



## Prayer page

2005



To activate *Prayer page*:

Place your right hand onto the opposite page, palm facing down, in accordance with the image. Place your left hand on the cover, bringing your palms together. Think about what you think.

**Finding comfort in an uncomfortable imagination**

**A catalogue of ideas  
by Ana Prvački**

**With texts by**

**Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev**

**Raimundas Malašauskas**

**Chus Martínez**

**Bala Starr**

Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore

LASALLE College of the Arts



## Soap soup

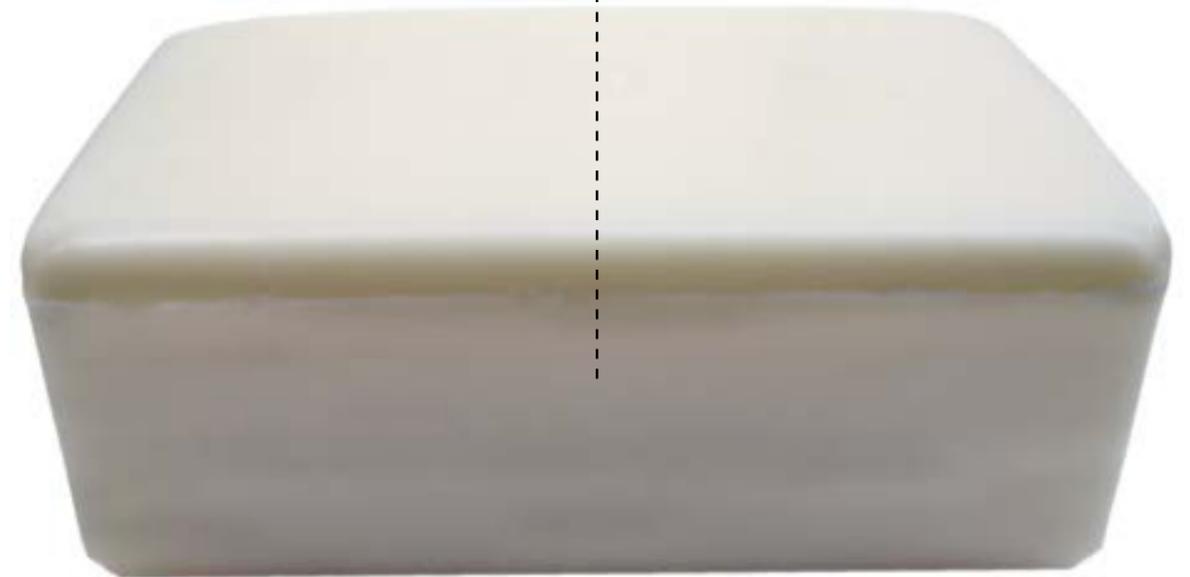
2005

Sold in supermarkets as well as beauty shops, this bar of soap/soup can be used as a body cleanser and a nourishing meal, two-in-one. Natural, fun and convenient! Add water and mix, in the shower or in the kitchen!

\*Add ginger, coriander, mushrooms and lemongrass for a delicious soup!

soap

soup



**Ways to protect the sensitive audience  
(Misting frost glass variation—  
you have only 60 seconds to see it)**

2015



## Re-robbing the Monkey Forest

2010-15

Well-known for their dexterity and craftiness, resident monkeys of the Sacred Monkey Forest Sanctuary in Padangtegal in Ubud, Bali, have been accumulating a fortune over the years. The macaque monkeys have been stealing designer sunglasses, purses, wallets, passports and jewellery from tourists and snatching items from souvenir shops.

Considering that the forest has up to 15,000 visitors per month, or approximately 180,000 per year, the amount of stolen goods is considerable. A re-robbing of the forest would be a lucrative endeavour. When creating a plan of action one should keep in mind that the monkeys are smart and competent as well as strong and aggressive when provoked and cannot be bribed with food. Perhaps an exciting and colourful performance could be staged outside the forest, attracting all of the monkeys' attention and making it safe and non-violent to enter the forest and reclaim the goods without an altercation.



## Headstand with camera obscura variation

2005-15



Fig. A



Fig. B

Headstanding is the simplest, most efficient way of adjusting the mind and body to changes of perspective. Besides its many health benefits, headstanding is a total experience of gravitational inversion which also allows us to invert our ideas on various subjects, stability, surface and fear among them.

If we calculate the surface covered when standing on our feet (Fig. A) and then the surface covered when standing on our head (Fig. B) we will note that the surface covered in Fig. B is much larger than in Fig. A, therefore implying that standing on our head is the preferred position.

For *Headstand with camera obscura variation*, wear a long and loose black dress with a hole at eye level.

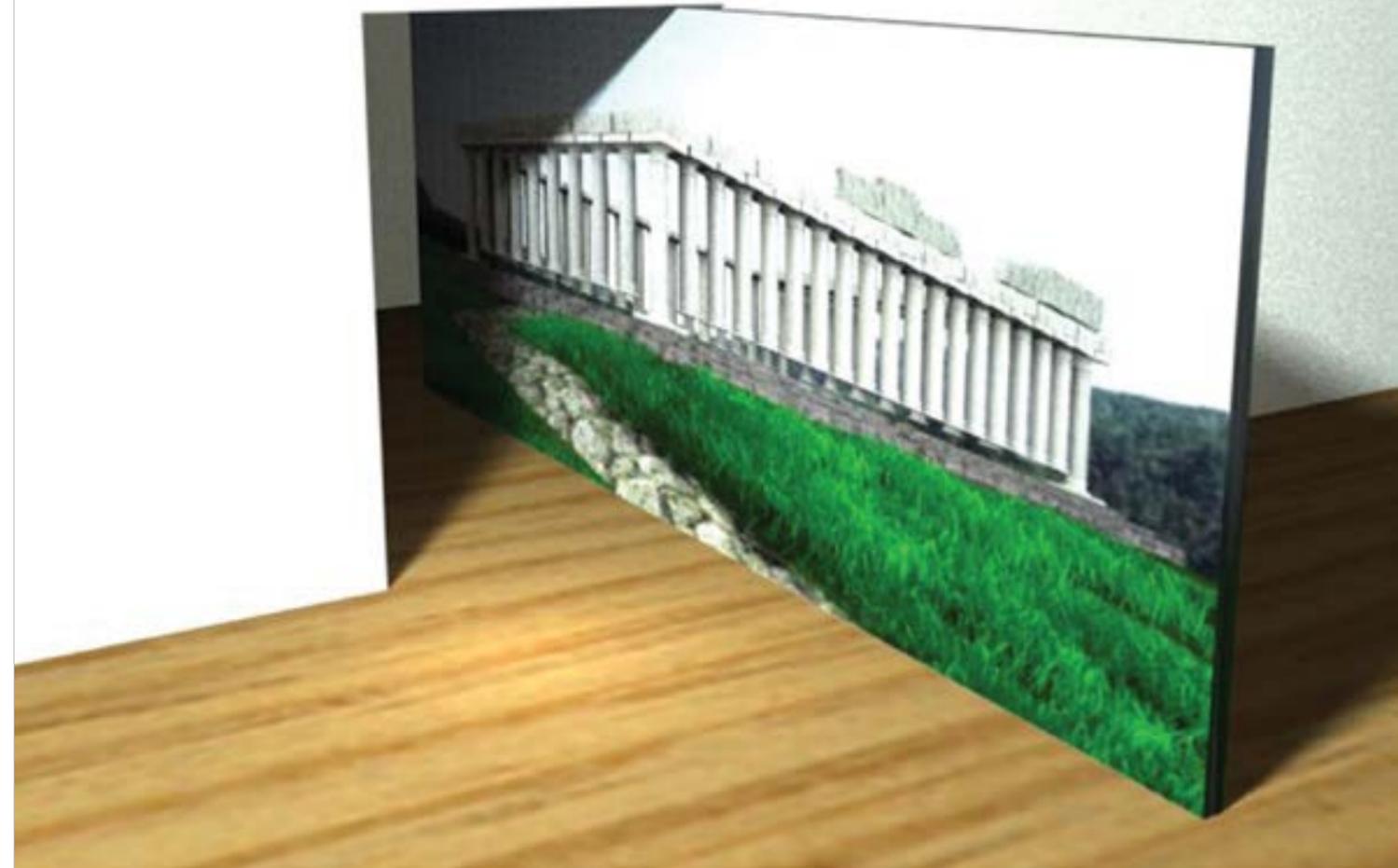
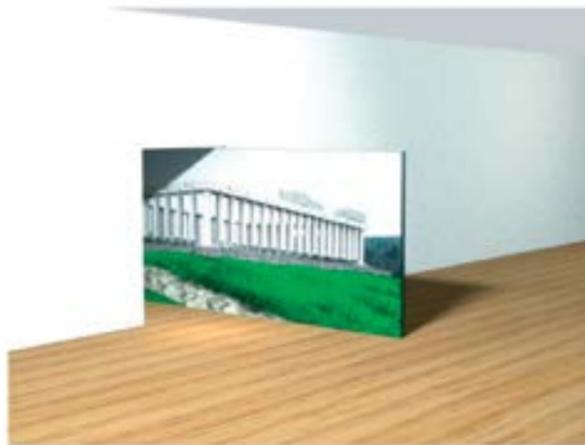




## Built not to fit

2005

1. Choose the appropriate exhibition venue.
2. Measure the door leading to the space where the painting is to be viewed.
3. Stretch the painting in such a way that it flares at least 10 cm on one end.
4. Try to get the painting into the space, give up, laugh and invite all your friends to come and see it.

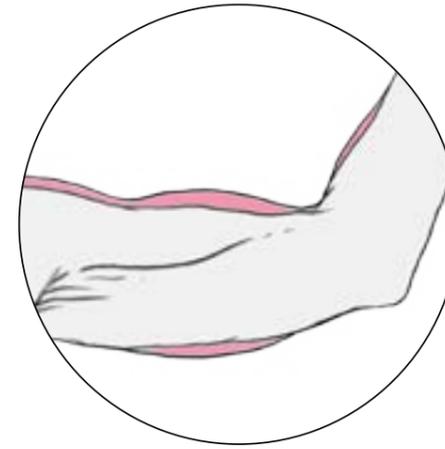


# Healthy mind in a healthy body

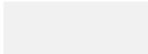
2010

Develop both mind and body with a couple of springs attached to any hard-cover book.

Physical evidence of knowledge:



