





Launch between rows, 2016. Tape and HD video and synced foley sound from *Bash to bash balestra* (fencing match filmed in the gallery's corridor, the width of which measures exactly the same as that of a fencing piste). 02:42 min. Installation view, MFA exhibition, KHM Gallery, Malmö, 2016. Marie Raffn



Bash to bash balestra, 2016. HD foley sound video on monitors: knitting needles and the artist performing the feet of each fencer. 02:42 min. Installation view, MFA exhibition, KHM Gallery, Malmö, 2016. Marie Raffn

*Seemingly so contained
 like it's leaking but
 lacking a crack
 octave
 put a purl in it
 and another
 little less
 parry
 contre
 sixte sticka stick a stack
 bash to bash balestra
 launch
 between rows
 AND WATCH IT RIP*

For a long time, I went to bed early. But not the other day. And when I finally fell asleep, it was to Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. When I woke up, I realised I had dreamed that I had restructured his paragraphs on language-games. I had translated his book into a phonetic script so that the book's typography was also changed. At the end of the dream, the book was leafed through, and each page was illuminated by sunlight and subsequently developed, in much the same manner as an analogue photograph that comes forth inside a darkroom. In one way or another, it came to be called ['pʌzl],¹ or something of that order, supposedly derived from the word "puzzle." That's how I remember it, in any case.

In Georges Perec's novel *Life: A User's Manual*, each one of the ninety-nine chapters makes up a small piece

of a large jigsaw puzzle.² In the novel, however, there is actually a different game going on, a game that fashions the basis for the book's structure and that operates as a model of the world, namely, the game of chess. The plot unfolds inside a Parisian apartment complex, where the building's facade is a kind of chessboard and the knight "jumps" from room to room. In the novel, we zoom in on the characters' stories and relationships, and on everyday bagatelles—with an abnormal richness of detail, within a cobweb of tales. "Every piece the puzzler picks up, and picks up again, and studies and strokes, every combination he tries, and tries a second time, every blunder and every insight, each hope and each discouragement have all been designed, calculated, and decided by the other,"³ writes Perec in the novel's preamble. Within the structure of this intimate relationship between the jigsaw

puzzle's creator (the author) and its "moulder" (the reader), the author asks the reader to discover the hidden structures in the novel and to put the plot together. Can't the same process come to manifest itself in exhibitions, where each work corresponds to a piece that the artist lays out before the viewer?

0-1

It has been said that fencing is a game of thinking, a kind of chess with the body. Both the fencer and the chess player have to be able to think strategically in any situation, to read their opponent and to plan out their strategy accordingly. However, in contrast to the chess player, the fencer needs to have reflexes like a squirrel. In fencing, you've got to be both defensive and offensive, by turns. Otherwise, you haven't got a chance, for every single attack can be defended by a parry.⁴ As fencing expert G.V. Hett explains: "Today the fencer knows that there are no secret strokes: there is no attack that cannot be parried and no parry that cannot be evaded. ... the secret stroke has been scorned as a fantasy of ignorance on par with the touchstone of the alchemists."⁵ Fencing has a whole lot to do with fooling one's opponent and is about smoothness rather than speed.⁶ It has to do with testing the opponent's reactions to slight thrusts, beats, and feints, and has to do with waiting to attack until the opponent is off balance.⁷ It has to do with causing one's opponent to stray out from the piste (playing area) by lunging forward and finding just the right moment to spear the partner in the chest. It's easy enough to be on defence: you can do that for quite some time. What's difficult is making an attack. If you dare to go all out, then you've also got to be prepared to run the risk of losing, only to brush the dust off yourself and try all over again.

Fencing is an ultra-succinct, high-voltage tale running through signs of life and death, with a few lightning quick, simple actions that always wind up in a point of no return: "a dialogue of split-second reflexes."⁸ Somewhere between dance and improvised theatre. At times, a Strindbergian death dance, but mostly a controlled play in the form of wordless communication.

