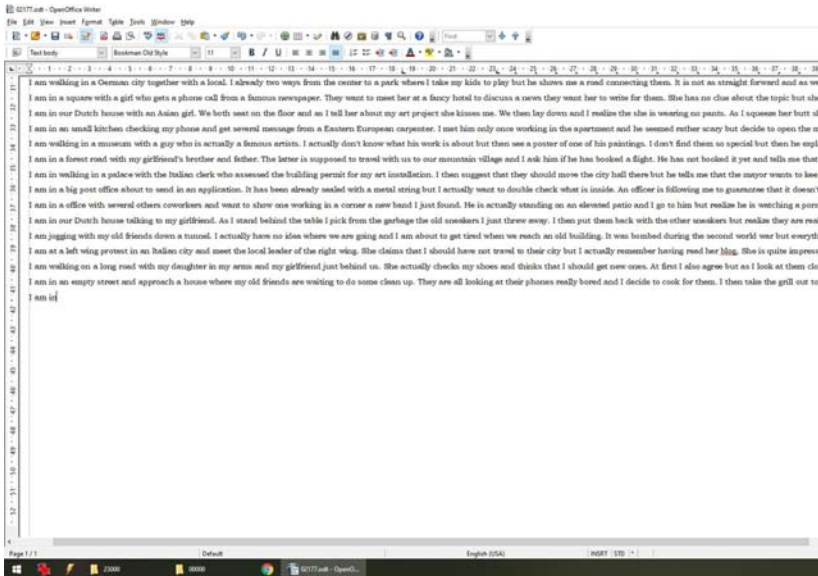


Fig.014 Screenshot of the editor I use every morning to write my dreams down. When writing a dream in this editor I try to reach the end of the line. The description of my dreams then may be also wider or shorter according to the space I have at my disposal. Generally however it became natural for me to just write each dream with such a length.

DREAMS 02

Not only do I not use my mother language to write my dreams down but also the very free-ware editor I use has limited spelling capabilities. As a result the grammar of my dream diary is that of an expatriate with an average command of the English language. Having said this I do not wish any further editing; the way the dreams are written reflects my social condition of an immigrant using English as his “lingua franca”. The font I selected to write my dreams down is Bookman Old Style size 11. Each dream is on average 288 characters long and is usually made up of three sentences. The first sentence is used to contextualize the dream by putting the dreamer in a particular location doing something such as walking across a meadow at sunset. The second sentence usually highlights a problem, something that the dreamer experiences such as seeing a barking dog approaching. The last sentence usually resolves the problem. Following is an example of one of my dreams in which I am not the actual protagonist: "I am with an old friend going under a long tunnel. He starts telling me how he has caught the new American president editing his own encyclopedia page on-line. The edits are actually written on the white painted tunnel and he uses his fingers to remove parts of it even though it gets quite dirty".



Fig.015 Picture of a sketch I made in order to remember twelve dreams. The actual mental image is a creative process in which all the various elements ought to be well interconnected and rather physical in order to become more memorable. The writing of the dreams can be the most time consuming work I have to take care of during the daily update of my project.

DREAMS 03

Of all the dreams I might have throughout the night, the ones I do remember are those occurring early in the morning. Traditionally, at least in the time of the Romans, these morning dreams were considered the most telling and prophetic but to me they are just simply the ones I remember. I usually go to bed around 10 in the evening and the most dreams I have are between 4:30 and 6 in the morning. The more I can sleep until 6 the more dreams I can remember. It is also true however that in an urban context I don't sleep too well. I don't know whether it is because of the dozens of wi-fi signals in the air and all the many appliances of many neighbors. Either way I wake up around 5 and the amount of dreams I can remember are less. With the winter and the darkness I can even wake up around 3.30 and still remember some dreams. In these situations I just update my project on my computer and then get a few hours sleep between 5.30 and 7.30. During this time I can get more dreams as if the writing of my dreams during my project update also stimulates more dreams. Also I have noticed that if for whatever reason I don't manage to write my dreams down early in the morning and have to wait the evening to do so, this going back to my dreams prior to going to sleep boosts my dreams or just only my awareness of them.



Fig.016 Picture of one of several archival boxes in which my early handwritten diaries are stored. So while my digital record of dreams cover the period of my adulthood, since I was a teenager I also annotated dreams in my notebooks. These early dreams were very vivid and I annotated them because they were simply beautiful.

DREAMS 04

I have been keeping a dream diary since 1996 when I was 17. Initially my dreams were written in Italian on booklets I made using recycled paper, such as that I found in trash bins next to the copy machines of my Canadian art school. Given the low quality of this paper, these written dreams have almost disappeared. My first attempts to communicate my dream to the public started already in 2000. While an art student in Vancouver, I experimented with dreaming in the public realm. After days spent living with the homeless and getting very little sleep, I locked myself in the library window of my art school and finally got some rest. After waking up I wrote my dreams on the window and later invited passersby inside it to interpret my dreams with them. Back then my dreams were really wild, pretty much as myself roaming the city with my shopping cart singing opera and eating the leftover bagels of a bakery shop under Granville's bridge. My decision to begin a life project also entailed a great deal of responsibility. Thinking back now I believe that not only I became more responsible because of my life project but particularly because I conceived it as a performance in which I was going to act like an ordinary man. I now realize that because I have this faculty of dreaming I might have made it into a shaman.



Fig.017 Screenshot of the icons with which each dream was originally labeled and with which it could have been retrieved. This categorization worked pretty good but I later gave it up to just present my dreams as a more integer material, a language of its own. If readers put some effort in it they can certainly extrapolate their own meaning.

DREAMS 05

Only since I was 24 years old I began digitizing my dreams and including them as part of my project. Initially I tried to combine the dreams with the photographic record of my activities trying to append each dream onto the activity that might have inspired it. Soon however I decided to keep the dreams as a separate work, allowing readers to make free interpretations comparing the dreams with other works of the project. Also from the beginning I developed an interface based on four categories with which I could label each dream using a set of 16 icons per category: the time and the place in which a dream occurred but also the people involved and the kind of dream. The interface worked as some kind of internet artwork but was later dismissed to maintain all the various works of the project exclusively chronological as different languages of the same life-time. In this respect I have opted to provide readers with raw ingredients; rather than trying to refine and sophisticate the various works including my dreams, I feel like the German artist Joseph Beuys who used to install in a museum setting a large quantity of for example fat or beeswax. I am fascinated with the idea of confronting the viewers of my project with an incredible quantity of human nature, in this case a giant amount of dreams.



Fig.018 Picture of an early exhibition using microwave dishes surrounded by RFID tags and toy cars underneath them. The dishes bumped randomly against a reader creating a narrative on a screen. Since the beginning I have been fascinated with the idea of dreams themselves generating quasi-infinite narrative fragments of almost any situation imaginable.

DREAMS 06

Contrary to common belief, it was not so much my photographing or filming activities infringing my private life. After a journalist wrote about my project emphasizing my sexual dreams, my partner at that time grew indignant. As a result I had to keep writing my dreams in secret, in the bathroom or in the busy metro of Shanghai where we were living. Because of this I also had to remove my project from the internet and terminate my career as an artist. While I can consider myself to be quite loyal, I cannot help having some erotic dreams. Dreams are one of the many dimensions I decided to investigate and possibly the reason why I am not so interested in going to parties and eventually cheating on a partner is right because I have my project to attend. The years I had to hide my project from public view turned me extremely depressed. It was like cooking a meal and not being able to share it. I felt most generous, I wanted to give with all my enthusiasm and passion this meal for free but was prevented from doing so. I then realized that my life-project is really my life-engine. It keeps me going. Rather than a Freudian death-drive it is really my life-drive and the sort of castration I had to undergo was most traumatic, it got me lifeless as much as the increasing amount of laws imposing privacy related limitations.



My father see [one in particular](#) and says to go there instead, I tell him to [check the other](#) maps. We are both looking at [Magellan island](#), the road we can cross. He points the [one getting up, than I the one getting down](#). A guy there tell us about the island. In the map we can see [many square dots](#) that tell there is a city over [one million](#). We are taking than the [ferry I doubleask](#) at the entrance which way with the ticket-woman at the door. I imagine a black person from that place.

Walking on the side of [a big street with my sister](#). We are trying to reach [Tobaldini's](#)

Fig.019 Screenshot of a web interface I developed in 2001 to interpret my dreams. Prior to the beginning of the project I attempted to relate my dreams to my daily life, continuously photographing what captured my attention during the day so as to interpret what I dreamed at night. This induced me to make more conscious the subconscious and vice-versa.

DREAMS 07

Over the years that I have been recording my dreams, I could not but observe how technology has got increasingly more invasive. While every single aspect of our daily life has become dominated by screens, in turn also the remembering of dreams has become more difficult. Generally I try to abstain from using screens particularly at night. I have noticed a trend among my friends watching TV series after TV series. I came to realize that all this TV series watching is pretty much a surrogate of dreaming, that they can easily create a sort of collective subconscious in which not so much ideas but the seeds of ideas can be quickly implemented. Far from siding with any conspiracy theory of any kind, it is impossible not to denote an underline trend in these surrogate and collective and televised day-dreaming. Too much of this dream substituting entertainment is however too much of a fast food, rapidly produced, rapidly digested with some spice here and there like some sex or violent scenes but not really any savor and definitely a most disgusting after taste. We are far from the poetry of avant-garde films, of a Kurosawa or a Tarkovsky or a Pasolini who with their poetry can really stir the souls of viewers and enrich their dreams rather than consume them with some cutting edge special effects.



Fig.020 Screenshot of my dream performances. While an art student in Canada I used a library window to sleep, write my dreams down and conduct psychological sections with people passing by. If then I was inspired by Freud, later I found how my dreams are based solely on my reality and psychoanalysis is perhaps a more suitable science for bourgeois.

DREAMS 08

There are other factors I have been trying to abstain from in order to avoid a dreamless night. I never liked the taste of alcohol but at the beginning of the project out of kindness I would accept a glass and drink a small sip from it. Even because of this small sip I was unable to remember my dreams and I began to refuse any glass of it no matter it was New Year's Eve or a wedding. In a culture in which alcohol consumption is often the main drive of social gathering I thus felt awkward. On the other hand I have always been very extrovert in these situations and even though I have never done any type of drugs nor I never had alcohol running in my veins I have always managed to be craziest of all, jumping on the stage of a concert or dancing in the most wild fashion as if I fell into some kind of shamanic potion when I was little. Indeed when I was little because of the alcohol consumption of adults around me I lived horrible scenes of violence. Despite the horrors I have witnessed, I have always managed to have a smile on my face and be very playful and jockey even later on when I moved up to the more serious and composed northern European societies. Now I do not know if dreaming was also for me a way to find shelter in a different world but most certainly the cultivation of my imagination has been a key.

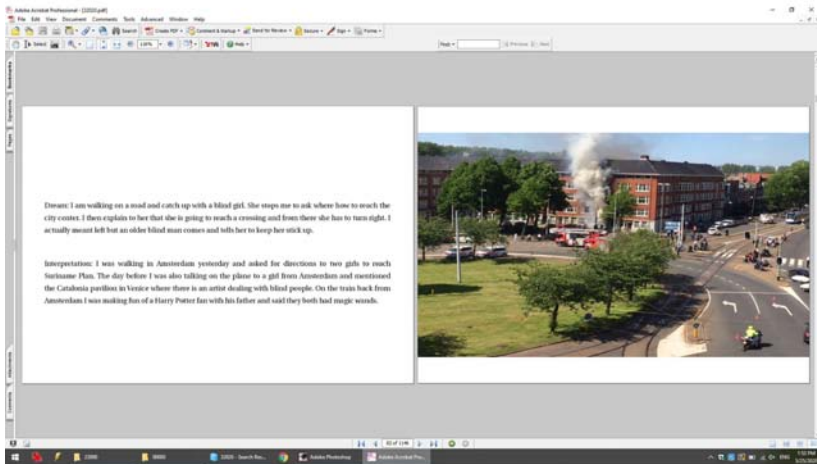


Fig.021 Screenshot of a book of dreams I am creating as part of my project. Here I use pictures to demonstrate the relation of a dream with what has occurred to me during the day. In another book I show how some dreams anticipate future occurrences and can then foresee an event such as someone's death. I am no magician but some uncanny things have occurred.

DREAMS 09

One thing that facilitates dreaming and usually unlocks my mind is staring at the nocturnal landscape after a night spent indoors and relaxing the eye beholding the horizon. Another thing that is certain to trigger my dreams is describing past events to an old friend in the evening prior to going to bed. Now the times I meet up with an old friend are very seldom. The ones who have been very close to me and have also undertaken a rather bohemian lifestyle have all undertaken their life journeys which has brought them far and wide. I do not regret the fact that having a family I am no longer able to travel as I used to. In reality I consider myself very much on a journey, the journey of continuing my life-project and completing it. Despite being fixed in one location I keep on being in motion, I keep on being active as well as reflective. Certainly in my dreams it is possible to detect that the open landscapes I used to dream of at the beginning are getting substituted with more closed and domestic environments yet this is not the point. If I had the chance perhaps I would not really travel in the modern sense. I would want to slowly walk through the landscape and gradually see it change. I would want to caress the small local variations to nourish my imagination with what nomads must have experienced back in time.



Fig.022 Picture showing how a book of a few years worth of dreams was presented during a solo show in Sweden. It was the only public occasion I printed and exhibited my dreams but I am prepared to print a durable copy of them as part of my work in which I physically archive material related to my project in boxes.

DREAMS 10

It is mostly in a vivid and primordial nature such as on a beach of a tropical island surrounded by the jungle that I dream more naturally. In these settings my brain fully relaxes and there are no tensions nor interference such as the many radio frequencies circulating in the air of city environments. The hardest period of my dream writing was in 2008 in an old wooden house in the center of Uppsala, Sweden. Here the newspaper delivery man regularly woke me up every night. In the dead Scandinavian winter I kept waking up exactly at 3.29, exactly a minute before the newspaper delivery man arrived each day. It was only leaving Sweden for warmer countries that I recovered my normal sleeping pattern. Not only the darkness and the sterility of an environment but also stiff muscles can make my sleep very light. While my love for Scandinavia was in its landscape, I still tried to have a normal job which brought me to long commuting hours spending much of my time sitting on a train to reach this or that art academy where I earned my living as a teacher. Mainly tai-chi has helped me undergoing the back-related issues I encountered. Above all I realized that I don't have to travel for a few bucks and it is perfectly fine to be more and local and be of help to my children, in other take care of my ecology.

and I tell him to hurry. He wants to get out just with his swimming suit on and I tell him to get at least the towel and leave the car in the parking of a condominium. We then walk down the peninsula and come to an old food stand prepared to eat and he points at a white dish. I then color it with a brown marker but he keeps pointing at it. I then hear her prejudices an old documentary shows a boy who was taught by his mom to hate Jews. They actually end up at a marathon approaching and I hurry past my parents-in-law to pick up a bar white chocolate. Two of the runners remain. My stepfather can take me to see it and I ask him if he knows the car dealer. He then tells me that they know the car. They are actually divided into pairs ready to dance Latin American music. One of the pair is from Latin America and are forced to go in because of the traffic. I then tell my cousin that we can reach the destination without going to the South and ask her what she thinks about the building. She is also a researcher and shows me the reading over the railroad and he gives me a soda cork before we separate. It is written in a strange alphabet and I use it on the sidewalk. I then park it for him and we go with an American guy in a pizza place. It is actually our apartment where I also grew up there as a baby and mention my stepfather. He is actually passing by and I join him to hear their talking and I get demoralized but then the director points at a woman to talk. She then lifts her hand but there is actually a brand new yellow locker that my white maid had bought for the other side of the room. As I take a taxi but there is another costumer ahead waiting. There are actually some cheap taxis on the other side of the road. I go up to his house from where he can see the sea. He is actually with me and explains how to get there but I am not ready to leave but I still have a highschool exam to take and I am actually late. I only have my swim suit on and he is also there and I try to get them into a discussion so that they don't think bad of me. I then show them a picture of a small picture of his wife. It actually falls showing the back with her crying. As I move in another room I find a picture which hits us ahead. The landscape is so beautiful and we pass a bold man running. I then demand the girl to also take a picture. Fig.023 Screenshot of a detail of a month of my dreams. Interestingly while they can be read from left to right a lot of patterns arise when attempting to read them vertically especially in the middle of the page. Here the use of some adverbs like "actually" and "then" but the list of characters provides an interesting insight in my psychology.

DREAMS 11

In all the writing of my dreams I try to adopt a very universal language. I avoid being specific with names of people or places and talk more generally about old friends and mountain apartments and American cities and Swedish colleagues and so forth. In this respect my attempt is that of coming closer to what readers can themselves relate to. Each of them can envision his or her own conception of, for example my best-friend. Possibly he or she can even think of his or her own best-friend when reading a dream, especially given that I use the first person to do so. Allowing some intimacy to this work perhaps the more passionate reader can come up not so much with an analytic interpretation of such a record but rather he or she can be carried away into an oneiric dimension. The reading of the dream on the screen then is not the most appropriate medium to establish such an intimacy with the reader. Also the very place itself, the very atmosphere where this dream diary should be explored ought to emphasize such an intimacy. An empty and solitary and ancient place with a dim light such as that of a candle may be thus more appropriate than reading the dreams on a smartphone screen on a busy and noisy metro. The whole diary then takes the shape of an urn containing a life that was and is no more.

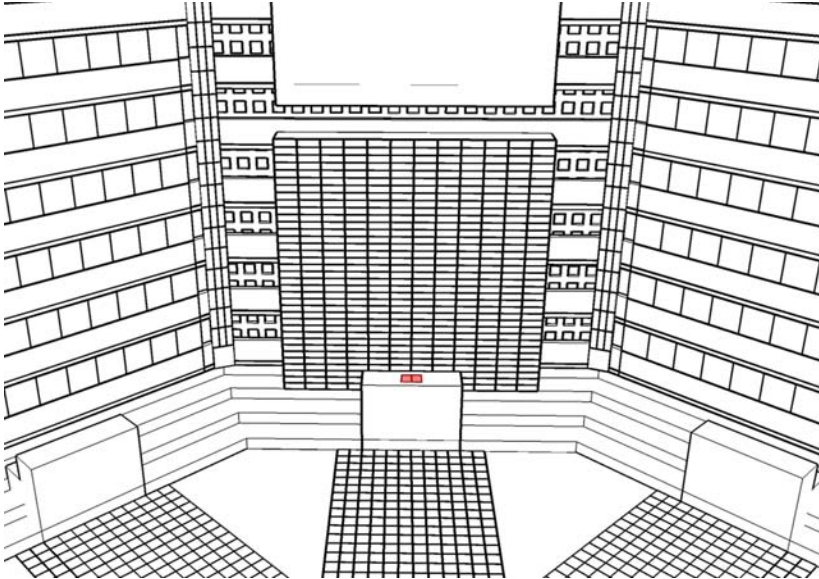


Fig.024 Rendering showing where the dream book should be located in a memory theater. Visitors are invited to walk up to it and recite its surreal non-sense turned even more so by the interplay with other elements of the project such as my record of songs. The result may be cacophonous but at the same time make the spectators experience a reality transcending catharsis.

DREAMS 12

In a memory theater the dreams should be presented in the form of a book located on top of the podium where my video-record of public spaces is shown. While the reader is elevated over the rest of the exhibition, the content he or she is presented with is in essence a very private part of myself. When recited the dreams would act as some kind of a choreography along with other sounds and music and lights and smoke and the other effects rendering the other works of the project. The absurdity of the exhibition and in particular of the placement of the dream book is that dreams usually contain secrets, secrets that are told in a most confidential manner to the psychologists who can detect an interpretation from them. In this speaking them out loud and with all other parts of the project running, the dreams take another dimension yet this is not too far from the dimension of our hunter-gatherer ancestors who used to relate to dreams as something real. While some of them would even wake up in the middle of the night to relate to others their dreams, others would take their dreams so seriously as to pursue them. Now the whole memory theater I have conceived can be seen as a dream I had. I did not spend my life to realize it as that would have hinder me to live but I prepared all the content for it.



Fig.025 Screenshot of a musical notation corresponding to a month of the songs I have heard, annotated and recomposed. These songs are generally the ones I hear from an environment like a shopping mall or by a carpenter singing on a scaffolding. They are also the ones I play myself with an instrument or singing or simply on the radio of my car for my children to listen to.

SONGS 01

As another on-going work I annotate on my phone the titles of all the songs I hear and recognize. I emphasize “recognize” since I first need to get acquainted with a song and as soon as it becomes a hit in my head and I am able to replay it, I then begin to keep track all the times I listen to it. As it happened throughout the entire duration of my project, I lived in foreign countries where I actually don’t know the language sufficiently. I then often just come up with the title of a song and translate it into music without ever bothering about the actual lyrics. As a matter of fact, all that I transcribe of a song is the interlude, therefore only a dozen notes written on a musical sheet. On average I recognize every month 240 songs. These songs are rarely unique. When Christmas approaches for example, there are a lot of Jingle Bells popping up. It is estimated that, at the end of my project in 2040, I will have transcribed over 100.000 songs. Currently, I have recomposed the interlude of over 2.466 songs. Based on the list of the songs I hear, I copy and paste them onto a musical sheet of 22,5 by 120 centimeters. For the purpose I use a composer software which enables me to replay my compositions as .MIDI files so as to test if I have composed them correctly.



Fig.026 Picture showing a detail of a stack of my musical sheets. This work was presented early on in an art museum in Sweden. For this occasion the notations were available for the public to play on an old secondhand organ. The pages were laminated and a clipboard was used to keep the musical sheet in use on the organ stand.

SONGS 02

After conceiving a way to record my awakened life by photographing the objects I use with my right hand, I conceived a way to track the part of my life spent asleep by keeping track of my dreams. At this point I began thinking of a third work related to an aspect of my life that was more musical and was not visual or textual like the first two works. At first I began keeping track of all the songs popping up in my head. Generally I noticed that different events in life always inspired me to think of a song. Yet to actually be aware of these songs would have distorted this subconscious process. As a result my brain would have turned most chaotic and filled with songs constantly popping up just as a mere caprice. After various experiments then I opted to simply track the songs I hear meaning both the songs sung by another person, instrument or whatever audio reproducing technologies but also the songs I myself sing or play. The resulting record then partially presents my spontaneous approach to life. Since I was a teenager I often just sang without really paying attention to what came in my head. My repertoire has always been varied and I have been inclined to easily memorize very long songs, especially those that my grandparents sang to me, in a way keeping up their heritage.



Fig.027 Picture showing me in my twenties using a family piano in the Swedish farm where I used to live. The piano was out of tune and was only kept as decoration but I began reusing it to recompose with my right hand alone all the songs I recognized. The musical notes were initially written on paper. These notes which are now part of my physical archive.

SONGS 03

Initially, the title of each song was written on a piece of paper. Later these handwritten annotations were transcribed using a family piano. After a few years I began annotating the songs I hear on my mobile to then find the melody using a melodica. After a melody has been composed it is saved on a file and I don't have to recompose it again. Following the list of songs from my mobile phone I just have to copy and paste on the month composition I am working on. This process takes me about ten to twenty minutes everyday depending on whether or not I have to compose new songs. Of course at the beginning the process was even longer since I still had very little songs composed. In this early period I spent much time on the piano finding the musical notations for each song and after some practice I became quite good at it, at least for a beginner like myself. Living up north but coming from the south I noticed a stronger inclination among Nordic people to play music; they are more acoustic while a person like me growing up in the solar landscape of the alps is more visual. Nonetheless throughout the course of the project I became quite in love with the old musical heritage particular of Scandinavia where the project actually started and where my first son was born.

Voyage
 Life is life//driving back to the netherlands
 Half way there
 Its the final
 Where to we dance when the are burning
 Halfway there
 Everybody keep the vain
 Every pray i make
 I send an sos//at macdonald in luxembirg
 Roxanne
 I am in englishman
 We are the world
 Its a wonderful life
 There can be miracles
 My love is your love
 I am everyoanng
 Senza una donna
 Si viaggiare
 Perché no
 Nessun dolore
 Perché no
 Ma che disatr
 Donna selvaggia
 Ma che sapore
 Dont wanna close my eyes
 Country road
 Jag ar soei
 Oh sole mio
 Michelle
 Nothing is gonna change
 Hey Jude
 Yesterday
 I get by
 Let it be
 All the lonely people
 Questo e il
 La bella la
 When i wish
 Nella vecchia
 Fra martino
 Andian
 In un mondo che
 Come puo uno scoglio//spending the day with livia and august
 Che anno e
 Aqua azzura

Fig.028 Screenshot of a list of songs I have annotated. These songs are ready to be transferred from the phone to a basic text editor so that I can daily transcribe them. The comments on the side of some songs reminds me of the situation in which they were annotated. These annotations are later used to write an account of a month worth of songs after a musical sheet is completed.

SONGS 04

Keeping track of the songs I hear, I also keep track of the songs I sing for example to my kids. On some occasions I just involuntarily sing a song and this reflects a state of my subconscious. As if automatically in fact I may begin singing a song that contains certain words that reflect something I am experiencing. As an example, if it is raining and I am getting wet, I may start singing "Era una notte che pioveva", an old song that talks about a night spent by a sentry under the rain. The somber atmosphere of the song has nothing to do with the happy moment I am experiencing with my children under the rain. It is only a mental mechanism in which some words of the songs come to reflect a situation but not in the least the actual melody and the type of atmosphere it can generate. Also the song I may hear from other sources like the radio, may be completely mismatching the situation. An example could be a Jingle Bell tune played by a toy in the middle of the summer. Nonetheless most of the times it is likely that overall those viewers who read through the resulting musical notations can get a feeling of the atmosphere in which I annotated the songs, whether it was a period with a lot of birthdays and/or a period spent working in a factory with colleagues constantly playing techno music in the background.



Fig.029 Picture of the melodica I bought at a secondhand shop. The melodica was used to recompose my songs but also to play songs to my kids especially during the many rainy afternoons spent in our house in the Netherlands. The photo belongs to my photographic work in which I keep track of my activities by photographing all the objects the right hand uses.

SONGS 05

To begin with I preferred classic music and particularly opera which I have assiduously played in my car radio since the age of eighteen. With playing entire opera pieces over and over again, I began to memorize the whole libretto. The same thing happened while listening to classical music in general. I got quite quick in memorizing entire symphonies, even the most complicated and abstract ones. I simply did not want to go for banal pop music and wanted to make the time I spent in the car formative. At that time I was alone and did not have to compromise with other people's taste. However this privileged situation did not last for so long as I began traveling and working here and there, I often had the situation of having to withstand the musical taste of others. Even among indigenous people in the depth of a tropical jungle I had to wake up every morning with at first the ferocious sound of a big monkey followed by a severe diarrhea attack and the native family hosting me playing Macarena on their generator-powered radio. Of all these absurd situations the bits of music I collect comes to compose a new type of classic composition, one made of all these fragments that put together become a description of my life-time from when I was young and single to when I got children and they grew older.



Fig.030 Screenshot of a street musician in an Italian city. In this case the pianist is placed on an ancient bridge and is playing a melody of a song which I promptly annotated. A former student of mine is in the background also recording the street musician. My life project has often inspired other artists to develop their works and become modern days hunter-gatherers.

SONGS 06

Between 11 and 14 years of age I studied classic flute and went as far as composing my own music and performing it with my teacher. I only worked on the main melody and having no idea on how to work on a full composition he later made all the background arrangements. We went as far as to perform the simple tunes I was able to come up with. I guess the motivation that brought me to compose music was on one side my restless creativity on the other the terrible boredom I was experiencing living in a city just after being uprooted from the open space of the highland where I was born. Either way this basic training taught me how to both read and write music and lastly recompose the songs I hear. Besides that I did not have any relation to music but my Brazilian born great grandfather. After being uprooted from the virgin forest and brought to Europe to escape a yellow fever pandemic, in the teutonic and gray weather he turned to music and dedicated his free time to become an organist. In my youth then my only contact with music was the flute lessons I took as part of my study. As I escaped the sterile middle class environment in which I ended up living in, I eventually studied art and met many skilled musicians and attended their gigs but never dared to pick up an instrument to perform in public.



Fig.031 Screenshot of 18 millimeters films showing my early performances with opera singing. Making use of the equipment I had at my disposal from the art academy where I was studying I was able to get a hold to a projector which at that time was rare. I then managed to duplicate my own self in the act of making as well as performing opera.

SONGS 07

In 2000 I was an art student in Vancouver and began a series of performances which also involved signing. In one of these performances I experimented with the last act of Mozart's Don Giovanni by filming myself singing the script of one of the characters and then singing the script of the other character, while projecting and interacting with the previous characters. Later on I partially kept up my singing. In more traditional settings of the Swedish countryside I performed Schubert's "Ave Maria" during funerals, Puccini's "Nessun Dorma" during weddings and Di Capua's "O Sole Mio" during the midsummer celebrations. While probably not fitted to the Scandinavian environment, these performances were relevant to at least keep up live music in a village where the last musician got too old to perform and young people were not willing to step in. Also while living in Sweden my American employer, an opera fan and a famous art critic, got quite obsessed about listening to me singing Don Giovanni under the distorting effect of helium gas. In later years I almost completely ceased singing publicly and only sang to my children. They became my life, and all three I spent much of our time together until mandatory school began. In our spontaneous was of life we could have certainly invent our own songs.



Fig.032 Screenshot of a professional organist during an event organized at a solo show in which my musical work was exhibited. For this purpose the organist also provided the arrangements to all the songs annotated in my musical sheets. Later I also installed a small organ in my barn in the alps. Here visitors were able to access my works as well as replay the compositions.

SONGS 08

While more interested in folk songs and less in pop songs and with an overall initial interest in classical music, I conceive this as work unique in that it attempts to depict the lyrical heritage of an individual. It also represents a music world that is fading with newer songs becoming less singable. Lastly, in my view, this work comes to represent the struggle of an individual like myself to keep up a certain heritage and to expand it with new folk songs. Not only I feel I have to comply with the music the creative industry proposes but I feel that it is no longer okay to just go around singing as our ancestors have been doing until recently. It is even an arduous task to transmit a musical heritage and enrich it with new content. While I am not an active listener of music, every time I stumble open a folk song I instantly gain great value from it and integrate it in my personal heritage. For example while watching a war movie which in itself is not particularly interesting, I could spot a song sung by a soldier in the background. I would then immediately search the title of the song and try to replay it so as to memorize it. I would even go as far as trying to read the often ancient and obscure history of such a song and give it an additional value. In a later stage I would also sing it to my children and also contextualize it to them.