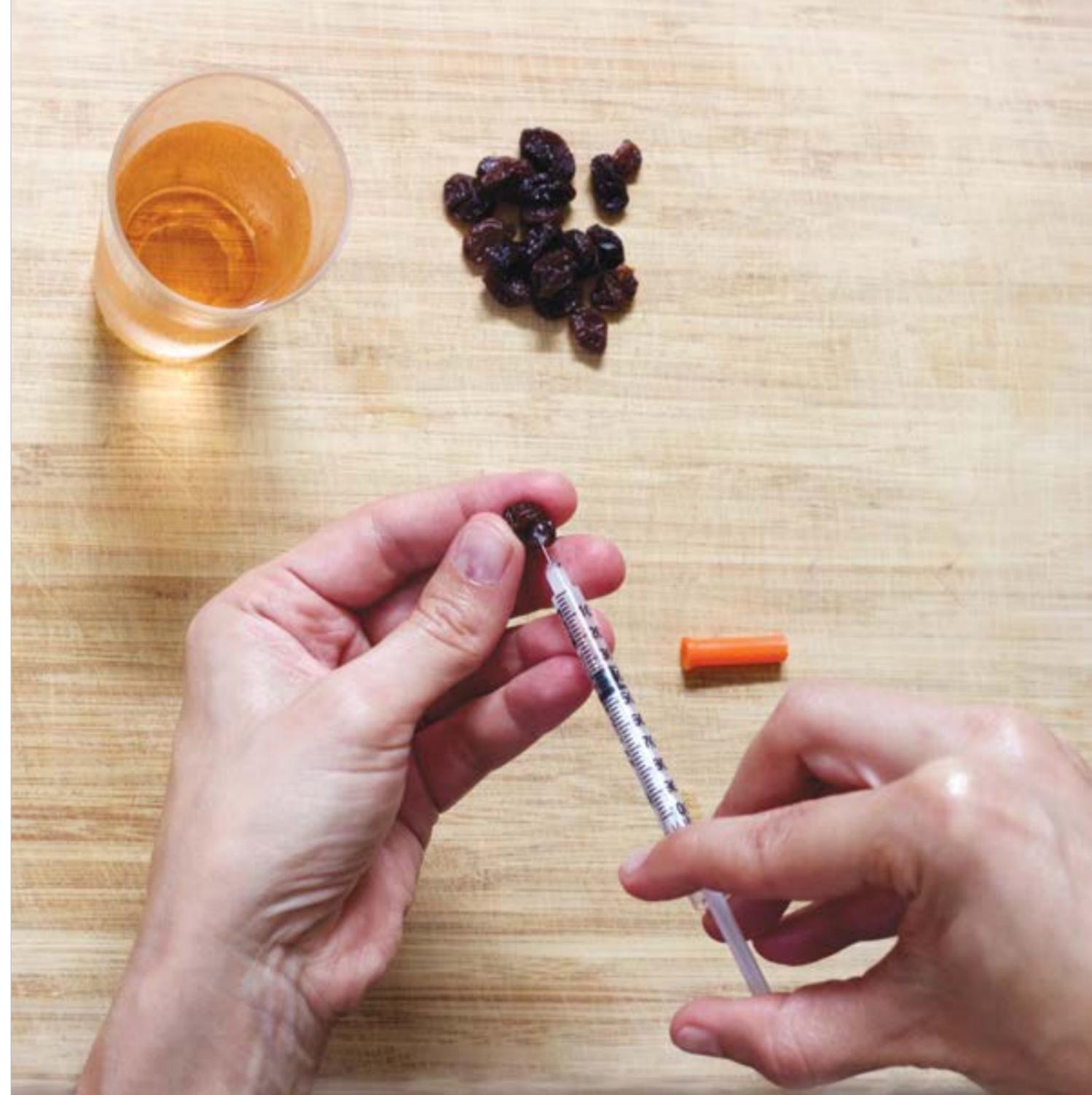
 heavy reader

 light reader



**#raisin #grape #botox #cocktail**

2015



Attempt to revive a raisin back into a grape with a shot of rosé.

## DR DJ

2005

Feel it come into one ear and out the other.

Tuning forks bring your body, nervous system, muscle tone and organs into balance. By tapping the tuning forks, pure musical intervals based on precise mathematical proportions are produced. This is known as Pythagorean tuning.

CLICK AND FORKUS POROUS!

Experience the *DR DJ*! The physical body will actually re-posture itself to hold the proportion and sound correctly, creating an alignment with the ethereal.

- Enhances your sense of strength and motivation, self-identity, vitality and radiance and promotes enthusiasm, assertiveness and determination.
- Promotes emotional tranquility, softness, trust, intuition, enhances feelings and the feminine.



## Divination and navigation cocktail

2014

The compass was initially designed for divination before it was used for navigation. This is a drink that encourages you to find yourself rather than lose yourself. It literally gives direction, adjusts one's perspective, grounds and gives a sense of location and alignment. The ingredients include precious herbs, distilled essences of the earth, minerals and clay. Instead of an olive or a lemon rind, a compass\* serves as the ultimate garnish.

\*A bag napkin accompanies the compass so the guest can take it along.

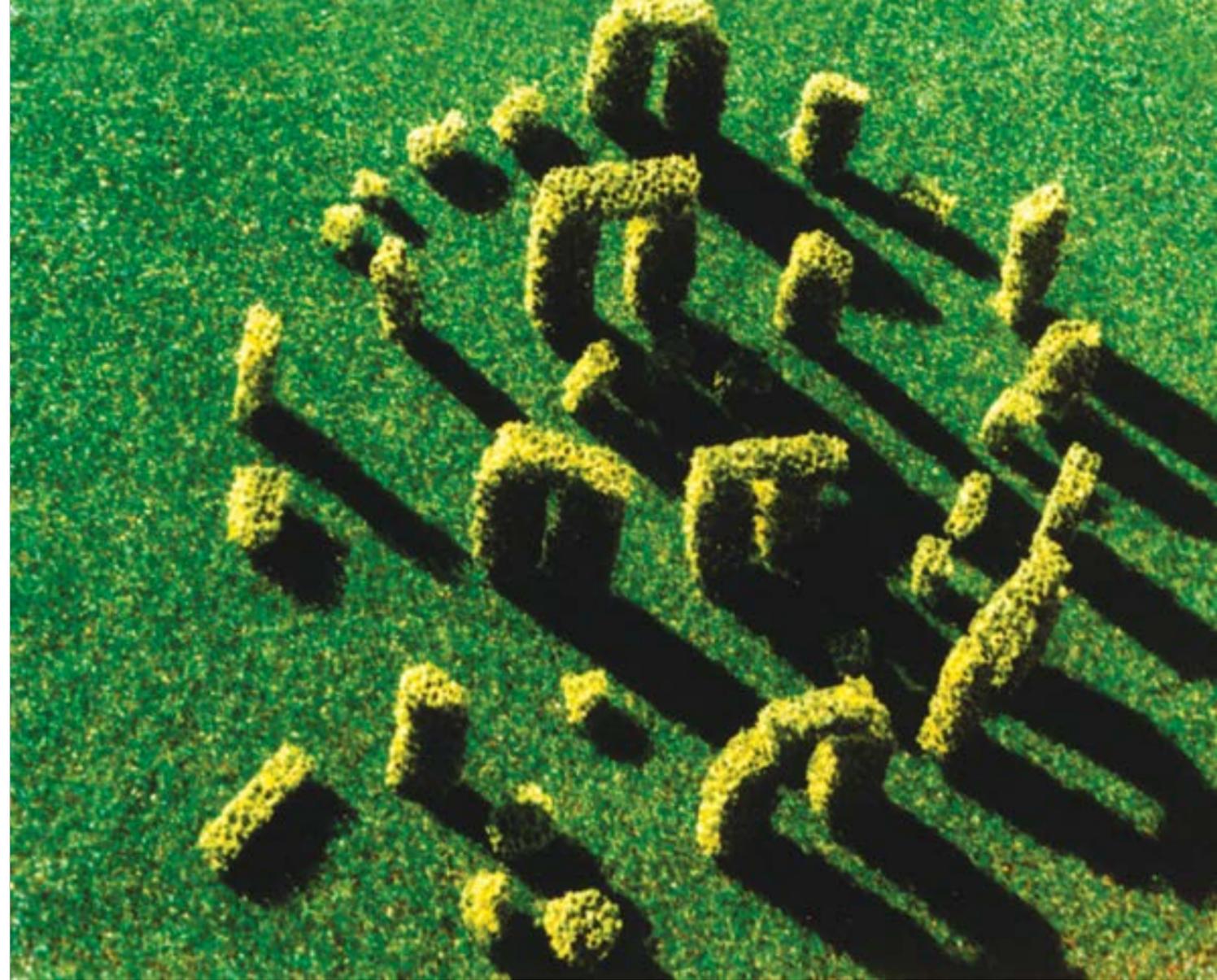
As the drink is served by the artist, questions are raised: Where are we? What is our position? How do we align ourselves? Where is the magnetic core?



## Hedgehenge

2002

This garden design is the ultimate fence, which promises not only to protect but also to bring tradition and history to any garden. Unlike Stonehenge, which requires only protection, *Hedgehenge* demands high maintenance. It is a hedge that is abundant and always growing, therefore needing frequent pruning so as to maintain a form adequate to its proper function. *Hedgehenge* is a hands-on experience in gardening as well as astronomy.



## Exquisite corpse punch bowl

2014

25–50 characters (writers, curators, artists) are invited to choose one flavour/ingredient (spice, herb) that is important to them with the idea of making a cocktail of all the suggested elements.

An experiment in alchemy and synesthesia, the *Exquisite corpse punch bowl* cocktail is a sampling of cultural producers' tastes, addressing tastefulness, literally.

The ingredients would be used in minimal and symbolic amounts (a grain of salt, a leaf of lavender, a dot of pepper) mixed in a spirit base with the expert guidance of a mixologist. The input of the mixologist and herbalist regarding how to make a successful cocktail based on this idea would somewhat dictate the protocol of the evening and the process of making the cocktail corpse. The questions to the mixologist would be: Use liquid or powdered essences? What would be the spirit base? Shaking or stirring?

The ingredients would be shaken or stirred in a large shaker by a very large person.

The collection of ingredients would be a mysterious but joint effort—the drink will be 'built' collectively as a kind of surrealist parlor game. The ingredients chosen should be kept secret until after the drink is served. Present the cocktail with all the names of contributors and their chosen ingredients? I kind of like the outcome being sensory rather than visual or text-based.

## In-flight fundraising

2010-15



After take-off, get out of your seat and proceed down the aisle with a makeshift begging bowl.



## Results in a riddle

2006



Memo  
10 September 2015

Dear Employees,

As per discussion at our last staff meeting, in regards to the final semester results, all future mailed student results will be presented in the form of riddles, quizzes or puzzles, as advised by our consultants.

The aim of this new venture is to further stimulate the intellectual capacity of our students, to continuously challenge and provoke them, as well as to create some excitement and suspense around our department.

For further information and instruction as to how to construct the result riddles, contact your supervisors.

Regards,

**\*STAFF MUST NOT DRAW ANY RESULTS**

**Ways to protect the sensitive audience  
(Fig tree variation)**

2015

If there is an explicit artwork which you are concerned could be offensive or upsetting to visitors, place a lush and beautiful fig tree in front of it.



**Ways to protect the sensitive audience  
(Puddle variation)**

2015

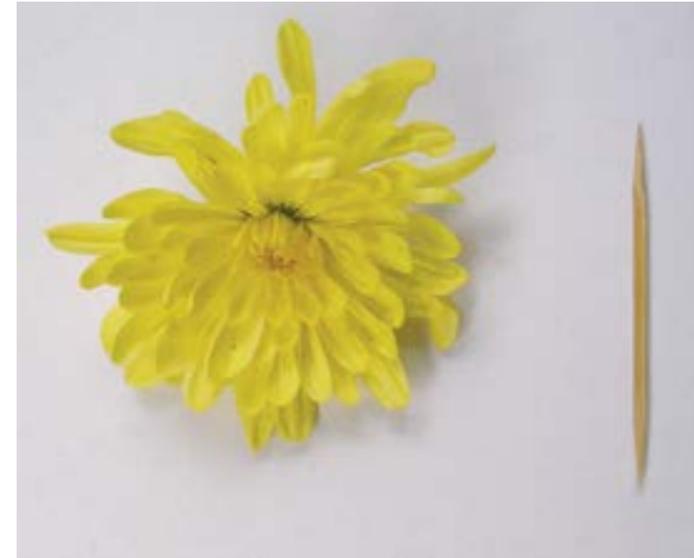
Where there is an artwork which you do not wish the audience to see up close it is possible to create a large puddle in front of it, making it difficult for the viewer to see details.



## Cute pick

2005

A flower behind one's ear and a toothpick between one's teeth are symbols of contentment, joy, rest, leisure and idleness. In a spontaneous and positive manner, the two combine to produce a banal, happy, DIY ready-made; a temporary object that provides us with a basic utility for picking teeth, the banality of decorating our hair, and the sheer amusement of the situation itself. *Cute pick* is free, easy to make, and a wonderful conversation starter. Good for your teeth, great for your look!