1-1

The fencer takes hold of the sword in much the same way that you extend your hand when you greet a stranger. The weapon is held, as a basic point of departure, in the *en garde* position,⁹ in which the fencer stands fully guarded, so that they cannot be hit, in a pose that looks like an "X": turned to the side with respect to the opponent; flexed at the knee; some distance between the feet, held in perpendicular position to each other; relaxed shoulders; right upper arm held in against the body; forearm parallel to the floor; and the metal gadget on the *épée*'s hilt held in towards the wrist. A straight line from the elbow, running through the forearm and through the fist's grasp around the

sword's hilt, issuing all the way out to the tip of the sword. Left arm held in the back, ready to be extended upon any lunge,¹⁰ with the consequence that the pass becomes extra energy-filled, in an ascending line leading from the left to the right hand. Something growing linearly. "A certain mathematical precision is necessary in the timing of hits," says Hett.¹¹ *En garde? Prêt? Allez!*

Are the fencers fighting over *the question's paradox*? When you ask a question, you open up to a matter but at the same time you limit the possibility of talking about anything else. It's a little like there's a pendulum, a situation of tension in the fencers' relation: an alternating dependence and independence, as ebb and flow, where distance is a prerequisite for interconnectedness.

Does fencing mime the artist's way of playing with the work before it becomes entrusted to the viewer, who, for their part, is fighting to put some of the pieces together?

2-1

The Quivering Line—Navigating through Subtle Channels

Much like the jigsaw puzzle, the skull is put together from several different parts, and just like the contour of a piece from a jigsaw puzzle, it is a *line* that causes the skull to fall into place. The small undulating line that runs through the skull, the vessel of consciousness, and that gathers the skull's constituent parts: a line known as the suture.

The suture line looks something like a delicate embroidery, a visualisation of an unknown heart rate or remote radio waves that carry a cryptic message. "Suture" is also the designation for the act of surgical stitching, as well as for the thread that binds the lips or edges of a wound together. However, "suture" does not only refer to this textural near-sightedness: in the field of geology, this same term refers to a collision between two tectonic plates. The skull's coronal suture might very well resemble something from an uncontrollable seismograph, a meandering river seen from an airplane, or GPS registration of the walker's route on a map.

In this way, there are certain similarities between a skull and a globe of the planet Earth, and there are certain analogies that can be drawn between the skull's construction and geographic boundaries on the one side, and between the individual's interior and their surroundings on the other. It's merely a question of scale: from the smallest to the largest, and back again.

Michel de Certeau was a French cultural sociologist and philosopher who tried to understand everyday life rather than ignoring it. Among other things, de Certeau puts into question how the pedestrian's movement in the city can be represented. He makes an attempt to draw representations of movement through, for example, an analysis of the "script" that the wanderer leaves behind.

De Certeau is of the opinion that human beings' movement seen from a bird's-eye perspective is only one possible representation of the city, and is accordingly erroneous in its approach. It is insufficient and inadequate to try and create an understanding of movements through a route, a pattern, drawn onto a map, a representation only from above. De Certeau insists that there must be more, and that there must be something else, in order to understand human movement and to understand everyday practice. On the course of a walk through the city, people suck impressions into themselves, impressions that, for example, a GPS device registering the very same route cannot. In the section "Walkers in the City" in his book *The Practice of Everyday Life*, de Certeau presents the problem associated with the linguistic representation of movement through the city's streets:

It is true that the operations of walking on can be traced on city maps in such a way as to transcribe their paths (here well-trodden, there very faint) and trajectories (going this way and not that). But these thick or thin curves only refer, like words, to the absence of that has passed by. Surveys of routes miss what was: the act itself of passing by.¹²

G.V. Hett, in his book on fencing, expresses the belief that the best supplement for the physical training of fencers is to do a lot of walking, since legwork is essential to fencing.¹³

De Certeau's point about the individual's movement manifests on the fencing piste, which the fencers perceive through the netted masks of their helmets. Is this subjectivity's filter? Could we imagine that this netted mesh is a metaphor for the artistic process, where the artist is continually adjusting the horizontal and vertical lines within the imaginary network? An elastic view of perception.