Fig.033 Screenshot of a video made by my girlfriend while I drive and scribble the songs I hear on the radio without losing sight of the road. On some occasions I just play a list of favorite songs. Knowing the playlist by heart, I only have to write them on my phone after driving. Such videos illustrate the kind of emotions that the songs create while on the road.

SONGS 09

While the annotating of the songs I hear and recognize can be rather smooth, at times I do not have access to my smartphone to do so. While traveling by car for example I sometimes get to play the radio, especially if the road is very boring and I have many hours to kill. In particular I am curious to hear the kind of songs that are more characteristic of the country I am crossing. Driving through Germany I can hear a much broader repertoire than the one offered by the algorithm-driven Dutch radio stations. Initially if I was driving, I used to ask my girlfriend to annotate the songs on her phone for me but later I just trained myself to memorize the various titles. I do this by creating in my head a complex sequence of images to represent chronologically the title of each song. Strictly avoiding the use of my phone while driving I might also annotate the songs on a piece of paper I have on my wheel. In this event I keep my eyes on the road and scribble with a pencil on the paper the title of the songs I hear. All these paper annotated songs are later stored in my mountain archive. In other events I might be doing other types of activities that keep my hands occupied such as working as a carpenter or holding my children's hands in a trafficked road. On these occasions I again resort on my memorizing technique.

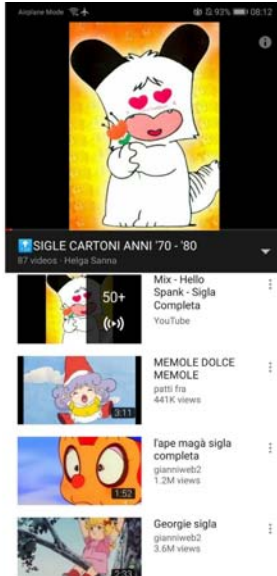


Fig.034 Screenshot of my phone taken while replaying some cartoon songs from my youth to my children. Growing up in the 1980s, I was predominantly exposed to Japanese cartoons but the Italian theme songs that were composed for these cartoons had far more of an impact on my generation. The replaying has refreshed my memory and my children and I were soon able to sing these tunes.

SONGS 10

To some extent also this work of annotating the songs I hear throughout my life marks the end of songs. By conducting this work I have in fact noticed how songs in the digital era have transformed into mere beats and loops without a melodic climax almost as if they were stuck into the bits of the very computer medium that has generated them. Either way any melodic or lyrical crescendo in this new realm would sound most awkward and it would certainly not be welcome. Contemporary music in itself has come to reflect the predictable and routine-based lives of individuals. Music in this sense acts as a sedative to their inability to evolve within an artificial type of confinement. The singing out of any melody in contemporary music is thus as challenging as the ability of undertaking a life experience in its fullness. In my opinion contemporary music struggles to convey some in depth poetic emotions or story tell about anything authentic. On the other hand I became aware of the fact that songs are very powerful messages that stick with us. Everyone can be a musician. Like indigenous people, also we can come up with our songs and perform them to our tribe. All we need is to live our lives and avoid getting too much channeled in the life others has designed for us.

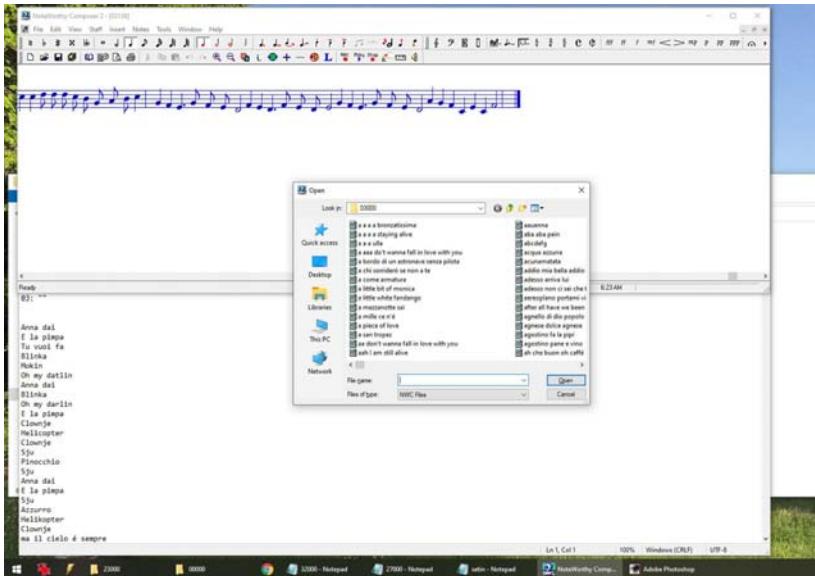


Fig.035 Screenshot of the software I use everyday to recompose the songs I hear. Notice the list of songs kept open on a Notepad file below the software window and the actual window on the very top in which I search whether the song I am about to input in a chronological sequence has been previously composed.

SONGS 11

Following are the technical parameters I use to compose the songs. I use a light but comprehensive program for composers called “Noteworthy”. After recomposing a song using a melodica, the song is written on the program and then tested using the inbuilt midi synthesizer. The program indicates to me the percentage of a staff I have composed. When the percentage reaches 15%, I use the inbuilt “Primo PDF” virtual console to print the 225 by 1200 millimeters musical sheet. The resulting .pdf file is usually two pages long. While saving the first one I copy the notations of the second to start a new composition corresponding to a new month's production of all the songs I have heard. All these software are at several decades old and even dates to my time as a student. Over the years I have created my toolbox and I am content with what I have. I don't need more or wouldn't dream of more if it wasn't that the operating system keeps on getting updated with the excuse of improving the security while in reality turning my dear old tools unusable. No matter whether there are options to run my old applications using older compatibility modes, sooner or later my consistency is undermined. I guess the idea is to get people like me to subscribe to big creative suites but I hold on to my poetry and see where I get.

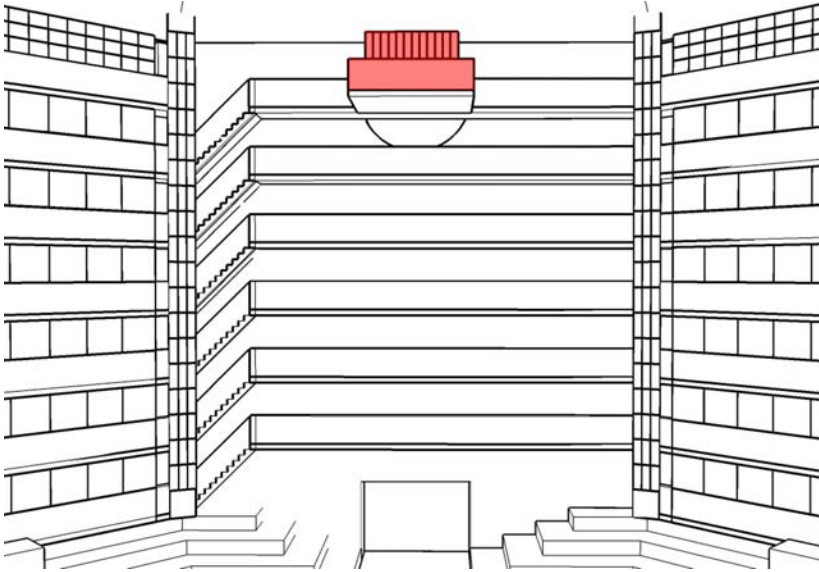


Fig.036 Rendering of the location of the organ in the memory theater where I have since the beginning conceived to host the whole of my project. Notice the 12 boxes on top of the organ to store all the musical sheets. While these sheets are 120 centimeters long they can be folded in four parts, thus getting slightly bigger than an A4 format.

SONGS 12

In this musical work I am partially some sort of a DJ selecting my life playlist but also partially more a human who is forced to be aware of a more and more algorithmically orchestrated playlist broadcast on the humans of my time. The music of the organ then is just a way of uplifting the musical redundancy of the digital age into a more profound reorchestration which the very medium of the organ amplifies. Generally the resulting composition works well as a background to the performing of other parts of the project such as the reciting of my dreams and the reading of the casualties found on the news. In an ultimate exhibition scenario the music performed on an organ can also accompany very well visual works such as the films of public places and generally the psychedelic atmosphere created within the exhibition space. The whole juxtapositions of the various works can come to mimic the very inside of my brain, a living organism in which memories are retrieved along with others sensorial stimuli. In the performance of the project then there is none of the pretentious chronology that most cultural products conveniently adhere to. The chronology I have followed is fully threaded and given to a giant organism of its own brooding over all the content as it attempts the impossible task of digesting it.

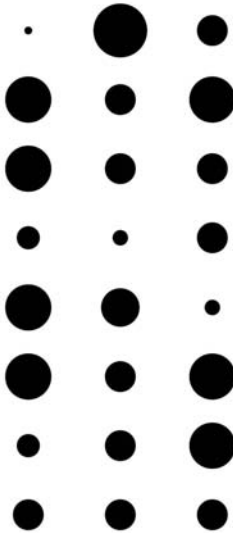


Fig.037 Screenshot of a month of perforations going left to right from top to down in chronological sequence. This month was particularly happy with several large perforations. Here however we can see how often large perforations may be followed by small ones and vice-versa almost as if a joyful day is automatically followed by a sad one.

EMOTIONS 01

Every morning I register the emotional level of the previous day using a scale of 8 values. Every month, the result is a panel of 36 by 75 centimeters with perforations ranging from 1 to 8 centimeters representing respectively a very dreadful and a very cheerful state experienced during a day. This work has not only made me highly aware of my emotions but also, in turn, more emotional. On the whole however I have learned to moderate the rise of excessive emotions. I have also learned to consider the fact that if I feel very much down, there will soon be days in which I will feel much more joyful. Said this, I am not so positive about feeling too joyful either as I now know that such extreme moments of happiness are followed by an equal dose of unhappiness. Possibly the best scenario I am pursuing when it comes to my emotional state is a moderate level which I would certainly be able to maintain if it wasn't for outside circumstances affecting me at all times. Generally speaking and as far as I can tell I am mentally quite healthy. My project which gets me to analyze myself and my surroundings provides me a great anchor without which I would feel lost and keen to pursue worldly ambitions, such as getting rich and famous. In turn these worldly ambitions would get me disillusioned and perhaps depressed.



Fig.038 Screenshot of myself on my first holiday alone after a break up. It was particularly painful but I was able to emotionally deal with it thanks to my project. Thanks to it I brought so much to life and have always been full of life myself but when people around begins to hinder me in its realization I lose my life-drive and what is left for me is to move on.

EMOTIONS 02

The type of measuring I adopt in this work, as the measuring I adopt in my other works, is not scientific. It is me who assigns a grade not so much as a school teacher assessing the work of her students but as a shaman reading his own chakras. This subjective grading might be criticized and not taken seriously. In the long run however it does provide accurate patterns. As a matter of fact with time I started retaining this grading system in my subconscious without thinking about it nor caring about what other people may think. As in other parts of the project, I became the sensor. I have opted to adhere to a human scale and this adherence gives me an orientation in life. Hence, rather than wearing all sorts of devices to attempt to measure my emotions, I have myself matured a strong awareness of them; I have developed an understanding of the factors why my mood is high or low. I am my own analyst and do not require any psychologist. Of course I am not able to control my emotions but I can perceive and predict their cycle. It is possible that by analyzing all the data I have left behind many psychologists can quickly draw their conclusions and label me with this or that syndrome. I can certainly find their labeling intriguing but nonetheless my life carries on happily. Possibly it is because in my project I found my own nature.



Fig.039 Screenshot showing me creating a prototype of a one month panel of emotions. The panel was later installed in a showroom I created in my one-room apartment. Having to live in an immigrant suburb in Sweden, my room became a little shrine in the midst of an urban environment made even more alienating by a truck factory just outside my window.

EMOTIONS 03

Interestingly, living the life of an immigrant without any security but my wife and children, I am generally happy. What affects my moods is not the lack of a reputation and money but the lack of time to take care of my project. In other words I am very keen to serve others and take no credits for it but I do need my moment in the day in which I can renew myself. In other words I am only fully satisfied as a person when I am able to look after my project on a daily basis. With this in mind, being very low in the social scale has turned out to be a favorable circumstance. With no expectations I can dedicate myself to a life in full accordance with nature, aware of reality and of the becoming that my project has disclosed. Like the foreign servant of a Roman aristocracy who is able to keep up his philosophical purse in a concise manner, I avoid the elaborated sophism of the more official intellectuals. I have my family to look after and this grounding preserves me to go astray. Scratching the surface I can feel reality and in turn I can express it in all its naturalism without pimping it with unnecessary decorations. Of course at times I can look at the sky rocketing success that other people are experiencing with their artistic practice and feel some jealousy but over the years I only came to pity them.



Fig.040 A rendering of a cupola where I thought of placing the 432 month-panels resulting from my 36 years long tracking of emotions. Birds would be able to penetrate the perforations but also the light and most importantly the wind. I imagine that the latter would be able to create sounds according to the size of the perforations it is blowing through.

EMOTIONS 04

The recording of my daily emotional state is one of the simplest works of the project; it only requires me to assign a diameter to a circle so as to label every morning the kind of emotional state I perceived the previous day. Generally speaking I evaluate the emotional state as it unfolds throughout the day and come to grade how I feel towards the end of it, whether the day made me spontaneous and happy or bitter and frustrated. This grading process is straightforward. The realization of the resulting panels is however one of the most difficult parts of my project; the panels are meant to be installed high up in a pagoda looking cupola so that the actual perforations can function as a giant filter of the outer atmosphere, a flute of some sort constraining the wind through its perforations and eventually producing sound. In this sense the perforated panels become like punctuated cards to be played not by a street organ but by the wind. I see this as a metaphor to human emotions also played out by outside circumstances no matter how strongly one opposes them. While the other musical works that are part of my project have either a machine replaying a particular work or a visitor, this work is activated by chance. Visitors can however behold the various panels as they appear with also the rays of the sun passing through.

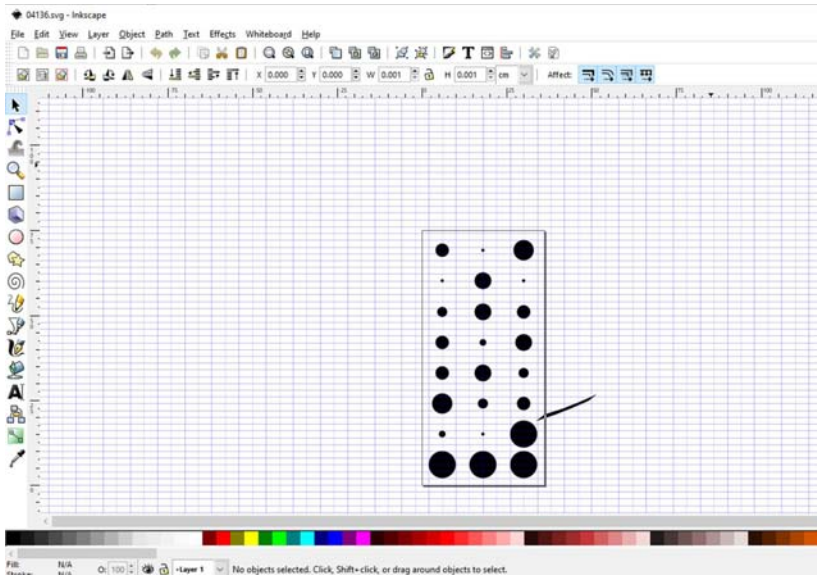


Fig.041 Screenshot of the program I use to set the diameter of a circle based on the emotional level of the previous day. The circles are set to 8 centimeters in diameter. Every day I open the file to resize one. If the previous day was very joyous and should stay 8 centimeters, I make a mark next to it so that I know that I should not resize it the next day.

EMOTIONS 05

Thanks to my project my life has become rather frugal and I have no expectations to control what it is not in my power to control. I have distanced myself from any form of worldly ambition and find a long-lasting joy in pursuing my project. Yet I am sharing my life with my family. My kids can benefit from my engagement and care and I can keep them happy and alive. My partner however might have spent a whole day at work and might come home stressed and worried. She would then also need my assistance to discuss certain issues and be able to release herself from the work burden. By assisting her also my mood might shift and her anxieties can temporarily become my own. I am convinced that if I was to also have a job in a corporation I would also have many worries. In that respect I am not a rock. On the contrary I can immediately sense if I upset someone because he or she thinks I am stepping on his or her feet. The times this has occurred I have immediately stepped on the side without any confrontation. In this respect, I have never fought to maintain a power status, I always gave it away whenever a confrontation arose. The reason for it is that deep inside I am just very content with the idea of being able to take care of my ecology which I define as both my family and my project combined.

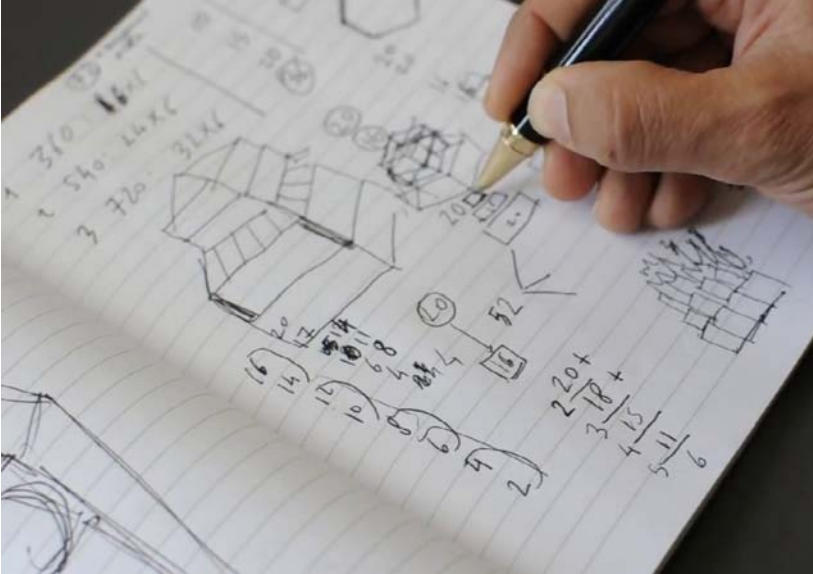


Fig.042 Screenshot of a video showing me calculating how to distribute the perforated panels in the concentric hexagons of a cupola. As in other cupolas and especially as in Asian pagodas the panels should be accessible via a staircase with inner corridors making it possible to explore them also from above. This has been achieved with the memory theater on which my project is based.

EMOTIONS 06

While in essence the cupola is reminiscent of a pagoda which can be related to my experience of traditional Asian architecture during the years I spent living in China, the actual passage of light through the perforations are reminiscent of Indian temples, but also Western temples. In the case of the Roman Pantheon for example, the ray of light coming from the perforation on its top, can be compared to Marcus Aurelius' definition of a rational mind, a mind that ought to pose itself on the object of inquiry like a ray of the sun. In my case however there is no absolute god; the many perforations create a shower of rays falling on the multitude of data I am presenting as part of my memory theater. Now there is perhaps nothing rational about my emotions, good and bad days alternating each other. At times I am prolific and feel extrovert and at times I feel introvert. If this is the case however I always know how to manage my bad mood, by going out for a walk for example. And to this day I always make outside to walk, but not just for the sake of walking. When I am outside I am active observer. I not only reload myself but I also reload my project with the clouds I observe, the wind I experience and the thoughts that come to my mind.



Fig.043 Picture I took with my partner in the alps. While the years of distance relationship was at times hard, fully investing in one another and fully allowing one another to express themselves proved to be a good recipe for an emotionally stable life without any need of therapy and all the props that modern couples need.

EMOTIONS 07

Throughout the years in which the project was executed I found out that what came most natural to me was to take care of my family and the household. In previous relationships all the conditions were rather perfect but the people around me could not tolerate my choice; a man at home was simply not acceptable. Yet my nature has always been inclined to be homey and get busy with children and cooking and what not. On top of it I eagerly picked up all the jobs that no one wanted to do, all the jobs that are by now labeled as recreational but to me they are an integral part of my ecology such as pruning the fruit trees and going to the forest to pick berries. Often after a confrontation I have applied for a regular job. It was unnecessary because the art courses I taught on the side provided enough money. As a result, in my function as a real man with a real job I got very depressed. With time I have learned not to betray my nature and try not to care about what is expected from me. There is no inversion of roles or anything provocative or scandalizing in my behavior. I feel I am acting as our ancestors did; they kept close to their encampment going berrying and hunting occasionally as I do in my daily explorations of the surroundings.

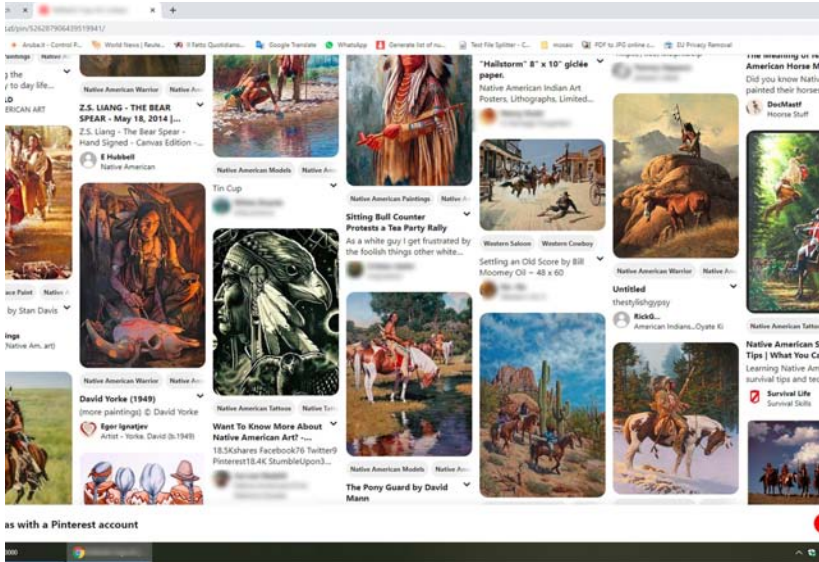


Fig.044 Screenshot of an example of my father activism. While being like me very engaged with the lives of native people he thinks that authoritarian regimes are needed in order to ensure that migration of people does not cause further damage. His view saddens me as I believe that it is because of these regimes that we can no longer live an indigenous life.

EMOTIONS 08

Since I was 6 I was no longer allowed or encouraged to see my father; he became taboo. Twenty years later he got in touch with me and we began a regular correspondence. The event was significant for me but also quite traumatic; it turned out that my father held extreme political views and had quite a rough life in Canada where he moved. I saw very good sides of him but his darker sides had a big impact on me. In the long run I was able to cope with all of my father's issues finding a more stable emotional balance. I am sure that one of the reasons I have started my project is due to the trauma of being left without a father and I am sure that my father's attitude to life is due to the trauma of having been left without his family and children. While I was able to deal with the situation, the relationship with my father became too arduous; he just had his strong convictions. Having been always flexible in my life and always open to new places and people I just couldn't live with the his many prejudices. This experience however gave me a lot of room for thoughts. I became less and less naive on certain issues and with time I began to endorse and appreciate the life of indigenous people my father and my father's family in general are so fond of. I read about them and I keep my brain open to what they have to teach me.

Sara Dierker has died

"It is with great sadness that we have received the news of the death of

Dr. Sara Dierker, Professor of Architecture and Design, 1968-2018.
Her obituary is available at: [http://www.berkeley.edu/news/berkeley/2018/04/18/sara_dierker.html](#)



Fig.045 Screenshot of the announcement of the death of one of the few professors I truly admired and respected in my short-lived time in academia. Other professors were generally disappointed with my eclectic way of being. They gave me a hard time but I was stubborn and unwilling to exchange my practice-based-research for any of their conventional canons.

EMOTIONS 09

Depressing periods of my life was related to my will to communicate my project to others and being hindered to do so by the gate-keepers of a particular social domain. In this case as a researcher in a university I attempted to present my project in scientific writings but was immediately confronted with professors who just thought very little of my artistic work. While I struggled to position my practice in an academic context, in the end I was obliged to comply with the notions I was told to comply with. The critical nature of these notions affected my positive attitude to life. Most of all I felt depressed because I entered academia with the intention to provide a thorough understanding on the type of life-project I was doing. It felt like a great chance and throughout the years I had already stumbled upon a lot of reference material and met a lot of people who dealt with similar projects. The fact that I was forced to comply with an already existing discipline made me realize that it was not research I was going to produce, it was not culture I was going to share, it was no knowledge I was going to expand on; I was only asked to add yet another trophy to the dusty cabinet of the department, another stuffed and dead creature to exhibit and all for the sake of its status.



Fig.046 Screenshot from one of my films showing the start of the construction of an ark near my native mountains where to stow and show my project. Later I was forced to dismantle it because some local politicians saw the opportunity to create a polarizing debate around it. At last my battle was won and I was able to resume the construction.

EMOTIONS 10

Throughout the years I have learned to live without expectations. I have learned to be independent from any illusion. I simply focused on the joy I gather by living and observing the reality around me, disclosing all its fertile potential and seconding it. Having perceived that the borders I crossed during my youth were suddenly closing, I ultimately decided to deposit my project back in my native alps. Staying up north in Scandinavian just reminded me of all these people who left society to go to the wild and were not able to make it back. I wanted to make it back to a familiar nature, that of the alps. My wish was that of depositing my work back to nature in an ark which combined two of things I loved so much, the alps and my project. I was saddened by the fact that I was not able to do so in the Swedish countryside I also loved and had invested my life into but I decided to purchase a small farm in the alps thinking I would not suffer any form of discrimination being in my native country and in my property. Nonetheless some local politicians there set up a revolt to block the construction of my ark. Then I realized that even in the rewilding nature of the alps where civilization has disappeared, even after having had the project approved by the competent authorities, there are still gate-keepers hindering my freedom.



Fig.047 Screenshot showing me with Polish friends singing karaoke and getting quite exuberant and out of control. In a social context and without the use of alcohol or drugs I can turn into a little hurricane often lifting up the atmosphere of an entire group. Interestingly this sort of energy comes out of my otherwise rather contemplative lifestyle.

EMOTIONS 11

Conversely I have found my happiness in being able to train my mind through the execution of my project and in training my body through the taking care of a natural environment where to deposit it. When events such as bad weather might prevent me from even just taking my daily walk, I might feel unhappy. On the other hand, bad weather could be a great opportunity to write an essay or edit this book, works that makes me happy yet works that I cannot do when for example my partner is working and I have to take care of our kids and keep indoor. Generally speaking then, I can find my full happiness when exploring. I can do so taking walks in the landscape or in a city or I can do so in my attic which is in itself an extension of my explorations or rather a recollection of them. When I cannot accomplish these activities and I am stuck in a situation such as in a traffic jam on the way to a boring job I can get ill tempered. Luckily I just figured I can live with little money. As I don't have any drive to get rich or famous I can enjoy more freedom and happiness and people feel generally freer and happier around me. Even when I am obliged to do things I don't like I anyway try to combine them with things I know I need in order to keep happy. If I have to work for money, on my way to work or in the breaks I might just walk.

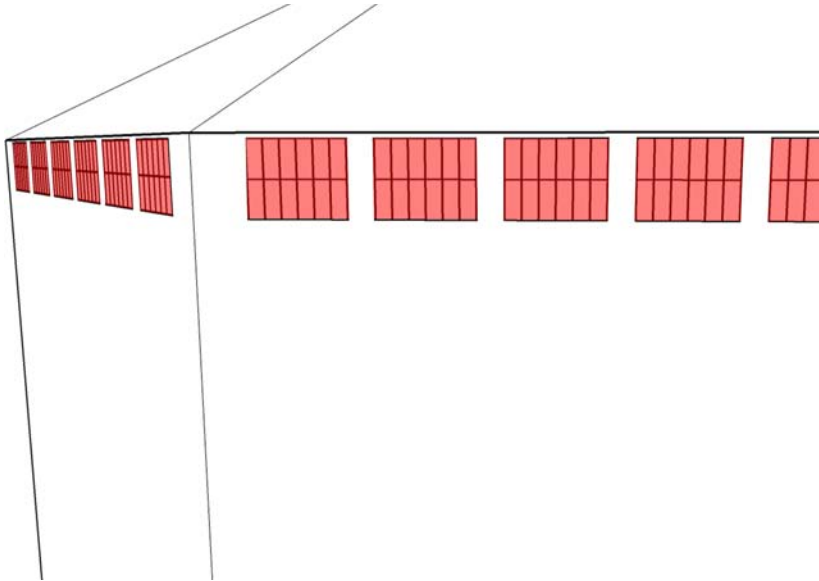


Fig.048 Rendering of my memory theater showing how the perforated panels representing my emotions are displayed. Up the very last corridor of the theater visitors may be able to perceive the sound of the wind blowing through the various perforations. In a sense then also with this work all the works in the theater are experience within it.

EMOTIONS 12

In the memory theater I have designed to host my project, the resulting panels representing my emotions are placed on the very top of six of the walls with the exception of the wall in which visitors access the theater and the wall in which visitors view my walks. The idea is that the wind blowing inside the various perforations of the panels generate different sounds also based on its intensity and direction. This wind then comes to interfere directly with the artificial wind generated by the fan hanging in the middle of the theater to reproduce the wind I daily experience. The panels are placed in groups of 12 with 6 groups per wall. These groups make a visitor standing behind it experience the full force of the wind and of the light standing behind it. It even allows birds to fly in and out of the building making their nestle under its roof. Said this, while I would love to realize this theater but I accept that it is only a mental construction. I certainly would have the power and skills to be able to just dedicate my life to such a project and in this respect I would fill very accomplished and happy but on the other end there are not only little birds and animal creatures but there are also my children I need to take care of and life needs to carry on without too many worldly expectations.



Fig.049 Screenshot of a month of walks from a summer spent in the alps. The trajectories are rounded like the paths going up and down the mountains. Some walks have been repeated and small variations have been added. The sudden interruptions in the upper walk corresponds to military tunnels built during World War I that so much disfigured my native alps.