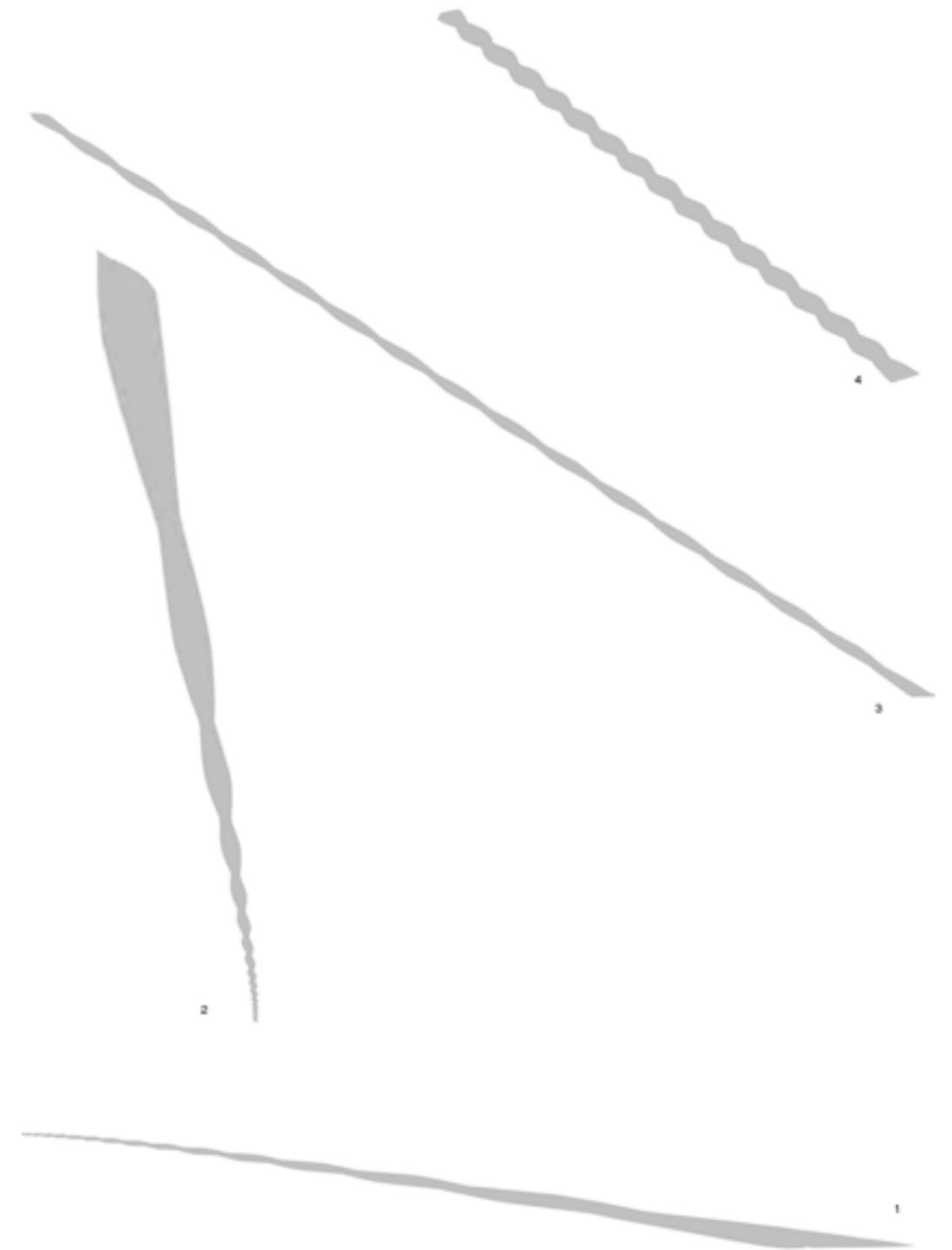
## Stealing shadows

2007–15

When Constantin Brâncuși left Rodin's workshop and declined the great master's invitation to become his assistant, Brâncuși allegedly said, 'Nothing grows under the shade of a great tree'.

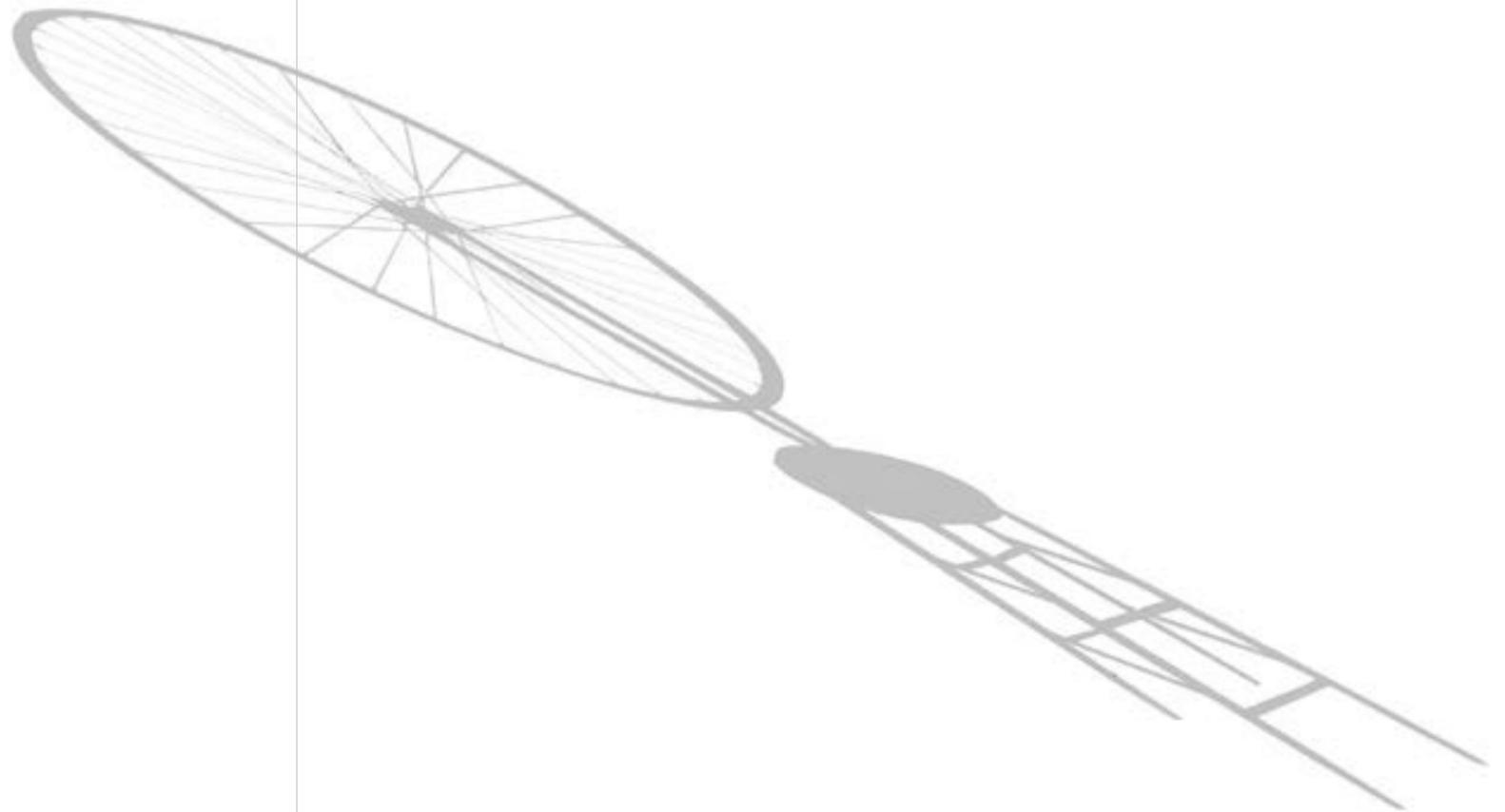
Almost a hundred years later, referencing, exploring and exploiting shadows remain part of the discourse. Shadows haunt and propel the spirit of today's dematerialized art production and preoccupation with ephemera and mischievous urges. Stealing shadows of famous masterpieces is both tactical and economical. You will come across shadows throughout this publication.

The shadow is to be reenacted without the original 3D object, and at a scale and angle befitting its presence in the given location and site. Shadow variations are a natural occurrence. The shadow can be easily customized and adapted, however its outline must be consistent with the exact presence of the original. The lines should have sharp, clear and recognizable edges. The value of the shadow is to be estimated at 1% or 0.1% of the original 3D work, and is to be sold or auctioned at the masterpiece's current market price.



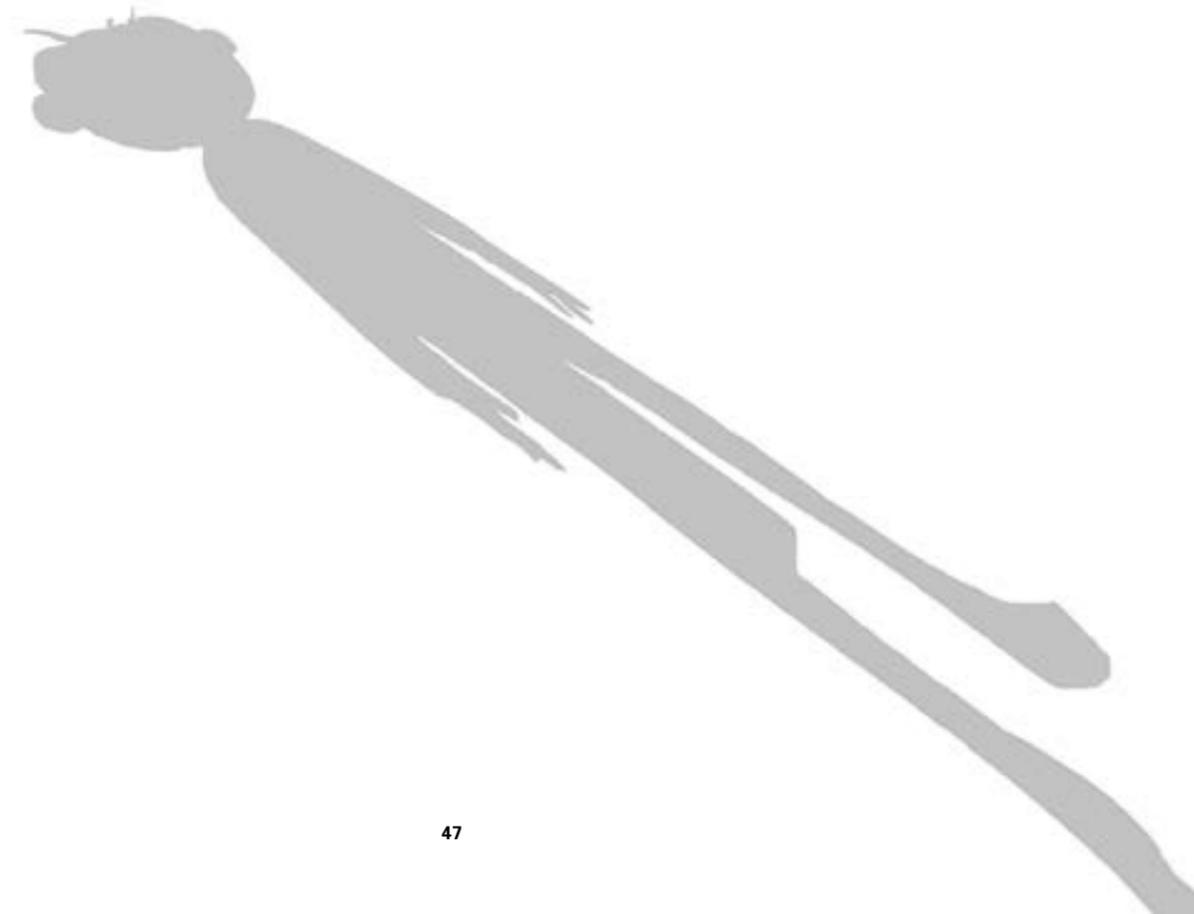
**Stealing shadows  
(Duchamp)**

2007-15



**Stealing shadows  
(McCarthy)**

2007-15



**Stealing shadows  
(Bourgeois)**

2007-15



**Stealing shadows  
(Murakami)**

2007-15



**Stealing shadows  
(Lucas)**

2007-15



**Stealing shadows**  
**(Koons)**

2007–15



## Spinach-embroidered napkin

2014

When you or someone you love has spinach between their teeth, use this hand-embroidered napkin for convenience and discretion.



## Family tree hypnosis and a transportation duet

2012–15

If you say GREAT, and/or GRAND about 70,000 times, you arrive at your first mother. Imagine a hypnotic durational piece, starting with a soprano voice and ending with a basso profondo singing in the full human range, going down the musical scale and down our family tree. The experience of history and ancestry condensed in a day!