3-1

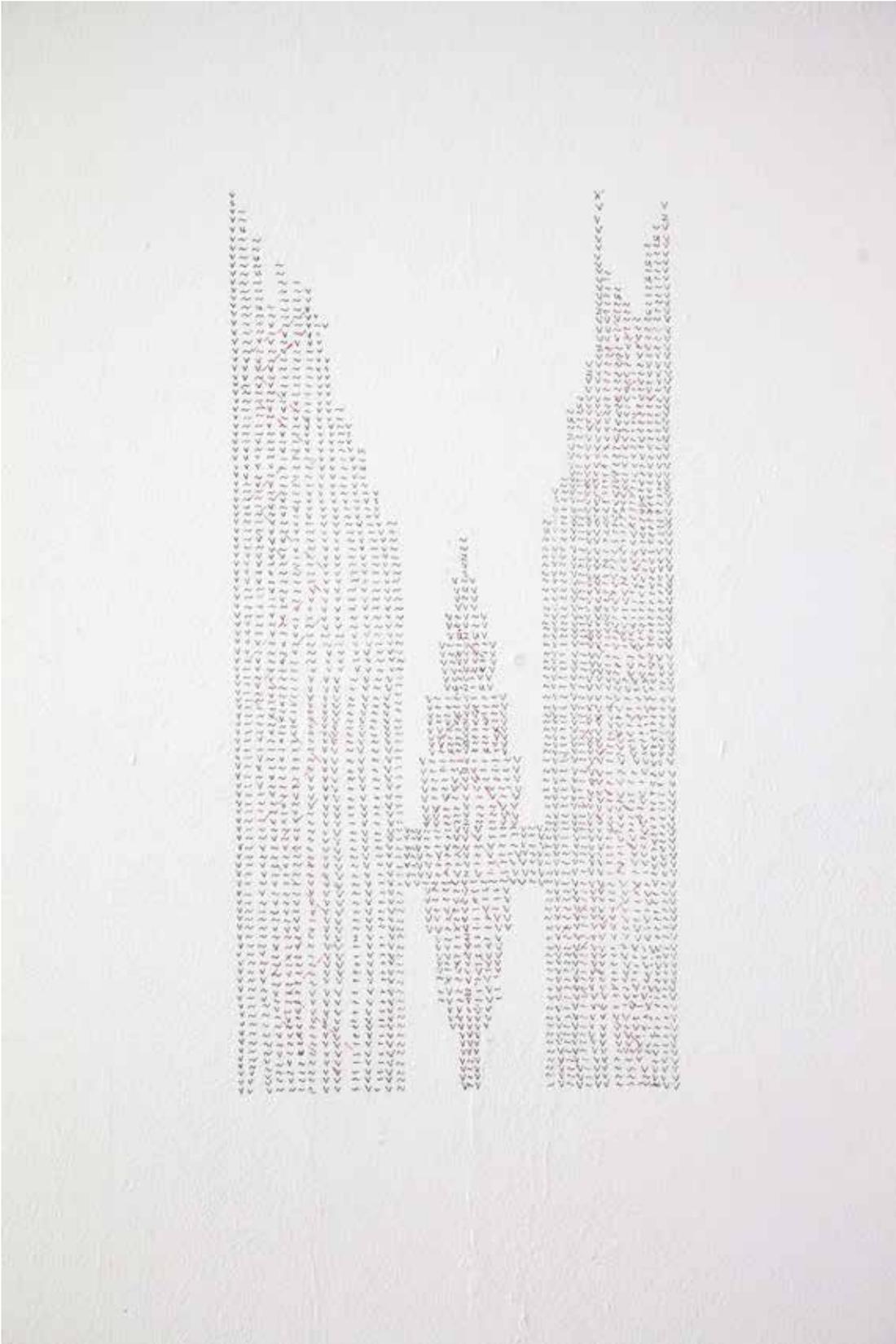
In his novel, Perec uses the chessboard as the model for space. But ordinarily, one uses a map as model, as a tool for moving one's way around the city.

Outside, all the walkers are wearing shoes as they stroll around the city, each one walking in their own pattern, making invisible line drawings. From passage to passage in their external spaces: the path. From association to association in their interior spaces: the suture. Sensing lines. A boy falls over his shoelaces, which he immediately ties while squatting: a construction of one long string, which is braided together and then winds up in two, only to be joined together, at last, into one—in a loop. A compact narrative in a closed circuit. The boy goes astray, and before he even knows it, his detour discloses a loop—seen from above:

∞ 8



Launch between rows, 2016. Still from HD video and synced foley sound from *Bash to bash balestra* (fencing match filmed in the gallery's corridor, the width of which measures exactly the same as that of a fencing piste). 02:42 min. Marie Raffn