WALKS 01

Every evening, after a day of walking, I use pen and paper to trace my movements. Every morning I manually retrace the resulting sketches on a vector graphic program using a computer mouse. The digitization occurs on a 52 by 52 centimeters layout. The top, right, bottom and left of the layout are respectively the north, east, south and west of where the walks occurred. The result is a layout with small drawings representing different cities or different areas of a city, or different places in nature. The more round the drawings are, the more I have been walking in a natural setting. The more scattered these drawings are, the more I have made use of private or public transportation to reach them. In this respect I drove or I was taken to a site in which a walk is taken without any connection to the place where I live. Generally the place where I live is the drawing in the middle of the layout and the more attentive viewers will be able to recognize that it repeats itself in the various month panels, showing the more basic kinds of patterns such as walking to the supermarket. Throughout the project I have lived in places that offered a good environment for walking such as Boston, Venice or Stockholm. Some cases I had to struggle with the traffic like when living in Shanghai. There I made use of hidden alleys.



Fig.050 Picture showing a prototype I built in my barn superimposing a year worth of walks on the alpine landscape. These grooves of intersecting lines may not mean anything to the people who view them but they acquire a different connotation as soon as they are placed back on the landscape I have so much explored walking; they become like Nazca projected on the wilderness.

WALKS 02

In an exhibition setting, my walks are engraved on transparent glass allowing the viewer to superimpose these trajectories on the outside landscape. I was able to test such an effect in an exhibition I produced on the top floor of my barn in the mountains. For the purpose I printed the trajectories on a transparent film which was applied on some large square windows. The result was interesting; these tattoos got superimposed on the mountain landscape. To some extent these lines become like the ancient geoglyphs of the Nazca desert. In this case however they do not come to represent any mediation with some extraterrestrial divinity but they are the trace I leave on the landscape by constantly roaming around it. While the landscape remains untouched by my walks, it is my brain that gets engraved by them as if they are part of a mental map enabling me to orient myself and survive. Also this landscape is my natural landscape or rather that of my ancestors. I enjoy hiking on it and my constitution is made for it; I am skinny, with thin legs and much stamina to go up and down the hills. In this sense I am never fully satisfied in the places I got to live in such as the Swedish forest and the Dutch countryside. The fact that I always carry extra weight like my equipment is in a way to compensate for the gravity I so much miss.



Fig.051 Screenshot of a video I filmed while crossing a frozen lake and trying to do as much movement in an otherwise non motivating and obscure Scandinavian winter. Wearing heavy boots and walking many kilometers I began experiencing knee problems and in later years switched to lighter shoes, or in some cases no shoes at all especially along Dutch rivers.

WALKS 03

By looking through the various month layouts of my walks, an attentive viewer will also detect similar patterns or sudden changes in patterns or gradual increase or decrease of these patterns based on seasons and other conditions which more or less facilitate walking. These conditions are above all set by the weather such as rain or snow hindering me from taking any walk. Other conditions can be determined by the urban environment in which I happen to live such as the pollution of a Chinese metropolis and the alternative streets I am able to find to avoid the traffic. Also my physical conditions can often force me indoors such as knee pain due to too much walking on hard surfaces. With some exercise and rest I can generally be well again without ever taking any medications or consult a physician. Other hindering conditions to my walking and the strong urge I have to move is work in an office or a factory. In both circumstances my objective is always to take a walk whenever I can and also to keep standing even during meetings. Because of this I am considered weird. Even so if I force myself to sit after some hours my back starts complaining and I am not able to sleep well at night. As of now I am writing in a rather uncomfortable but healthy position, sitting on a high saddle as if I was riding a horse.



Fig.052 An early screenshot showing me retracing a daily walk. As one A4 paper might not be sufficient, I either continue the tracing on the other side of the paper or attach another next to it. I can also use bigger paper formats but generally I recycle the back of the paper I have at my disposal like my children drawings. Since this paper is later archived, so is the content I am recycling.

WALKS 04

The variety of sketches presented each month in each panel also shows my economic situation. On a few occasions I might have a job but not so much time to take long walks. As a university researcher for example I had little time to walk but I got to travel and commute much more from one place to another, taking every opportunity to make small walks in whatever place I reached. By doing so I generated panels with many small and scattered sketches. Also later while working as a carpenter I was sent to different clients and made use of my breaks to walk. Generally however these situations never last too long. The impulse to hit the road and pursue my project always prevails and within a short time I am unemployed from work and employed back into my own ecology, not only my project then but also my children who would otherwise be confined in a kindergarten. My usual situation then is that of a quite poor person who has to walk several miles to places not willing to waste money on a bus ticket. In this respect I have acted in accordance with the transcendentalist principles underlined by Henry David Thoreau; it is faster to walk to a place than having to go to work to be able to afford the train ticket. With my oldest son for instance it was no issue to walk from Brooklyn to Central Park and back.

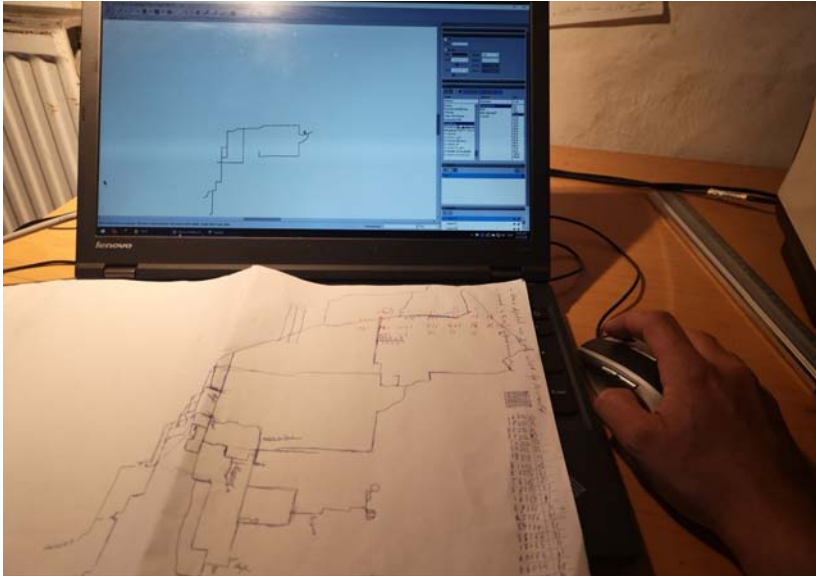


Fig.053 Picture of a morning set up to retrace the walks I have first traced on paper. I could easily just copy and paste certain patterns I drew in older month files but every month I perfect them by drawing them from scratch. The work of tracing is by now a routine, a craft I execute with my eyes and hands. Also drawing directly on the computer wouldn't render the walks with such a finesse I can achieve when drawing on paper.

WALKS 05

Most of the times I can easily remember my walks in well-known environments and can reconstruct with my own head a cartography of the places I explore. Over the years I have also become quite skilled in reproducing manually the hand-drawing I make of my walks. For the reproduction I use an old fashioned computer mouse and select two points in space to either make a straight line or a curve. Often also I make use of a cutting tool to break the lines I make so as to delete a part of them. I also make use of a feature aligning the starting or ending point of a new line with the starting or ending point of an old line. To do so I use LayOut, an old vector program. Here the document is set to 52 by 52 centimeters, and the margins to 1 centimeter. The stroke of the actual line I use to retrace my walks is set to 1 point and the fill feature is unchecked. After a panel of a month of walks is completed, I export it to .pdf format in the highest quality. The overall technique I have developed to trace my walks is quite primitive. By now there are better ways to execute the tracing of walks. I could simply run a GPS based application which can automatically do the tracing. This would however remove the human faculty I have developed to orient myself. It is said that Inuit men are excellent cartographers and so I am.

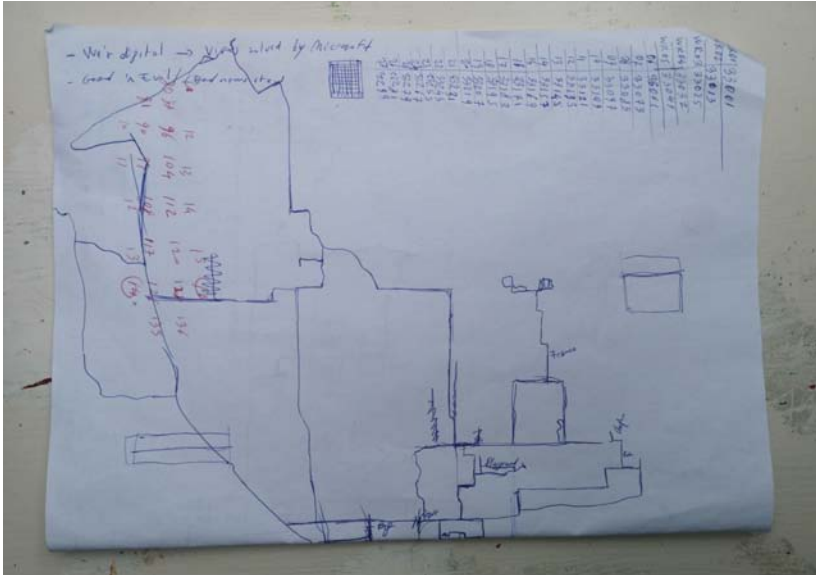


Fig.054 Picture of a folded A3 paper in which I have been tracing the walks I took with my kids in and around our Dutch village. We usually walk through the city center and over old and new dikes. I try to often alternate the kind of round tours we take also in accordance with the weather but many times in the course of a month we repeat the same route.

WALKS 06

Walking has become for me a vital means to slowly explore the foreign landscapes where I have lived most of my life. In some regard then it can be said that I exported to other countries my alpine culture of an excursionist. Geronimo, the run-away native American, once claimed that the legs are our best friends. For me also my legs are a valuable means to keep in motion and fresh in my head and my body especially as I do not have any steady income and cannot so much afford public transport and going to the gym. To put it plainly, I prefer walking. Over the course of the project I have crossed many cities, yet in later years I have settled in a small town in order to take care of my children. With them I used to walk daily for several kilometers getting them used to a semi-nomadic open air culture this until mandatory school started and our routine had to adapt to it. The inheritance I left to my children is that of being able to move through the landscape and not only be part of it as some primitive humans but especially be aware of it, aware of its phenomena see the slightest change, learn the various use of the various plants and fruits and nuts we picked on our journeys. My goal in this respect has been that of providing them with independence and the ability of orienting themselves also in life.



Fig.055 Screenshot showing me on one of my daily walks with my small daughter. Specifically this walk belonged to a repertoire of walks I try to repeat regularly every month. From the south of Utrecht where my partner worked, I crossed an old cemetery and via an abandoned railroad I reached a small farm in the very north of the city where I used to feed my child.

WALKS 07

I try to keep in motion at least for half of the day. Having to take care of my family I can never go too far from home, especially if they are not with me and have to be at school or at work. I then try to make my walks purposeful, walking to the market to buy veggies and fruit or walking to a second hand shop in the industrial part of town to search for cheap but good shoes and clothes for the children. In this sense walking as a recreation for me is only when I am with my family and I want to keep them in motion. Something within me does not allow me to just walk or do any other activity for the sake of personal recreation. Even my partner was not used to walking and after she met me, she got more and more into it to the point that now it is her way to endure her stressful work. My ordinary walking puts me on the same level of people like Carolina Maria de Jesus, the black Brazilian who kept a diary of her days spent scavenging in and around Sao Paulo. With her it was a matter of life and death and for me it is a matter of surviving as a human being. While I did in the past lived the homeless life in Vancouver, the main reason I am in a scavenging mode is my realization that we have lived as hunter-gatherers for thousands of years and it is in this modality that we can keep sane and learn to respect our surroundings.



Fig.056 Rendering showing a view of my walks superimposed on an alpine lake in northern Italy where I first thought of building a showroom for my project. The superimposition of the walks onto an idyllic landscape has been for me the main factor with which from the beginning I tried to orient myself in finding a place where to physically deposit my project.

WALKS 08

Several artists have been working with walking as the main medium for their works. Beside all the modern artists that just have a little application on their phone to track their movements and do some “awesome” visualizations with it, there are still today artists who commit themselves to long duration journeys across entire continents. There are of course very famous examples like the walk Marina Abramovich took from one side of the Chinese great wall to the middle of it where she met her partner Ulay walking from the other end. Beside these famous examples one can meet artists or people walking or even biking across the world, seeing beautiful places and of course stumbling the too gentrified cities or too ugly industrial areas. I often met these wonderful people and I could see in their eyes all the magic that they had experienced. I do not entirely envy them however. In the course of my project I have in fact content myself with exploring and crossing the bio-region where I live without necessarily wanting to go more exotic. This regionalism of mine is more in line with how hunter-gatherer people moved in the past, always within their bio-regions. Moreover, to go beyond these regions would also disrupt the square format in which I trace my walks. How could I ever fit the Camino de Santiago?



Fig.057 Screenshot showing me taking my partner in the more secretive and non-touristic paths of an Italian city. In my life I was able to discover many unbeaten paths just by roaming around. I prefer such organic and historical and landscape walks to any straight and modern and trafficked walks. Given my explorative inclination I make it a good guide.

WALKS 09

In addition to being a transcendentalist practice and a means to survive in times of economic difficulties, walking is something I have somewhat inherited from some of my ancestors. In remote times they migrated across the alps, moving in the 13th century from the northern side of the alps to the southern side in order to work for the Venice Republic. In the first centuries of their colonization they had to fall trees and toss the timber down a river that conveniently brought them to Venice where they were deployed as the underwater foundation of the city. As the new trades to the Americas were opened, Venice lost its power and the highlanders focused on shepherding. Some of my ancestors then kept on moving with their flocks, going down to the Italian plateau during the winter and then back in the highland during the spring and then up to the higher mountains during the summer to then begin to descend again with the autumn. There was in this sense very little of the sedentary life from when they were woodmen, they just had to keep on moving and sell their wool for a trifle. Other of my ancestors were more from the valleys and for them the going up and down the mountains to hunt and gather food also implied a lot of walking. In this respect in my genes there is not much people having to be confined in a place like a city.

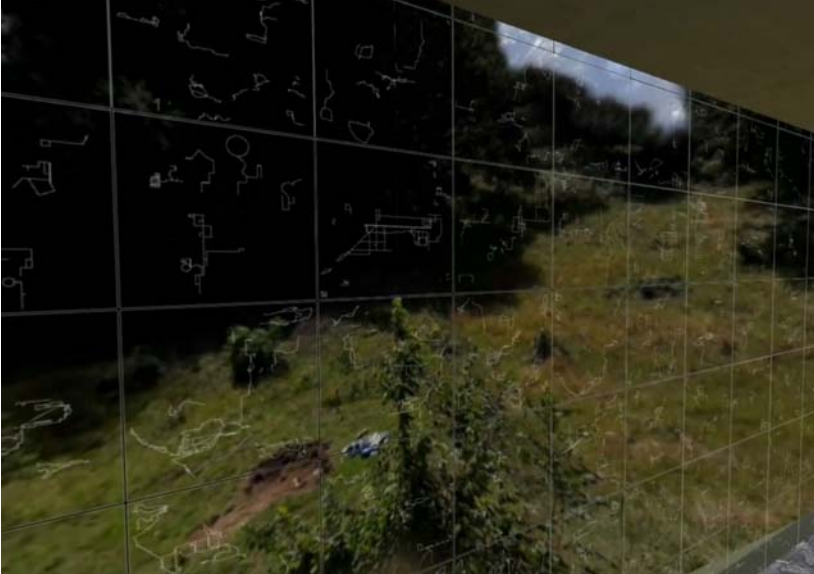


Fig.058 Rendering showing how the glass panels with the engravings of my walks would superimpose on the actual alpine landscape where I have built my ark. Originally the memory theater hosting the panels was conceived for a far more dramatic landscape such as that of Scandinavia where I was living at the time I have actually conceived.

WALKS 10

My walking is a most peripatetic as well as cynic practice. It enables me to observe the reality around me and in turn feed the various works of my project. For example while walking in a city I film the public places I traverse and pick the trash I find on the sidewalk. I can also get inspired with new ideas to draw and in a more natural setting like a park or the countryside I observe the shapes of clouds or record the intensity of the wind. Especially when alone walking becomes my studio; I am able to set my brain to work and get more in depth with my thoughts. Also when walking with one of my kids or a friend I am able to have my best conversations. Rather than meeting for a drink and sitting in a cafe to try to talk to a friend with music in the background, I prefer to walk with him or her and I prefer friends who prefer walking. Frankly all my friends have been great walkers and I cannot conceive a friend if he or she is not so willing to walk. I can be on friendly terms with anyone but I can only get to know him or her and reveal about myself crossing a landscape together. This does not mean that I am not discriminating against those who are not so good at walking. I can walk very slowly as I did with my children. I grow very restless of the talking for talking sake of people that just sit.



Fig.059 Screenshot showing me taking a solitary walk in Berlin. While departing from conventional tourist itineraries I have always attempted to explore the more peripheral territories without consulting any guide. Only by walking past the city arcades and its pretentious gentrification I have been able to discover some level of authenticity.

WALKS 11

Every evening I retrace my walks on paper mentally going through the actual places I have crossed. Possibly due to my alpine heritage, I might have a particular predisposition to do such mental rehearsal. I have noticed that I can apply this technique also going mentally backward through the places visited during a walk. This particular faculty might be related to my natural instinct to get oriented in a new place, creating a virtual 3D map I store in my head in order to survive within it. What is most interfering with this process are however the directions that signs and phones provides. While my maps are more similar to those that cartographers made prior to the 18th century, the new mapping systems and the way certain directions are imposed on people, confuses the organic mapping of my brain. In this respect my practice breaks with the itineraries imposed by the new mapping systems. Also many of these attempts to direct people have the intention to bring an economic advantage to a particular destination. For this reason I try to stay away from any of these suggestions; they are becoming more and more pervasive and sadly also the only alternative that is recommended. I am aware that these impositions are ultimately disorienting not only for myself but for humanity at large.

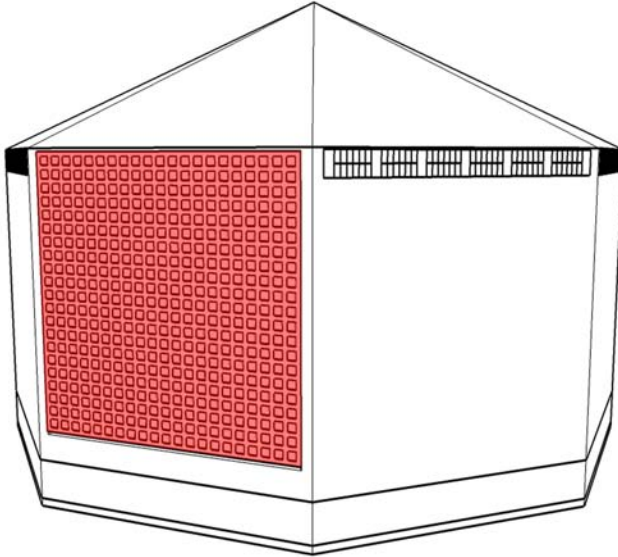


Fig.060 Rendering of the memory theater where the engraved glass with the walks I have made are highlighted red. Walking up and down these staircases to reach the corridors surrounding the interior of the theater, visitors can check out the various month panels of trajectories as well as they can gradually get suspended over the landscape.

WALKS 12

In an ideal exhibition, the resulting 432 square glass in which all the walks I have undertaken every month are engraved, should be placed in a 21 by 21 matrix. This matrix would result in a giant window resembling that of a modern building or for example a corporation. The matrix would leave 9 glasses blank as 21 by 21 equals 441 and I only need 432 glasses as 432 are the amount of months in the total 36 year duration of the project. 7 staircases all around the theater leads to the back of the theater to the windows where visitors can take a close look to the engraved walks. Moreover each new floor elevates the visitors to an increasingly sublime landscape which the height unveils. All the locations I have sought to build or prototype this theater were all considered in view of this effect. While all the other works are presented indoors, the glass matrix seeks to merge the viewers with the natural surrounding like that facing a setting sun in a sea or over some mountains. Ideally the theater should be placed on an Icelandic or Irish cliff with the matrix facing east such as on a coast ridge. This is ultimately the landscape where I am most excited to walk, a landscape combining the dramatic elements of cliffs and that of the sea, almost as if these two come to interplay with one another right where the trail is.

01	150	120	135	140	145	105
02	120	135	140	115	130	135
03	110	100	100	105	105	100
04	115	115	120	115	115	100
05	110	110	100	100	115	110
06	110	120	120	115	110	130
07	120	120	115	110	110	120
08	110	110	120	130	125	120
09	120	155	105	100	120	140
10	145	120	120	125	120	130
11	125	105	110	130	100	120
12	125	155	140	140	140	105

Fig.061 Screenshot of one month worth of recorded heart-beats. The increasing and decreasing of the values is a characteristic of different training sections where I usually reach a pick to then slow back down. Over the years I became less of a sportsman concentrating my physical activities in taking care of my family and building artworks in the mountains.

HEARTBEAT 01

Every time I train, I record the highest heartbeat I reach every two minutes. I then round it up using one of the following Beats Per Minute values: 100 BPM, 105 BPM, 110 BPM, 115 BPM, 120 BPM, 125 BPM, 130 BPM, 135 BPM, 140 BPM, 145 BPM, 150 BPM, 155 BPM. In this fashion every month I collect 72 of these values, biking or running or generally training for 144 minutes on average. While this amount may seem small, it is what I conceived as a sufficient compendium to my already active life where walking is the main physical activity. Initially, I annotated my heartbeats timing my run around a green area such as the baseball field in East Cambridge, Massachusetts. Later I switched to a watch with a heart rate sensor to be able to train more freely. With the watch doing the tracking for me I was able not only to run wherever I wanted but also to do other kinds of activities such as biking but also digging the foundation of my ark. Lastly I have been able to perceive these beats without the use of any sensor becoming quite accurate to annotate a particular beat in relation to a particular effort I accomplish. In this sense, the technological medium has only enabled me to become aware of my physical effort. I gladly got rid of the technology and began using my brain alone to be aware of myself.



Fig.062 Screenshot of the watch I used early-on to record my heartbeats. Overall the watch often malfunctioned and it was a frustrating experience. Generally I have never liked the idea of having any active technology attached to my body. Also the trend with these wearable devices has increasingly been that of gathering personal data for commercial purposes.

HEARTBEAT 02

Reading the ethical essays by Plutarch there is an emphasis on how elders should not need any doctor because with age they must have learned to know themselves and their bodies. In other words in antiquity the elders going to the doctor to ask to get their wrists measured were scorned. Over the years I have learned to handle all the minor health related issues myself. The bigger issues I have encountered were due to modern life like sitting for hours on a school chairs or on a train to commute to work, or being repetitively woke up in the middle of the night by the newspaper delivery man or ruining my years working in a noisy furniture factory or ruining my sight counting the loaves of a baker or damaging my shoulders falling in the kitchen of a restaurant. On top of this there are all the the package one automatically inherits being exposed to pollution, pesticides and magnetic fields of our modern world. It goes without question that what modern science is working on is but a cure to all the diseases and health related issues previous scientists have caused. In this respect I try to keep healthy by avoiding to expose myself to the refinements of our consumer society. For instance I avoid eating sugar-added and processed food. Also I feel uncomfortable to live in too automated environments away from nature.



Fig.063 Screenshot of the card in which my heart beats were annotated while running around a playground in the immigrant suburbs where I lived in Sweden. Each value corresponded to the time it took me to run a whole round. This was actually my initial way to estimate my heartbeat and was limited to places in which I measured the perimeter beforehand.

HEARTBEAT 03

The more popular monitoring of personal health conditions only shows the social interest in the more bodily aspects of our human existence. Following Seneca's advice, I only do the minimum training to keep healthy. Presently I have fully committed my life to the training of my own human nature and this training already presents some physical challenges that either way keeps me fit. Yet to pursue my nature I had to give up all the sport manias I inherited from my foster family. Every moment of free time in my childhood was dedicated to sports only for the sake of doing sports. There were skiing and biking and skating and swimming activities that all the family members had to pursue. There was no pleasure in these activities and certainly no fulfillment. Coming of age I discovered the contemplative side of me. With a cheap bike and a tent wrapped around it, I used to travel across entire nations, going from one sea to the other, without a map, without anyone to guide me but the landscape and the discoveries I was also finding within my own self, as I fatigued. Later I crossed continents in search of a way to deal with all the creative energy exploding inside me. After much traveling I found a way that gave peace, my current project and my counter-effort has been that of bringing it back to my native alps.



Fig.064 Screenshot showing me going in the southern Indian ocean after a long walk. Leaving the cold climates and rediscovering southern climates has helped me to recover my physical health. Despite not actively seeking to do sports, I simply keep on the move, rebelling to the idea that one day society is doomed to board a space shuttle and leave mother earth.

HEARTBEAT 04

It was at the age of 16 that I won a scholarship and spent a whole year in a small town in Wisconsin. There I attended a high-school and experienced almost military-like training. The wake up call was at five and we had to run for an hour in the freezing weather. Then there was weight-lifting on rotation. The actual hours of school were just meant for resting before the afternoon training in the swimming pool which lasted until the evening. Needless to say I was a little fart among all these Prussians and Russians blond giants who had no mercy in bullying me. Back in Italy and for several years I spent a daily average of three hours in the gym. As a result at the age of 19 I had so many muscles I could not even reach my neck. I began to take part to bodybuilding competitions and came to represent my region at the Mister Italy final. This experience got me face to face with the vanity and decadence of the entertainment industry. So disgusted I was that unlike all my friends who later ended up quite bad with steroids and the like, I pulled the plug and never stepped foot back in the world of the spectacle. Soon after this diminishing experience I began to fully dedicate myself to painting and writing. Traveling also became my way to discover not so much foreign countries by what it means to be human.



Fig.065 Screenshot showing me attempting to clear a path to reach the building site of my ark in the alps. The physical work is made most strenuous by the actual remoteness of the site. There are barely any roads to reach it and it is completely disconnected from the grid. All the heavy steal and equipment had to be carried individually.

HEARTBEAT 05

Over the years, pursuing solely my intellectual project, the attempt to find a place where to house it has given me the opportunity to express myself physically once again. While at first only recording my daily training I soon began to also record the heart beats related to strenuous efforts to turn an abandoned farm in the alps into a sculpture park. To begin with I cleared up the mouth of a mountain and with the help of a few friends managed to build a 7.2 meters high cube made of 12.000 kilos worth of iron. I while mostly do these kind of work in the summer, in the winter I keep with my family in Holland where I struggle to find the right conditions to train outdoor as I am used to. Generally I feel I could have the strength to do much more work, to keep on creating more art projects. Alas the world today seems fully saturated of prefabs that are copied and pasted without any effort. As a result the more interesting and suggestive landscapes where humans could truly feel part of them are hyper protected. Of course I don't want any luxury for myself nor a villa to live in but I do feel I have a strong urge to create. When thinking about it what I create are not commodities but ways to celebrate nature along our human existence as part of it. They are mediums for others to embrace a more natural life.



Fig.066 Screenshot showing me doing a tai-chi section in a camping site after spending a day driving through France. As I have often commuted first across Sweden and then through Europe, I have been regularly practicing tai-chi as a way to hinder back pain. The pain has emerged as a combination of working in a Swedish farm and living a sedentary life.

HEARTBEAT 06

While spending the winter with my family in a Dutch village, I use to seize every opportunity to do physical training by for example letting my family drive somewhere and reach them by bike. I also found ways to train at home doing some carpentry especially in the backyard where I started producing works for my sculpture park. All these activities however are rather scattered and what I try to daily when I am up north is to take a walk and find a place in nature where to tai-chi. The latter I did not learn while living in China. There I was just astonished to see older people doing their many recreational activities in city parks. It was only while living in the United States that I approached an old Chinese man doing tai-chi and he proposed to teach me. Every week and for the the course of eight weeks he taught me 3 new tai-chi movements. It was a very good method because in the end I have learned something I carried on for the rest of my life, something I feel got me to overcome all the pains and physical problems. I once fought them to be chronic simply because I got to know that my father suffers from rheumatism. With the years however I have realized that while each of us may be predisposed to get a health related issue, there is a lot of improvement we can do to tackle it and overcome it.



Fig.067 Picture of my wife and our children taking our long walks. Since all of my children were young I have encouraged an outdoor lifestyle and we specialized in making excursions in the wilderness. In this we have been unique, not knowing any other family encouraging their children to be on the move, especially when it comes to make them walk long distances.

HEARTBEAT 07

In the midst of my project I found myself without a job, in a foreign country and with two kids to tend. While the two small kids pretty much occupied most of my time, I made use of the remaining time to work on my project. In this respect the handling of the kids became my main physical occupation. While they were small I was lifting, holding and cleaning after them. As they grew I was able to do more physical activities such as playing with a ball or chasing one another. In the meantime I also got them trained to walk especially during the holidays we spent in the alps where all the climbing brings much aerobic training. Well I can say that my kids got used to it and even if the school have taught them to stay sited, with some training they are back in shape and can go up mountains that only adults dare to ascend. Old people in my native village often tells that children in the past had to spend the night outside to see if they would survive the harsh climate. I think I have inherited this character myself. I have had an impulse to raise my children to endure the surrounding nature. I made sure they had enough stamina, training them gradually pushing and in a playful manner. With walking they also acquired the confidence more sedentary kids lack. My hope is that they can keep up the tradition.



Fig.068 Picture of my maternal grandfather during a blood test. I was very close to him; he loved me and from him I inherited the love for nature from him. He was in his heart a farmer but got sucked up in managing the my grandmother's business which turned industrial. This business became so detrimental that his heart did not last.

HEARTBEAT 08

As a child I have been experiencing the burden of my maternal grandparents' poor health. They were recurrently ending up in the hospital for heart related problems and we used to pay them many visits. Initially I was relating their health problems to their stressful life-styles; the 1960s Italian economic miracle turned them into rich industrialists smoking, drinking, cheating on one another and keeping the fat diet of their farmer relatives. As I became older however I have also begun to see how life could become stressful at times. Not only having to raise my children alone with no one there to help me was particularly challenging but what became most distressful was all the unnecessary fights that people do with one another trying to hurt each other. In the course of my project I had a first-hand experience on how badly things can turn out if I am not able to take an upper hand over my life. I felt the worries of a man trying to fulfill his only expectation in life, that of communicating his life to others. Every time I have tried to go public with my project I was starkly pushed back by some gatekeepers like university professors and local politicians but even people in my own family trying to pushing me over. And what is all this gatekeeping about but to enforce their own power?