In case a romantic sound performance is needed, select a famous duet for a soprano and a baritone, perhaps by Donizetti or Puccini. The scene takes place in Venice, Italy. Each singer is on a different vaporetto, starting at a different location but crossing paths only for a moment along their journey. The longing of the lovers (and the other passengers) is briefly pacified before the vaporettos continue in their directions. This staging can be applied to any other transportation method.

## Snow/Salt

2005

Carefully compare the two images, Fig. A and Fig. B.  
Decide which one is the salt and which one is the snow.  
Wonder why.



Fig. A



Fig. B

## Post-Apis

2010

The Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) phenomenon has been affecting bees all over the world and causing the disappearance en masse of *Apis mellifera* (western honey bee).

*Post-Apis* is a new honey banking system. It offers a customized and personalized security system for honey which acts as both protection of, and investment in, liquid gold. A safe deposit box or private safe provides the ideal solution to keep your valuable honey stored with maximum security while also remaining close at hand. Easily accessible and custom-catered to different lifestyle demands, local honey\* is placed in safe deposit boxes vaults around the world and/or in a private safe in your home or office.

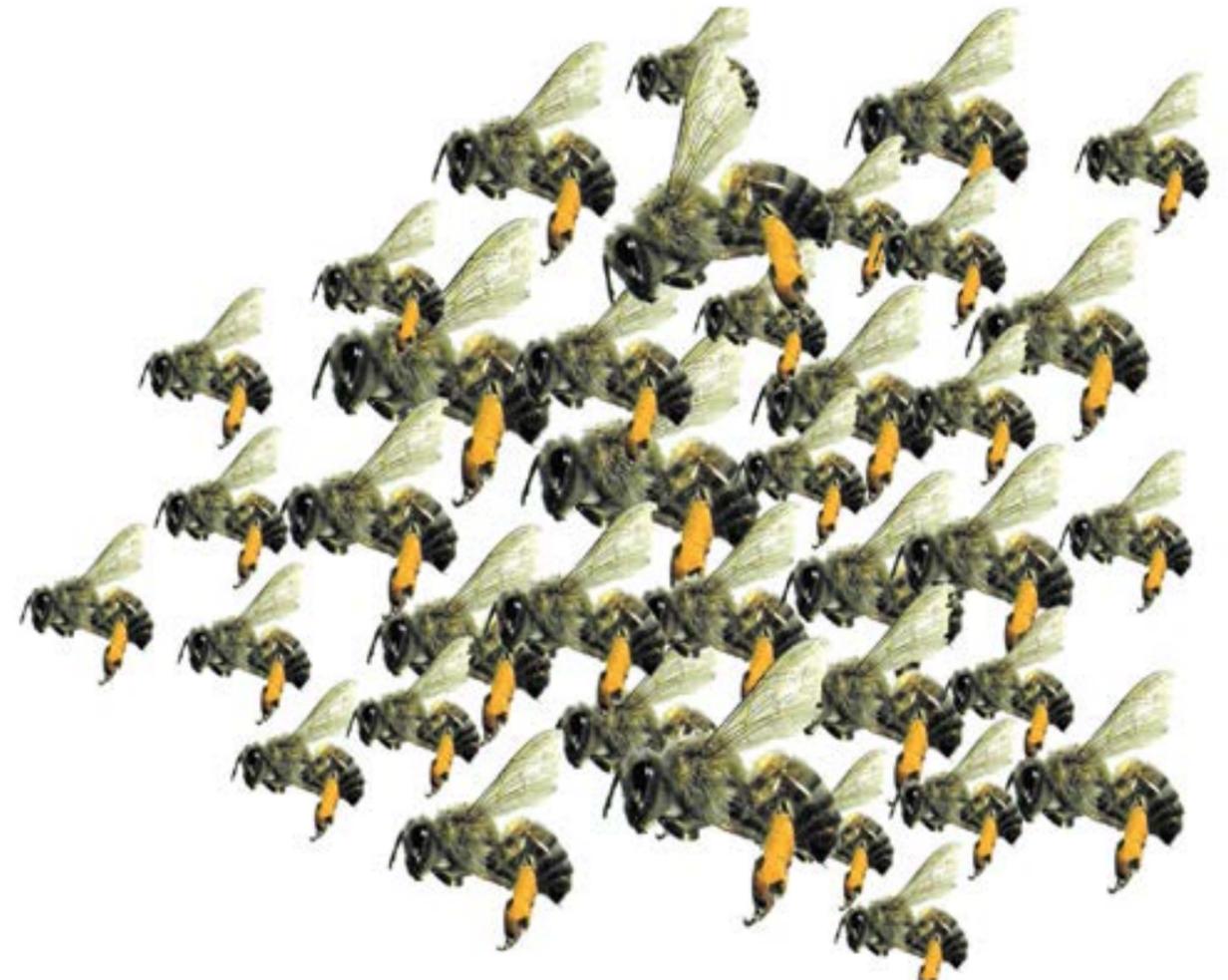
It is recommended that all households start to safeguard their local, organic honey using a padlock and/or a special hiding place and also to consider the benefits of including honey in wills and trusts. *Post-Apis* investors and collectors can be assured that with correct storage, properly selected honey can last up to 2000 years.

Bank arrangements can be made in chosen locations and clients will be assisted with selecting the most suitable local honey and the proper storage method. *Post-Apis* home safes can either be installed as wall safes with a custom painting included to cover the safe, or as a freestanding safe with a customized sculptural enclosure.

The painting concealing the wall safe will reference depictions of bees and honey such as the *Portrait of Napoleon I in his coronation robes* by Lefèvre or Albert Dürer's *Cupid the honey thief*. Themes of pollination, politics and love may also be explored.

The sculptural enclosure of the freestanding safe option will be based on the beekeeper's hive. The beehive sculpture can be customized in either antique or contemporary styles.

\*Local honey is honey raised closest to one's place of residence. It has proven most efficient for fighting allergies and boosting the immune system. Organic honey is preferred, meaning the apiary is surrounded with at least four miles of organic farmland. Ana Prvački will establish contact with local organic beekeepers to assure the highest quality honey.



## Post-Apis

continued

2010



### PRECIOUS HONEY OAT COOKIES

#### Ingredients:

2 cups ground oats

1 cup quick oats (for chewier version soak regular oats overnight in ½ cup soy milk)

¼ tsp sea salt

¼ cup HONEY

¼ cup vanilla or plain soy milk, or other non-dairy milk

2 tbsp ghee

Chopped dates, raisins or nuts (optional). Keep in mind that if there is no pollination almonds and raisins may not be available. As they are perishable foods they can be stored in the safe for only up to two years.

#### Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F (176°C). Oil the baking dish with ghee. In a large bowl, combine all the dry ingredients. Add the wet ingredients into the dry mixture stirring until well combined. Transfer the mixture to the baking dish. Either press down into an even surface and cut into bars or make cookies. Bake for 20 minutes, then remove and let cool.

To soften or sweeten the oat cookies dunk them into pure honey or tea sweetened with honey.



## A proposal for a money-laundering ATM

2007

This is a call for fragrance-dispensing money ATMs (automated teller machines)! Having manually laundered over \$8000 and interviewed more than 300 individuals across a wide demographic group (from financial advisers to artists) we found that over 90% of those asked expressed demand for fragrant and clean banknotes.

Preferred scents polled were lavender and lemon (70%), followed by pine and cedar (20%), freshly cut grass and Downy fabric softener. In the survey, only two respondents were of the opinion that money should maintain its grimy/unwashed smell.

Functioning as both a campaign for hygiene and a public art project, these specially modified ATMs would also facilitate scent branding for a commissioning or sponsoring company. Scent branding is a powerful method of advertising and promotion, and money is the most circulated 'surface' there is—over a trillion is exchanged every day. However, it is illegal to alter it in any way, except for its scent!

Imagine going to a Gucci store and withdrawing \$300 of Envy-scented money! Or to Marc Jacobs and withdrawing \$500 in Daisy or Cucumber! Or using a MONA-scented ATM? The fragrance would be triggered every time one's wallet were opened and the money passed on.

\*The ATMs would be customised with the help of an engineer adding a scent-dispensing element.

\*An antibacterial emulsion would be added to each fragrance used.



## Crossword puzzle

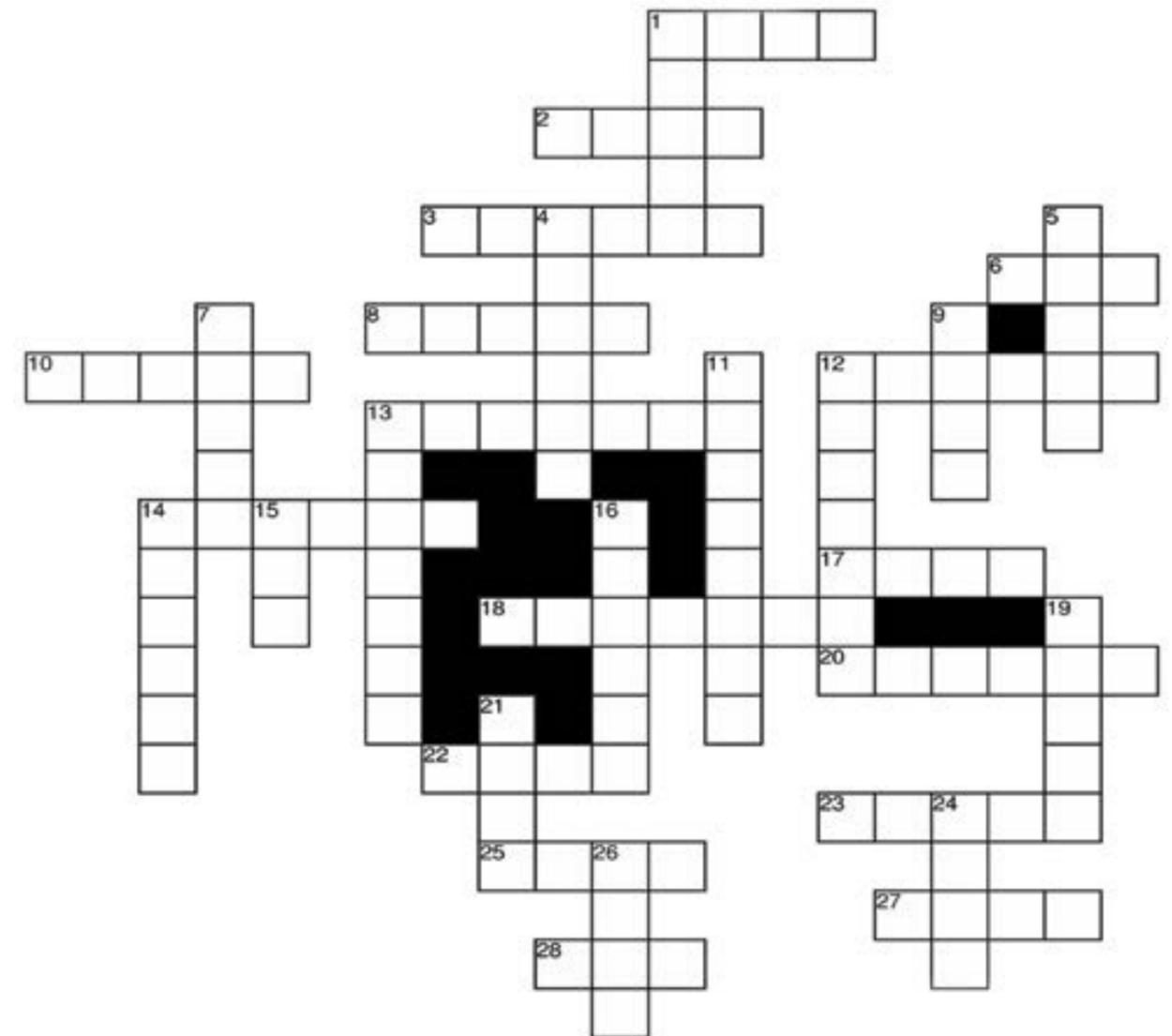
2015

### Across

1. Word that is both a synonym and an antonym for 'blow'
2. Take quickly
3. Covered with viscid matter
6. A burning sensation when tasted
8. Just a bit wet
10. Pulsate steadily
12. Dripping, in a way
13. Shiver reaction
14. Dracula's target
17. Touch with tongue
18. Rich in resources
20. Desire of a little sucker
22. Freely transfer the possession of (something) to (someone)
23. Gustatory sensation
25. Tender or yielding to pressure
27. Solid, firm, and resistant to pressure; not easily broken, bent, or pierced
28. Covered or saturated with water or another liquid

### Down

1. Slap with one's open hand or a flat object, especially on the buttocks
4. The inner side or surface of a thing
5. Where a river meets the ocean
7. Make contact, get in ...
9. Far beneath the surface
11. What melting icicles do
12. Engorged body part
13. Tremble in pleasure
14. To poke some sensitive part of the body so as to excite spasmodic laughter
15. Apply friction
16. A potent man
19. Go down smoothly
21. A projection of the pelvis and upper thigh bone on each side of the body
24. Strike with the open palm
26. Intuitive sense



## Public warmth

2005

A 'life-size', approx. 150 x 150 cm colour photograph of a radiator or heater printed on waterproof vinyl sticker.