Put a purl in it. Bei alle Mustern zwischenreihen (Alte Muster aus dem alpenländischen Raum), 2016. Detail. Knitted parries wall drawings used as scores for the sculptures and sound piece. Red and black ink. Marie Raffn

Is an infinity sign a recumbent figure of eight? Or is an eight an upright infinity symbol? The boy walks around the loop, in a circle, so that the sign is constantly changing in importance, in sync with his movement. So it is: “Numbers serve two purposes. First, their use is practical. They comprise the tools we use to count and measure. Second, they are the means by which many people have attempted to understand the mysterious and the unexplainable.”¹⁴

In Rainer Maria Rilke’s short essay “Ur-Geräusch” (“Primal Sound”),¹⁵ he imagines himself being able to play the sound of the skull’s coronal suture with a phonograph needle. In such an event, the pickup would offer a convincing representation of the writing hand, in a predominantly mechanical way. But what sound would you hear if you played the skull? How would feelings, sensations, and the internal-side sound? A melodious humming?

I do not know how it would sound if you could play back the sound of the earth’s many parts, but I know how it is to navigate through tortuous terrain. If the skull is the brain’s receptacle, then what kind of receptacle is the planet? What is happening there, right under our feet?

Precisely like a fingerprint or somebody’s handwriting, the skull’s suture is unique to every single body, each of which has its own secret signature, its own language, in engraved symbols, and its own primordial sound. A semiotic instinct deep within the human body’s most intimate private space.

If we imagine the suture as a clue told by the body itself, does this entail that all (vertebrate) animals are also inscribing themselves in the world and making sense within it? Alternative articulation via foreign alphabets in the impassable interior. In the *Philosophical Investigations* of Wittgenstein, he writes, moreover, about the animal’s inability to speak:

25. It is sometimes said that animals do not talk because they lack the mental capacity. And this means: “they do not think, and that is why they do not talk.” But—they simply do not talk. Or to put it better: they do not use language—if **we except the most primitive forms of language.**—Commanding, questioning, recounting, chatting, are as much a part of our natural history as walking, eating, drinking, playing.¹⁶

The spider weaves a web and builds a construction much larger than itself, which can hold merely a fraction of all that it contains. Isn’t this little spider also a linguistic subject within the interwoven textuality that the world is made of, where bodies are a part of the world rather than *in* the world? Although the spider does not have a skull with a suture, it does have one, in a way, from its silk fibres, which it uses to make the web; silk fibres used to make surgical threads for sewing wounds together are, as has been mentioned, actually called sutures.¹⁷ The spider’s are

silk threads with greater ultimate tensile strength than steel. That is to say, the notion of *suture* includes both points of intersection and joinings, and both fractures and junctures of healing.

Everything’s Core

The skull’s suture does not belong to our space- and time-limited consciousness. However, inside the skull, at the next layer, we find the brain itself, the most complex structure that we know in the universe, where everything that is human is gathered together.

In Karl Ove Knausgård’s article “The Terrible Beauty of Brain Surgery,” he follows brain surgeon Henry Marsh’s operations in Albania. Marsh’s work is a combination of seeing and feeling. Hasn’t everybody imagined how the world might look from somebody else’s perspective? Being in somebody else’s brain. Knausgård describes his first “insight” into another person’s brain, as a miniature model of a fantastic landscape, in an extraordinarily tactile way. He likens the experience to being transported to another world, to another part of the universe. About another operation, he reports:

I had looked into a room, unlike any other, and when I lifted my gaze, that room was inside Hasanaj’s brain, who lay staring straight ahead under the drape in the larger room, filled with doctors and nurses and machines and equipment, and beyond that room there was an even larger blue sky. All those rooms were gathered in my own brain, which looked exactly like Hasanaj’s, a wet, gleaming, walnut-like lump, composed of 100 billion brain cells so tiny and so myriad they could only be compared to the stars of a galaxy. ... How could it contain these images of the world? How could thoughts arise within this hunk of flesh?¹⁸

How do these images and thoughts come to be expressed in language? One of Wittgenstein’s looming philosophical questions is precisely the issue of how people are capable of communicating ideas to one another. Wittgenstein points out that thinking is characterised by language and language-games: whenever a thought is created, internal sentences are formed. The language-game lies hidden behind the words, the meanings of which arise through their usage within language. Words make it possible for us to create images in our minds (and vice versa), which we can then exchange for each other, although each person’s perception is, of course, coloured by a whole lot of individualised and cultural premises. Language is accordingly a kind of tool that we can make use of for different games, for patterns of intentions.