Fig.069 Screenshot showing me hiking at a high tempo up a hill in the south of Germany on my way to the alps. Rather than running and facing back problems, I have eventually resorted to speed walking. As I became busy looking after my children, walking became my only form of training, generally disliking any indoor sport activity.

HEARTBEAT 09

Ultimately I found mountains as my ideal scenario for keeping healthy and in shape. There I can hike, do the required maintenance and do all the creative work in the sculpture park I started there. In the mountains to keep physical is a necessity. There are little infrastructures and to this day there is very little solidarity among the few people left to live there. Actually I do not mind to winter in Holland. In the summer I work so extremely hard in the mountains that it comes as natural for me to use the winter season as a period of recollection. In this sense I do understand that I belong to the bio-region of the alps but I also accept the fact that it would be very unhealthy to grow up a family there. Obviously there is a lot of potential for a tribe of the future to reclaim such a territory but as of now people in the mountains are forced to drive their children to the schools down below and to make it themselves to a factory. There is a lot of driving involved, a lot of sitting. The mountain is for them but a dormitory. When I am there I want to drive as little as possible. I want to stay up in the mountains and my work is up there, creating new art projects and cleaning up the paths to it. This is my ultimate activity that keeps physically fit but also keeps me creative unlike the other mountaineers who are kept in factories.



Fig.070 Screenshot showing me attempting to train aerobically while keeping my center of gravity straight. Having learned to deal with my body pains I was able to train quite regularly. Here in the gym of my former university my training was always light and always preceded by tai-chi I would do in a small indoor theater next to the gym.

HEARTBEAT 10

Getting to meet my father for the first time after twenty years had a strong impact on me; I began to experience the same physical issues he complained about and as a result I gave my sports activities like running and swimming. Only with time I understood that in the course of his life my father wanted to experience the harshness that his father in turn experienced as a soldier on the Russian front. I understood that I could have dealt with my chronic pains more gently, moving in a warmer climate to begin with and doing exercises like tai-chi. My focus also shifted towards the more natural activities I had to undertake in order to build my sculpture park in the alps. In this respect I believe I have inherited not so much strength but a great resistance which is also shown in the marathon I am conducting in the very undertaking of my project. Perhaps this project is a sacrifice I had to make so as to bring an end to a family tragedy that has gone from father to son in the past four generations. This tragedy is a human tragedy, the tragedy of being part of a natural environment and suddenly being uprooted by civilization. What my family has experienced in its recent history is what the majority of humanity and their families have experienced in their history. My operation is clearly that of re-rooting at least my humanity.



Fig.071 Screenshot of the heartbeats I wrote on my phone after giving transforming myself into the sensor doing all the tracking. With time I have learned to memorize these values and retrieve them when it was time to annotate them. So doing I abolished technology especially during training which is a moment for me in which I want to get naked from any accessory.

HEARTBEAT 11

While I understand that by training I avoid all the restless feelings and the frustration I develop when I don't, I am skeptical of the devotion some people show to their body. I respect my body and I try to keep healthy but I do not make a thing out of it. It is what it is and I fully accept it. I was taught as a kid to be rather vain focusing exclusively on my appearance. Almost automatically however as soon as I got to live alone I started not to care on the way I look. All my care went into my ecology and I think in this ecology every human can find perfect contentment. Ecology is the family and with family I mean the family in a broader sense. As a matter of fact our social unit is the tribe. The tribe relates to its people and surroundings and as part of being tribal one has to celebrate the former with much dancing and storytelling and explore the latter with hunting and gathering. I think my project is just but a practice that ensures that these basic human procedures are maintained. I would not agree with any primitivist that I am just undertaking a kind of surrogate set of activities. I feel that my ecology is running and my project is there to ensure that I do not get sucked up in any other mechanism and my little tribe with it. It is not a question of being privileged to be able to do so, it is a question of being determined.

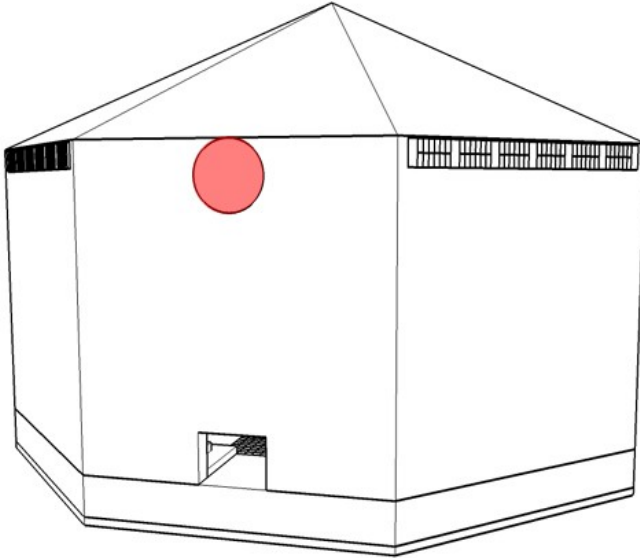


Fig.072 Rendering of the memory theater where the clock that is supposed to replay my heartbeats is highlighted in red. This work is similar to the works of artist friends who have used their biofeedback to generate art with the only difference that while they only tried out a device for some time I pursued the work over the years and learned to become myself the sensor.

HEARTBEAT 12

In the context of the memory theater hosting my project, the beats resulting from the tracking of my training sections are played by a large clock positioned on top of the entrance. Its dimensions are 480 centimeters in diameter. Importantly it can be heard inside the theater where its clicking acts as a metronome particularly to the musical notations of the records of songs reproduced by the organ just behind it. The clock should also be as mechanical as the one envisioned by artist Brian Eno. In this respect the clock resembles the Big Ben, the Great Bell of Westminster Palace in London but rather than putting itself up as an institution for anyone in the world to refer to, my clock is my personal clock, it is a most unregulated clock breaking free from the mechanical rhythm of the most advanced of clocks which in the last millennium of human history have regimented human life. In its inconsistent clicking my clock demonstrates my going against the mechanical regimentation in which we have ended up living. Its tempo is relative and all the other works performed within the theater disobey it. The music and voices emerging from the performing of these works set off on their own accord just to show how during the course of my project I wanted to keep each of my creative manifestations independent.



Fig.073 Screenshot of a painting. It usually takes me one month to finish one. I work on it for a few days in a row, putting at least three layers of acrylic colors. Once I feel that the painting is done I photograph it in the day light and then spend about five minutes every day to retouch the resulting photo on an image editor program.

PAINTINGS 01

Every month I execute a 50 by 50 centimeters abstract painting. For this purpose I use an illustration panel which I quickly sketch using a pencil. After using crayons to associate each of the resulting shapes with a color, I use a size 24 square cut brush to paint the panel using a palette of 18 acrylic colors. This palette comprises of a lighter and darker version of all the primary and secondary colors. After being executed, each painting is photographed and the resulting image is retouched using an image editor. Later I also use a filter to simplify the colors. Each painting is, from left to right, the continuation of the former and the idea was to create tapestries of them for the corridors of my memory theater. Conversely painting is not my forte. I can be quite good at drawing things straight out of my imagination but plainly speaking I don't have a developed technique for any of these more traditional arts. This is not because I am a sloppy person who doesn't wish to apply himself in following the academic tradition that tells him to paint. My point is not to excel in one technique but in being consistent in manifesting also this aspect of my humanity. Therefore it is a mistake to judge my paintings within an art context, comparing them with those of other contemporary artists as I do not intend to compete with them.



Fig.074 Picture of an oil painting I made while enrolled as a student in an American high-school. The painting reproduces an image of an actress I found in a magazine. Despite the realistic subject already at this point I began experimenting with more abstract and curved spaces like the dress of the actress and the grass on which she laid.

PAINTINGS 02

As a child I have been drawing incessantly. Coloring was always only a supplement of my figurative work and I never bothered too much about it. As a student in Italy I felt bored and during classes I drew in my classmates' agendas. At the age of sixteen I was an exchange student in a small town in Wisconsin and decided to take art classes. Only then I was able to let go of my creativity and experiment with colors. Despite all the possibilities I could have pursued, I kept on doing figurative work but abstract patterns emerged in the coloring of backgrounds. On one occasion I pulled the high-school fire alarm on purpose, the handle broke and within a few minutes the school had to be evacuated and the fire brigades had to intervene. I was about to be sent back to Italy but then persuaded the high school dean to keep me. As an apology I offered to spend my summer painting the corridor walls with murals. During the school year we visited museums in Chicago and the works of native Americans inspired me. I then lost no time in recreating them out of memory and filled up the walls with many symbols and figures. Already then I did not want to leave the background of these images empty and I filled them with scribbles of different colors. Later on I became obsessed only in making these scribbles as an art form.



Fig.075 Picture taken by my high school art teacher, an Italian painter who invited me to use a corner of her ancient villa to paint together with her son. In this setting I was able to experiment with random chemicals I found at the hardware store. The paintings became filters of a much too industrialized society, especially the north east of Italy where I was living.

PAINTINGS 03

After my American high-school I had my atelier in the apartment of a widow. There I used a room to make rather traditional oil paintings. Soon however I broke free from using traditional techniques and began experimenting with synthetic resins and foams of all kinds. Eventually the old lady began experiencing nausea and as a result I began painting in whatever garage I could find. In this early phase I would just go to a hardware store and buy whatever chemical product intrigued me. Not knowing what I was using, I would simply mix it on canvas with other chemicals and await for the reaction. The experiments did not end there as I was also using fire, powders and liquids to get the most bizarre textures. I was an alchemist of the modern age or possibly simply an artist using very unconventional materials, using the whole materials I could find on the shop shelves to enlarge the palette with which an artist could play with. After so much experimentation I began to know the materials I was using and got more and more into creating my recipes. The main ingredients of my paintings became undoubtedly polyurethane, the foam used by carpenters for isolation purposes. Frankly I did not even know what it was used for and how to use it but just stuck to it after trying it a few times.



Fig.076 Screenshot showing a set up I made to paint a large canvas using both hands symmetrically. At this time a rich couple allowed me to use one of their villas to paint. They were expecting traditional types of paintings but I was stubborn in pursuing and perfecting my ritualistic style. Upon showing the results the couple were very disappointed.

PAINTINGS 04

After a few years experimenting with chemicals I completely shifted to natural materials such as pigments, eggs, bee-wax and tar. At this time also I began to choose natural sites where to execute my paintings like on the rocks of my native highland, on a small beach by a river and on the hills. As painting became increasingly more ritualistic, I focused on painting symmetrically with both hands. At this point filming the process became more relevant; in order to execute my symmetrical paintings on a big canvas I had to build very precarious structures so as to be able to suspend myself over it. For example I would lay the canvas below a tree and then secure a ladder with ropes around it so as to be able to be fully inclined over the canvas. The procedures with which I executed such paintings using both my hands became increasingly more a formula to which I adhered to. Secluded in nature I began to act like a shaman of some kind. First I would have my hands drop an egg each on the canvas and then I would drop two natural pigments prior executing a mirrored scribble dripping paint with both my hands. Later I would position the canvas on the ground and carefully paint inside the shapes that resulted from my scribbling. After this I would pour bee wax on it and spread it all over the canvas with a hair-drier.



Fig.077 Screenshot showing me painting in my one room Swedish apartment. Despite the alienating environment of the suburbs, I was able to feel good with myself, cultivating my own ecology. I did not paint for any art gallery but just created my own culture and became mindful with it. Rather than a hobby, painting became part of my ritual of being.

PAINTINGS 05

On one hand I retain a ritualistic element to my paintings linking it to artists who more or less consciously enact a shamanic-like ritualism in their practices. Most importantly I just let the hand do its work and without any preconceived design. Only after the initial sketch do I try to be more rational and attempt to create a full palette of colors and shapes. Now the resulting shapes and colors are merely aesthetic choices and there is not a theory of composition behind it. My painting is therefore more of a labor I have to accomplish in order to fully decorate the interiors of the memory theater on which my life-project is based on. Of course if I had the opportunity to realize such a building I would give my body and soul to it but since I cannot, the paintings I execute are a contribution to its construction. Generally speaking I am quite ashamed of my paintings and other people too find this work quite childish. Nonetheless I pursue my painting systematically and simply with the intention of also manifesting this side of myself without much prejudice nor without any vanity driven attempt to try to make something beautiful for others to tell me how good of an artist I am. My paintings then become art stripped of its vanity. They are a non-pretentious representation which has accompanied me through time.

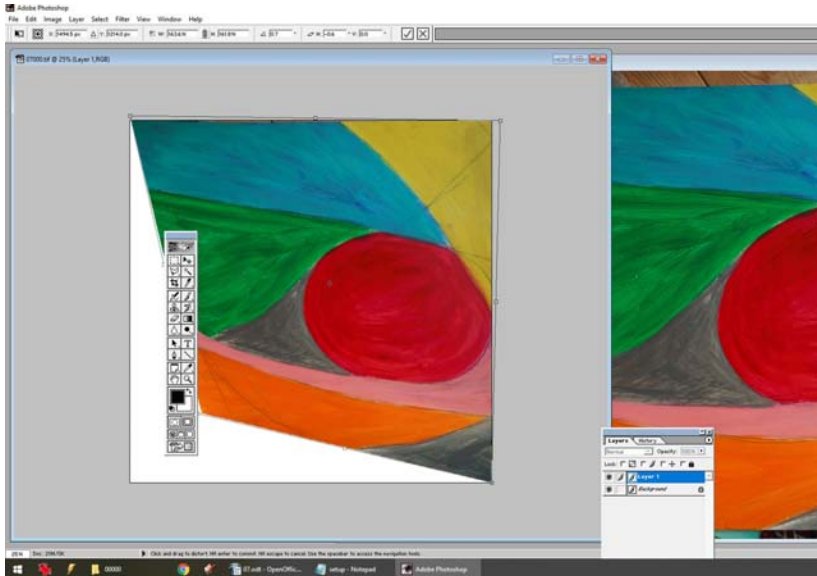


Fig.078 Screenshot of the old software I use to edit the paintings after I photograph them. The screenshot shows the image at the moment in which it is freely transformed in order to fit a square-template. Once the image is inserted I begin a long process of cleaning all the edges making them as smooth as possible by retracing them by hand with a lasso tool.

PAINTINGS 06

After photographing a painting, I use an old image editor to crop the resulting image and place it within a square template of 52 by 52 centimeters. To do so I distort the image in order to make it fit in the actual template set to 52 pixels per centimeters resolution. Later I spend on average ten minutes every morning to polish the edges of all the shapes I have painted. Also I digitally erase all possible pencil traces using the rudimentary cloning tool of the software. The same tool I use to erase the tape I put in the corners of the painting to keep it up on the wall. At this point I might consider adjusting the contrast of the image based on the lighting available when the picture was taken. Lastly, I apply a perceptual filter which reduces the amount of colors in the paint and saves the image into a .gif. As a last step I convert the .gif image into a .pdf file. Overall the process is very laborious and I could certainly obtain much nicer and more advanced results using a more up-to-date application. Frankly however the reason why I was able to have a pretty much coherent style throughout the paintings I have produced in the course of three decades is that I adhere to a technique and don't let myself be carried away by all the cooler effects newer and bigger and fully automated creative-suites keeps on offering.



Fig.079 Picture showing a painting after being sketched. The panel is rectangular and is cut into a square after the painting is finished. Six pieces of paper tape are used to keep the painting attached to the wall. When finished the painting is photographed and I remove it using a cutter. After photographing it, the painting is cut in smaller parts so as to fit in my archival boxes.

PAINTINGS 07

Initially I used to make the preliminary sketch of each painting with a brush. Later I began using a pencil to scribble in a more or less powerful manner the painting, always holding the previous painting up on the left side to see how to continue it on the right. Using a pencil I am then more dynamic and the process is similar to that I was adopting as a young painter. In addition I also began sketching using a red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple crayon. These crayons allow me to identify the colors I wish to use to fill the shapes I have created as a result of my pencil scribble. Spaces can also be joined using the same color in accordance with the colors of the previous painting. The overall idea is that of creating a three dimensional world with shapes overlapping one another as in a groove that keeps entangling itself from one painting to another. Having identified the shapes and the colors I wish to associate with them, I spent several days painting several layers over the white glossy surface. Per se this work is not demanding and I conceive it as a distraction to all the computer work I otherwise do in my study. The computer in many ways become the dominant medium which I regularly get back in order to work on my life-project. Its virtual environment is my atelier but nature is where my project is aimed to.



Fig.080 Picture showing the guillotine I use to cut each painting so as to fit within a box of my physical archive where all the leftover physical production of the project is stored. The white margin is not archived and is instead used for notes and sketches. Early in the process I bought all the hundreds of panels I knew I needed to complete this works.

PAINTINGS 08

After a painting is photographed and the resulting image is edited, I proceed to archive it. In order to do so, I fold each painting horizontally and just cut them in three parts using a guillotine. The pieces are then stored in a random box below my desk and at the beginning of the summer I transport it to a barn I own in the Italian alps. Here the pieces of my paintings are placed in boxes together with other archival material. Potentially by retrieving all the archival boxes and rearranging all the cut pieces, one is likely to obtain a 216 meters long continuous painting I made throughout the 36 years course of the project. The work per se is not impressive. It is not meant to astonish people and beat any world record. It is meant to cultivate this aspect of myself because literally I bring out a talent that would otherwise keep latent within me. I do not use and abuse this talent for the sake of becoming a celebrity but keep modest and by doing so I have been able to persevere until I got old. By now I got used to expressing myself within the constraints I have given myself. These constrains I don't find limiting at all. On the contrary they keep on bringing me new insights. This is because I chose this constrains and these constraints have been based on my own nature what she is inclined to manifest.

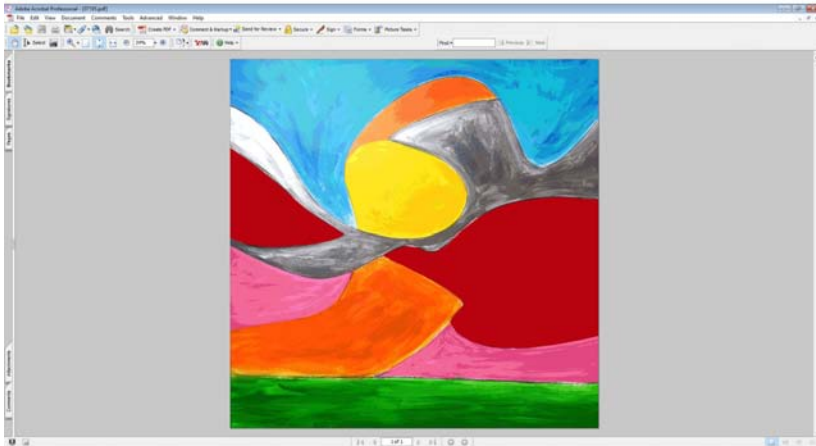


Fig.081 Screenshot of one of the hundreds of paintings I have executed in the course of a month. The way in which the various layers appear and disappear create a three dimensional space with a certain depth. Thanks to these different layers of different tonalities and strokes I can demonstrate that my paintings were not computer generated.

PAINTINGS 09

A close examination of the paintings can highlight an involuntary language that has developed over time. Within the overall sequence of paintings executed throughout several decades a careful viewer is able to detect sequences in which certain elements come to repeat themselves until they might get lost and might reappear again after some time. One could go as far as attempting an abstract theory of paintings to be able to read such shapes and positions and colors which in turn might in fact represent my psychology. Many factors might come into play with the execution of a painting, factors such as a gray winter and unemployment. It is important however to highlight the fact that if there is a message behind my painting it was not premeditated. I simply execute these paintings in a flow as much as my other works. While the main obligation in my life has been that of taking care of my own nature, meaning my project, my family and my surroundings, certainly the gray weather I have experienced in the course of the project has dictated a certain kind of existence. As Noah sitting in his ark waiting for the land to appear my paintings have brought some sunshine in my existence. So all these tremendous combination of colours may be just a way to deal with grayness.



Fig.082 Screenshot showing a small gallery space I built in my mountain barn so as to examine the reception of my work. The gallery showed one year worth of data and it was the first time for me I got to print my paintings. They have been printed on textile but the idea it to embroil them into tapestries which do not show anything figurative but some out-of-space abstractions.

PAINTINGS 10

A quantitative study I have conducted as part of my doctorate thesis showed how all the people taking part in it thought very little of my paintings. They were set up on the top floor of my mountain barn hanging between small columns. On the question of which one of the works they were not so fond of, everyone answered the abstract paintings with the exception of a young man who thought very highly of them. While I am not fond of my paintings either, I am very fond of practice behind it.. Certainly if I put more effort I could improve my technique and get people to like my paintings but I am simply not interested in the result. Yet painting is what is expected from an artist. But I paint not because I want to be one but because I find painting one of many ways to investigate my personal sphere. It represents the flow of my life, a flow moving from one painting over another. As long as this flow continues I am also able to continue as a human being who has decided to devote his life to life. With painting them I was able to activate this flow and be part of it, visualize it. A single painting examined by a viewer cannot say much in this respect unless he or she is aware of the entire flow of paintings that stands before and after it. As in other works of my project I am both the subject as well as the medium that comes to represent it.

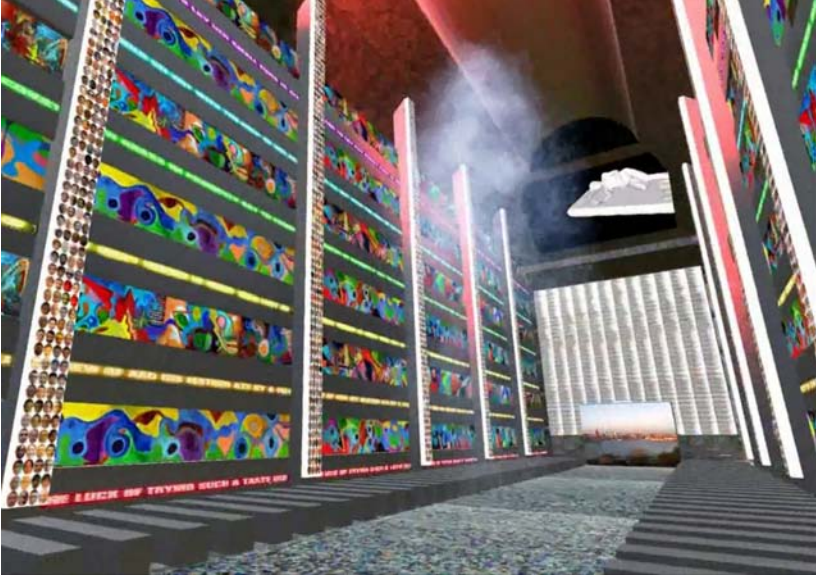


Fig.083 Rendering of an exhibition in which my paintings can only be seen from afar with also the benches distancing the viewers from them. Here the paintings might not look as bad as they do when observed up close. A more abstract pattern can be contemplated with the tail of the eyes and not in the frontal manner proposed for example in a museum setting.

PAINTINGS 11

The paintings were conceived as the actual curtains of the corridors of my memory theater. In this respect my paintings only serve as a base for embroidery that are one by one meter long and make use of a limited palette of colors. Conceiving this work then, I was inspired by classic tapestry although the only few attempts that I made to print my paintings used basic pigments on canvas. These tapestries could have then acted as the thick curtains of an opera theater, curtains that cannot be really observed from within the corridors being there too dark to do so. Nonetheless these curtains can be opened and closed and some pattern can be also observed sticking the head out from the corridor among the tapestries. In principle however my paintings are as rough as any other painting made for a theater scenography. I don't want to waste time in perfecting an aesthetic that can appeal to others. Life is far more important and my principle work of art is life itself, the life I can better capture and render while on the move using cameras and making notes of things I only later render at home if needed. By becoming a studio artist I would basically deny the object of my artwork that is the poetry I can only experience by living. Still I do not need to become adventurous to live my life. I just live it as it unfolds.

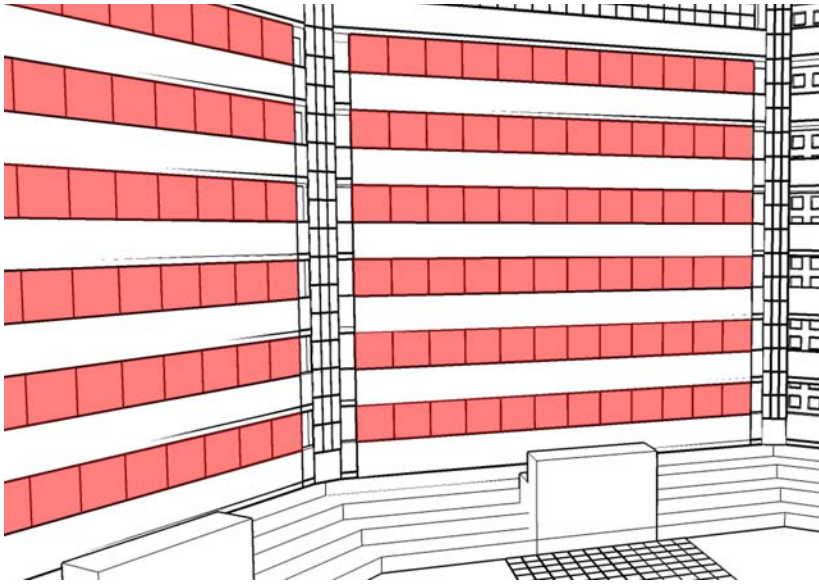


Fig.084 Rendering of the memory theater I have designed to present all the works of my life-project. In this context the paintings contribute to a circular movement around the octagonal building, a circular movement also emphasized by the LED message screens displaying my fables underneath each line of paintings.

PAINTINGS 12

The tapestries resulting from the paintings I made every month make up the curtains of the 36 corridors placed around the memory theater with the exception of the entrance and photo wall opposite to it. Given also that there are 8 columns cutting perpendicularly the resulting outline, the tapestries would in the end be placed in 36 different segments of 12 units where the left to right continuation between the paintings can be appreciated. The horizontal movement of the paintings is here also emphasized by the LED screens standing right below it. The screens display my fables and to some extent dictates the way in which the eye of the viewer might also move through the painting in a left to right fashion. To some extent also the paintings can work as a type of hallucinated setting for the very fables the LED screens are telling, complementing one another. The chronological disposition of the tapestry should begin from the bottom left corridor. The flow of the paintings surrounding in such fashion the exhibition, turns the space into an underwater world in which the fables juxtaposed in it are like the animals of a Noah kind of ark waiting to regain ground the moment this vessel reaches land once again freeing all this absurd but vivid reality back into the natural world.

A COUNTRY LITTLE MOUSE SHE WAS BUT PINK AND REALLY MOST AMIABLE TO THE EYES OF EVERY CREATURES EVEN OF THE UGLIEST OF ALL BULLS IN THE COW FIELD THAT SHE AND HER SPECIES WOULD AT TIMES CROSS TO GO FROM ONE BARN TO THE OTHER IN SEARCH FOR THE LAST GRAIN TO GNAW BUT RIGHT IN ONE OF THESE BARN'S ONE DAY HER BEAUTIFUL LONG AND RATHER SEXY TALE MANAGED TO BE TRAPPED AND THERE SHE SOON HAD TO FACE THE DILEMMA OF EITHER DYING OR LOSING THE TALE AND HAVING TO LEAVE WITHOUT AND ASHAMED FOR THE REST OF HER LIFE AND THUS SHE DECIDED TO BETTER DIE AND FACE THE COURAGEOUS DEATH SHE MUCH HEARD ABOUT FROM HER CELTIC LIKE BROTHERS ALL FED WITH THE MOST WEIRD IDEAS ABOUT DEATH BUT NEVER REALLY THEMSELVES EXPERIENCED ANY DANGEROUS SITUATION AS SHE WAS JUST NOW EXPERIENCING WAITING FOR HER IMMINENT DEATH AND REALLY AT LAST IT WAS NOT THE ONE OLD FARMER OR HIS WIFE WHO AT LAST FOUND OUR CUTEST PURPLE MOUSE BUT WORST THAN ALL THAT THE ACTUAL FARM CAT WHO WAS ACTUALLY IN FACT TOO FED OF ALL THE FOOD THE OLD FARMER COUPLE KEPT GIVING HIM AS IF HE WAS THEIR LITTLE KID AND REALLY NOW LIKE A TOY HE STARTED TO TREAT OUR MOUSE CARESSING NOW HER PURPLE FUR AND PLAYING WITH HER LIKE THE PURPLE WOOL CLEW THE FARMER LADY

Fig.085 Screenshot showing part of a fable after it has been digitized. The lower case letters are turned to upper case after the grammar has been corrected. The resulting digital pages containing a fable are stored for future references so as to be able to feed an LED message board of my memory theater.

FABLES 01

Every month, I improvise a fable. Each fable is hand written with a pen on a booklet. To finish a fable, the total number of pages I write down in the course of a month are 12. Each of these pages is in A5 format. Every evening before falling asleep I write one page using no punctuation and letting my subconscious write for me as in an automatic writing fashion. Once it is completed, every day I retype one page in my computer resulting in approximately 8,000 characters per fable. I select the main animal protagonist of each fable on rotation from the following environments: air, tree, earth, grass, river and water. The resulting fables are presented using LED message boards. The text of a fable belonging to one of the six environments is associated respectively to the following colors: red, orange, yellow, green, cyan and purple. Also the LED message boards are presented at various heights according to the environment they represent with the water being far below and the sky far above. With this set up readers are unlikely to grasp the content of an entire fable. They only get narrative elements that can interplay with their subconscious. The idea with these fables is anyway not to create a nice story but to capture my stream of consciousness before bedtime when my brain is still saturated.



Fig.086 Selfie showing me holding my youngest kid in one of our daily interactions with the domesticated animals living near of our Dutch house. In the time we spend in the Italian alps instead the animals are wild and the abandoned region is taken over by previous inhabitants like wolves, boars, snakes, marmots and chamois.