\*Training the body clock and internal heaters.

\*Jet lag and adaptation benefits.

\*Weather and the placebo effect.

\*Impossible yet generous.

\*Circulating and emitting imaginary warmth.

\*Immediate visual and climatic impact.

\*Promise of inside outside.



**Fig leaf curtain  
(So we can go naked)**

2015

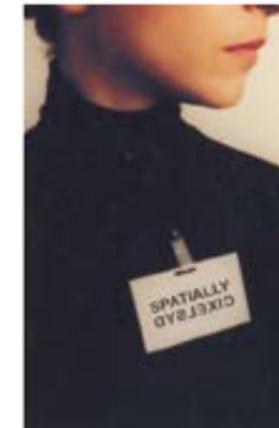


## Spatial dyslexia

2002

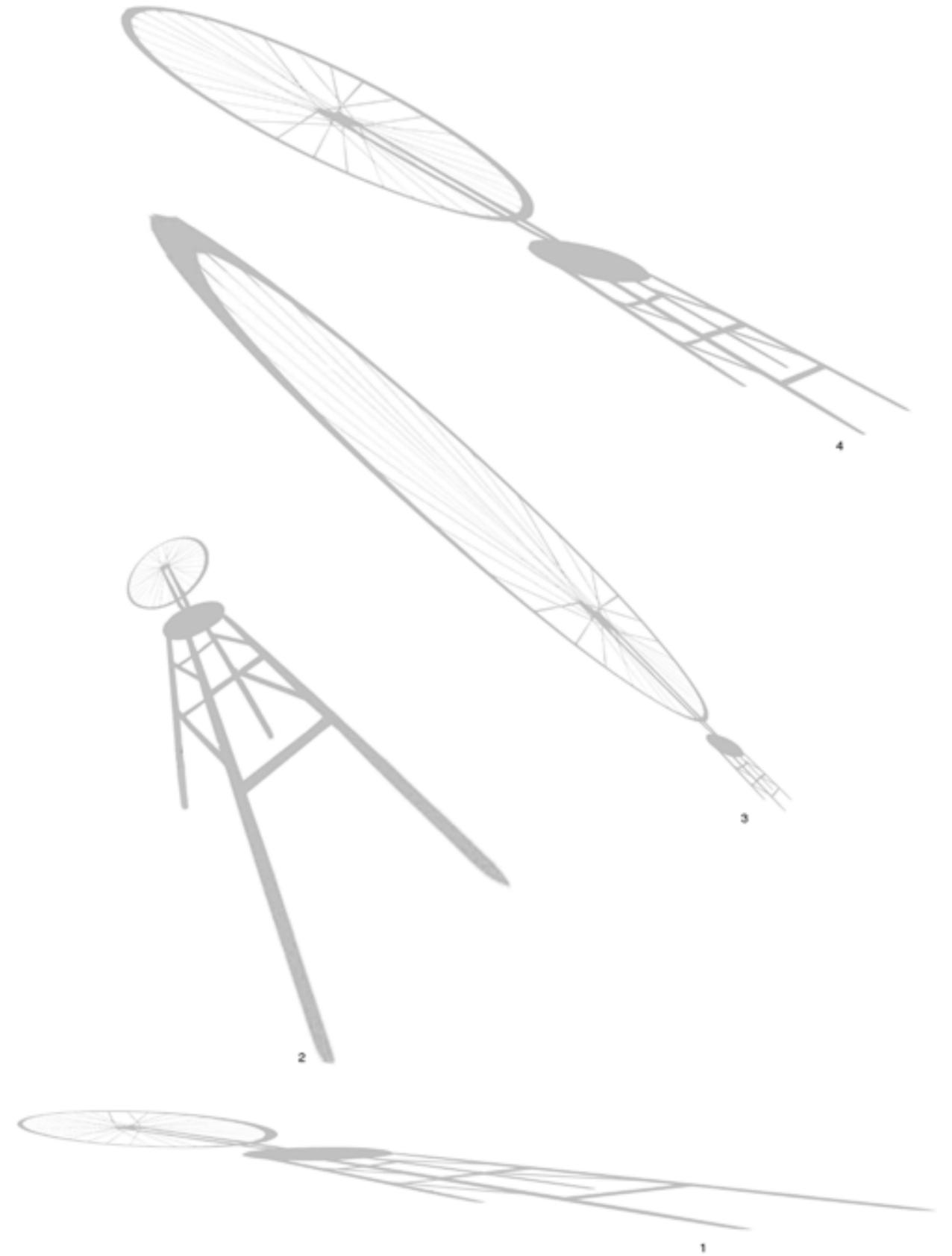
'Dyslexic people are visual, multidimensional thinkers.'  
—dyslexiagift.com

Spatial dyslexia impairs our ability to decode and relate ourselves in space. We are unable to logically process the environment around us so as to inhabit it in a logical manner. Spatial dyslexia observes the difficulty in managing the physical world, the inability to read space in all of its dimensions. This form of dyslexia should be treated as a New-Age ailment, an urban illness that overcomes us in a world that is physically, or literally, too small, too wide, too high, too narrow. A world in which each move is fatal for the accident prone. To prevent and overcome confusion and inconvenience, those suffering from spatial dyslexia can now use these easy and convenient tags to inform those around them of their disability.



**Stealing shadows  
(Duchamp variations)**

2007-15



## Book burning

2005

In case you worry about history ... This DIY book burning, step-by-step procedure will help you deal with posterity-related anxiety. Be prepared and use caution with matches.



Prepare new notebook, a piece of tape and some matches.



Open the notebook in the middle.



Tear a match.



Place match on chosen page.



Peel off tape.



Tape match to page, leaving a few millimetres on top of the match.



Look.



The notebook is ready for use.



Start writing your ideas and thoughts in your new notebook.



Use it daily and spontaneously, without editing.



When the notebook is used and finished, leave it aside for some time.



One day, find it and look through it.



Watch it burn.



Keep watching.



You feel embarrassed by your writing and you decide to get rid of it. Prepare for easy DIY book burning.



Strike the match.



Make sure all the pages have started burning successfully.



Keep watching.



Make sure the match is burning.



Watch the notebook start to burn.

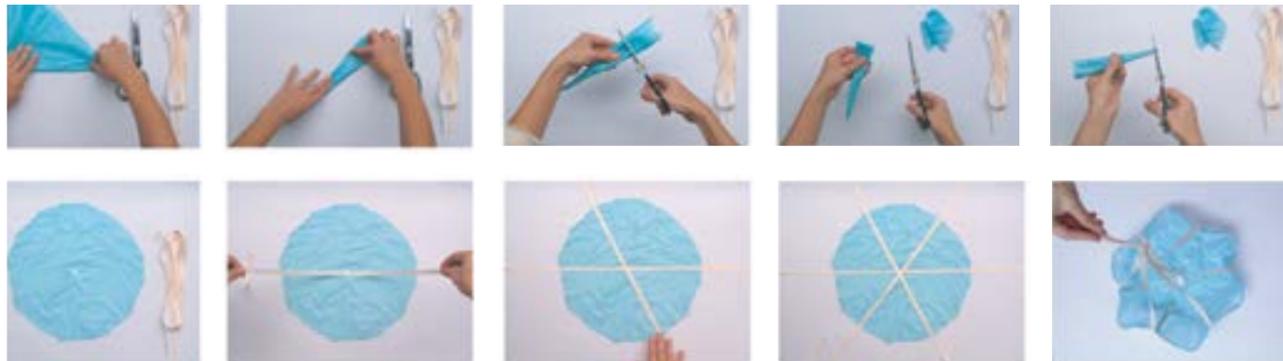


You may decide to keep the ashes.

## DIY prêt-à-paracute

2005

*DIY prêt-à-paracute* is a custom-designed skirt that gives its wearer the option of jumping out of any window, any time. Catering to anti-social sentiments, fear of crowds, paranoia or simply helping one deal with security and safety issues in emergency situations, *DIY prêt-à-paracute* is a skirt transformed into a parachute in a few easy steps. A gadget and a fashion item, *DIY prêt-à-paracute* promises trend and style as well as speed and movement for any occasion.





## Friends and family waver

2005-15



*Friends and family waver* is a hand tool that magnifies expressions and emotions, helping those around us read and assess our physical and psychological state from an appropriate distance.

Greeting card

2005

**GREETINGS AND SALUTATIONS FROM**

**SINGAPORE**  
(write city/country visiting)

on the scale from 1 to 10 **SINGAPORE** is:  
(write city/country visiting)

	10	10	8	10	5	10	2	1	5	10	10	2	7	10
<small>(fill the box with the appropriate number, 1-10, be honest.)</small>	1. weather;	2. living standards (comfort level);	3. food;	4. transport;	5. sites;	6. hygiene;	7. emotion;	8. nostalgia;	9. people and relating;	10. shopping;	11. scent and sound;	12. pleasure;	13. value for money;	14. energy level;

front

This is a standard ananatural production postcard which allows you to inform your loved ones about exactly how you are. It can be used anywhere, anytime.

Excellent for tourism, marketing and anthropological purposes.

other comments and remarks:

MAY 29TH 2005  
WORKING ON SUNDAY!

ANA PRVAČKI  
338 DAHAN RD.  
759691  
SINGAPORE

  
ananatural production 2005  
<http://www.ananatural.com>

back

## Spring smoke

2005

Expanding our lung capacity to inhale better and more fully, and ideas for novel and innovative smoking styles are morbid propositions, like invitations for positive and productive self-destruction. *Spring smoke*, the new menthol, provides the glamour and pleasure of smoking turned on its head. A cigarette holder made of a spring onion leaf is a natural, cheap, easy, even wholesome way to consume nicotine. It promises improvement through humorous and effective filtering to diminish the damage of indulgence. Like a toy, *Spring smoke* offers healthy smoking in a consequence-free world: improvement through imagination and innovation.



You will need:  
1 medium-sized spring onion (wash and pat dry)  
1 cigarette.



Choose a green leaf wide in diameter and cut a 1 cm piece.



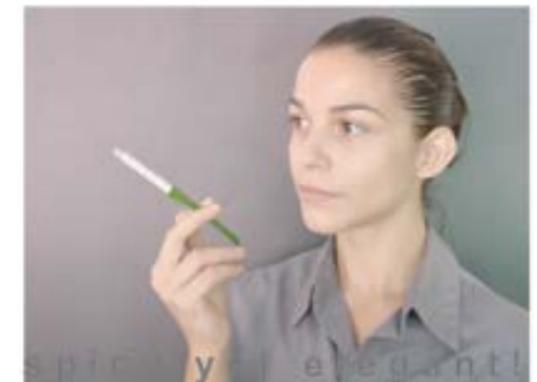
Gently slide the cigarette into the green leaf.



Use the bulb and the rest of the leaves for your salad.



Enjoy spring smoke.  
Caution: Do not reuse or eat the spring holder.



# WALLET PORTRAITS TODAY!

2012



## Superstructure Island

2005

*Superstructure Island* is a theme park which combines a selection of insufferable tasks found in myth and literature into a series of activities for the whole family. Packed with psychological danger and mental challenges, this theme park is an alternative adventure-realm which will test your endurance and courage. Attractions include rides, rollercoasters, hunts and expeditions. *Superstructure Island* offers full-day as well as overnight packages. Overnight packages include accommodation, activities of your choice, three delicious and difficult meals\* as well as shopping and spa services. After the intense day at *Superstructure Island*, Wagner's Disco is the perfect choice for a thoughtful and profound night out.