Sometimes, when I’m “operating” with materials, I feel a little bit like a surgeon: cutting up, examining, restructuring, forming, “sewing” back together again. Small interventions and gestures. Am I parrying off

an attack? Destroying, so as to build up. Work is something like a muscle: you've got to keep it in shape. But if you skip the days of repose, which allow for recovery, and if you don't step back and get a bit of distance from it, work can cease to be important. Is my wielding of materials a link within a larger mindset?

One of many games that the artist plays: on the first day, the studio is an operating chamber; on the second, it's an orchestra pit, and the works are instruments, the tempo and volume of which I can control with my conductor's baton. A little louder in the strings and a pause for the bass drum. The conductor's baton can easily be mistaken for the percussionist's drumstick. When the percussionist initially counts in—one, two, three, four—and strikes the drumsticks against each other, it emits the same sound as if he had struck two wooden knitting needles against each other. It's as if the two objects had the same phonetic script, a hidden script, corresponding to two words that sound exactly the same. Similarly, there is a funny correlation between an épée and a knitting needle, by virtue of the fact that the sound of the fencers' crossing swords and the sound of the metal knitting needles being struck against each other is, by and large, one and the same. Knit one, purl two, and a fencer's mask on three.

On the third day, the studio is a little bit like a garden: plants that need to be transplanted, flowers that have to be watered, and vegetables that must be picked on time. An oblong, thin, withered leaf calls to mind the violin's rosined horsehair strings. Here, it is full of cacti that do best in dry climates and may not be overwatered. I pour the last drop from the watering can into a tub, with a layer of plaster over it. Put a sentence in the water and wait for the whole work to blossom forth.

I place restrictions on myself, as in a fencing match, because it is impossible to deal with everything at one and the same time. But within the limits, I have freedom of movement. In Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, there is a section that can be read as a way of understanding the artistic process:

83. Doesn't the analogy between language and games throw light here? We can easily imagine people amusing themselves in a field by playing with a ball so as to start various existing games, but playing many without finishing them and in between throwing the ball aimlessly into the air, chasing one another with the ball and bombarding one another for a joke and so on. And now someone says: The whole time they are playing a ball-game and following definite rules at every throw.

And is there not also the case where we play and—make up the rules as we go along? And there is even one where we alter them—as we go along.¹⁹

There are pieces of tape on the studio's four walls. Some of the pieces of tape are holding papers in place, while others hold nothing other than themselves—to the wall, the architecture, like loricariidae inside an aquarium. One page, with a conch shell, is taped to a piece of graph paper, on which a Fibonacci spiral has been sketched and glued to a printout of a cluster of galaxies.

Hammer hard against the windowpane, in order to see how the splinters form a cobweb pattern: pieces in a jigsaw puzzle. Some of them tumble down and are carried, with melting snow, into the street grating. How are we ever going to find the last piece? Microscopic, and far beneath our feet.

3-2

The Dance with the Pen

The épée is like a long pen without ink. When you write with a pen on a piece of paper, it's the small movements in the finger joints that create the letters. And these same minimal movements are what's needed in fencing when you have to parry off an attack. The upper body is divided into four fields, defined by a horizontal and a vertical axis, where the eight basic parries are distributed, two by two. It's a matter of a few millimetres that determines whether or not the parry will be accomplished. The hand is hidden behind the bell guard, the cup-shaped metal part of the sword that protects the hand. If one begins to fence as a child, then it's not uncommon that one learns to internalise the movement by taping a pen onto one's sword, with which one then tries to write one's name on a piece of paper attached to the wall.²⁰ The fencer's "script" is executed by the hand but is borne by the legwork, which is choreographed in specific steps: the anterior foot moves back and forth, on heel/toe, while the rear foot moves back and forth on toe/heel. Just as it is an essential prerequisite for building a house that one has a foundation, it is impossible to build up a good position when the feet are positioned incorrectly.²¹ This applies, properly speaking, to all forms of construction.