FABLES 02

The writing of fables started following the tradition of inventing a story for my oldest son prior his going to sleep up until he turned eight years old. The inventing of bedtime stories has been for me also an attempt to avoid mainstream narrations and provide a moral message. Far from being classic however, the fables I invent as part of this work have much to tell about my own psychological state and the way my nature reflects the surrounding nature, especially in the wild. It particularly reflects my inner concern for the way nature at large has been treated by modern humans. While some of the fables are inspired by animals I show to my kids on televisions, many are inspired by those animals I encounter in real life while roaming around the largely abandoned roads and fields of the Italian alps where I was born. Also in the Dutch village where I have resettled, I have had the possibility to show to my youngest kids many domestic animals spread out in the landscape. Here I often made it a point to traverse the Dutch countryside so as to let my children interact with horses, deer, donkeys, goats and cows. While in the Netherlands the animals we meet are well fed and peaceful, it is back in the alps that we get enriched by our meeting with the creatures of the wild.



Fig.087 Screenshot showing my daughter at the Berlin zoo. While I daily transmit my love for nature to my kids, I also at times brought them to zoos finding it quite hard to experience the captivity of the animals there. In some respects I am afraid of animals when they are in a state of captivity and prefer to see them free and at a distance.

FABLES 03

Most of my fables depict a much altered nature, which on one hand reflects human intervention in the animal world and on the other shows the continuous metamorphosis of these animals into something other and monstrous. I normally terminate each fable with a genial end in which the transformation settles, almost giving a new mythical explanation to a natural phenomenon. In this respect the narration of the fable comes close to the environmentalist message brought forward by Hayao Miyazaki in his animations. To a certain degree my semi-automated writing not only reflects my own natural state in regards to the environment but the resulting stories seem to be generated by a grand Artificial Intelligence to which I am connecting to. Most of the fables in turn defy the artificial intelligence created by humans, as if the grand Artificial Intelligence I am channeling with takes a massive revenge of the natural catastrophes brought forward by humans increasing automation at the expense of nature. Through my fables then I let the voices of the various animal characters speak out against the human colonization of the environment. I am not an environmental extremist however. My ideal are in fact hunter-gatherers who were able to live in harmony with their surroundings taking only what they needed.

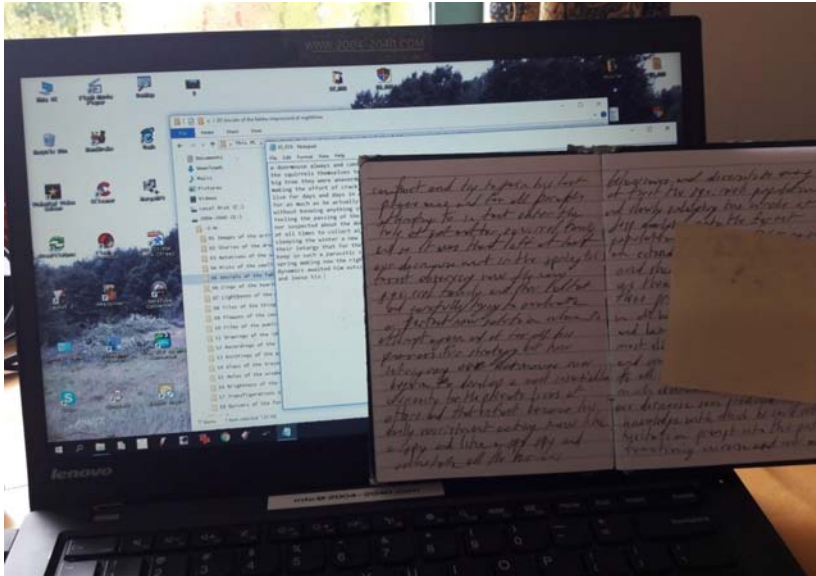


Fig.088 Picture showing the setup I use every morning to type on my laptop one page of my fable-book whilst updating my project. This task is not one of my favorites among all the other tasks I do in my morning update. I prefer doing visual works such as editing pictures or videos but with time I grew accustomed to typing.

FABLES 04

Following is an extract from one of my improvised fables corresponding to month number 54: "...in all her anger she directed her ghost navy slowly through all humans dwellings riding over a mist our very porpoise was able to produce through her back opening and further inland our porpoise she went followed by all her spectral fleet now floating her without so much purpose throughout the land of the humans turning them into zombies now also advancing beyond our porpoise without any purpose and proceeding like the biggest of armies into unknown territories...". In many of the fables my inventions are often dictated by a special feature I find in my preliminary research on certain animals like the laziness of sloths. I often also use their names as a starting point. For example I can start a fable by simply narrating about "Two toucans" or a "Jewish starfish". So while in a lot of my works I am a realist and adhere to what I experience, depicting my life, with this and other more imaginative works I represent the fermentation of reality which in turn can also affect my reality. If there is my consciousness depicted in my project there is equally a lot of my subconscious yet the very fact that manifests it could be seen as another way to make it also conscious.



Fig.089 Screenshot of an installation I set up in my barn in the alps. Here I was interested in investigating the conjunction of the fables with the other works of my project. The resulting text running on LED message boards functioned as an absurd explanation of my project in contrast with message boards showing data such as stock exchange values and ads.

FABLES 05

Wishing to experiment and at least show-case my fable writing, after moving to a one room apartment in the Stockholm suburbs I began playing around with an LED message board. At first I managed to purchase a ready-made board but soon realized that if I were to present my fables I ought to customize it myself, programming a microprocessor along with an LED matrix. On my project website I was able to simulate the effect by means of a scrolling text software. Later my oldest son managed to program another software that generates these simulations more accurately. Generally speaking it wouldn't make sense to present the fables in a static medium such as a book. They are meant to be experienced in a flow that is not particularly overwhelming but it is constant as it is constant the process of transformation nature is undergoing. The fine line that I bring forward in my fable writing is however the fact that all the constant process of metamorphosis is not in reality so natural but is rather monstrous as monstrous is the age biological manipulation humans are about to pursue. This project comes out of the electric age as a premonition of a time in which what I fantasize about may come true. Already now chemical treatments can alter our nature and turn us into something else.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1		001-006	007-012	013-018	019-024	025-030	031-036	037-042	043-048
2	AIR	bat	eagle	swallow	magpie	crow	wasp	pigeon	seagull
3	TREE	squirrel	nightingale	owl	woodpecker	lizard	tree-creeper	redbreast robin	cicada
4	EARTH	unicorn	cougar	cat	pheasant	deer	chamois	hare	mouse
5	GRASS	ant	grasshopper	spider	tick	lady bug	python	louse	toad
6	RIVER	duck	crocodile	crab	swan	cormorant	pike	rumble fish	scaup
7	WATER	dolphin	salmon	seal	sea horse	salamander	cat fish	water snake	

Fig.090 Screenshot of the excel file I use to keep track of the animal characters I write about. Using this file I am able to have an overview of the animals I have already used. In some fables however it does happen that I use some animals as secondary characters. I also have a text file in which I annotate the animals I would like to write a fable about.

FABLES 06

By means of example I can list a few animals I have adopted as part of my fables. Air animals: bat, eagle, swallow, magpie, crow, wasp, pigeon, seagull, hobby, starling, lamagar, bowerbird, vulture, albatross, flamingo, skua and puffin. Tree animals: squirrel, nightingale, owl, woodpecker, lizard, tree-creeper, redbreast robin, cicada, gnat, firefly, lemur, dove, dormouse, chameleon, koala, chipmunk, golden hair monkey, caterpillar, marten, macaque and lyrebird. Earth animals: unicorn, cougar, cat, pheasant, deer, chamois, hare, mouse, buffalo, fox, mole, langur, scarab, lama, zebra, chimpanzee, armadillo, wolf, badger, ram and dog. Grass animals: ant, grasshopper, spider, tick, lady bug, python, louse, toad, turtle, blackbird, anda, pheasant, ostrich, tiger, cricket, scorpion, jaguar, panda and wolverine. River animals: duck, crocodile, crab, swan, cormorant, pike, rumble fish, scaup, basiliscus, leech, heron, frog, otter, hippo, moorhen, kingfisher, rainbow trout, piranha, lobster and plover. Water animals: dolphin, salmon, seal, sea horse, salamander, catfish, water snake, carp, porpoise, sardine, jellyfish, penguin, octopus, clownfish, navel, walrus, krill, urchin and oyster. All these animals I have stumbled upon by accident, seeing them or reading about them.



Fig.091 Picture showing how towards the evening, after spending the day roaming around nature with my kids, we occasionally watched documentaries. While mandatory school disrupted our healthy routine, I might have been able to give my children an instinct to go back to nature and use nature as their primary base to constantly aim for.

FABLES 07

Getting seldom in touch with exotic animals, I mostly watched documentaries every time my kids felt like watching TV. In this way I was able to get to know many marvelous yet about to be extinct species around the planet. I actively take notes of them on my phone according to the environment they inhabit, also mentioning their more peculiar features. In some way however the way I live with my children is rather wild, facilitating the spontaneous interaction with the surrounding nature such as running in the mud and diving in rivers. This approach is opposite to nowadays conventional parenting but in line with the life of our human ancestors. It is a playful way to rebel against the increasing gentrification of urban spaces. Roaming around in rags we come to disturb the sterility in which the new citizens are sealing themselves into. Paradoxically the very fact that I am not pursuing a career is vital to maintaining our authentic presence in the community; I can dedicate myself to be an integer part of the surrounding, continuously crossing the landscape and actively observing several of its features. Yet even if I am possibly the most outdoor person in the Dutch village where I happen to live, I am still by far considered a local, I am just a foreigner among locals who barely put their foot outside.



Fig.092 Screenshot showing me on a summer night sleeping at a university campus of a small English town. After escaping all the conferencing I had to attend, I explored the beautiful surrounding nature taking long walks. Later in the evening I even escaped all the social gatherings to take my time to write in my fable-book.

FABLES 08

The nighttime writing of the fables has to some extent counterbalance a lot of my other writings. With my fables I demonstrate my skill for improvisation which is primarily an oral quality. Writing my dreams or my journal or this very book my sentences are drier and more descriptive. Writing my fables I fully let go to all formalities; I just set myself as if in a trance. It is not a stream of consciousness I am referring to here but rather a stream of subconsciousness. Also generally speaking I prefer writing in the morning when I am like a blank page. In the evening this page is saturated with the events of the day. Yet for me the bedtime writing of fables is like an antipasti to all the brain liberating dreaming of the sleep time. It retains an oneiric element which also reflects the dawn of the world as it is often depicted. Oftentimes then I am very tired when the evening approaches and feel like just taking it easy but have to give it an extra push to draw my ideas and write my fables. Getting in the habit to do so however made these tasks quite light even when life is packed with other activities such as having to take care of my children but having got rid of other forms of entertainment such as the television, I started to actually look forward to my evening work, another intimate moment I can have with my project.

The screenshot shows the ENPA (Ente Nazionale Protezione Animali) website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the ENPA logo and contact information. Below the navigation bar, there is a large banner with the text "ABBANDONARMI È UN REATO. TESTIMONIA!" and images of a dog and a cat. The main content area features a "Categorie" sidebar on the left and a "I temi" section on the right. The "I temi" section displays an article titled "L'arte che disturba i cacciatori" published on 17/05/2019. The article includes a photo of a wooden ark and a short text snippet.

Fig.093 Screenshot of an article published by the main Italian animal right association concerning the battle I had to undertake with local hunters in order to be able to build an ark where to host my life-project. The very fact that the resulting ark has many small perforations turns it into a sanctuary in which birds can take rescue.

FABLES 09

Without intending to do so, when I decided to build an ark where to deposit my project, I did not realize how it came to protect the surrounding wilderness. This ark is in fact located on a mouth of the alps through which thousands of birds migrate every year. Not only some of these birds take shelter in the ark but also the nature surrounding the ark is growing back into a primordial fores. Trees are growing older and animals start to reappear. I have no interest to cut these trees either. I could make a bunch of money but with time I understood that the forest ought to grow back to its primeval state and only then the local community can thrive again. Now I do not say that nature ought to be left alone and humans cannot take any part in it. I am just saying that nature should not be exploited for the sake of profit. I think that our hunter-gatherer ancestors were very good in respecting their natural surroundings while taking what they needed. Obviously they had no giant houses to heat up but their land was certainly filled with game and they went out to it as if we now go to the supermarket. The only difference is that they did not have to do a boring job or had to become cheaters in order to earn money so to do grocery. They just had to be skilled and daring in their hunting and gathering.



Fig.094 Photo of my father interacting with a raccoon. It was one of the first photos I received from him after twenty years apart. It immediately showed his deep love for the wilderness in his life as a lonely maverick in Canada where he moved to pursue his North American dream. He was not seeking to become wealthy but live like a native.

FABLES 10

After spending my childhood in the alps, I spent my early years as a teenager in a bourgeois environment detached from nature. Because of this separation I grew a stark twill to go back to the wild. Eventually I relocated in Sweden where I have learned to gather and grow my food, to fix my cabin and fetch my wood. At this time my father got in touch with me after twenty years apart. He was living in Canada and I soon discovered that we shared the same love for nature and for its people. In general however while I kept content with the small ecology I was creating, he was angry with all the political ideologies that disrupted his ideal of the American wilderness. His anger eventually unsettled me but I admire him for his commitment. Living for a while in an Indian reservoir he managed to befriend wolves and later put his life at risk crossing the Yellowstone national park in winter time. He had practically lived the life of other adventurers who sought to reconnect to the wild. My lesson however is that this reconnection to the wilderness can only occur at the social level, forming little tribes and with these tribes trying to establish links to the natural surrounding. This is of course easier said than done because children needs to attend school and parents need to go to work but my life is a demonstration that it is possible.



Fig.095 Screenshot showing me with my oldest son interacting with a sheep. Eventually I became aware to live in a farm is not exactly to go back to the wild. The farmer mentality is too often that of making a profit overlooking the diversity that nature has to offer. I am now more inclined to think of hunter-gatherers as the best example to follow,

FABLES 11

In this part of the project, in my evening improvisations I become the very altered creature that is so much reflected in my fables, a creature which cannot find peace but is forced to constantly move around in search for an environment that sooner or later humans with their physical as well as ideological interventions will come to destroy. In practice I want to preserve my wild spirit and the fables become as some sort of mantras invoking mother nature's revenge upon those who keep on interfering with it. As I have given up my quest to make it back to the wild, I began laying my focus mostly on the education of my children. My intention is to enable them to be more indigenous and free and committed to a more ecological way of living. in a land free of the brutal individuals I met in the attempt to get back to my native alps. In this sense we share a critical view on the so-called environmentalists who aims at an uncontaminated nature hindering humans spontaneous relationship with it. In a sense I feel like that my tribe has been living a kind of diaspora. World War I uprooted us from our bio-region in the alps. Our highland was bombed to the ground and deprived of its trees. As a result the bare landscape became the perfect foundation for a massive tourist outpost filled with luxury and zero ecological mindset.

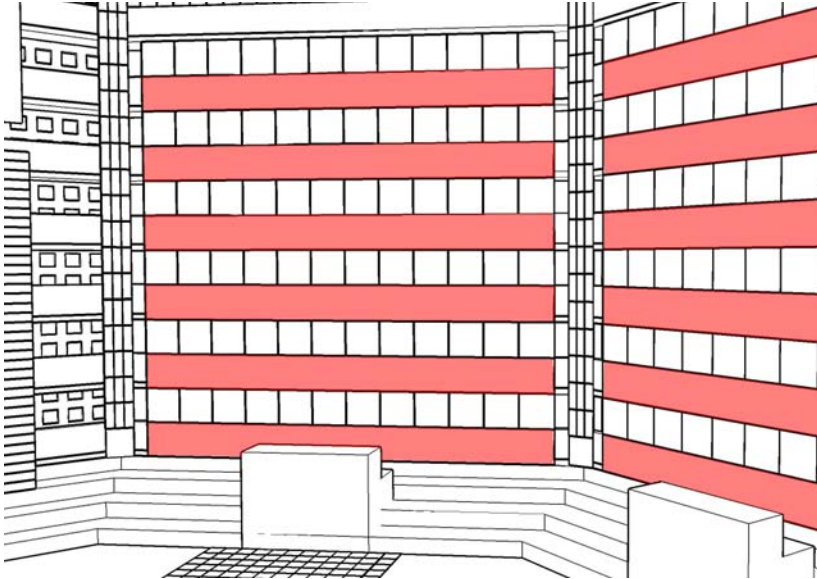


Fig.096 Rendering of the memory theater where 12 of the 36 LED message boards showcasing my fables have been red-highlighted. As with the paintings above them also these big boards provide a circular moment in the octagonal shape of the theater, continuously displaying text in a clockwise fashion.

FABLES 12

In the memory theater, this work is to be displayed by 36 LED message boards distributed in the 6 corridors of the theater. These message boards acts as the railings of these corridors displaying one fable at the time for each level. Each of the six fables shown then moves left to right across the columns and into the following board. In this case the fables taking place in the air are at the very top and the fables taking place in water are at the very bottom with all the other natural domains respectively in the between levels. These various levels come to represent some sort of Dante Alighieri's circles of hell. In addition they transform the actual resulting building into a Noah-like ark with actual animals stowed in it. These animal fables do in fact depicts the human enhanced destruction of the natural world. If the work in itself as the whole project foresees a deluge-like moment which will reshape the face of the earth, the animals that are going to inhabit it in its aftermath are in this respect mutated from the original animals. My fables then become an exercise in foreseen a whole new world with creatures presenting whole new features. From this world the human presence has vanished and in some cases some of the animals have developed a mind of their own likely not inclined as the human mind to deplete the environment.



Fig.097 Screenshot showing me walking out of a Swedish forest and across a meadow while recording a thought. It was the Nordic solitary environment that enabled me to bring out such a reflective side of me. This side however has never been introspective but rather it emerged as an urge to speak out my inability to be part of a system no matter how civilized.

THOUGHTS 01

Whenever I walk alone, I formulate each of my thoughts in about a 12 seconds long audio recording. The recordings are done using an mp3 recording application I run on my smartphone. At the end of each month, an average of 60 recordings are made amounting to 12 minutes of my thinking. On average, I record a thought every 500 meters of walking meaning that, in normal circumstances, I walk alone at least 30 kilometers a month. At the end of the project in 2040 there will be a total of 25.920 audio recordings of my thoughts which amounts to approximately 12.960 kilometers of walking. The amount equals the length of the Eurasian continent and it is only an estimate of what I managed to walk in solitude, not accounting to the many walks I take with friends and in particular with my family. It is possible however that during walks I take with others, if a clear thought comes to my head and there is enough distance from these other persons and myself, I might venture to record. This is more the case when I am for example out walking with my children. For years taking at least one walk a day. During these walks my aim is to leave a residential area behind and reach a solitary place where to record my thoughts in peace. Otherwise I feel that each house has eyes and ears to monitor me.



Fig.098 Picture showing me at the age of twenty with my first digital dictaphone. It was recording my thoughts after walking down a dangerous slope in my native alps. In the first recordings my thoughts were fuelled by the risks I was taking in my outdoor adventure. They were recorded in Italian and I was not yet able to synthesize my thinking.

THOUGHTS 02

I began recording my thoughts at an early age using booklets and later experimenting with the first digital dictaphones appearing on the market. These dictaphones were mostly for interviews and made use of the old .MSV audio file format. The latter format was developed by Sony but was later dismissed and as a result I was not able to recover these recordings made prior to the project. Initially my first recordings were a way for me to register my stream of thoughts. Coming of age, I have been very prolific especially in my early adventures biking across the Italian peninsula or around the Peloponnese coast. On these occasions I had limited access to my physical notebook and the use of a dictaphone came at hand. Already at that time I was experimenting with the first digital technologies keeping track of my mental proliferation while on the move and feeling most inspired. Especially when biking, having my hands occupied stirring but feeling the urge of recording my thoughts I went as far as placing a pouch in the back of my bike with inside a battery and outside a solar panel to recharge it. I had a miniature camera attached on my forehead so that I could at the same time record my thoughts and show what I was referring to in real life. This was years before the first action cameras came out.



Fig.099 Picture showing an early setup I adopted before the beginning of the project and right at the birth of digital devices. The dictaphone can be seen as central to all other devices meant for typing, photographing and storing data. My early setups were all meant to allow me to be on the move as right on the move I felt prolific and in need to register my observations.

THOUGHTS 03

Here is the transcription of a randomly chosen thought from the recording of month 012: "and if among strangers we need to mimic in order not to be spotted among equals we need to stand out in order to prevail", from month 058 "and we as humans should only allow the spiritual side to act for us and oppress all greediness", from month 088: "and struggling becomes virtue only under the spell of nature", from month 129: "and if great is the quest to represent a concept even greater is the quest to find a medium to represent it", from month 141: "and in all our remoteness we shall only allow a path through the wilderness". In all these thoughts there is a reminiscence of the actual experiences I am undertaking. While living in Sweden and more so in my native alps I took many challenging walks and the resulting thoughts were perhaps also challenging. While walking on the flat and predictable paths of the Netherlands my thoughts are perhaps less daring. Interestingly I got in the habit of starting my thought with "and" as if the various aphorisms I formulate are chained to one another. As a result the fact that there is not a moment of silence between them can be overwhelming. Those who venture to listen to them should therefore use the pause if they wish to make sense of my meaning-making.



Fig.100 Screenshot showing me recording my thoughts while walking with my youngest son in a Dutch forest. Walking with children and recording my thoughts have been possible only until they started talking. From then on my primary focus has been that of assisting them in understanding what we see and experience during our walks together.

THOUGHTS 04

The recording of my thoughts has often slowed down when living in urban environments. Between 2009 and 2010 I lived in Shanghai and had troubles finding moments of solitude. My walks there were extensive and I ventured in every little corner of the giant city especially on my way to one of the many parks where life seems to be concentrated with much singing and dancing and playing. Fuxing, Lu Xun and Xujiahui were our favourites. During this time I barely recorded my thoughts but a year later I moved to Boston which offered more spaces to roam alone. There I took extensive walks out into nature such as to the Arnold Arboretum and further down to the Blue Hills or simply to the Mount Auburn cemetery. At times I had the opportunity to explore what New England must have been like, venturing further west in the birthplace of American transcendentalism. It was a significant moment for me to get in touch with the American reality prior to its becoming a world-power. Both in the States as well as in China I witnessed how the progress humanity so much struggle for is a form of recession creating much misery among people who try to live a small and ecological type of reality. In these super-powers their only choice is to either let go and become homeless or obey and get regimented.



Fig.101 Picture taken by my left hand as part of my photographic record of activities based on the objects used by my right hand. This picture in particular shows me recording my thoughts with a dictaphone. I have been using dictaphones until I actually got a smartphone ten years into my project. Most of the time I keep my phone off and use it for my project.

THOUGHTS 05

My recording of thoughts emerged from my dissatisfaction with overly-regulated environments. While in my life I always sought an intimate relation with nature and with her local society, ultimately I have come to recognize top-down administrations as the disruption of such a poetical but also ecological and self-sustainable form of living. Originally I intended to combine each of my thought with a video of the social surrounding. I wanted to enhance my poetic commentary with alienating scenes from our day-to-day life. Later I opted to keep the two media apart and enable a more random type of juxtaposition in for example an exhibition setting where what one hears and what one sees can create interesting and unwanted combinations. Generally speaking my recordings express a negative consideration of the artificial surroundings; they emphasize the necessity to get more intimate and loveful by recovering our long forgotten humanness. My considerations are in line with Stoicism, Transcendentalism, Tolstoyanism, Taoism and other Libertarian philosophies stressing the need for humans to act according to nature and without any artificial schemes imposed over her. Ultimately I am inspired by our hunter-gatherer ancestors who cultivated nothing but their own mindfulness.



Fig.102 Screenshot showing me taking a lonely walk prior to an academic conference. In this respect I not only trained my intellect but also my intellectual autonomy by developing my own thinking. I then had hard time to accept the many academic notions and dogmas that were provided to me as if they were the only bits of a game I was allowed to use.

THOUGHTS 06

My recording of thoughts while on the move has been particularly of relevance as some kind of peripatetic intellectual practice quite in contrast with the sophisticated of scholars keeping in the comfort of their office chairs with a comfortable salary. While I had the opportunity to become one, somehow I felt it was against my nature. I am honestly a very down-to-earth individual who has given everything up to pursue his vocation. With some effort I could have become famous and rich but I always avoided them both as the plague. What seek is the time to be able to be with my project and family, what I see as my ecology. And on top of this I have ways to keep nomadic, bringing freshness to my thinking; I also manage to synthesize these thoughts and enrich through them the otherwise desolated reality I traverse. And with my family to we try to keep on the move and bring meanings to our surroundings. Also if reciting out loud I come across as crazy, it is in fact a practice advised by ancient philosophers. In Plutarch for example we read that in order to keep healthy it is more important to train the voice than the body. Native people too are known to speak out loud what they have inside, not only their dreams but what their souls reveal to them. As for me I am convinced there is a ring of truth to my mumbling.



Fig.103 Right-hand photo showing me using a smartphone to record my thoughts. While this device made it more convenient for me to record both sound and visuals, I am also sensitive not to be tracked by external applications accessing my phone to monitor me. In this respect I use my smartphone as a Swiss knife and put it away as soon as I am done with it.

THOUGHTS 07

I keep formulating my thoughts without much censoring, without being afraid of ruining my reputation. Rather I act as an outsider trying to rationalize whatever comes in my head, walking through the natural landscape as a wandering poet recollecting his intuitions at the very moment they appear. No matter whether the nature is peaceful and lovable or whether the wind and the rain is battering me, I keep up my stream of thoughts, at times feeling very prolific and enlightened and at times confused especially after having to deal with bureaucratic issues. Generally however, the more the bureaucratic system running society disappoints me, the more I have material for thinking just like a Taoist philosopher on his way out to a mountain. On the other hand I never end up turning into a permanent mystic. I momentarily detach myself, to then reconnect it. Like a stoic I am able to find peace within myself but be out in nature certainly helps me with this process. To me the going to nature and the reciting of my thoughts is a ritual, a daily baptism not with any particular religion but to mother nature who gave birth to us all. Following my nature I became a very prolific person and while in nature I can recover the freshness the keeping in a business based society makes me lose.



Fig.104 Screenshot showing me taking one of my favourite walks when I was living in Sweden. This specific route I often walked to find some solitude in the otherwise crowded city. At times I perceived the presence of a person but usually this person also avoids me finding me a weirdo who is not normalized with the city way of life.

THOUGHTS 08

A small part of my recordings are completely ruined by strong wind blowing in the microphone. At times also the thoughts are barely whispered especially in these situations in which I am walking not entirely alone. In this semi-solitude I cannot fully concentrate on my thinking but anyway feel the urge to speak out. One feature of the recordings I made while perceiving that someone could hear me is that I often stammer. Stammering also occurs in the open field as soon as I perceive that there is a passerby approaching. In this respect, while I attempt to be thorough with the thoughts I record, a lot of them are hastened. I am aware that many of the thoughts I have recorded would have required more thinking but they are nonetheless a testimony of what comes to my head. The more throughout ones can often work like maxims I try to formulate thinking in terms of their universal applicability. The shortness in which they are spoken equals to one single exhaling of my breath but at times I might be walking up a mountain or anyway uphill and inhaling also occurs in the duration of a thought. Also my thinking is to be conceived as a form of laying low. I am not the dictator or the authority talking to a big crowd who ought like me. I just speak what comes in my mind not concern with gaining popularity.



Fig.105 Picture showing a prototype built and exhibited in collaboration with a Swedish art museum at an early stage of the project. Here I presented 12 months of my thinking using 12 different MP3 players each containing a month of thoughts. Visitors to the exhibition walked around with one of the players as if it was an audio guide.

THOUGHTS 09

I am generally soft when it comes to relate my thoughts to others. This work however is quite judgmental and is often disliked by people exploring my project. The same people prefer my more artistic and creative work such as my drawings. The latter work is a more subtle critique of contemporary society. Understanding then that the general audience do not want to deal with negative content, I still pursue the manifestation of this aspect as a way also to give some darker shadows to the general depiction of reality I am undertaking with the whole of my works. In this respect I attempt to provide a complete spectrum of human nature and the reality that is perceived and conceived. If the uncensored content I record might be harsh, the practice itself can be an example of how to cultivate human intelligence in a non-written fashion, becoming more synthetic and more convinced about the way one wishes to position oneself. Also this work has helped me to overcome the many preconceptions which we are endowed by the establishment. Since my project has been a journey for me, it is clear that I have reached different conclusions than those intellectuals who have pursued the path that they were told to pursue by one or another institution representing the establishment.

IL CASO. Incontro dell'artista Alberto Frigo con il consiglio di quartiere e i tecnici comunali

L'installazione al Tretto al centro della bufera

Dopo la multa è stata smantellata ma i documenti saranno riprodotti

Mauro Sartori
Rubina Tognazzi

Non c'è pace per "Tebah", l'installazione multimediale che l'artista internazionale Alberto Frigo, ashughese di origine, intende realizzare a Santa Caterina del Tretto, sulla via della Bussa Novegno, meta di escursioni ma, almeno per lui, anche terreno di caccia. L'opera in discussione è un'installazione di sette metri per sette da realizzare nella proprietà dell'artista, che ci ha investito 150 mila euro per acquisire i terreni; è autofinanziata e non ha scopo di lucro. Con struttura di ferro, in teoria sarebbe percorribile su ben due piani. Tra mille codici Qr giganti, si può accedere via internet a ben 20 anni di un catalogo fotografico digitale collezionato giornalmente, che rappresenta la memoria di una vita trascorsa

ti e sui vincoli paesaggistici esistenti, più una sanzione da parte dei carabinieri forestali. L'installazione sarebbe inoltre vicina ad un casotto di caccia, sufficiente far arrabbiare le "doppiette".

Qualche giorno fa c'è stato un incontro fra Frigo, amministratori e tecnici comunali e il Consiglio di quartiere.

«Ho dovuto smontare la struttura perché era a 98 metri dal casotto - ammette Frigo - «La sposterei di sette metri. Sono disponibile a sottoscrivere una convenzione che doveva essere siglata ancora a febbraio ma mi trovavo in Olanda, bloccato dai problemi del coronavirus. Ora intendo riprendere il discorso. Da parte della giunta c'è sempre stata attenzione. Mi hanno richiesto nuova documentazione che produrrò».