For tickets, reservations and flight or fairy bookings to the *Superstructure Island* call 1-800 DIY HOLIDAYS. Individual return swimming tickets available.

\*24-hour Sisyphus Self-Service Restaurants are located throughout the island.

\*The island's ATM machines fees are subject to change without notice.

\*BYO water, soap with soap dish, sun hat, umbrella, sturdy shoes, insect repellent and flashlight.

\*DO NOT bring Walkman, electronic games or candy. No narcotics, alcohol or smoking.

\*No customer service or suggestion box available.



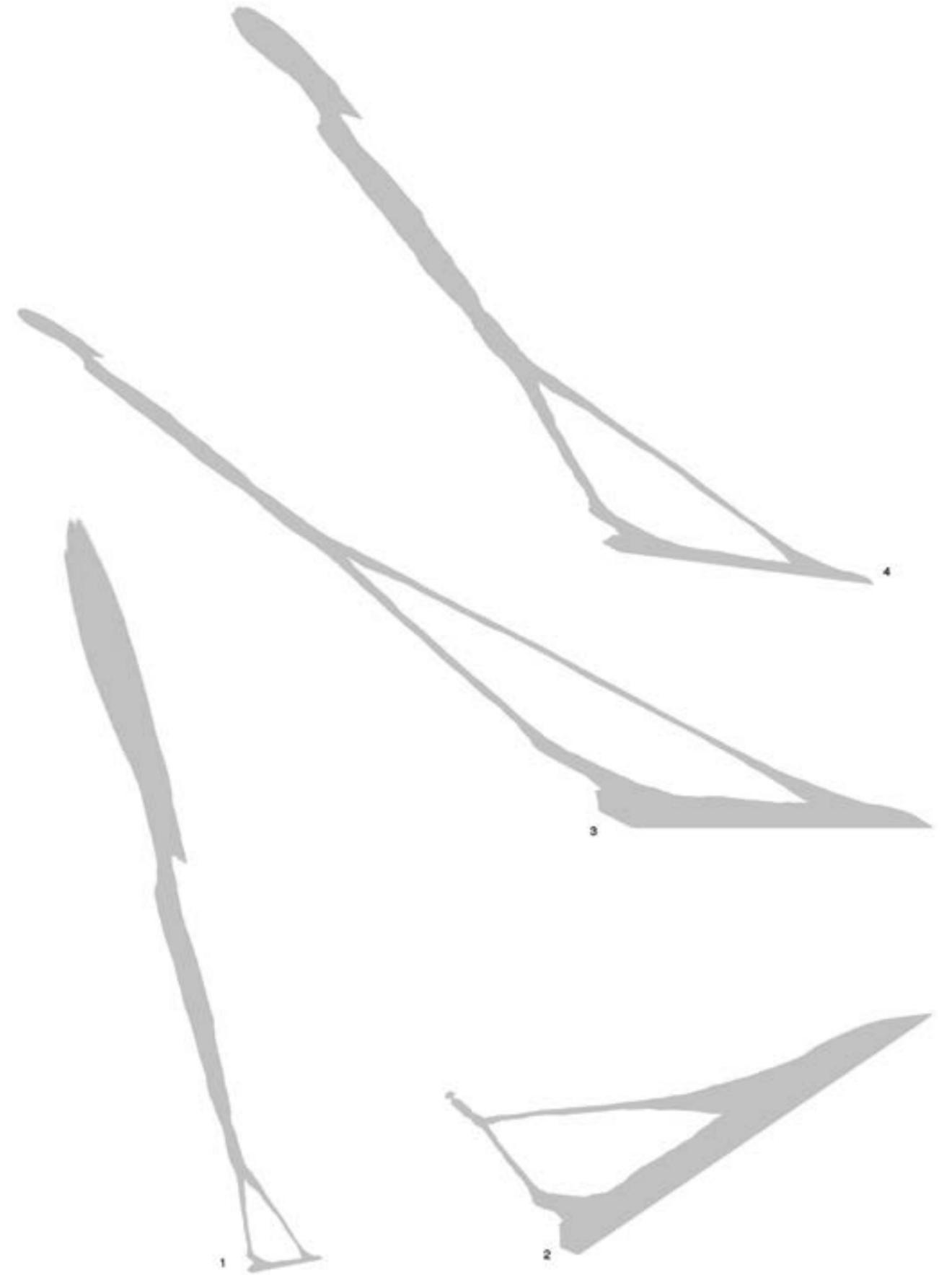


Attractions map:

- |                                      |                             |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Kafka's Mansion                   | 16. Kali's B&B              |
| 2. Marxist Princess Coaster          | 17. Icarus Freefall Falls   |
| 3. Torment Tornado                   | 18. Harpies' Bird Park      |
| 4. Mystery Obstacles                 | 19. Cycloptics              |
| 5. ID Shapeshifters Challenge        | 20. Oedipus Family Parade   |
| 6. Oblomov's Expedition              | 21. Lady Macbeth's Day Care |
| 7. Tantalus Souvenirs                | 22. Medea Princess Dresses  |
| 8. Philosopher's Queen               | 23. Baba Yaga's Farm        |
| 9. Fantasmic Ticket Hunt             | 24. Banshee Lullabies       |
| 10. Wagner's Disco                   | 25. Mephistopheles Tours    |
| 11. The Big Waiting Adventure        | 26. Unicorn Zoo             |
| 12. Administrative Mountain          | 27. Restroom                |
| 13. Dante's Bakery                   | 28. Information             |
| 14. Sisyphus Self-Service Restaurant | 29. Media Centre            |
| 15. Charon Rides                     |                             |

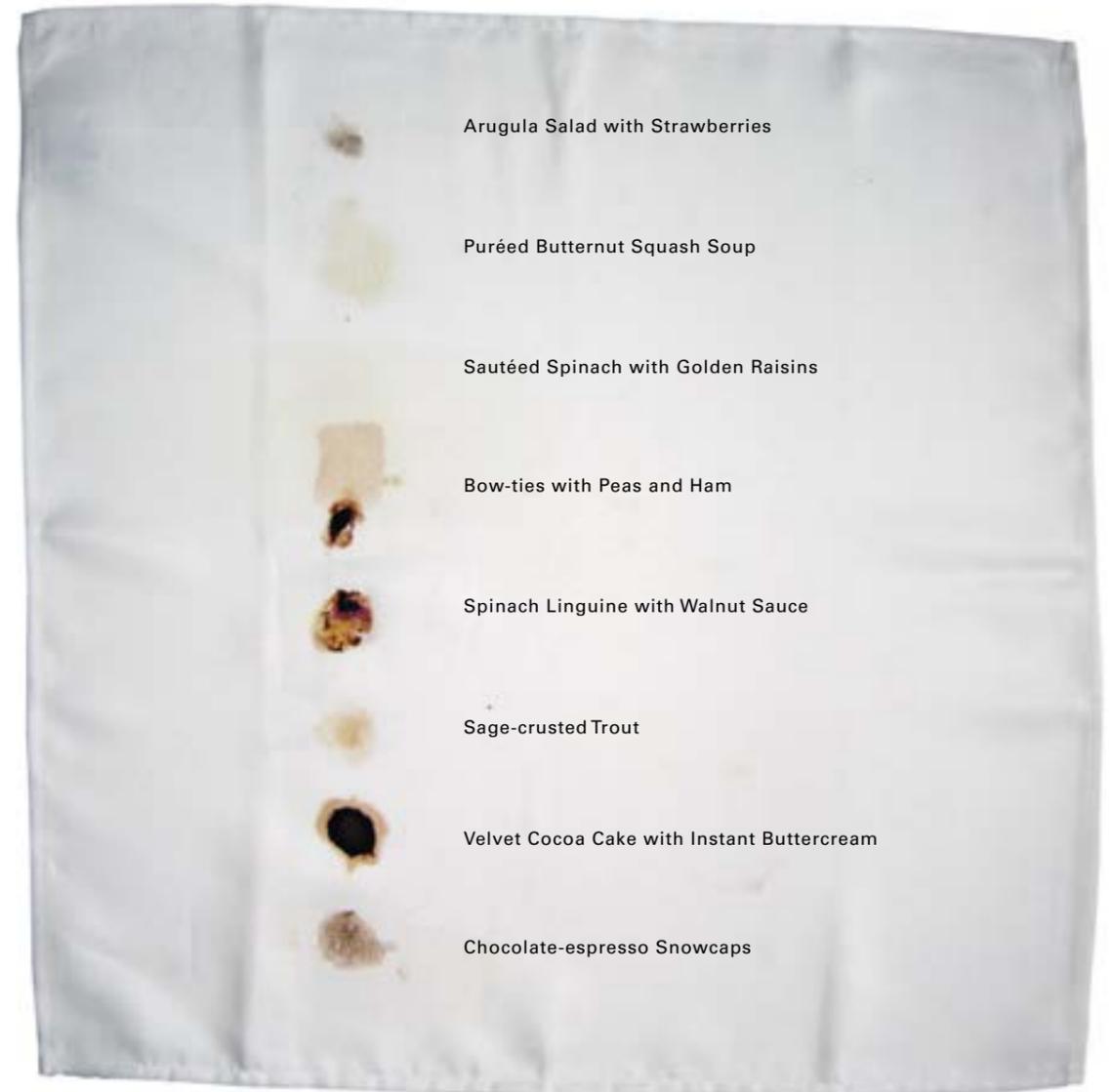
**Stealing shadows  
(Giacometti variations)**

2007-15



**Stain menu/Napkin**

2005





**It doesn't mean anything (?)**

2015

It doesn't mean anything ?

## DIY cloudstacking

2005

*DIY cloudstacking* is part of the *Weather modification* series. Devised as a game, children and adults are invited to 'play God' in a miniature sky in which one is physically and manually able to configure the appearance of the skyscape and organize the distribution of clouds to one's liking. Whereas weather and meteorology fail us as a science, lacking certainty and comfort, this game promises a measure of absolute control that is exercised easily and pleasurably through make-believe play.



## Finding comfort in an uncomfortable imagination

Bala Starr

This is a kind of introduction to Ana Prvački's *Finding comfort in an uncomfortable imagination*. The book itself is the primary material of an exhibition I have had the pleasure to organize with Prvački. From the outset of the development process, Ana Prvački designed the exhibition as the corollary to her book. At the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore she presents a sparsely furnished reading room for the book, which is an inventory of her ideas, and accompanying writing. In the almost-empty gallery, Prvački makes available a guide to postures choreographed for the purpose of rejuvenating our body and mind while we read the book.

As the curator of this exhibition, it is intriguing to think about Ana Prvački's background, her character, and how she has come to be the artist that she is. A provider of art as 'personal service', she specializes in etiquette, eroticism and hospitality. She is well-travelled, and multilingual (fluent in Serbian, Romanian, English and Spanish). In 1990, when she was fourteen years old, and before war broke out in her home country, the former Yugoslavia, Prvački immigrated with her parents to Singapore. She later studied in New York and Barcelona, returning to Singapore in 2003 for several years before moving to her current city of Los Angeles in 2010.

Much of Ana Prvački's art takes a form that is tangential to what we typically value most highly in the art world. It is often materially slight, and in many instances she is yet to address the question of how or even *if* a work should exist as stand-alone physical matter; only her ideas from time to time display bravado. An example of the scale of Prvački's work is *Zéphyr*,

*Debussy erotic score* (2015), a musical score annotated in ink pen and discreetly framed, which was presented in this year's 14th Istanbul Biennial. Interestingly, curator Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, whose writing is included in this book, installed Prvački's single drawing in the Biennial among a group of historical and contemporary works that collectively encapsulated her key concerns across different fields of knowledge.

Ana Prvački untangles small concepts as opposed to the 'big' concepts generally favoured by the art world. In saying this, I'm aware that her interest is not to provoke dialectical thinking but to pursue an imaginative approach. Prvački's hybrid practice is grounded in her own temperament and sensibility. It would be argumentative to suggest that it is designed to counterbalance instrumentalized culture (but perhaps it does). An argumentative position, I would think, is exactly the flipside of the point at which Ana Prvački's practice begins. Her art, which references diverse aspects of histories, music genres and geographies, projects a worldliness and exoticism. It is civilizing, open-handed, 'in tune' with the present.