There is a hair-fine line that runs between doing too little and doing just enough. What we have here is a case of extreme minimalism: small movements with enormous consequences. If the fencer is parrying correctly, they can perform *riposte*.²² However, if the fencer's movement in the parry is just a bit too wide, then this works to the advantage of the opponent, who sees a line opening up and goes for it as quickly as possible. The extended arm, which slays. The race has been run. Fencing revolves around doing very little, but doing so with great precision, deep concentration, and a lack of temperament, in total balance. While being at the right place at the right time.

"Writing is not language, but merely a way of recording language by means of visible marks. ... a language is the same no matter what system of writing may be



Like it's leaking but lacking a crack, 2016. Detail. Cast plastic. Marie Raffn

Sticka stick a stack: "Land Salzburg", 2016. 03:40 min. sound shower loop. Knitting pattern used as a score for the sound piece. Marie Raffn

used to record it, just as a person is the same no matter how you take his picture," the linguist Leonard Bloomfield emphasises.²³

When one, as a child, is supposed to learn to write the letters of the alphabet, one has to fill the page up and down with each of the letters, until the movement finally sits firmly in one's hand:

aaaaa
aaaaa
aaaaa

Similarly, attacks can also be learned by repetition through the body. You've got to repeat the attack position in order to know it, at long last. By heart. Outstretched arm before: *Marché. Touché*.²⁴ The sword's blade curves slightly upwards.

3-3

Stacks of handwritten papers are lying like lakes in the studio landscape. Maybe it will soon be time to go through them and undertake a little overview. Books are stacked on top of each other, and alongside them a large mind map fills the end wall, the artist's overview, like a lush tree that grows and spreads out with various couplings, quivering lines: a sketched-out hand is surrounded by a pen, a conductor's baton, a drumstick, a tube of paint, a sword, and a knitting needle. Beside the hand, it says: "Hold our pen and then try to hold it in a different way," which is the first sentence in *The Invisible World II*.²⁵ Are the reflections brought forth in this text simply branches from one of the tree's trunks? Thread for fabric. Fabric for works. Figments of the imagination. At the end of



Like it's leaking but lacking a crack, 2016. Installation consisting of vapour barrier, wire, plastic, plaster, pigment, marker, tape. Marie Raffn
brought roughth oughthr ughthro ghthrou hthroug through, 2016 HD video 01:46 min. loop. Wood, silicone, glue, tape, book cover sheet,
 mini projector, mirror. Marie Raffn
The Invisible World vol. I + vol. II, 2013, 2015. Ongoing novel, printed replicas, 152 pages each. 22 x 3 x 28 cm. Marie Raffn



Like it's leaking but lacking a crack, 2016. Detail. Cast plastic and casting mould. Marie Raffn

one branch, a toothpick fencer has been sketched out. From this figure issues yet another branch, where it says: “> <kung fu and calligraphy → abstract expressionism, Willem de Kooning, Cy Twombly and others.” At the end of another branch, we can read: “As if my body enveloped my own paper”—a sentence uttered by Hélène Cixous, in an interview that bears the title “As if I were writing on the inside of myself.” The mind map’s countless strokes incite me to throw a line back to de Certeau and his ruminations on the pedestrian’s routes, his ruminations on what is inadequate and insufficient about looking only at maps that have been made from a bird’s-eye perspective. It’s not enough to have only an overview: you’ve also got to move down into something and navigate your way around in it—and follow some of your ideas all the way to their ends.

I change the ball of wool. I patch up the holes in the elbow. I try, generally, to avoid “rambling” too much. I read a little of a book. But it turns out, most of all, merely to be a good piece of yarn.

“Jean-Paul Sartre and many other writers have said reading is writing, by which I understand that as readers we are always piecing together meaning and, in a sense, writing our own texts by weaving the threads and associations of previous readings and experiences,” writes Moyra Davey in her essay “The Problem of Reading.”²⁶ I expand a little further on the book I had previously put away and start to flip through its pages, starting from the back. “Through the use of the hand to turn the book’s pages, the memory of the words is integrated within a spatial dimension,” says historian Rasmus Fleischer.²⁷ Seeing the picture in front of me: the reader, whose gaze is turned towards the book, which—together with the reader—shares a secret that everybody else does not know, but is actually subordinate: the book is surface and sound.

Knitting, not with the knitting needle, but with the pen that fills the wall with the knitted pattern’s template’s symbols as parryings.