Tesi confermata dall'assessore Sergio Bossi: «Allo stato della cosa abbiamo fatto un



Il rendering dell'installazione multimediale dell'artista Frigo

servivano certificazioni, l'artista ha pensato di modificarla, sarà possibile entrare solo quando c'è qualcuno e si potrà stare solo al piano terra. La modifica è stata presentata la settimana scorsa al consiglio del Tretto, un passaggio che abbiamo ritenuto importante. Il giorno dopo è stata protocollata la domanda per il permesso di costruire e adesso è stata presentata in forma ufficiale. Di base il problema era un esecutore che ha capito. Inizialmente l'artista non aveva richiesto nulla e aveva iniziato a costruire senza autorizzazione, quindi è stato sanzionato dalla forestale e ha ripristinato tutto. Ed ha iniziato con l'iter normale. Si è anche impegnato a non aprire la struttura in periodo di caccia. Non va contro alcun regolamento, ha chiesto tutte le autorizzazioni ed è un suo diritto costruirle sul suo terreno di proprietà».

Non la pensa così Luigi Santini, consigliere comunale leghista e residente del Tretto, quindi direttamente interessato alla vicenda: «Parliamoci chiaro. Se è un'installazione artistica di interesse pubblico, il progetto deve passare in commissione urbanistica e poi si deve intervenire sul Piano regolatore generale. Non si tratta perciò di edilizia ordinaria. Il regolamento

Fig.106 Newspaper article discussing a debate that emerged after my idea to deposit my life project in an ark in the alps was blocked. Right on my skin I felt how politicians just took sides based on the type of consent they would gain. The recording of my thoughts has been a way for me to reflect on these circumstances and keep up my determination.

THOUGHTS 10

Through the years, thanks to my practice of recording my thoughts I have been able to keep out of an increasingly polarized way of thinking. If this polarization is promoted by social media, I was able to stay alive keeping asocial. The actual recording of thoughts has in this respect become my way to see through all the heated discussions and tensions in which my project as a whole become an outside observer. Nonetheless the moment I try to make it public with my project, one or the other polarity is always there to hit me. If leftists hit me when the time came for me to write a doctorate thesis about my project, the building of an ark where to deposit my project back in the alps put me against the right wing. Interestingly the friction that I had with the academic left and the political right has left me in a different position, that of a stoic enduring the times of transformation and not debating the present but debating for a future recovering of common sense. I think that this common sense can only be recovered in apolitical arena in which humans ought to seriously ask themselves how to live without killing one another and the environment. In my opinion the solution is in our acknowledgment that we can only do so by embracing an ecological dimension like that of our hunter-gatherers ancestors.



Fig.107 Photo showing my youngest kids eating an apple I just picked for them from a tree. Roaming with them on a daily basis, I recorded my thoughts with their voices and screams and laughs in the background. As they started to speak and walk I gave up recording my thoughts while with them and focused on guiding them in their understanding of the surrounding.

THOUGHTS 11

Walking and walking and thinking and getting old through the seasons of the landscapes and the life I have crossed, I was able to maintain my initial views. I have been advocating for a life more or less close to modern society but in general always outside of it or as an outsider within it. Having removed any expectation to become someone and having entirely focused on the caring of my nature represented by my project and my offspring, in all the thoughts coming to my head I have conceived the idea that beyond any philanthropic fight for remote causes, we ought to focus on the care of our own nature. I learned that this ought to be done without also expecting anything from it; kids may one day leave and my project will be forgotten. Certainly death will come. In this respect beyond all the disappointments given to certain expectations, beyond taking sides against the causes of these disappointments, only by transcending my expectations I have been able to live my life peacefully in the name of taking care of my nature sharing this love to others through my project. In reality while I do not see any future for our sedentary society, I see our future in learning from the nomadic societies of the past who used to live light upon the earth and use to be fully interconnected with her.

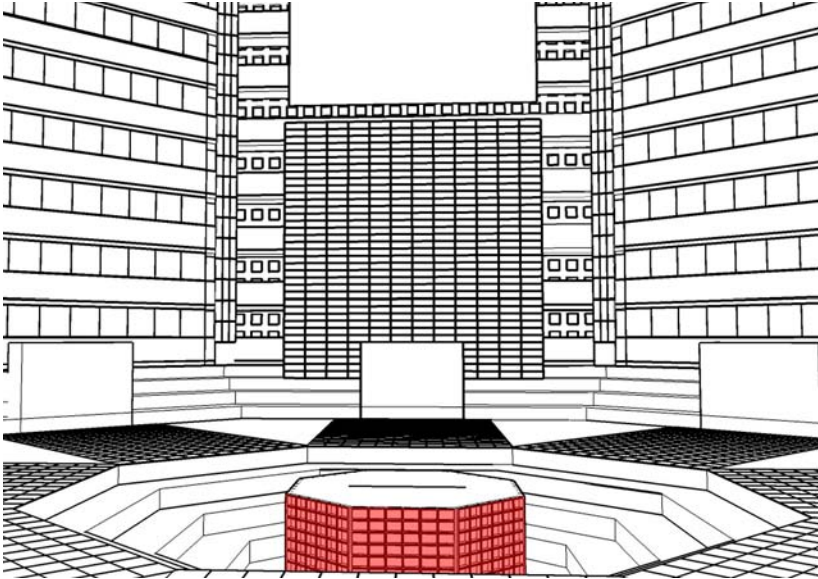


Fig.108 Rendering of my memory theater where an octagonal closet is placed in the center to host 432 audio players. My wish is that visitors listening to the recording are also invited to reflect on their own nature while walking around it and in other parts of the theater.

THOUGHTS 12

In my memory theater I wish to present my recorded thoughts in eight square panels hosting 54 digital audio players each in a matrix of 6 by 9 slots. Each of the slots then contains a player corresponding to a month's recording. These players work as museum guides to also view the other parts of the project. This acoustic experience is meant to work as some sort of random yet profound commentary to other instances of the project such as the drawings or the videos or the more graphical and anyway visual works. Also a concentric hexagonal path is created around the panels to enable the audience to walk around almost circularly within it and experience the thoughts without any random juxtaposition. This path offers the possibility to endlessly walk in a circle and meditate on what the thoughts I have recorded over the main part of my life have to say. In this respect the logic behind my way of thinking can be disclosed. It is not a very complex logic and a certain roughness may be easily detected. This roughness is due to my unwillingness to push myself astray, developing my intellect for the sake of developing it. I literally only record my thoughts as a way to monitor what comes to my mind and I therefore do not depart from a thought and try to elaborate it and make it much bigger and more elegant than what it is only to impress others of my eloquence.



Fig.109 Screenshot of a month of head-shots. At first glance it is just a random collection of people. It is however deeply embedded in my own life stumbling on other people and their lives. While some of these people may have a normal life, others can have an interesting story to tell like a gypsy boxer renting my flat or a poor black man I helped with food.

PEOPLE 01

Every month I take on average eight head-shots of new acquaintances. These are people I get to know briefly but don't really keep up a relationship with. It can be people I meet on the road or at a party and to whom I briefly explain my life-project. On these occasions I ask them if they want to be included in it. I make sure to highlight the fact that their portraits is not going to end up in platforms but are kept as part of my project as yet another way to represent our age. After the photographic portraits have been taken I start a daily process of manually removing the background using an image editor. The process of background extraction is done every morning for about 10 minutes and it takes approximately three days to complete a head. The resulting portraits are vectorized and printed on a 30 by 90 centimeter panel. Ideally the resulting panel would be a light-box with eight bulbs lighting respectively behind each of the head-shot. What is special about my collection of portraits is that I am not part of any social network in which people collect other people only for the sake of collecting and feeling powerful about the number of followers they have. As a matter of fact the more people become obsessed about enlarging their virtual networks the more they are reluctant to be part of my collection.

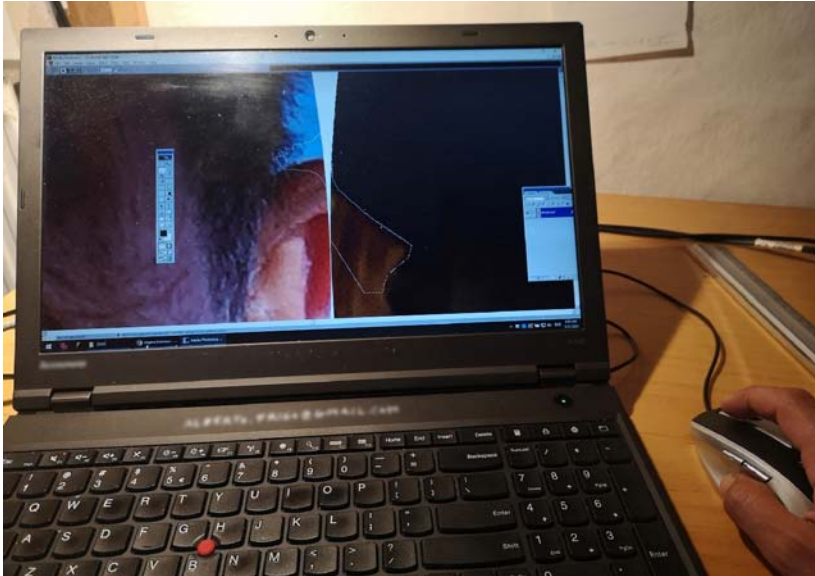


Fig.110 Picture I took early in the morning while removing the background of the faces of people I have photographed. With more recent image editors this process can be easily automated but I do not want to invest in heavy and expensive software. I enjoy my digital craft and see myself like a hairdresser cutting out the background especially around the hair.

PEOPLE 02

I started capturing head-shots with a heavy digital reflex camera. I used an optic particularly suitable for portrait pictures but also less invasive than normal telescopic optics. Over time however I began looking for less obtrusive options that I could carry around. Prior to a trip to India where I was invited for an exhibition, I finally switched to a pocket camera. As smartphones became more advanced I at last started to take portraits using all kinds of smartphones. Even though the overall resolution of the headshots decreased, I soon realized that the quality lies in the very background extraction. This extraction I do on a daily basis. It has become a skill I have mastered over the years of constant training even though the image editor I use is from my student years in the 1990s. Left with a smartphone I hypothetically could take a lot of photos of people I meet but all these people by now are also armed with a smartphone. Some are even curating their own profiles on digital platforms. Personal branding has become a priority to such an extent that these people seem to be locked in their own fortresses. Not only they want to curate themselves how they look but also they want to curate what they say and in this respect it is hard to know them.

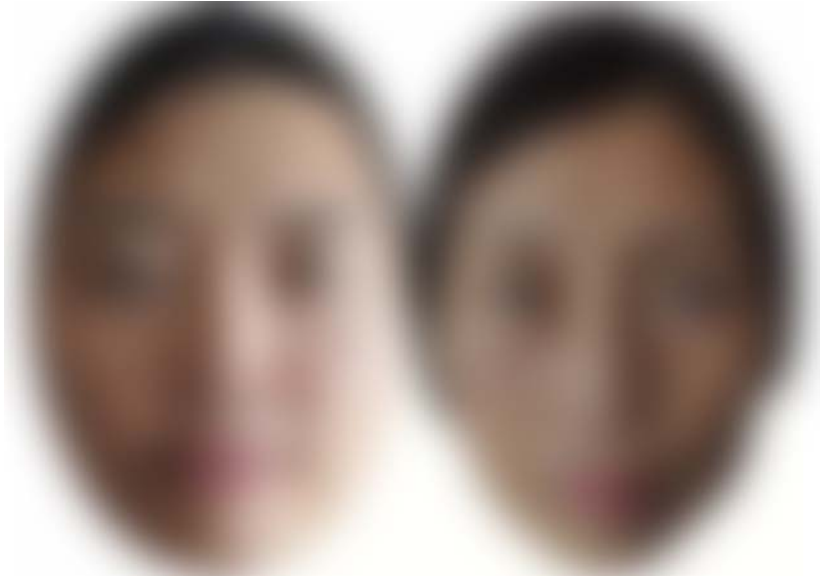


Fig.111 Screenshot of the first head-shots I took of two Chinese people. The oval masking I use in the layout of the panels is like a billboard inviting people to put their heads through it. Asian people in particular seem to perfectly fit such an ovality. Also the disposition of the faces in a vertical fashion resembles Asian banners.

PEOPLE 03

I initially started the project by making a painted portrait of my new acquaintances. I did so also to vary the kind of technique I adopted for this work in relation to the others. While living in Shanghai I consulted an American neighbor who ran a gallery there. The latter found my work too brainy but really enjoyed the drawings. The painted portraits however were not of his like and I from that moment on switched to photography. The first photographs then were taken of the Chinese people I met. Their faces fully filled the oval mask that I use when extracting the background of each head-shot. Living in North America and later in Europe I had more troubles fitting the longer Caucasian faces in such oval templates. Beside being a hairdresser then I also became a plastic surgeon digitally removing those facial features that made it outside the oval mask. Later when it became fashionable to be a hipster I also had to deal with excessive beards and hairs which I have always managed to cut out. Generally speaking it is not so much the style a person adopts that is so telling in his or her portraits but his or her gaze towards me, the photographer and subsequently towards the viewers of this work. Purposely in this work the faces are just faces and there are barely any other traces of the uniforms they wear.



Fig.112 Detail of head-shot of a person I am unable to remember even if the actual reflection of myself photographing him in an American city can be seen. At times I meet people who might not have so much to communicate, having grown up in the same environment without so many challenges and a rather predictable life.

PEOPLE 04

While taking my time to extract the background from each head-shot I get to rethink of the people I had photographed. Given the long process, several years can pass between the background extraction and when the photograph was actually taken. Nonetheless while extracting the background I can remember details of the very character I have portrayed even if I met him or her briefly and have not thought of him or her ever since. In this respect a face for me works as a trigger to a buried memory. Faces are like the fingerprints that enable me to access many different stories and like a storyteller I could narrate the life of Rami, the Palestinian who attempted to climb the Dome of the Rock and was shot or the life of Sangye, the dancer working in a Tibetan restaurant who lost his mother in an earthquake and cut his beautiful hair, or the life of apparently ordinary people like Frangetta building a secret castle in a forest. These stories are partially told in the account I write of each month's production of the project including the head-shots. In some cases however I am fully unable to recall the memory associated with some persons, possibly because they did not strike me at the time I met them having very little to communicate and being more interest about hearing from me my life story.



Fig.113 Head-shot I have taken of a Dutch woman during a carnival. In western countries people are more concerned with their privacy and festivities seems to be the only time in which they are keen to be photographed. Anyway in these occasions their identity is more or less camouflaged with a suite.

PEOPLE 05

In the course of the project I have noticed an increasing unwillingness to be photographed particularly by the western people. All the public debates on on privacy certainly influenced this unwillingness. It is interesting however to see how Asians are generally more willing to be portrayed but people of other cultures are simply against it. Beside the cultural factor there can be more personal reasons for people not wanting to be photographed. Some for instance may be hiding something and don't want to expose themselves. They might be out with their lover or might have issues with the law. Generally however I try to be respectful of other people decisions and the photograph is taken at the time of departure after investing quite some time in getting to know each other. After explaining people my project, they can be very honoured to be part of it especially. For example I am very willing to show them my project. Some of them may go as far as making it up the mountains to see the ark I have created to deposit all of my works. I take my time to explain them and answer all of their questions and only at the end I ask them if they wish to be part of it. Since I do not earn a penny from my project and for showing it to them I find a fair exchange. As I no longer go to people, they come to me in my ark.



Fig.114 Head-shot of a South American worker I met in during the coronavirus pandemic. If August Sander's photographs depicted a reality soon to be destroyed by wars, my work has anticipated the changes occurring during this pandemic. People were forced to home and a whole generation got disrupted in their socializing patterns.

PEOPLE 06

My portrayal of people echoes August Sander's "People of the 20th Century". As in his work, my work marks the end of an era in which the freedom to roam and photograph ceases. With the increasing political and social turmoil the people photographed might cease to exist. If before my work is a collection of Gogolian or Nietzschean encounters with people retaining different social positions, faiths and points of view, later these people become the victims of much turmoils affecting the otherwise spontaneous biodiversity life has to offer. Their characters and personalities are swiped by changes that at last confine them in their own private sphere and disable them to express themselves in the physical world. This process has certainly occurred to me. At the beginning of my project, when I was only 24 years old I felt free to express myself, free to embark on any spontaneous manifestation of my inner being. I was in love with the world and with my existence within it. I felt prolific and naturally I wanted to share this joy with others but only found many closed doors. I did eventually succeeded in showing my creativity but only after much cleansing which deprived me of my character. I think I was able to recover my character by rebelling and just building my sculpture park.



Fig.115 Collage of people met on a journey through southern India among Tamil people. There I also met westerners, mostly on a spiritual journey to ashrams where, besides, photography was not permitted. After many years, looking at this image I can still recall the stories behind each of these folk. I concluded then that life on the road is easier to remember.

PEOPLE 07

During my time spent living abroad I stumbled upon many people of different classes, from American bums and Vietnam veterans to Finnish boxers and Cuban dissidents. Only on very few occasions I met important people like the Boston major or one of Harvard directors. These official meetings occurred at the beginning of the project when I still complied with my career as an artist. Having given that up, I only stumbled upon people like me, generally dismayed with the system and in my opinion quite authentic and worth being remembered much more than any pretentious authority. It is while on the road that I meet these sorts of folk, traveling according to my intuition and reaching local communities and blending with them. Other prolific encounters occurred during exhibitions and conferences I took part in, meeting people like me tracking their daily lives. By photographing them then I quantified the so-called quantifiers. With the cultural establishment becoming entranced in a kind of identity politics, I decided to keep on following my intuition and disregard what was expected from me as an artist. If I just had adhered to it my reputation would have grown considerably but I did not want to become yet another painter a church who is told to adhere to a new kind of holy scriptures.



Fig.116 Sequence of backpackers while living in a hostel. After renting out my apartment so as to finance the making of my ark I got to live in a dormitory and met many travelers with their many life-stories to share. Unable to travel outside of Europe I was then able to get in touch with people from all corners of the world.

PEOPLE 08

In the later years of the project the world became far less open than I had experienced in the first years. New conflicts and pandemics got my life limited to Europe alone. For a time then I have been building my ark in Italian alps while living in hostels back in Sweden. It was in these hostels that I got to meet people from all over the world. If I no longer traveled intercontinentally, I anyway got to meet backpackers like two lovely sisters from Alaska, a Bulgarian chess champion and many other interesting characters. Becoming a bit too old for that kind of backpacking lifestyle I anyway was able to refresh my view of the world and get back in love with the international vibe. With the evolving of the project not only did I get old myself but generally humanity became more conservative. It is true that the digital medium opened up many possibilities; my project in many ways was born with it. The feeling was that with one click anyone could fly to another country and study or work abroad. Anyone could bypass all the old fashion borders; the planet was becoming a place for nomads migrating from one spot to another. I grew up in this historical moment of openness but soon also witnessed how this very openness began to close. Overall life was much more fun when it was more fluid.



Fig.117 Head-shot of a girl coming all the way from Normandy to see the building of my ark. Ultimately the ark became the only place where not I could share my humanity to others but also others could let go of all the regimentation that has come to characterize people in the professionalization of society the digital medium has generated.

PEOPLE 09

Approaching the middle of my project my life got far more sedentary and I no longer went around the world. At this point also the perception that people have about photographing became rather negative. To photograph was like to infringe the law. To photograph one needs all sort of tedious permissions and if they are not up-to-date the photographers faces charges. Interestingly while society has agreed to hinder all the spontaneous photographing occurring from below, corporations from above are now ruthless in monitoring each one of us in the tiniest detail. And if look at the purpose of this monitoring, while corporations do it to gain power and wealth what is with photographers like me just taking photos so as to be able to represent a period of time in which conflicts and cataclysms are changing the face of the world? And even so aren't these institutions the more or less direct cause of the dramatic changes we are facing? With these questions in my head I come to think of my own artistic practice as a way to confront these corporations. They want to get bigger and control the whole market turning us into predictable consumers. I just want to keep small and share the little culture I generate as a nourishing albeit poor looking meal for others to consume, making me just like a modern hunter-gatherer.

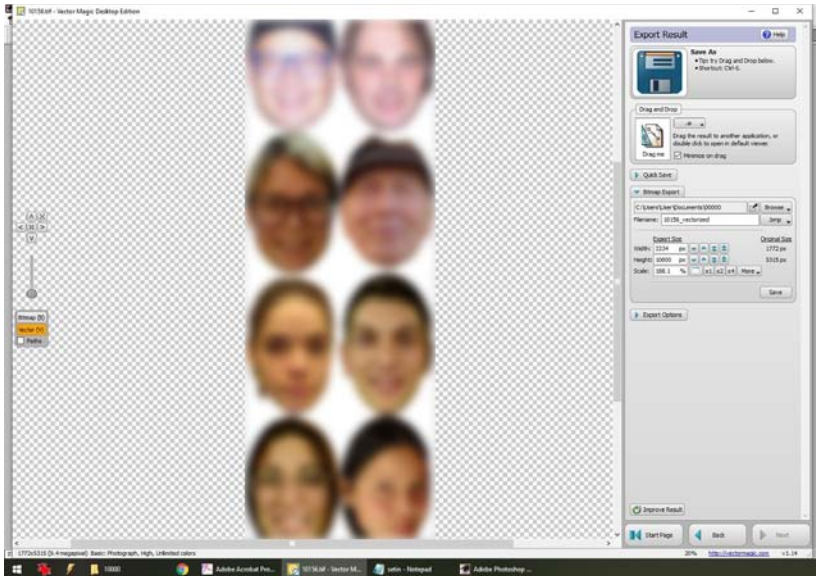


Fig.118 Screenshot of the software I use to vectorize each panel. Given that I am not a studio photographer and I take pictures of people in the most unexpected circumstances under natural or artificial lights of any kind the vectorization process brings more homogeneity among all the various head-shots of each panel.

PEOPLE 10

After resizing each head-shot within a 15 by 22.5 centimeters oval mask the latter is placed in a 30 by 90 centimeters layout of 2 by 4 head-shots. Given that the process of manual background extraction is time consuming, it might even take up to two years from when I take the head-shot to when I actually start editing it. Working briefly every morning on it, I manage to complete a panel in approximately a month, removing the background from every hair of a head-shot, taking particularly a long time to do so for people with beards. As the background is fully removed, I use the program Vector Magic to smoothen the colors of the resulting faces. This is a particularly needed procedure since the head-shots of a panel are captured under different lights and at times the pictures are blurred given the precarious moment in which they were taken. In this respect the vectorizing process smooths through the differences. In the vectorizing software I use an unlimited colors scheme with the highest level of details. The result is then exported to .bmp format which is resampled to 300 dpi. The result is resized to 30 by 90 centimeters and then converted to .pdf format. At times however I might have no editing to do with my socializing becoming far less like when writing this book.



Fig.119 Collage showing several head-shots of people I met while organizing a summer workshop in Russia. Interestingly many of these people will never be accessible to me. We were in very good terms then but because of political circumstances my sons might be sent to fight against their sons like my father's father had to fight against their grandfathers.

PEOPLE 11

Throughout the years I have experienced an increasingly harder stand on diversity. While at the begging of the project I lived in a spontaneous type of diversity and really enjoyed it, I often had issues with the kind of diversity enforced in the higher social strata. With some people becoming more important than others I was suddenly left out. In this respect I believe that my sort of social representation is far more authentic in that it truly depicts the faces of humans I meet, especially outside more institutional setting. Also I noticed that people making it inside institutions tend to be the ones who are most unwilling to be photographed. Perhaps then this instance of my project come to represent excluded people, not only black migrants or brown refugees but also the white artists who no longer have an access to the establishment. By now I am of the opinion that people that are not in power are generally more approachable. It feels instead that people who have certain privileges are stealing from the community. They also feel that it is not a natural thing to do it; it goes against our social way of being that is based on sharing and equality. To mask this robbery, privileged people get even more authoritarian. Their tendency is to eliminate all threats and the sincerity of my project is conceived as one.

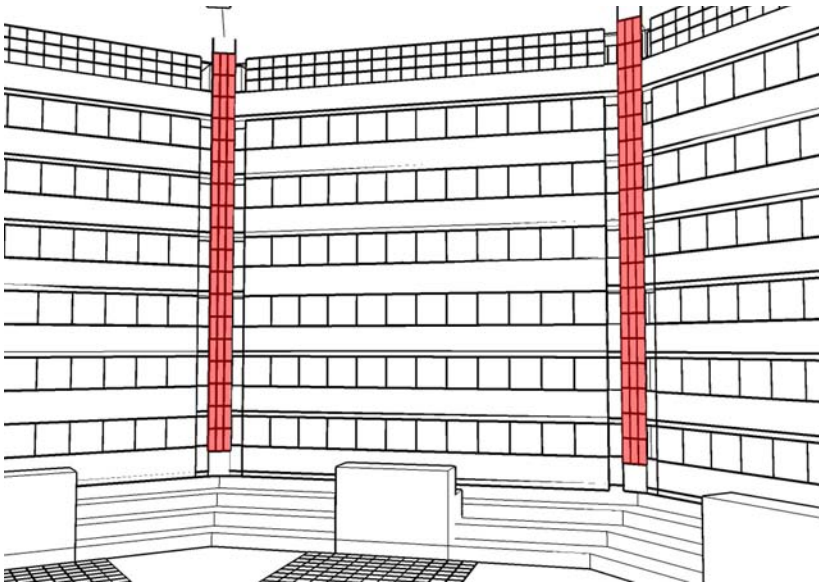


Fig.120 Rendering of memory theater in which the columns with the head-shots are highlighted. While in Poland I was able to print a whole roll of acquaintances but never had the chance to actually exhibit it. Often I thought of unrolling the print down a bridge as a public intervention but in the end I have always prioritized the making of the project over the actual exhibiting since I anyway first have to finish it.

PEOPLE 12

In my memory theater the light-box panels representing one month of head-shots are placed on a column of 16,2 meters by 90 centimeters. In this respect they act as the artificial light of the whole exhibition. At the end of the project, in 2040, the final installation will comprise 8 of these columns, each column displaying 54 panels. The result are 3.456 faces staring at the viewer from every corner of the theater. Given the distance between the spectator and the columns the head-shots can only be experienced as patterns from which only the colour and age of people can be identified but not so much their actual identities. Generally speaking portraits of people have been executed since antiquity to elevate someone over others, making them superior. On the other hand the nature of this work is quite different. It takes people who are chill and are therefore willing to be photographed to be part of a low-key project like mine. These people are those with whom I could potentially constitute a non-hierarchical community. This I can never achieve with people who struggle for power and spread their portraits over the masses. Far from wanting immortality this work highlights the importance of mortality as a indispensable mean to regenerate.



Fig.121 Picture showing a month of trash-picking. While attempting with this work to depict the society I live in, reviewing its outcome can trigger certain memories. For example the first tile of the third row shows a metro card depicting the recently married queen of Sweden. After finding it I was able to ride the metro for over six months free of charge.

TRASH 01

Whenever I am walking on a sidewalk, I unconsciously scan the floor in search of discarded items. If I notice one I have never picked up before, I pick it up and put it in a pouch I keep around my torso. Only later when I have gathered enough discarded items I make collages of 15 by 15 centimeters right on top of an open scanner. I then scan them and invert the colours of the resulting image. The latter is meant to be printed on a decal for ceramic tiles so as it can be assembled back in a sidewalk. A month comprises 16 of these tiles placed in a 4 by 4 grid. With this work then I am literally scavenging. While in many of my works I also roam like a homeless person around the urban environment to see what it has to offer, in this work I literally collect actual trash. Like Carolina Maria de Jesus who collected paper for her journals while scavenging in Sao Paulo, I keep the paper I find for my journaling of reality. Like a hunter-gatherer I retain my instinct to collect food from the environment and live a more ecological life. For me this life is very rich and worth remembering. The territory is no longer wild and it is getting increasingly gentrified but with some effort I do find areas in which there is still some gathering of sidewalk trash that has not been immediately erased by a cleaning machine.

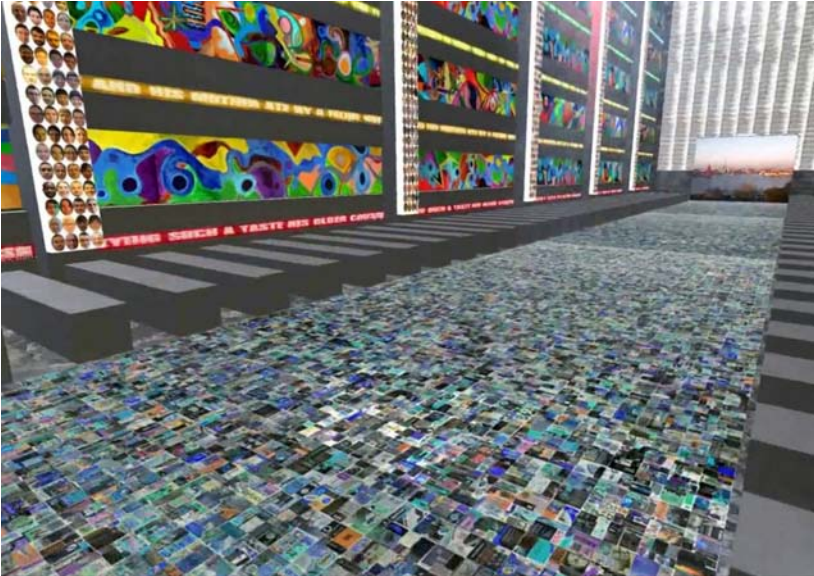


Fig.122 Rendering of an ideal exhibition in which the sidewalk made out of all the collages of the trash I picked is displayed. Installed in this fashion the work resembles a river of trash coming to represent what a human had to absorb through his or her life as a consumer or in my case as someone who has resisted to become a consumer.