Prvački has an unusual personal story of migration and experience of cultures and social practices. Two periods of several years' living in Singapore, for example, provided a *mélange* of cultural and social etiquette practiced side by side. Prvački's art can be understood to have emerged through her need to negotiate the role of stranger or visitor in so many circumstances. But there is more to it than this. Prvački describes her practice as 'gently pedagogical', and her approach is based on empathy. It stresses the person who is experiencing her work before its presenter or 'subject'—who is usually herself. It is not the accidents of the artist's performance that matter in Prvački's art, but the way in which her imagination services the problems she identifies.

Prvački is unusually observant of social discomfort and uncertainty as well as opportunities for seduction between people and things. She applies her imagination—her problem-solving—to model new protocols for contemporary living. Her artworks represent a desire to be of service that has developed from careful attention to courtesy, propriety and decorum. The diagrams, drawings and instructions in this book have the appearance of a designer's business pitch to a client. The solutions she presents range from product improvements such as the two-in-one *Soap soup* and *DIY prêt-à-paracute*, which promise convenience, to the unexpected and ambitious *Re-robbing the Monkey Forest*, which proposes a peaceful method of reclaiming personal goods stolen by monkeys. Individually these can seem peculiar or bizarre; when anthologized, they read like parables. Physical or psychological hygiene is a key theme, underpinning early works such as *A proposal for a money-laundering ATM* (2007), as well as new works such as the series *Ways to protect the sensitive audience* (2015), which answers the problem of how best to shield visitors from visual subject matter that they may find uncomfortable.

Even the most prosaic social encounters cannot be entirely predicted, despite the best training and experience. Prvački's illustrated DIY solutions have an extended (future) presence that depends on you and me, the readers and doers who will gauge the proposals' success post-incubator, out in the world let's say. Ana Prvački's models are for every day. They are as significant for their optimism, lightness and joy, their humour, as for their teaching. Kindness, sincerity, optimism, resilience and a can-do attitude are among the tools proposed here for ameliorating unavoidable social anxieties. This book-form inventory of Prvački's instructions is a recommendation for openness, for a different state of being. Ana Prvački's hope in our time might well be: From little things big things do in fact grow.

## Ana Prvački: Music-derived pain killer

Raimundas Malašauskas

Is she a paradox or a *pharmakon*? Or an impure synthesis of the two infused with ginger acrobatics in her domestic laboratory? Was she a feminist the day penises grew out of musical scores? Whose music did she launder? Pardon, it was not music—she laundered economics. How did it sound? Amazing: She hunted for literal meaning in metaphors and found what literally matters: that there are more than 100 types of bacteria including salmonella on dollar banknotes in New York. The germs were killed with a detergent and a sponge in her hands. Your disbelief remained alive a second longer in front of *Leap of faith*, which required that you wear a metal jacket and test the strength of a magnet in the wall, of which I heard a couple of times before, you thought, and then, a second later, you are stuck to the magnetic power of an artwork. Surprise surprise!—it happened as literally as it announced. A little book she had a few years ago contained a similar inventory of ideas and prototypes for creative explorations of body, appearance and imagination. It was a mix of Dada, Zen and Martha Stewart. A pool of blood is oozing in the corner of a living room, yet you can remove it as simply as you put it there—it was a piece of plastic, actually, an edition, a part of that little book. A piece of Freud or Lugosi,

you thought. Ana Prvački never shied away from her desire to be a corporation-like lady. Being determined and goal-oriented, yet totally driven by by-products and serendipity, she generously shared the protocols and formulas of her creativity. You could hire her to be your intellectual concubine for twenty-four hours and learn everything about Ananatural world or why you should drop sesame oil on the top of your head. When she wants you to feel with your whole body she takes your whole body hostage; when she wants your pain to go away she plays flute. This play produces a by-product—saliva that drips and turns into another by-product—a wipe that kills pain together with the whole imperative for use because the quest for usefulness has become so inflated it is toxic. She enjoys providing those services that are seductive, awkward and protocol-based. Day and night she rehearses her disciplines; producing waves in form and spirit and searching for a perfect body position in sleep. Notions of power, performance, achievement and exercise have a big impact here. Yet in doing those things she never plays the role of a pure artist building a career in the art world. She remains marvelously impure. She could successfully work for a department of sanitation, a bank or a museum instead. Or she could successfully change your perception about things you think you know or things you think you don't need to know.

'Will your pain result in something? Or do you fear that by losing your pain you will become less of an interesting person?' she asks one day. And then you think about whether you want to numb yourself with parts of her saliva or whether you want your pain to remain a *pharmakon* itself.

First published in *Ana Prvački: Music derived pain killer*, Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin, Italy, 2009.

**Language is confusing but the actions are unmistakable.  
On the work of Ana Prvački**

Chus Martínez

Imagine a work that is about nothing but the future of the mind. Since this task is humongous it would only be expected that we might be dealing with metamorphic material. Consciousness and brain science caught Ana Prvački's attention very early on, but in every stage of her life this fascination has used very different tongues. Metamorphosis, the way the senses emerge—like spectral apparitions—in our tasting and touching and smelling the real, the impressions that experience, life and matter leave behind—intense at first, or perishing after a time—are all central to her work. Her works are parts of a treatise in how natural and unnatural relations demand an education. And how we humans are anxious about language dominating the field while at the same time we are aware of a new culture that is emerging from the non-human world and sensing us as well. Ana Prvački questions our ideas of efficient knowledge, efficient form and social design, and even efficient feelings. She directs us towards a new cultivation of the senses with works that are like asanas, postures that we need to maintain in order to understand that relations between space and the body and the real can be radically changed.

**This is the tale of a new organ that is created in the 'making'**

Considering artworks as organs is the same as describing a practice, an oeuvre, which has the ambition to possess an intelligence able to surpass the limits of pure presence. The works of Ana Prvački, as organs, are not made to be presented or positioned as objects in front of us. They are made to gain a force that will activate them differently as art

from the moment of their creation. It is not only the brain that possesses intelligence—all organs do. This thinking exercises a rigorous attentiveness to forms of perception that affect the world of reasoning as we know it.

Through many of Ana Prvački's early works, we have learnt to see, not to formulate ideas nor mediate empirical experience and translate it into concepts, but to gain a new experience of the real through objects or situations that help us to re-educate our eyes and turn them into hands, into skin, into a nose, into a stomach. The most important characteristic shared by all of Prvački's works is their function of exercising this organ—sight—so as to introduce us to seeing as 'visiting'.

Yes, the eyes that visit and see are eyes that understand their connection to the body not as its only 'light' within an opaque 'box', but as true friends to all the other functions we humans exercise with our senses. An art practice that requires us not to 'relate' or 'participate' in the work but to visit, in order to stay in-the-works, is one that investigates consciousness as a better word than aesthetics to name what we feel. By visiting these works we discover how to dwell in and experience details without regard to an ordered arrangement or any logical sequence.

**Think about artworks as you think about vitamins**

Why do I say vitamins? Visiting—as we were addressing it above—requires patience and above all time, not the record time of the shortest distance between two points, but the time one spends wandering along the zig-zag path of all the complex structures created by Ana Prvački's work. Ana Prvački moves away from any form of linear seeing that plows through a work, a space, or piece of paper, making a straight line. She moves away in her thinking in the making from the Cartesian method that efficiently subsumes all local details to arrive at a 'global' knowledge of reality, in the shortest time and by the most linear route. She, like the woman biologist searching for 'the vital', for vitamins, erases all plots, all narratives, and seeks a new system capable of levelling all singularities,

all deviations, as in organic life, penetrating into the organs and leaving the world of the visible 'outside'. As in biology, Ana Prvački's work always binds time to space. Her model is one that causes ontological upheavals in the scientific realm: nonlinear active system theory.

Bear with me. This is an invitation to think about artworks as you think about vitamins, as concrete things, invisible to a certain extent and key in the transformation of an organism.

For centuries, alchemists and doctors knew that mankind was lacking elements that would have an incredible effect on the body, restoring balance and lost health. Vitamins, unlike pharmaceuticals, do not 'act' on our senses by addition, so to speak; they simply assure life. It took centuries to refine medical thinking so as to understand that vitamins are not magical properties, but rather substances that can be isolated and, once isolated, recombined and absorbed by our bodies. What surprises me most about vitamins is not their complex history or the fascination with biochemicals that we all somehow share, but the fact that humans are the only animals unable to internally produce the vitamins they need. If thinking is supposed to be the internal force that our minds possess, vitamins are completely exterior, like a light shining upon us.

The history of this external element essential to human life interests me for many reasons. Working outside mainstream medical research, several women were relevant to its development—scientists and nutritionists who were not at the core of laboratory research, but were crucial to the socialization of that research, to its integration in life. It was in the 1920s and '30s that scientific research started to focus on understanding human metabolism. The ongoing interest in diet took another form, and food became not only a matter of access, class, or tradition, but also a matter of health and a new form of self-control. Especially relevant in this context is the research of Catherine Kousmine (1904–1992). Kousmine was a Russian émigré who studied in Lausanne and developed a theory and praxis for a food-

based cure for cancer or, more precisely, a cure based on dieting. Her first diet protocol was highly influenced by the research of another woman, Johanna Budwig (1908–2003). Budwig, a German biochemist, developed a study of fatty acids and their influence in curing cancer in the 1940s. While Kousmine followed the discoveries and the precepts of Budwig's diet, she was a pioneer in a new understanding of the influence of raw food on our health. Kousmine put a special emphasis on cold-pressed oils, which, unlike 'dead' refined oils, are produced by simple physical processes like decanting and filtering, and remain alive. Kousmine's texts are intensely eloquent in explaining how a simple food has been transformed by industrial processes, and how the loss of fatty acids—also called vitamin F—adversely affects the protection of cell membranes from external attack. It is not my point here to describe these methods in detail. The interesting aspect is the growth, at the beginning of the twentieth century, of an interest in the invisible but transformative force of the vitamin and its effect on human health and metabolic processes.

It took hundreds of years to understand what experiments proved in 100 years. Vitamins do not only permit us to avoid an ill body, allowing us to live longer or extend the productive years of human life. The science of nourishment does not exist only to assist in achieving a strong machine-body, but gives rise to a paradoxical state—one in which we are healthy enough to work more but so healthy that our bodies make us feel as if we were in a state beyond labour. Vitamins, like light, stand in my mind for the possibility of surpassing labour and becoming simply radiant—a way to describe a human being who does not structure their being around production (or consumption), but simply around being themselves.

In this context, the monster may be understood as the externality that marks a territory for life beyond classical ideas of the self and of labour. Historically and culturally we have been seeking constant expansion, in all sorts of fields and territories of life and, at the same time, balance. This brings us to a paradox, since one drive contradicts the other. One of the hardest things

to imagine is an image of goodness that is not static or entropic. In other words, how can we grow without advancing, conquering, destroying or taking? From utopia to the many versions of ecology-balance movements, humans have been trying not only to reach a state of grace, but to find an image for it that would not be kitsch, or too blunt in representing this immense complexity for which we still do not have enough words. The metabolic processes performed within the body by vitamins, and paralleled by the artwork, result in a body and mind capable of being radiant.

**Oh, it is a tale!**

Oh, you will say, it is all a tale! Yes, it is a tale. Imagine— I am proposing that you look at vitamins in the same way that you look at artworks. Both bear a position of total externality to the body, both aspire to better the body's performance or labour and, yet, it is difficult to think of how art is the vitamin, the monster. My idea is to propose the artwork (the vitamin, the monster) not as an artifact, not as the object without function, not as the site of taste, but as an organ.