All people interpret a manual in their own way. Although we are both working from the same recipe, your dish might become somewhat saltier, and even though we are working from the same knitting pattern, your sock might come to be slightly longer. The knitted pattern’s templates are there, as a matter of fact, to make something two-dimensional three-dimensional (a knitted cardigan). Some of the symbols in the template are alphabetical letters, which are employed for the purposes of being translated into geometric shapes:

V → ∇

The vapour barrier used in construction: it has been placed inside all the outer walls to prevent moisture from penetrating into the edifice. It’s a kind of concealed circumference, inside of which we surround

ourselves every single day. Sculptors can make use of this vapour barrier in the casting mould so that the plaster will release the mould more easily. It’s like a transparent carpet, with the potential to accommodate all of the world’s conceivable forms. In the operation with the vapour-barrier material, I mark out a letter with a magic marker, cut into the middle of its surface, and bend the edges up. These are then fastened with a small bent piece of wire, so that the edges are just barely turned upwards, thus making it possible to cast inside the form; while the molten plastic is drying, small wrinkles turn up in the vapour barrier and make imprints in the plastic. In their containers, the moulds fit hand in glove, just like so many other things: the route in the streets, the fencers on the piste, the suture in the skull, the cells in the brain.²⁸ It’s only that due consideration is not being paid to all of the mould’s containers.

What is it that the string is trying to tie a ribbon around? Concrete poetical experiments, of a kind, transpiring in rooms?

Spatial representation depicted two-dimensionally on a surface is particularly evident in Pablo Picasso’s paintings, in which we see the object from several angles at once. This is the same thing that Gertrude Stein accomplishes, only with words instead of colours. Literary cubism. When she reads aloud, it’s like being inside a musical space, where she uses her tongue as language’s brush.²⁹ Stein writes almost as if she were painting. One word. And then another. And one more. As if she had a brush and a palette full of colours: a brush and a brush and a brush and a colour and a colour and a colour. Like an impressionist, who dabs a bit of red on the canvas, followed by a bit of blue, and, at last, a touch of yellow. Before she knows it, she has a shimmering violet passage. A rose is a rose is a rose not a pipe.

Behind the Bell Guard

Metal against metal. The fencers write out their own language through improvisation on the piste, as if it were a piece of paper: a delimited space with the potential for something to happen. As if the fencers were trying to penetrate their way into each other’s interior through signs, but the writing disappears before it is registered. The fencer leads his épée in zigzag and circular movements, slicing the air into chunks. She operates with the immaterial, with invisible lines. Displacing imaginary spaces through internal tensions and energy exchanges, so that the signs are translated, transformed, and come to arise from themselves. The fencers do not fill the piste with superfluities—only with whatever makes sense in their narrative or helps them towards their goal. I am standing inside interminable patches of air, inside a strained void, a constant buzzing. A subtle trembling makes it difficult to remain at a standstill. Gestures³⁰ turn towards me; I am forced to step backwards. Have difficulty deciphering your codes, since most of them are transformed even before they arise. The codes

that remain are effective on the wrong doors. When something jerks forward, something else has to recoil. Vacillations, falling slowly out of tempo, in a brutal tango. You aim at my shoulder; I die for a second: 3–4. My collarbone is riddled with bruises. Getting lost in remembrance’s labyrinths. I parry contre sixte,

making a small circular motion with the wrist, moving clockwise from full to half. The minimal script triumphs again, 4–4, in my favour. *Rumpé*,³² *marché*, *riposte*. My signs are potential.