TRASH 02

At the end of my project in 2040 I will have scanned 6.192 collages of trash picked from the sidewalk. This amounts to 15.552 square meters of picked trash over the course of 36 years. If it will ever be exhibited the work results in a dump with the only difference that the old layers of garbage do not get covered by new layers. Rather all this dump has been reassembled by an individual into a flattened landscape almost as if the viewers will have to take account of it without the possibility to hide their consumer traces with new traces. In a way this assemblage elevates the garbage into a noble material that could decorate the interiors of wealthy individuals, the same who are behind the capitalist enterprises so much polluting the planet. Refusing this idea I just visualize it as a centralized sidewalk that has been purified by the dirt of its content. But instead of being fancy models of a catwalk, visitors have to remove their shoes, to ensure that the printed layer does not fade. In this respect they become like poor barefoot scavengers trying to make sense of all the trash. They are reverted into their hunter-gatherer ancestors who were excellent trackers and constantly walked with their eyes scanning the ground for hints which could lead them to a game. In this case the game is to make sense of my project.

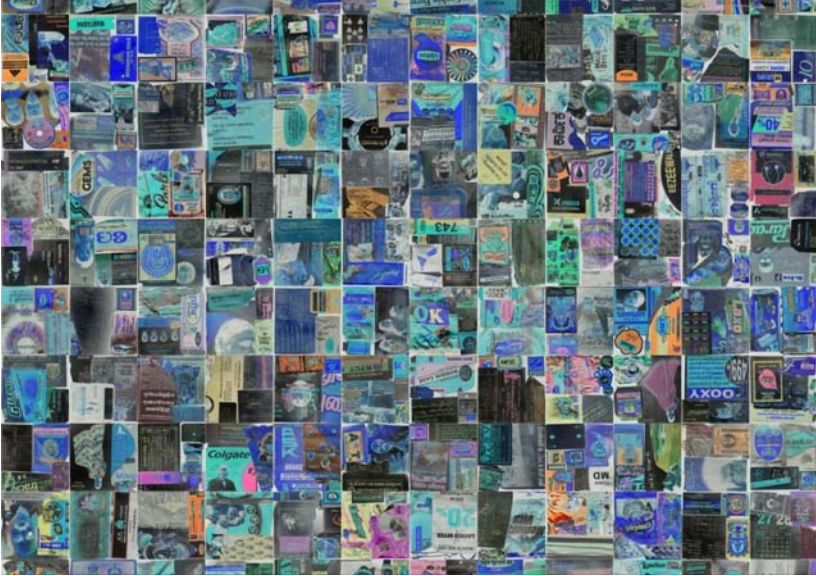


Fig.123 Collages of trash picked during a trip through Southern India. Brought back to Northern Europe, the Indian trash still retained the incense-like smell which can still be appreciated scavenging through my physical archive where a further selection of what I have gathered from the sidewalks of the world is kept.

TRASH 03

My trash collages are representative of the societies I explore. Perhaps more than a scavenger, I am an ethnographer visualizing the status of a particular society. Not only then my trash picking shows the different calligraphies of the world but also the way different societies of the world boost or censure certain content. While on the sidewalk of Tokyo and Prague I might find plenty of pornography, on the muddy sidewalks of Madurai the content of the trash is of a religious nature. The work is in this respect a true radiography of a nation as well as an account of the psychological brainwashing its citizens have to undergo. A careful examination of the gathered trash can in fact reveal certain patterns. For example the Black Lives Matter movement that became popular in the middle of the project had a great impact on the advertisement of Western countries. During this period I collected many fliers representing black people but ironically almost none from other ethnic groups. When it comes to representation I think that the more colours, the better. If it only used to be white, it is by now black and white but far from achieving the palette that only conscious photographers like Oliviero Toscani managed to achieve in the past with his scandal-driven advertising campaigns.



Fig.124 Picture showing a girl exploring an installation I made by sticking my collages on 60 by 60 centimeters ceramic tiles. In this installation it was also interesting to see how the RGB light depicting the weather and the video of public places interacted with the tiles by changing the colours of its otherwise white and static background.

TRASH 04

In later years I settled in the Netherlands regularly traveling across Europe to visit my son in Sweden or to build my ark in Italy. During these trips I did manage to explore random French or German towns I have crossed on my way to these destinations but generally speaking most of the trash picking was done in the Netherlands. While most of the trash I have picked has Dutch text written on it, I have noticed that pretty much all the fliers and cigarette boxes and generally the advertisements picked from the sidewalk of the Western world started looking increasingly the same. This has occurred throughout the course of the project, at a time in which multinational companies like McDonald, Marlboro, H&M, IKEA contributed to the gentrification of urban environments around the world. In some respects then what I have also documented in the course of this systematic trash picking is the gradual disappearance of local and even national brands. Everything became more global; the KFC fast-food packaging I can pick in Rotterdam is similar if not the same from the KFC packaging I can pick in Shanghai. Also the Netherlands is the perfect environment where to analyze consumer trends. In this country these trends are quickly dispatched and absorbed finding no cultural barriers.



Fig.125 Screenshot showing me picking trash on a Russian sidewalk. Here I found far more little trash than in an western city. The reason behind it is that consumerism there is more of a thing for the upper classes and less for the lower classes who just have to content themselves with what they can afford.

TRASH 05

Picking trash from the sidewalk I avoid contaminated trash like packaging of liquid food such as yogurt but also trash that due to rain or snow got too wet. If I do pick up wet trash by the time I scan it, not only it has molded but it has compromised the other trash I placed with. In many cities my expectation to explore them and pick trash is in fact diminished by weather conditions but also by extreme tidiness. One of such examples are Austrian cities like Innsbruck where I spent days going through and around every little neighborhood with absolutely nothing to pick. In the course of my project wealthier cities became like airports with machines constantly operating to brush them clean and no longer any of the dustmen slowly sweeping through the boulevards as I could still experience at the beginning of the project. After scanning all the trash I keep a selection of it for my physical archive. Here once again I make sure to discard trash that is too dirty and could contaminate the archive For this further selection I am more likely to keep the more solid trash such as the one that has been laminated but also when possible the trash that is more unique such as papers with handwritten phone numbers and shopping lists but also business cards of local artists and producers or even postcards and passport photos.



Fig.126 Screenshot showing me in Manhattan picking trash from the large sidewalk. In such places the trash tends to only represent the tourist influx. Mostly I pick trash in the more peripheral areas where I myself live. In this respect the resulting collages come to better represent real life and the consumer psychology enforced onto ordinary people..

TRASH 06

Not only in winters or during rainy seasons I find little trash but also in the gentrified heart of the bigger cities. I then usually explore more peripheral places such as artist squatted areas, immigrant areas and the more edgy districts. While in Berlin for example I avoid the center of town and shift to the dirtier peripheries like Neukölln. Here I can experience an authentic blend of both the immigrant community and the artist community not afraid of manifesting themselves. Similarly in other cities I avoid the sterile financial district and focus on the more bohemian neighborhoods. In this sense I do not find myself a parasite going where there is to eat. On the contrary I think that parasites are those who are obsessed to scale up their power and capital getting hold of the self-organized neighborhoods to replace them with gentrified and dead-from-the-start shopping centers. Well it is my opinion that not only the world cannot afford rich people but also these very centers of gentrification are not sustainable. Their facades may be covered with vertical gardens and there might be the most up-to-date system to regulate the temperature and what not but in principle the whole set up that is required to keep them up and running is horrific depleting not only exotic forests but also their people.



Fig.127 Selfie showing the equipment I used early in the project when venturing outside. A second hand pouch is hanging on my right side to gather the trash I pick from the sidewalk. Inside the pouch there is a zip-lock bag I used to get for free at the security check of an airport. The bag is where I placed the trash so as not to contaminate the pouch with bacteria.

TRASH 07

After picking the trash from a sidewalk I put in a pouch I wear around my chest. The trash actually goes in a zip lock bag I always keep inside the pouch so as not to make it dirty. When a bag is full I replace it with a new one and put the filled bag in a box waiting for its content to be scanned. These bags are the same distributed at airports to place liquids separately prior to the security scan. In my short lived career as an academic I have often commuted around Europe and have been collecting several of these bags. However during the time of the security scan I often feared that the guard might find some illicit substance in the trash I had picked. Previously I have also been using tetra pak milk containers to store the trash I picked. For the purpose each container was made flat, teared open, washed and dried. Later when my kids were small I used to put the trash under their stroller. Generally after picking trash I always have a feeling I want to wash my hands. I even feel a little itchy on my skin and I always make sure I do wash them especially before eating. I am not however a maniac of tiny invisible bacteria and while I keep rather clean, I hate chemicals on my skin and I avoid using strong chemicals to clean the household. Around me there is always some level of dirt I know too many people do not tolerate.



Fig.128 Picture showing a set up I adopted to scan trash. On the left the trash is put on a newspaper to collect all the dirt that might fall from it and the scanner is covered with a box so as to keep the scanning plate dark. If I scan at night the cardboard is not used and the light is switched on and off. In this picture my bed is just above the desk.

TRASH 08

To scan I use a portable Canon Lide 110 scanner. On the glass of the scanner I drew a 15 by 15 centimeters area with a permanent marker. Here I position trash by hand trying to fill the area entirely just checking for what could fit in it. I became quite good at arranging these collages although at times some spaces are left open as there is no trash of that size to fill it. Also the trash is often overlapped and only what I believe to be the most interesting part gets scanned. If there is a print on both side of a piece of trash I often go for the more graphic side. When the collage is finished I start the scanning with the lid open and the light off or with a cardboard box placed on top of the scanner to create the necessary darkness. For the purpose the scanner lid has been removed after it was damaged by the Israeli police. It was when I spent a summer teaching young Palestinians how to use audio visual equipment. On my way out of the country the equipment I use as part of my project was confiscated by the Israeli police who took weeks to open it up and inspect it. I then realized how hard it is to be an autonomous artist who does not comply to an official agenda. I have my own agenda and that is to live according to nature and as such I do not belong to any political organization that can protect me.



Fig.129 Picture of an archival box in which a further selection of the trash I scan is kept. This selection is not only based on special trash I find but also on trash that are not too corrupted and are clean and solid enough to withstand time. The dates written with the marker on the zip bags are the date in which the scanning occurred.

TRASH 09

The size used in each scan is 567 by 567 pixels (15 by 15 centimeters) and the resolution is set to 96 dpi. Each scan is then placed in a 60 by 60 centimeters 4 by 4 tile collage corresponding to a month. After arranging the 16 scans in the collage starting from the left top corner, I convert the result into a .pdf file. Once the trash has been scanned it is sorted according to paper, plastic and metal. Later this material is brought to a recycling station. In this respect this work also provides a service to society and if everyone would conduct a project like mine the world would be a nicer place. At the end of each scanning section I use a spray cleaner to sanitize the scanner glass which usually gets quite dirty. Also my desk and my laptop get dirty in the process and I make sure I clean them. So far I have never got any disease from the trash picking and scanning. Nonetheless picking trash is not like gathering berries in the forest. There is something filthy about it. There are no squirrels around the trash by rats. But removing this layer of filth is my contribution to enhance the process of rewilding. If this rewilding does not occur in the urban environment it certainly occurs in my own self. My nature is enriched not only by this work but by all other works making up a beautiful biodiversity within me.



Fig.130 Picture showing an experiment I conducted in the ceramic department at Harvard to print a collage of trash onto a tile. The process was laborious and the result dull having to sacrifice the colors of the tiles for the sake of having it fired in a kiln. Anyway the purpose of my project is not to produce with my project keeping digital.

TRASH 10

I have initially experimented with firing the decals of my trash collages under a research project at Harvard University. As a result I was assisted by a local artist working for the ceramic department. With her I spent months experimenting the ideal parameters to follow in order to fire my digitally created collages. Using ceramic decals on plain tiles we conducted different trials at different temperatures. Lastly we opted for the most suitable parameters but after that the collaboration ended. The positive side of such a technique was that the result was long lasting and can be proposed for a public intervention in a busy environment. Given the amount of scans of trash I made the content itself would be various and not as redundant as design on tiles tend to be. The downside of such a technique is that the actual colours have to be sacrificed and so the vibe of the trash itself. Previously I also spent a whole year in a copper graphic workshop trying to print my right hand photographs on archival paper and I also noticed what a waste of time and resources the whole process was. In both cases it was as if I was interrupting the flow of my project and of life for the sake of making my work more immortal. They were interesting experiments but I rather focus on my life and my project and the meanings I can gather from them.



Fig.131 Picture showing me standing in front of a year worth of the trash picking I made while living in the United States. To me it was interesting to bring a mirror back to the American consumerist. While the exhibition lasted a few days I got approached by a woman who wanted to decorate her Malibu villa with my work and wanted to purchase it right on the spot.

TRASH 11

If my ability to create collages is artistic, the reason why I do them is anthropological. With this work I want to provide a picture of the social environment I have lived in. As an outsider without any occupations I have been scavenging through the peripheries of many cities. Despite such an effort I understand that this work is most unlikely to be exhibited. It is unclear who owns the rights on the many fliers and products I have scanned. My argument however is that in the end it is the consumer who is the real victim of advertisement. In the past pop-artists like Mimmo Rotella made use of ready available graphics for their artworks. In a nearby future however we might be not even allowed to dream about a Coca Cola bottle without having to ask for copyright permissions. Yet we live in a fabricated world and necessarily our imagination is saturated by these kinds of fabrications. We are constantly shot at. This work however ends an era, that of tangible advertisement that in the course of the project has been replaced with digital advertisement. The physical trash I have picked may be in fact the last to be printed. Soon on a sidewalk it is going to be easier to find broken pieces of a screen from a tablet or a smartphone or whatever device, than to find an actual printed flier.

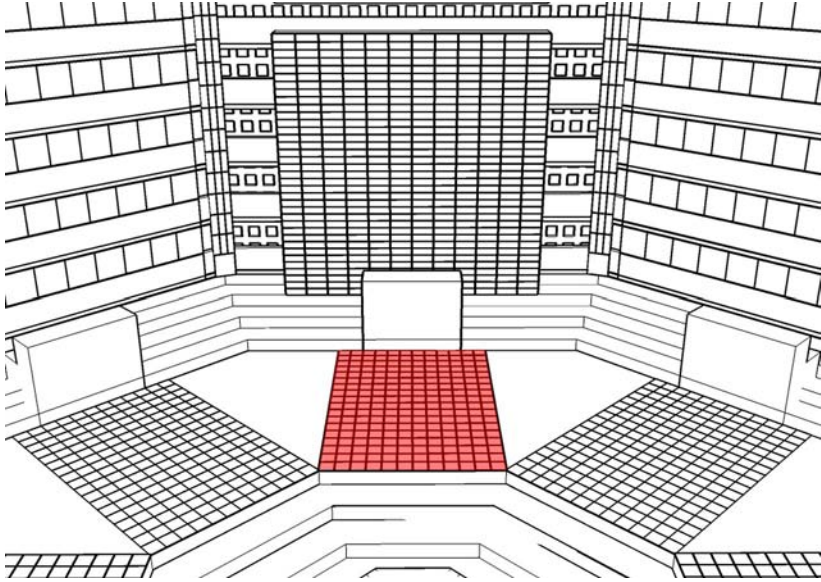


Fig.132 Rendering of the memory theater in which the floor where the trash tiles are placed is red highlighted. It resembles the tile work in ancient buildings with their mosaics. If in these ancient buildings there were scenes depicting daily life such as motives to be found in the surrounding nature, this floor represents our artificial environment.

TRASH 12

In an ideal exhibition the 432 resulting trash collages are placed as on the floor of the memory theater facing the screen of public places. The tiles corresponding to each month are placed in a 12 by 36 matrix. In the theater the tiles are scaled to 50 by 50 cm. The floor is then 6 meters wide and 18 meters long. The screen showing videos of public places is located at the end as if the floor of trash-collages continues within the public places where the trash itself was picked. The light of the screen also reflects on the tiles as much as other lights like the RGB reproduction of the weather. In order to view particular trash the visitors will have to bend down as much as I bent to pick them. In this respect I force the viewers into an act of humility that is not the humility towards one god to whom they have to show complete obedience but it is the humility to the ground, to the earth that is so much polluted by a whole new god, the god of consumerism that has come to compromise life on the planet and the life of the planet. Ultimately this work is my resolution not to worship such god but show those who are blinded by it how beautiful things I can create with the very things they throw. Having said this I am not making a celebrity god of myself but showing people how they could do the same and feel content.

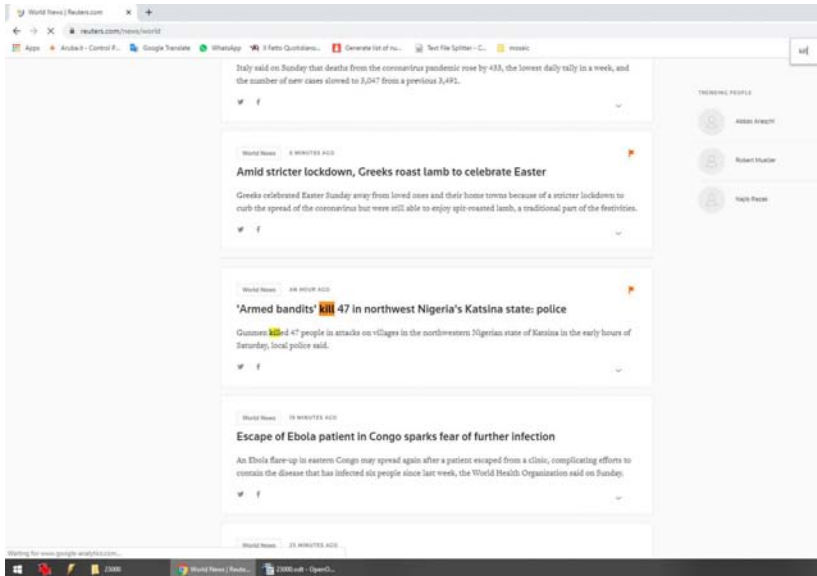


Fig.134 Screenshot of a news website I used early on in the project to check for casualties around the world. Overwhelmed by the amount of fake-news and gossips, I often search for the “kill” keyword. As shown in the above screenshot, important news-items are often found buried by very viral but equally irrelevant news.

NEWS 02

Following is an example of the casualties I have collected as part of month number 135 prior being converted to Braille: "SINKING KILLS THIRTY IN LIBYA EARTHQUAKE KILLS HUNDREDS IN IRAN SUICIDE ATTACK KILLS TEN IN YEMEN FLOOD KILLS FIFTEEN IN GREECE STAMPEDE KILLS FIFTEEN IN MOROCCO SUBMARINE ACCIDENT KILLS FORTY IN ARGENTINA ATTACK KILLS HUNDREDS IN EGYPT SINKING KILLS THIRTY IN LIBYA AIR STRIKE KILLS TWENTY IN SYRIA CLASHES KILL FOURTEEN IN HONDURAS ATTACK KILLS FIFTEEN IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO SUICIDE BOMB KILLS SEVENTEEN IN SOMALIA TRAIN CRASH KILLS SIX IN FRANCE". When I find a news-item that reports on over twenty casualties I approximate the number. In this respect the number forty two becomes forty and one hundred and eleven becomes e hundred while six hundred and seventy four becomes hundreds. Usually news-items reporting on high figures of dead people are not reliable and estimates keep on varying. My approximation is also appropriate due to the fact that high numbers of casualties are likely to occur in third world countries where the counting is not rigorous.

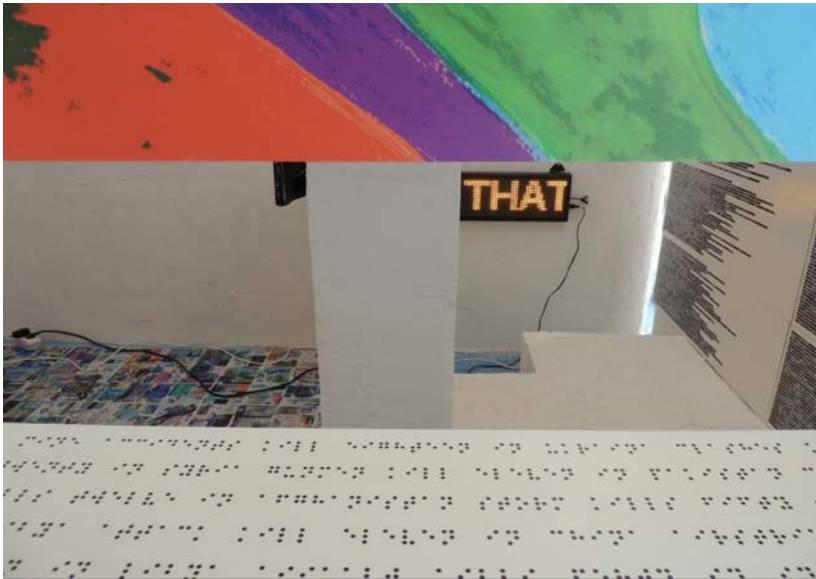


Fig.135 Picture of the project show-room I made in my mountain barn. Visitors were rather neutral about the panels of casualties; none of them could actually read braille and the work was overlooked. On the other hand if a blind person invited to recite out loud such a long list of casualties, the work would have its impact.

NEWS 03

In an exhibition context the panels in which the news of casualties are embossed are meant to be displayed in the dark. They are only readable through touch and as a performance, I have envisioned a blind person to read out loud the otherwise indecipherable casualties. The only light comes from the screens of drawings of ideas standing on the opposite side of the news panels. Thus, while these panels contain tragic content, the drawings display ironic content, creating a remarkable contrast. Yet this contrast is the same I find checking the world news websites. There important news are dug below dozens of other news speculating on sex scandals or the like involving the main protagonists of first world countries such as the United States. Nonetheless typhoons, wars, suicide bombs, hurricanes and other forms of natural calamities, strike the earth more or less regularly and unexpectedly. Said this I do not conceive that there is a god punishing humans with such calamities. In fact, reading a lot of mythological accounts like the great deluge that affected every society on the planet, the reason why their gods sent such a devastating calamity was that humans were too noisy. The news are just a representation of this noise I try to quiet down.



Fig.136 Screenshot showing me making my first prototype of a panel of casualties. For the purpose I am using actual nails to simulate the brailles. At that time I was living among political refugees escaping from their countries at war. Not only I still drag on the misery that war has brought to my family but I keep on facing it among refugees.

NEWS 04

Over the years I came to realize that there are periods of time where one can find a lot of casualties occurring worldwide and usually longer periods of time reigned by a complete calm. I have often been thinking on the cyclical recurrence of war. Ermanno Olmi's movie "The Scavengers" shows an old shepherd teaching a young soldier how to recover the metal from the many bombs spread out in my native highland. On one occasion the old man tells the young man that war is like a beast walking around the planet; sooner or later it will come back. Throughout the course of my project I did notice how conflicts shift place. Countries that recently had a lot of conflict might settle for a long period of peace and countries that have experienced a lot of peace suddenly start to build up a lot of inner conflict culminating into war. And war infect neighboring countries as if war in itself is more of an organic virus acting beyond human intentions. While I despise war with all my heart, I am in doubt whether it will stop roaming around the earth. As long as power is concentrated in the hands of a few, wars will always erupt. Yes a powerful leaders are good at mending the issues of a nation but soon they degenerate in a kind of propaganda of agitation that is the necessary requisite to maintain their power.

WORLD



Turkey hits at 'Crusades' against Islam in cartoons row with France

Turkey's president said on Wednesday that Western countries mocking Islam wanted to "relaunch the Crusades", heightening a confrontation with France over cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad that have stirred anger in Muslim-majority countries.

10:23AM EDT



Trump administration sets record low limit for new U.S. refugees

The Trump administration has slashed the number of refugees it will allow to resettle in the United States in the coming year, capping the number at 15,000, a record low in the history of the country's modern refugee program.

9:04AM EDT



Analysis: Merkel's success overshadowed by ugly battle to succeed her

German Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU) are riding high in opinion polls but their popularity masks serious unease among senior party officials about damaging internal divisions triggered by a delay in voting for a new leader.

10:16AM EDT

Fig.137 Screenshot showing an example of headlines I face when opening a world news website. The main headlines are related to politicians and their power struggle. This way of curating the news can in itself cause an inner struggle in the readers especially if they lack a way to make meaning of them. I do so by becoming myself a reporter via my project.

NEWS 05

The reading of casualties is my own method of focusing on serious matters without losing much time getting engulfed in political gossip or worldly scandals. Already in the 19th century, David Thoreau was skeptical about the invention of technologies like the telegraph; he claimed that it would only end up sharing silly news such as that the Queen of England has the flu. The internet made Thoreau's prediction even more correct. Daily I have to scavenge through a lot of gossip talking about prime ministers and royal families. In addition to it, media channels feel compelled to present news items only for their own agenda. As a result it takes me quite some digging before I am able to get to important headlines such as the many casualties due to religious and ethnic violence. I am always shocked that such terrible news gets completely neglected. While wishing news and the media channels broadcasting them to be based on facts, I can see that they do not refrain in using their power of affecting the public opinion. Many channels claim to be completely bias-free but it is obvious that even in these channels where bias is less explicit there is an agenda that favors certain topics over others. In this sense the front page of a media outlet is a clear radiography of its agenda and I got used to don't get caught in it.



Fig.139 Screenshot of a page of a Swedish newspaper where I read of casualties in Ukraine years before the war erupted there. In thinking of power shifts I became much aware of historical events. The reading of Leo Tolstoy was important for me to understand the constant struggle between east and west as a struggle caused not by people but by emperors.

NEWS 07

Becoming aware of all the rapid transformations occurring globally, I have begun to embrace a Tolstoyan view of history. As I have conceived it, the latter is made not of heroes and villains, but by forces and counter-forces. I then began to perceive pacifism as just a power vacuum that does not completely resolve the world injustices. In fact this work not only represents a unique record of hard-to-find casualties in the midst of much gossip but also it represents a shift of power. The west has become increasingly hindered by its colonial history and self-victimizing policies, the east has seen a new Renaissance. Along with this Tolstoyan view of history I became rather convinced that if power can be diffused also the violence that can escalate from it can be much more manageable and less destructive. If society would learn to coexist with the environment and organize itself based on the real value of each individual genocides and ecocides would some less. In this sense I can never be of any influence to any young person. I can talk about the war as I have learned it from my grandparents or writers like Robert Graves, Erich Maria Remarque, Vasily Grossman and my grandfather's cousin Mario Rigoni Stern but only after young people have read their books we can the necessary empathy for a discussion.



Fig.140 Photo of my setup when checking the world news. Since I do it in the morning when I am very productive, I limit reading the news only for the sake of reading them. I just search directly for casualties. At times however I feel bored and I might just check the news for the sake of checking them.

NEWS 08

I am not an active social media user and the checking of the news is my way to connect to the outside world. While traditional news settles my thirst for information, I have noticed that they are becoming more social media-like. If on one hand it is hard not to be bombarded with adds, it is also hard to avoid news that are not just reposted from a social media platform. While this perspective is also interesting, the type of serious journalism of the past comes less. In this sense I see my project as my way of doing a more serious type of journalism in the present social media paradigm. This paradigm elects the best users. The best users become the new celebrities. I think I am one of the worst but this does not mean that I do not have a role within this paradigm. I report on reality without thinking about any followers. In other words I don't have to be pretentious but can be frank and direct. In the process I have learned that I became sharp in observing reality. Alas this sharpness is not liked by people. Given that my project brought me in touch with my human nature and the natural surroundings, I can easily detect when things are going against nature not only with myself but also with other people. This makes me the opposite of a popular influencer. Like a philosopher of the past my medicine is bitter.



Fig.141 Picture showing the television set in our living-room. At times I turn it on in the evening to check the news especially when there is a new conflict and I want to keep updated. At times I read about casualties in the scrolling titles but generally I get a better understanding of the world situation but watching the actual reports.

NEWS 09

I almost always regret getting into any politically contaminated media channel. Right after checking the world news I take a look at the news from my own country and get invariably sad about its political turmoil. Here however I might find some world news of casualties that were not reported in the main world news channels. Also at times I check the news on the local newspaper of the city where I was born but find it quite bias. Whether international or national or provincial, all these media channels intoxicate me. I can imagine that a lot of people feel the same and have opted by now to cover their ears and eyes and mouth. This is a healthy approach especially in relation to other people who become addicted to the news just like smoking or drinking. The latter are infuriated about the mess they see and want someone with superpowers to clean it up. In reality this mess is a mediation of reality which concentrated negative events in a single interface. Generally speaking I think of the whole media apparatus as a giant monster connected to the neural system of its users. In this sense I perceive my project as a way to keep autonomous from it but not as a wise Japanese monkey abstaining from it. While keeping aware of its existence my objective is to regenerate its opposite, a human ecology.



Fig.142 Screenshot showing me early on in the project checking an Italian newspaper. Reading national newspapers especially in my own country, I was seldom able to get a global perspective. There were often no hints of actual conflicts going on in countries I might have in fact visited or I might have had a first person account of.

NEWS 10

In some respects my listing of casualties reflects the work of some conceptual artists. For example On Kawara used to glue newspaper articles behind his date-paintings. It also reflects the work of some outsider artists. For example Vivian Maier collected newspaper articles as part of her archive. Both their works are like messages in a bottle. They are the surviving traces of the past. In the course of the project I was also able to find old newspapers. When renovating a farm in Sweden I found newspapers from the 1920s used as isolation. It was interesting to see how much drier news used to be in the past. I guess they were less addicting. In the age of information I feel myself addicted to news. Not only news from around the world but also news about my friends. I do not use any social media account but I am in the habit of regularly talking to friends that are scattered around the world so as to get updates from them. I do this out of kindness and I try to do it only once in a while but still there is a thirst to be informed. It feels like that smartphones activate a part of my brain that desire information. With this information I can then start to gossip mostly with my partner. I guess this is a very human feature but generally I prefer to just meet people in person a more in depth dialogue with them.

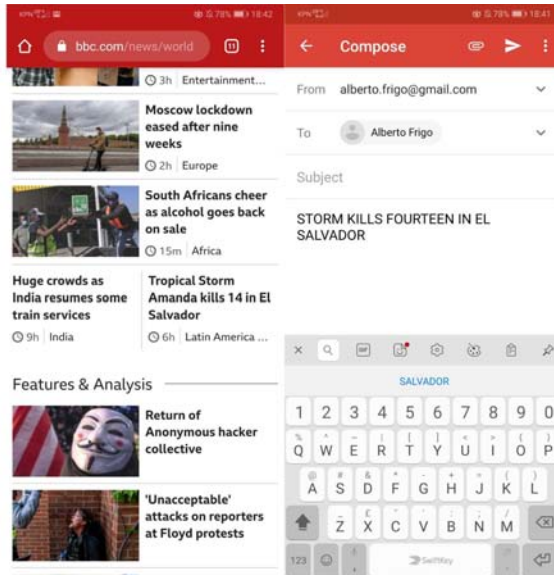


Fig.143 Screenshot showing the news as they appeared on one of my old smartphones. If I find casualties I write an email to myself and the next day I paste it on the braille document I use as part of this work. Over time the emails I send to myself as a way to communicate between my phone and my computer, became the only emails I receive.