Ana Prvački's practice is an epistemological search that aims to challenge classical sciences or humanities that would offer us the conditions for a reunion of our sensate body with our subjective intellect. This is the reason why Ana Prvački reaches out to the mathematical metaphor—even if the works often possess organic qualities that are more fractal than geometric. In the work she echoes the necessity of referring to primary principles, primary concepts or 'standardized components'—as opposed to dynamic forms and functions of matter and the senses that remain unpredictable to normal law—in order to initiate an exodus, which takes place in the works more than in her writings. Her work presents us with an epistemo-critical viewpoint of experience, with the possibility of absorbing the real instead of thinking

about it. Art is in her hands an agent that again and again demonstrates that the new is an ancient *savoir* passed through the epic beauty of understanding through digestion, through an unexpected new life of the senses. Her work provides us with an ambition to broaden our current ideas of human perception. Always exotic in her own discursive and practical ways, she is one among very few artists uniting (Ulyssean) praxis and (Cartesian) abstraction. She does so in her 'organs', her works.

Consider that this organ—art—possesses the capacity to generate infinite forms and ways of sensing (i.e. thinking) the universe. In this relation to the world, it is not difficult to see how this organ is able to assume time through its digestive function. Like a stomach or a heart, it is barely conscious, barely able to know its own preconditions but also, as a monster, it can neither be limited nor enhanced. The beautiful name 'monster' expresses the total impossibility of description, of applying the norm, of being subject to briefing, to labour, to a movement in history—it is beyond any gender or particular imagination. Organ is the name of an intelligence, seen not as a self-conscious agent or an active principle, but as a stomach taking its time in digestion.

## A brief monologue about Ana Prvački's art

Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev

When I first encountered your work in 2004 it was related to a series of generosity and/or service projects that at the time seemed important because an artist was offering her services to people in very practical ways. There was a surrealist element to those concrete activities, such as washing money in a bank lobby. On the one hand it's true that there is a fear of disease through contact from one body to another, and washing money fits into that kind of hygienic attitude to the separation of bodies, but on the other hand it was surrealist because money laundering has to do with the illegal loss of traces of financial activities or illegal financial activities.

Another piece that made me think about this fear of contact and fear of bodies touching was your flute playing and collection of saliva to make wipes that would disinfect people's wounds [16th Biennale of Sydney, 2008], and yet we have a fear of saliva. From those generosity projects, I remember you moved into an interest in social behaviour and applying rules of etiquette, or applying etiquette as a way of making an artwork at the Hammer [*Greeting committee*, 2011] and then at dOCUMENTA (13) [2012] where you trained staff to behave in a more appropriate way with visitors to make dOCUMENTA more welcoming. This work occurs at a time when the world is ever more barbaric, and in an international exhibition like dOCUMENTA, to think about that barbarity as a lack of etiquette seemed urgent. It was an almost invisible and yet very 'widespread' artwork that went unnoticed by the media, who generally have poor etiquette, usually noticing very spectacular, very visible, works even if only to criticize them. That's where the contradiction lies; the less spectacular

works that would have been appreciated by those who criticize the spectacularity of art are in fact overlooked.

There was then an apparent shift from etiquette to erotics. For example the erotic watch that you made for a collector, where a nipple was the image inside the pocket watch, or the hundreds of drawings on top of scores by Wagner or Debussy.

You showed the erotic drawings recently after a long time making them. They are explicitly sexual and inspired by your own collection of *shunga* [Japanese erotic art] prints, which are a very proper way of dealing with pornography within the rules of etiquette. Rather than going down to the corner stand and buying a magazine, you entered into the world of collecting *shunga* prints. Your making of these drawings itself refers to a kind of etiquette of collecting that needs to develop in a world where there are all these free ports and a lack of etiquette in all the violent investments that are going on in art. Your own erotic drawings and your collecting of *shunga* prints are both probably also related to a lack of etiquette in the art world itself.

Another erotic work is your recent *Family fig tree* [2015], where a fig tree is positioned in front of a film of an early twentieth-century erotic film. The work connects to your programme of distancing viewers with a puddle or with a fig tree from your drawings of vaginas and penises dancing together in this synesthetic endeavour of relating the musical score of *Zéphyr*, for example, or the hundreds of others that you've done with sex.

To create a gap or time between seeing the drawing and the desire to see the drawing is to insert a form of etiquette into viewing, not just in viewing these drawings but in viewing in general. We spoke about the first encounter versus the second or the subsequent encounters which one so much hopes will happen. A fear of the let-down and the embarrassment, I guess, of passing from a moment of extreme etiquette, which is the first encounter, to the moments of increased love and pleasure, and other forms of etiquette, which follow. I mean, etiquette

is something in-between people that puts them together and keeps them apart so what happens when etiquette is no longer necessary after the first encounter?

I think that good etiquette is also the balanced way in which the vagina and the penis are on a par in those drawings. There's no hierarchy between one or the other, being on a par or dancing together is the etiquette one is searching for in sexual relations—how to give, and take, in ways that are fair. I guess it has to do with fairness and with generosity. Back to the generosity project. There is also the possibility of sex as radical generosity.

Deleuze wrote about flying vaginas in his book *Mille plateaux* in the chapter where he speaks about wolves and becoming part of a pack. I always found that very patriarchal and macho because why would the vaginas be flying and there are no penises in that chapter? There's only a pack of wolves. It seems to re-propose a very patriarchal, exploitative vision of sex. Maybe your work is radically feminist but it's not about feminism, it's radically democratic. I think, compared to Deleuze, it's more democratic.

Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev spoke to Ana Prvački on 20 October 2015.

## ANA PRVAČKI

### BIOGRAPHY

Born Pančevo, former Yugoslavia (Serbia), 1976. Lives and works in Los Angeles

### EDUCATION

- 2005 MA Fine Arts, LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts, Singapore
- 2001 Master Arquitecturas Genéticas, El Nuevo Proyecto Cibernetico y Ecologico, Universitat Internacional de Catalunya, Barcelona
- 1999 BFA Fine Arts, Pratt Institute, New York

### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS, PERFORMANCES AND COMMISSIONS

- 2015 *Ana Prvački*, 1301PE, Los Angeles
- 2014 *Earthcake*, Land Transport Authority Art in Transit programme, Promenade MRT station, Singapore
- 2013 *Ana Prvački: Neutralize negative feelings*, Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, Salt Lake City, United States
- 2011 *Greeting committee*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles
- 2010 *Performing practice*, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, Massachusetts, United States  
*Wandering band*, The High Line, New York
- 2009 *Music derived pain killer*, Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin, Italy
- 2008 *When time becomes form*, Artists Space, New York
- 2006 *Ananatural wunderkammer*, LUXE Gallery, New York

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2015 *Contour 7*, Moving Image Biennale, curated by Nicola Setari, Mechelen, Belgium  
*SALTWATER: A theory of thought forms*, 14th Istanbul Biennial, drafted by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Turkey  
*Thirty shades of white*, curated by René-Julien Praz, Praz-Delavallade, Paris
- 2014 *Forecast*, with SO-IL design office, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, United States  
*Modern love*, curated by Khairuddin Hori and Bala Starr, Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, LASALLE College of the Arts  
*Ping pong*, curated by Lynn Marie Kirby, residence of US Ambassador to Serbia, Belgrade

- 2013 *Body show*, curated by Loredana Pazzini-Paracciani, Sundaram Tagore Gallery, Singapore
- 2012 dOCUMENTA (13), curated by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Kassel, Germany  
*Feast: Radical hospitality in contemporary art*, curated by Stephanie Smith, Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago, Illinois; and toured in United States to Blaffer Art Museum, University of Houston, Texas; and SITE Santa Fe, New Mexico  
*Gillman Barracks: Encounter, experience and environment*, curated by Eugene Tan, Gillman Barracks, Singapore  
*Sweethearts: Artist couples*, Pippy Houldsworth Gallery, London  
*Theatre of life*, curated by Dobrila Denegri, Centre of Contemporary Art, Torun, Poland
- 2011 *Out of left field*, the Quadrilateral Biennial, curated by Jovana Stokic and Ksenija Orel, Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Rijeka, Croatia  
*Speculative futures*, curated by Regine Basha, organized by SculptureCenter, Bloomberg office, New York
- 2010 *Beyond credit—contemporary art and mutual trust*, Antrepo 5, curated by Luchezar Boyadjiev, Iara Boubnova and Maria Vassileva, Sanat Limani, Istanbul, Turkey  
*Mardi*, curated by Raimundas Malašauskas, Centre Pompidou, Paris  
*She devil 4*, curated by Dobrila Denegri, Studio Stefania Miscetti, Rome
- 2009 *At your service*, curated by Cylena Simonds, David Roberts Art Foundation, London  
*Contemporary outlook: Seeing songs*, curated by William Stover, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts, United States  
*The girl effect*, curated by Lea Freid, Lombard-Freid Projects, New York  
*Invasion of sound. Music and the visual arts*, curated by Agnieszka Morawińska and Francois Quintin, Zachęta—National Gallery of Art, Warsaw  
*Power to the brand*, curated by Bozidar Boskovic, Museum of Contemporary Art of the Republika Srpska, Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 2008 *Coffee, cigarettes and pad thai: Contemporary art in Southeast Asia*, curated by Eugene Tan, Eslite Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan  
*Fantasmata*, curated by Luigi Fassi, ar/ge kunst, Bolzano, Italy  
*Forever young*, curated by Ami Barak, Anne + Art Projects, Paris  
*One of these things is not like the other things*, curated by Raimundas Malašauskas, 1/9 Unosunove Arte Contemporanea, Rome  
*Re-construction*, 3rd Biennial of Young Artists, curated by Ami Barak, Bucharest, Romania  
*Revolutions—forms that turn*, 16th Biennale of Sydney, curated by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev  
*The practice of everyday life*, curated by Aaron Moulton, FEINKOST, Berlin
- 2007 *In pursuit: Art on dating*, curated by Emma Braso, Dan Leers and Margot Norton, ISE Cultural Foundation, New York

- The last piece by John Fare*, curated by Raimundas Malašauskas, GB Agency, Paris
- Melting ice/A hot topic*, organised by the Natural World Museum and the United Nations Environment Program, toured to Nobel Peace Center, Oslo; BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels; Salle d'Exposition, Fort Antoine, Monaco; and The Field Museum, Chicago, Illinois, United States
- Move on Asia: Clash and network*, curated by Biljana Ciric et al., organized by Alternative Space LOOP, Seoul, toured to Tokyo Wonder Site; Remo, Osaka, Japan; Osaka Electro-Communication University, Japan; and State Library of Queensland, Brisbane
- Techniques of storytelling*, curated by June Yap, SSamzie Space, Seoul, South Korea
- 25 Years later: Welcome to Art in General*, curated by Anne Barlow, Sophia Hernández Chong Cuy and Anthony Marcellini, The UBS Art Gallery, New York
- 2006 *Belief*, 1st Singapore Biennale, curated by Fumio Nanjo et al., The Padang, Singapore
- Performativity 1*, curated by Thanavi Chotpradit, Khairuddin Hori and Manuporn Luengaram, organized by Wunderspaze, Gallery VER, Bangkok
- The food show—the hungry eye*, Chelsea Art Museum, New York
- The second dance song: New contemporaries*, curated by June Yap, Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts
- 2005 *Cityscapes*, curated by Eugene Tan, ARCO, Madrid
- New labor*, curated by Eric Angles, LeRoy Neiman Gallery, Columbia University School of the Arts, New York
- T1 The pantagruel syndrome*, Turin Triennial Threemuseums, curated by Francesco Bonami and Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Turin, Italy
- 2004 *Migration of energies, part 1: Clouding Europe*, curated by Nadine Gandy, Gandy Gallery, Bratislava, Slovakia
- 2003 *Toys*, curated by Gunalan Nadarajan, Earl Lu Gallery, LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts, Singapore
- 2001 *50 ideas in search of a brand*, FAD (Fostering Arts and Design), Barcelona, Spain
- 2000 *Alternative: Alternative*, curated by William Stover, Roebling Hall, New York

#### RESIDENCIES

- 2014 NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore
- 2011 Hammer Museum, Los Angeles
- 2010 Residency Unlimited in collaboration with More Art, New York
- 2009 Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, Massachusetts, United States
- 2008 Centre International des Récollets, Paris  
Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne, Australia

Ana Prvački is represented by 1301PE, Los Angeles

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##### EXHIBITION CATALOGUES

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## Notes

FINDING COMFORT IN AN UNCOMFORTABLE IMAGINATION.  
A CATALOGUE OF IDEAS BY ANA PRVAČKI

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Curated by Bala Starr

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