5–4

- 1 Phonetic notation for the word “puzzle,” according to the *Oxford Learner’s Dictionary*.
- 2 Georges Perec was a part of Oulipo (Ouvroir de littérature potentielle), a workshop for potential literature, which was composed of a group of individuals who were dedicated to exploring the use of mathematical structures for the purposes of generating literature.
- 3 Georges Perec, *Life: A User’s Manual*, trans. David Bellos (Boston: David R. Godine, 1987).
- 4 In everyday language, a parry is also an (evasive) answer to a verbal assault.
- 5 G.V. Hett, “Are There Any Secret Strokes in Fencing?,” in *Fencing, Games and Recreations* (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, 1939), 104.
- 6 Hett, *Fencing*, 42.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 107.
- 8 Joyce Carol Oates, *On Boxing* (New York: Dolphin/Doubleday, 1987), 11.
- 9 The initial position for attack and defence.
- 10 A lunge is made towards an opponent, where the rear leg is fully extended and the anterior leg is virtually squatting.
- 11 Hett, *Fencing*, 14.
- 12 Michel de Certeau, “Walking in the City,” in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 97.
- 13 Hett, *Fencing*, 119.
- 14 Priya Hemenway, “Pythagoras and the Mystery of Numbers,” in *The Secret Code: The Mysterious Formula that Rules Art, Nature, and Science* (Cologne: Evergreen, 2008), 29.
- 15 Rainer Maria Rilke, “Ur-Geräusch (1919),” in *Ur-lyd*, trans. Karsten Sand Iversen (Copenhagen: Forlaget Virkelig Bestiarium, 2013).
- 16 Ludwig Wittgenstein, “Aphorism 21–30,” in *Philosophical Investigations*, 1953, <http://www.voidspace.org.uk/psychology/wittgenstein/three.shtml>. Emphasis in the original.
- 17 Maj Bach Madsen, “Edderkoppesilke starter et kapløb blandt forskere,” *Videnskab*, October 19, 2010, <http://videnskab.dk/teknologi/edderkoppesilke-starter-et-kaplob-blandt-forskere>.
- 18 Karl Ove Knausgård, “The Terrible Beauty of Brain Surgery,” *New York Times*, December 30, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/03/magazine/karl-ove-knausgaard-on-the-terrible-beauty-of-brain-surgery.html>.
- 19 Ludwig Wittgenstein, “Aphorism 81–88,” in *Philosophical Investigations*, 1953, <http://users.rcn.com/rathbone/lw81-88c.htm>.
- 20 The passages about fencing are written from my own experiences with fencing and are based on conversations with my fencing trainer.
- 21 Hett, *Fencing*, 38.
- 22 In fencing, the *riposte* (French for “retort”) is an offensive action executed with the intent of striking one’s opponent, made by the fencer who has just parried an attack. In everyday language, a riposte is synonymous with a verbal retort and is used to describe a quick and witty reply to an argument or an insult.
- 23 Leonard Bloomfield, “The Use of Language,” in *Language* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1935), 21.
- 24 One step forward.
- 25 This is the second volume of an ongoing novel project (which I wrote about for my bachelor degree essay), for which my own route and the sequence of pages from homeless books that I find along my path serve to dictate the book’s plot. See my essay in *Malmö Art Academy Yearbook 2013–2014* (Malmö: Malmö Art Academy, 2014), 201–02.
- 26 Moyra Davey, *The Problem of Reading* (Los Angeles: Documents Books, 2003), 15.
- 27 Rasmus Fleischer, *Boken & Biblioteket* (Halmstad: Ink Bokförlag, 2011), 18.
- 28 These are but a few examples. In my bachelor degree essay, I presented a thought experiment where a process of zooming out transpired—from alphabetical letters to papers to worlds within universes—instead of zooming in on things, as I am doing here: from physical space to brain cells. See my essay in *Malmö Art Academy Yearbook 2013–2014*, 197.
- 29 Gertrude Stein, “Gertrude Stein Reads ‘If I Had Told Him: A Completed Portrait of Picasso,’” YouTube video, 3:38, posted by awetblackbough, July 25, 2010, <https://youtu.be/FJEIAGULmPQ>.
- 30 In everyday Danish, a *fast* (gesture) is, moreover, a gestural arm or hand movement that one makes in order to express or emphasise something. The Danish word *fast* stems from the Low German *vacht*, with “fencing” having been derived from *vechten*, “to fence.”
- 31 *Contre six* is one of the eight basic parries. The objective is to ward off an attack from an opponent in such a way that the attack moves past your body’s right side while, at the same time, you set up an opening for yourself to make a counterattack, with the result that you can execute *riposte*.
- 32 One step back.



Like it's leaking but lacking a crack, 2016. Detail. Stacked casting moulds. Marie Raffn

Further References

This essay is constituted from interweavings of various reflections from a great many texts, podcasts, and exhibitions.

A considerable handful of the essay's references are taken from titles that I have chanced to encounter while I was putting books back in their places at Copenhagen's Hovedbibliotek (Central Library, on Krystalgade) for jobs where I was assigned to do just this. Or the references have been borrowed from podcasts and audiobooks that I have been listening to while I was busy moving around between the bookshelves.

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