NEWS 11

Making it a point not to get lost in scrolling the posts of whatever platform, I began to replace the need for reading news about living people with reading news about dead people. From the beginning I have started to read any kind of memoir that came in my hand. Reading these memoirs I have started to develop a more profound idea of history. I have understood that the planet was inhabited by healthy societies that coexisted with their natural surroundings. The so-called civilizations enslaved these societies and forced them to adapt their pyramidal system with the catastrophic consequences that the adoption of this system brought to humanity as well as to the planet. If reading the world news I can daily confirm this fact, the greatest urge in my life is to learn whatever it is left to learn from indigenous societies. The greatest commitment in my daily life is to read accounts on these people and try to apply what I learn to my own little tribe. Of course we also have to be part to the pyramidal system but my effort is to bring the ecological dimension back into our family life. Whenever we can we are back in the woods hiking and forgetting for a time what my children and my partner have to comply with during their working days. In this respect my addiction to be informed became useful.

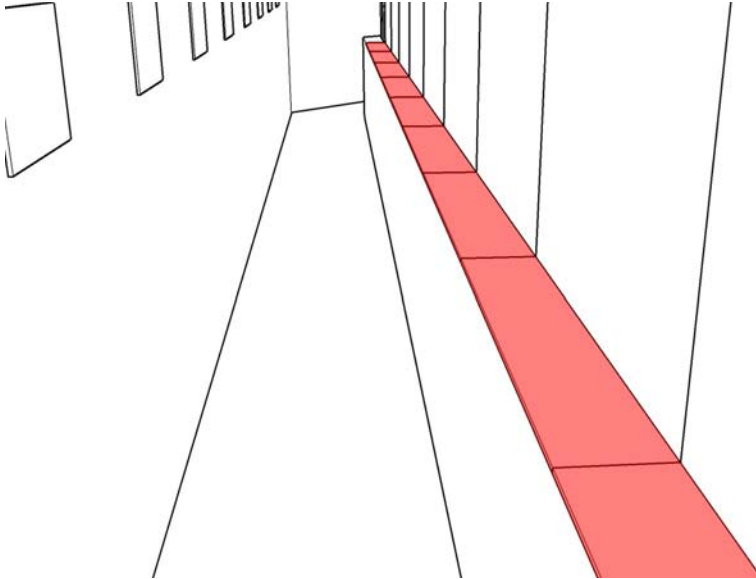


Fig.144 Screenshot of the memory theater where the panels reporting on the casualties I found on the news are red highlighted. Upon completing my project, I will stop checking the world news and retire altogether as one of the ancient Roman characters depicted by Plutarch who at the end of their lives sought peace back in nature.

NEWS 12

In the memory theater hosting my project, each of the 432 resulting panels reporting a month's worth of casualties is installed in 1 of the 36 14.4 meters-long corridors surrounding the main hall. With this setup the panels are placed in groups of 12 which corresponds to a year of casualties reporting. The embossed panels function as the handrails of these corridors. In this respect while in several other instances of the project I have used visual or audio material and in one instance even smell to report on the air-quality I inhale, in this work I focus on touch. Strikingly what the audience touches is actually something one does not want to have to deal with such as the many casualties mostly occurring far away in poorer countries. This record of casualties also resembles the monuments of war I confronted since my childhood. Right in front of the house where I grew up as a kid stood a triumphal arch under which the names of all the 54.000 soldiers who died in my native highland during the World War I are reported. Rather than a tribute to war my record is unique in that it reports on casualties that are easily forgotten and anyway have little resonance in the official history of nations. In this sense my work is not monumental; it celebrates ordinary people who died more or less because of power struggles.



Fig.145 Screenshots of videos of public places I took in different countries around the world. At first I had an impulse to live in different countries but I soon recalibrated myself to focus on my immediate ecology, keeping local and with my children. In this locality however I am very active and manage to visit a variety of places.

PLACES 01

Whether roaming around a city or the countryside I take four-second videos of the vanishing point of the public spaces I access. At the end of the project in 2040 the films of public spaces will number 77.760 amounting to 86.5 hours screen time. On average I film 180 places every month, generating a film of 12 minutes. Every day then I access about 6 places. As rain and other factors might keep me home a whole day, the average number of public spaces I access daily when outdoors is around 10. In this respect this work stimulate me to spend time outdoor. There I attempt to bring a variety to the sequence of places I visit so as not to be monotonous in my filming. At the beginning of the project I even live in different countries but soon began on focusing to explore my local surrounding. Given that I almost always end up in nature, the changing of the seasons provide the type of variety I first sought exploring different cities. Either way the repetition of certain places in the stream of videos creates a cinematic language that enables the viewers to read through it and get an insight of the environment in which I have lived. As viewers are not likely to have visited the places I have filmed, each individual viewer is likely to associate a particular place with the resemblance of a place he or she has explored in his or her life.



Fig.146 Picture of an exhibition showing my videos within an architecture, in this case an old Swedish castle. The ideal scenario to present these videos are places with a vanishing point. The longer are these places, the more I can achieve this effect. In this way the place itself can continue inside the places I have been filming.

PLACES 02

My filming of all the public spaces I access was originally inspired by Andrea Palladio's Olympic Theater, a 16th century building in which the oldest surviving stage set still exists. This stage set comprises a trompe-l'œil giving the appearance of a long city street. Similarly my idea is to extend the perspective of a corridor by projecting at its end the video of the vanishing point of the public spaces I film. I therefore keep up with a rather classic tradition onto which however the brutality of modern architecture and the contemporary gentrification of public spaces is superimposed. Also the filming of the vanishing point provides me with the ability to know immediately where I should point the camera when I access a public place. From the beginning this was not clear to me and I just pointed the camera without any particular aim. Sitting on a hill in the outskirts of a Swedish town I suddenly saw a clear perspective point in front of me and realized that in every space I can find one. In this respect also whenever I am walking in a public place and face an interesting vanishing point I film it, finding the depth of these vanishing points what interests me the most. In ancient urban agglomerates this vanishing point is easy to find but not in modern environments where the vanishing point may be blocked.



Fig.147 Screenshot showing me filming a newly built citadel in northern Italy. Not only do these modern places become increasingly more institutional but also the filming within them becomes trickier; while they are fully monitored by cameras 24/7, in some cases photography is not even allowed. In these cases surveillance dominates over its citizens.

PLACES 03

As I only film when in a public space, from the beginning I had to determine what I mean for public space. I then started defining it as any place that any citizen can enter without having to ask permission. In this respect I do not film in places where I have to pay a ticket to enter nor in places where I can enter only because I was invited to. Over the years I realized that access to places have been increasingly limited. This is particularly the case when places have been transformed into commercial entities like malls. Overall then this work represents the increasing extinction of public places taken over by commercial enterprises. In this sense all my filming effort can anticipate drastic changes ahead. The powering of these enterprises come with a cost and may trigger wars and natural calamities. It could be that in a more or less near future the gentrification we now experience may be followed by a great recession. As humans might not have the resources necessary to sustain its commercial enterprises, the latter might fall into ruins and the jungle might take them over. In this picture I keep on acting as the children of the forest, roaming around the urban environment and see its transformation into a luxury estate which in the end may give way to yet another abandoned Tivoli.



Fig.148 Picture showing me filming a public place while living in North America. At that time I still did not make use of a smartphone and had to carry around many more devices like a digital video-camera. It was discreet as it allowed me to flip the screen and look downward rather than than holding it up and irritate those who happen to pass by.

PLACES 04

While on one hand the resulting videos look like surveillance camera footage, they don't seek to record people but the emptiness of public places. Ironically this emptiness is, among all my works, what enables me to re-experience the past. In this respect I find the reviewing of these streams of videos a sad experience reminding me of life experiences that can never return. With time also this emptiness started to become more precious. The cities where I have been living throughout my project have become increasingly overcrowded. Not only the big capital cities but also the little downtown of my native village in the alps is invaded by a flood of tourists aimlessly walking through it. Becoming gentrified it has lost its aura. By now I can walk through the cities of my youth and don't recognize a single face. The overly restored architecture no longer talks to me either. I am one of the many alienated people who has refused to get gentrified. In this respect I came to prefer to be in not so popular destinations were I can still appreciate a level of authenticity. This authenticity is then reflected in the very place I imagine the videos of places to be presented. For this I choose very remote and hard to reach environments as if I am also attempting to protect my project from getting gentrified.



Fig.149 Screenshot of a public space I found exploring some ancient ruins in the near of Jerusalem. While my intention was to film the space an orthodox Jew stares at me and grows upset. In these rare cases I have to explain that it is the place that I am interested in and that anyway the people that happen to be in the video are hardly recognizable.

PLACES 05

Over the years I became aware of people's phobia to be filmed. Even though I am interested in the space and not in the actual people within, in the course of my project I have been told off several times. Once I was filming a park when an upset orthodox Jew came and broke my camera. Another time I was at a playground in East Berlin and I was told off by kindergarten teachers. On another occasion I was in Amsterdam filming a playground from afar and I was told off by a father who thought I was taking a picture of his kid. Later I was assaulted by a bodyguard of a coffee shop I did not notice when filming a street outside the Utrecht University library. Besides these accidents, whenever I can, I never point the camera at people if they are coming my way, rather I wait for people to leave. The discussion here is whether or not I infringe their privacy. My project is not meant to be shared on some online platform with thousands of people. I am not showing off. I am capturing places as a form of poetry, feeling a certain pain about how they are increasingly gentrified and stripped of their aura. Also ironically though my project I bring an element of playfulness within them. There are hardly any kids playing in public places but there is me walking around and doing my game, not only filming but also picking trash and what not.



Fig.150 Screenshot of a video shot in Amsterdam. While I have been progressively moving away from cities, with the years I have seen them radically transformed. While they were not flooded by the expected rise of the sea level but by tourists and later pandemics and more human triggered transformations.

PLACES 06

The big cities in which I have been filming public places are Stockholm, Shanghai, Boston, Venice and Amsterdam. These cities are all near the sea and might one day cease to exist if the water level keeps rising. To some extent this is happening because these cities are no longer linked to their local surroundings and are increasingly relying on what globalization has to bring them. As much as I love cities and their complexities and all the human richness they offer, I have noticed how since the beginning of the project they have turned into black stars; gentrification is spreading out of their centers and removing the life that was so characteristic of them. From centers of life they have turned into open air museums free of any possible contaminant. This sterility has to cope with increasing crises as if these museums cities around the world are preparing to be hospitals for devastating occurrences. The fundamental problem is however that while a ruling class has taken over these cities, a form of tyranny has emerged. This tyranny demands that cities ought to be saved at all costs. If mountains and forests have to be destroyed so as to build enormous dikes all around these cities so as to make sure they survive the very flood they themselves generate, no one is likely to oppose.



Fig.151 Screenshots of the same place recorded from the same site over the course of a month. These repetitions create a cinematic syntax. Viewers can detect sequences repeating themselves over time. Small variations in the sequences are characterized by the changing of seasons, of the architecture and of the cameras I use.

PLACES 07

In the first half of the project I was stimulated to document not only time but also space. As a result I spent several years living abroad and moving from one place to another. Later however I have settled in the middle of Europe, taking regular trips to visit my son up North and also taking regular trips down South to build the ark where to stow my life-project. As I had to take care of my younger children, the chances to travel outside of Europe became less and I have started to film more of the same places. The majority of the films then have been shot from the same locations. Whether on the handrail of a bridge, or against an oak tree or on top of a garbage bin I now have some usual spots from where I film. The exceptions are rare and can mostly be determined by terrible weather conditions. This aesthetic is similar to that of people filming the same spot over the years as in a Wayne Wang's movie. From an early attempt to depict the world and become a globetrotter, I soon embraced a local life only taking occasional trips outside our village. Yet unlike most people in the village disappearing in their workplaces, I am one of the very few to roam around it filming vanishing point of vanishing places no longer animated by people but only on special occasions when they get completely wasted.



Fig.152 Close-up of a 19th century painting of the Dutch village I live. Here I have filmed places consistently over the years. From the beginning my kids were always behind me filming but looking back at the resulting videos I can clearly recall all that many little adventures we undertook together as a band of gypsies free to roam around.

PLACES 08

As I stopped traveling around the world, my filming was done mostly in and around Culemborg, a small city in the middle of the Netherlands. Given the pristine medieval town, the river, the canals and the agricultural landscape of this area, I have in the later part of my work become more like a traditional 16th century Dutch painter. Several in fact were the landscape painters active in the region. Jan Weissenbruch for example painted the same spots I have been filming consistently during my years living in the region. Unlike the Dutch painter however I depict the spaces while on the move often bringing my family along. In this respect I have extensively taken several videos from the exact same locations over time. Some locations have been denied to me, for example outside the barber shop of an Arabic man. I used to sit on the metal pole standing in the middle of the sidewalk in front of his shop. From there I had a good view of the historical part of town and I sat there to film every time I passed by it. At one point however the shop owner got suspicious. As I could not explain myself, he got angry and I no longer dared to film from that location. Generally I try to be discreet, avoiding to film especially when there are people who might think I am filming them on purpose such as a disabled person.



Fig.153 Screenshot of a video I took at the river nearby our house. Here the ultimate vanishing point is depicted, literally the setting sun and the perspective created by its linear reflection on the water. This element clearly emerges in the memory theater which in my mind should have the screen presenting the videos of places facing the setting sun.

PLACES 09

The videos of public places I make in the heart of the Netherlands promotes a more authentic type of filming than that I could make in popular cities crowded with tourists and over-gentrified. Having become a family man, I have my routines and make it to our village a few times a day. Only in the weekends my family and I take excursions out of town, generally to natural reserves. Still at times we end up in a city but this is only for a special occasion like a birthday. It is during the holidays that we venture through Europe going through France or Germany on our way to my native alps in Italy. Differently from being common tourists however, we often stop in anonymous places, walking through them and experiencing the local reality just like travelers used to do. Too often these random places where we stop are struggling to survive. People have moved to the bigger cities and the identity of the past has been lost. All around them are the big farmers exploiting the land so the result is generally quite ugly. Yet in these places I see potential. Life and beauty can be achieved once again. They only require creative people. They should be left alone and to allowed to grow back into an organic community who is not demanded to make a profit and comply with the system. Only then life and beauty can resume.



Fig.154 Screenshot filming with one of my first cameras the long perspective of a church. I have always been fascinated with the perspective points in ancient architecture and have been basing my memory theater on Andrea Palladio's theater. With the years however I became more conscious that most architecture is the manifestation of worldly power.

PLACES 10

I started filming public places with a flip screen video-camera. Later I started recording with compact cameras which I had to hold up as the screen was fixed in the back. Meantime I also experimented filming with smartphones and as they became more advanced I began filming with them thus reducing the amount of equipment I have to carry around. With newer smartphones however it was no longer possible to film using the VGA 640 by 480 pixels resolution I adopted from the beginning of the project. As also the 4:3 aspect ratio became obsolete, I had to start using free applications which allowed me to film with such a ratio. Ultimately I just opted to film with whatever format the smartphone provided me with and only later crop the video to the correct ratio. In this sense smartphones did not make my life easier but fortunately I have developed ways to automate the cropping of the videos. In this respect it is quite amazing to think of how many workarounds one has to come with in order to keep up a very simple artwork such as that of filming public spaces for a given time and with a given ratio. Within a matter of a few years devices get obsolete and I am just simply forced to comply with new technologies and learn how to keep up with my simple documentation I have now been conducting for decades.



Fig.155 Picture taken by an old friend showing me filming the vanishing point of an Indian temple. We lived in a village and only made it to the city in order to withdraw cash. It was scarce due to a demonetization policy and my filming documented our struggle to keep in nature while having to comply with a government wanting more control on its people.

PLACES 11

By sitting my filming becomes more stable. Yet I often don't sit where the urban furniture suggests I should. Having become aware of the vanishing point of places, it is seldom that I find a public bench nicely located in front of it. While it is more likely to find such configurations in an Italian piazza or a Chinese garden, ultimately I prefer sitting where I am not supposed to like on a trash bin or a fence or on the ground if I am in a more natural setting. At times I also kneel, for example facing the great perspective of a temple. This work then is also a critique on modern urban design in which furniture is positioned with only pragmatic parameters in mind. With my filming practice I could easily serve a community to point out the best location where benches should be placed. Equally I could point out which branches of a tree should be removed along with other obstacles blocking the vanishing point. Thanks to my filming I became aware of how the layout of public places should be adjusted in relation to the environment it creates within but especially in relation to the natural landscape. Thanks to my filming practice I can now walk in a forest or a prairie and imagine a public place. In this sense these environments are not my drawing pad. I imagine a place in the womb of nature as she suggests me.

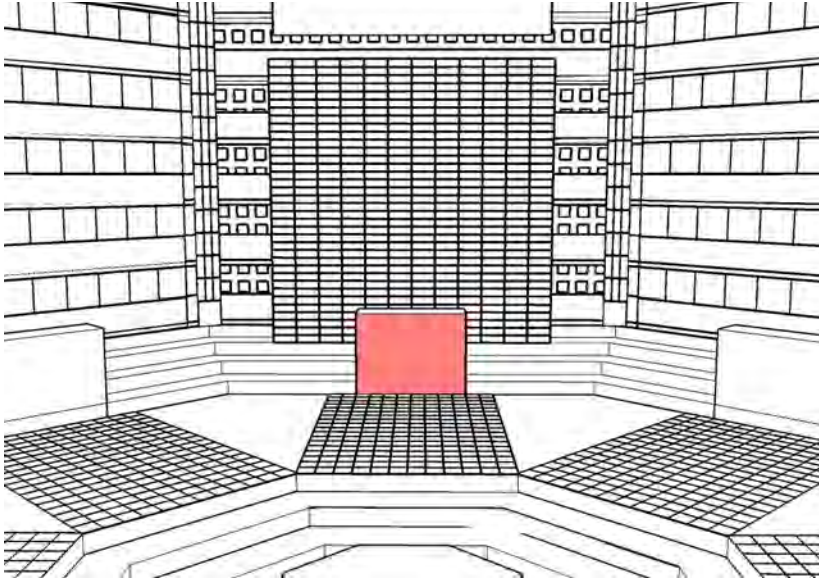


Fig.156 Screenshot of the memory theater where a large screen reproducing the videos of public places captured in a lifetime is red highlighted. The setting resembles a cinema but it would take a person nine days to watch through the videos. Also the videos have no sound which allows interesting overlapping of the audio from other works.

PLACES 12

In my memory theater the screen showing public places is positioned at the opposite end from the entrance. The corridor of trash leads to it and extends the vanishing point of the theater in the videos. The long perspective required by this part of the project has conditioned the entire set up of the memory theater on which the other parts of the project were thought of. The videos are meant to be played by a 4 by 3 meters screen. This large size enables the viewers to be sucked in the filmed places and their vanishing points. This screen should be created using 640 by 480 RGB LED lights which would give the places an element of abstraction when experienced at a close range. Even if the sequence of places can be long and tedious, by interplaying with the other works presented in the memory theater, it always provides novel content. While in public places we are confronted with content that is redundant such as the advertisement towering around it, in the place of the theater the content shown is always different. I mean there could be a slight chance that a visitor gets to see the same sequence of videos but the other media that is playing along with it is always going to be different like the mist simulating my work on air quality and the RGB light simulating the weather and the many different sounds of the other works.

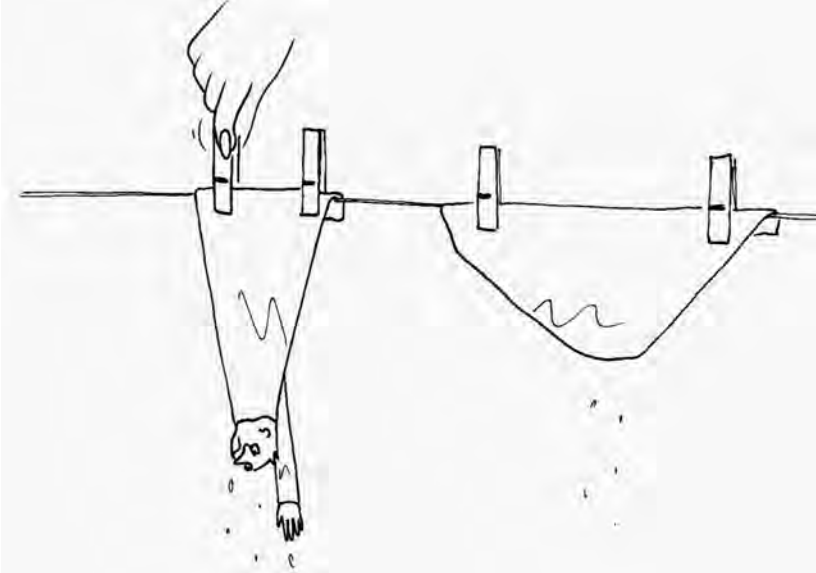


Fig.157 Drawing showing a woman hand hanging a superman to dry. Some ideas emerge while drawing other ideas. This one might have emerged drawing a superman and realizing that his mantel resembles an underwear. While irony is accidental, this one could go as far as to illustrate female domestic power over that of a male superhero.

IDEAS 01

While in a social environment, I am on the lookout for free associations. For example, if I see a BBQ grill in a park that is “like” a stroller, I annotate on my smartphone: “Carrozzina bambino e’ grill barbecue” (“Stroller for kid is a BBQ grill”). The annotations are made in Italian that is not only my mother language but it also allows quite some playfulness. Some time later I would then draw a mother or a father grilling sausages using the child's stroller as a BBQ grill. Every month I collect a whole list of these ideas and after dinner, unless I am traveling or I have guests to entertain, I draw at least 3 of them on A4 paper. It is a relaxing moment resulting in 90 drawings a month and 38,800 in my overall, 36-year production. As with my work on dreams, also with my drawing of ideas I attempt to imagine over time all that is imaginable. Only at times I might have drawn the same idea twice but even then I am quite aware that this could be the case and at times I am hesitant. Along with my well trained imagination I have very strong photographic memory which can in fact alert me that an idea has already being drawn. At times I am just too tired to be bothered about it and I just draw what I recorded without worrying too much that I might have repeated myself. The result is a comprehensive record of my imagination.



Fig.158 Screenshot showing me scanning one drawing after another. I undertook this procedure once a month after a pile of drawings was collected. The process of scanning took several hours during which I sometime watched a movie or I listened to a podcast. Later on I bought a scanner feeder and the process just took a few minutes.

IDEAS 02

A drawing is first executed in pencil and later with a 4 mm black pen tracing over the pencil drawing before it is erased. The drawings are executed on normal 80 grams copy paper which is not acid free and will eventually yellow within a few years possibly becoming unreadable. This cheap medium in which the drawing is executed reflects the ephemeral social situations I depict. It reflects the office environment that is all about paperwork. This cheap paper is the medium of our contemporary society, namely bureaucracy. Approximately every month, I manually scan the resulting pile of drawings in black and white, 150 DPI resolution. The resulting digital images are batch processed for resizing and cropping. Ultimately a slide-shown animation of 6 minutes is made from 90 drawings displayed for 4 seconds each. After scanning a pile of drawings I put them in a box. At the beginning of every summer the thousand drawings I make in the course of a year are brought to a barn in the alps to be archived. The whole of my drawings has been traveling a long way with me from China to North America and to Scandinavia and ultimately from Central Europe to the south, in the alps where I was born. In the end I might just put them inside the ark I have built there choosing stowing over showing.

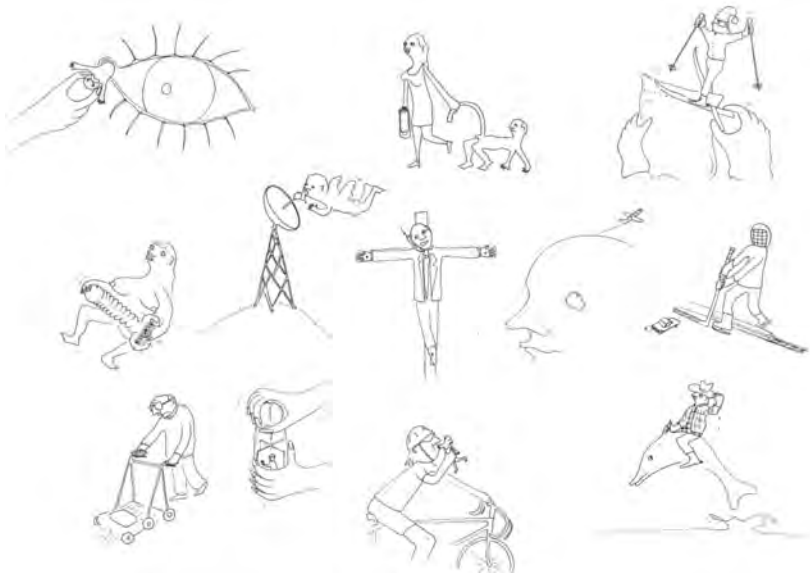


Fig.159 Assemblage of some of my drawings. With time I became faster in the execution of my drawings and perhaps worse. In fact I began skipping unnecessary details; in a matter of seconds I can sketch with the pencil the drawing I later retrace with the pen. Also I am more inclined to draw a human or animal than something more technical.

IDEAS 03

My drawings of ideas picked up while I was babysitting my first child in a Swedish playground; patiently waiting for him to play I would let my brain come up with all sorts of associations. Many of my written ideas are in fact generated in a boring situation, while in line at a cashier or in general while waiting for a societal thing to occur. The result is a stream of ideas that are generally enjoyed by viewers even though the irony I use is cynical of the social environment in which they live in. As a matter of fact my drawings are not only the result of human boredom but they show the absurd excess in which progress projects ourselves. Each drawing works as a black-circuit of the social enterprise. While I could relate my creative input to artists with a genuine imagination such as Charlie Chaplin, Walter Lantz and the graffiti artist Blu, I try to stay clear from all other so-called artists wasting their talent in attempting to establish themselves as leading celebrities. As with my other works, there is a reluctance to make art as a means to gain fame and money. Yet the establishment keeps on forcing me to consider making it to an art gallery or out on the street to sell my drawings. In a socialist system too I would have to contextualize my work within an academic discourse and as a result my brain would dry up.



Fig.160 Flier showing me in Berlin. When a student I was part of the “Social Engineering” collective. We dressed up like disabled people wearing sunglasses with cameras or dressing like women carrying a doll with cameras. In this way we filmed the city and then used the footage to re-engineer it with our creativity.

IDEAS 04

Personally speaking I have a particularly intimate relation with drawings. Having had a difficult childhood, I found my peace in drawing. Already at the age of 6 I was making complex depictions of the battles that took place in my native highland during World War I. After one of these drawings won an award, my teacher encouraged my tutors to invest in my talent but they wanted me to become a successful man. To some extent the male character showing up in the drawing resembles this man. Even later on I was not allowed to attend the art academy and had to content myself to become an industrial designer. As an industrial design student however I spent all my free time writing and drawing and painting and eventually made it to Canada to finish my study. There I gave up on industrial design and just pursued more contemporary art forms such as video art. Even as an artist then I was initially set up to be rather technical using clumsy editing machines and big 18 millimeters camera. I have returning to drawing only accidentally. Thinking to different media to documenting different aspects of reality, I came to think of drawing as a way to depict my imagination. It was a logical choice. Today a conceptual artist with a similar prerogative would choose a quicker but less creative medium like artificial intelligence.



Fig.161 Screenshot showing me drawing in the attic of our house in the Netherlands. It is when my children were small and I also drew when they were taking their afternoon nap. The desk light is placed on my left side so as not to create any shadow with my right hand when drawing in the evening.

IDEAS 05

I never had a proper education in drawing techniques. As a teenager I just spent my time drawing in my classmates' agendas, as a way to kill time during school hours. So when the time came and I attended design school I was starkly criticized for my lack of drawing skills. As a matter of fact I am quite bad at reproducing reality in drawings and my strength lies in reproducing my imagination, something that my professors did not appreciate. Overall I have always been a bad student. Whether in drawing or writing or whatever medium I was proposed and told to perfect, I have always been stubbornly developing my own style which is rough but has enabled me to develop my own creative language. Whether I wrote a novel or made a painting I have always been heavily downplayed. There is something within me that does not conform to the norm. Some people find it hard to confront my artistic production and I just felt there was something wrong with me. At one point I realized that these people lack imagination and they are conformists seeking to experience only what they have already experienced without any novelty. By pursuing my own style I was able to create a the culture I have been naturally inclined to develop. It is a type of folk culture without any of the pretentious of the mainstream.



Fig. 162 Screenshot showing me drawing while waiting for a plane. In my short life as an academic I had to do a lot of traveling. As result I was often drawing in public places under the eyes of others. I felt antiquated since in these places people at the most type on their devices. Later I was glad to give up commuting and improve the my drawing skill.

IDEAS 06

To this day, sitting in the evening to draw relaxes me. It removed all my gray feelings especially when I feel locked up in daily routines. This practice resembles that of a Chinese elder training in traditional calligraphy or painting with a brush; I am not a professional artist beautifully representing details. In this respect drawing is for me a performative act. Westerners find these drawings childish. They are used to see pretentious drawings and paintings from churches or calendars and magazines. Looking at my drawing as a ritual it is possible to consider how I have in fact developed a highly associative brain; I can take two things that are completely unrelated and make something peculiar out of them, something that is subtle and no artificial intelligence will ever be able to achieve. If by now anyone with the aid of artificial intelligence can create an amazing illustration that is better than reality, this illustration will always lack real genius. Anyway I find it hard to believe that any artificial intelligence can assess what is genius and what is not. Already common persons have a hard time to assess it not because they are dumb but because they come from a conservative middle class background. In fact my drawings are better received by people who have managed to escape this background.