

Amsterdam Mirage

by Elia Castino

Amsterdam sidewalks are invaded on a daily basis by a considerable amount of bulky waste. Old furniture, electronic appliances, leftover construction materials can become a valuable resource instead

of something to get rid of. So what are you waiting for? Check the map, find a bulky waste collection point and see what you can find. Remember to be quick though, a mirage never lasts forever!



Sandberg Meme Review

The Sandberg community has seen exceptionally high activity in student self-organisation in the past year, not only with the formation of the Sandberg Student Union and the Black Student Union, but also in the proliferation of meme pages on Instagram. There are, at current count, five different Sandberg meme accounts in existence, in varying levels of use.

sandbergmemes (@sandbergmemes) was the first account to appear, around the beginning of March 2018, making an appropriate entrance with some on first sight appealing yet not fully relatable Starter Pack memes (we aren't entirely sure what the Twin Peaks box set has to do with going to Sandberg!).



The meme that started it all (more like 'British' go moving to Amsterdam 'Starter Pack'). Originally posted in one of Sandberg's Facebook groups by the starter pack member Callum Copley (seriously – he's co-authored a starterpack-generating Twitter bot) and then stolen by the anonymous Sandbergers (let's hope this won't turn into a systematic practice).

Even though the thirteen current @sandbergmemes posts don't allow for much generalisation, their go-to-method seems to be tagging Sandberg's departments in somewhat random group photos, leaving the community puzzled trying to identify their course with non-descript characters whose social relations with others depicted are either unclear, or just not very interesting. You might be preaching at art students possessing the ability to come up with elaborate theories to explain unorthodox connections, but in the end this kind of ambivalence just isn't very funny.

Repet. Just as words accumulate to fill a page, so too do the threads gradually fill the frame of the loom. 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Everything You Want to Hear

by Bin Koh (2/5)

Emily doesn't want to make a slave robot. She just wants to make a nice robot who says everything she wants to hear. "Because I want what I want when I want it," says Emily. But she knows she can't want what she wants when she wants it. She isn't stupid. She just dislikes herself.

Emily programs the following scenario into Kark.

<Scenario begins>

I was still dreaming. I tried to imitate their voice, said, "Everything you want to hear." I could hear my voice sounded like theirs through the throng. My voice surely sounded like 'their voice'.

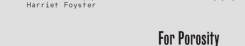
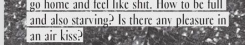
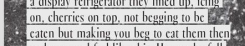
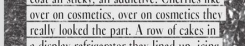
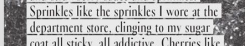
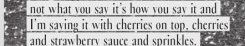
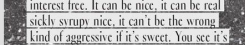
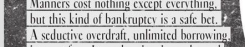
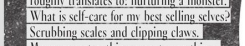
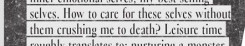
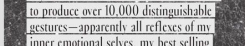
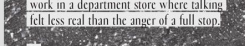
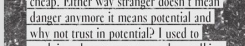
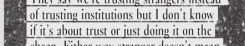
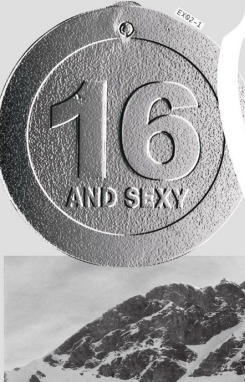
Then multiple voices, including my voice speaking simultaneously, were flattened in the void, made inaudible.

I shouted, I screamed. The more my voice faded out, the louder I shouted.

Everything you want to hear.
Everything you want to hear.
Everything you want to hear.
Everything you want to hear.
Everything you want to hear.
Everything you want to hear.
Everything you want to hear.
Everything you want to hear.
Everything you want to hear.
Everything you want to hear.

I awoke and said, "I'm a good girl and do exactly as I'm told to do."

<Scenario ends>



May We Have Your Attention Please?

excerpts from "Dizziness and Disobedient Bodies" thesis by Naomi Credé (1/3)

The voice of the announcement repeats itself for the sixth time in the past hour. Frustrated by the sounds seeping into me, I don't want to give her my attention but it's proving pretty difficult to block out her voice as it echoes out across the surrounding space.

I aimlessly refresh my news feed and caress my thumb in an upwards motion across the glass screen of my phone in a vague attempt to take my mind elsewhere and ignore the increasingly passive aggressive tone of her voice. My eyes scanning the images as they travel upwards across the screen.

Mind the step.

she says over and over. Bodies stand stationary with their feet and luggage pressing into the rubber travellator, dragging them forwards. There's seemingly a little more urgency in her tone the more she repeats,

Mind the step.

She speaks out just before the bodies are jolted onto the stationary solid ground, forced to move their tired limbs of their own accord.

May we have your attention please?

I have no choice but to give you my attention as your disembodied voice permeates my surroundings. You phrase it as a question, however there is no possibility I could respond to you. You call out to me and yet you are unwilling to listen to my response. You do so in a manner which is soft and calm and gives me no reason to disobey your familiar, comfortable accent.

Your announcements sometimes overlap each other, your words colliding. You utter the same sentences over and over in a supposedly soothing and reassuring manner. Your voice is pre-recorded, every syllable controlled and often fragmented. Phonemes pieced together to sound out the right words.

May we have your attention please

* APPLY or the SUMMER PROGRAM
A former shooting range transformed into a military institution into a peaceful and safe place opening its doors this summer for a cultural programme concerning nonviolence

www.schietbaan.amsterdam

Instagram @schietbaan

Facebook @deschietbaan

SCHIETBAAN

We're aiming to build a strong alliance between local collectives while rethinking the possibilities of an unused ex-military space for spontaneous occupations / interventions and nonviolent activities.

The "Schietbaan" is a collaboration between the Oosterdok members (e.g. vr base, Makervariety, Digital natives, Mediamatic, La boteller, Marineterrein) and a research project of Pina Petrova, a student of the Sandberg Institute masters programme Shadow Channel.

The wet, warm cavities of your mouth are replaced by speakers and wires. Your words do not come up to your mouth and spill out through your tongue. Both your body and your emotions have been erased as the sound vibrations are left to pass steadily through the air towards my car drums. You can be switched on and off, the sounds increased or silenced at the press of a button. Silenced by someone else. Your bodiless voice does not grow tired like mine. Perhaps the technology might malfunction but there is no possibility that at any given moment you might scream out in pain or in pleasure, erupt with sounds. Your voice will not quiver. In the instance of an emergency, the flatness of your tone will not falter. Our voices will likely become frantic, our bodies chaotically moving through the space, but you, your disembodied voice will remain calm and collected as you softly instruct us where to go.

May we have your attention please?

You ask me for my attention, the concentration of my mind, to listen to your words. You address me as one of many bodies confined in this space, speaking to each of us individually, all at once. You interrupt my wandering mind and make me aware of my surroundings once again. You refer to yourself as we as you very politely ask me for my attention. You have control of us and yet who has control of you, who is it they speaking on behalf of, and why, why is it your voice I sit here listening to?

Gorilla

Empty hands—astronauts daily work material includes all kind of indoctrinating CGI'd naza sorcery obtained by swindling structural practices in the form of rudimentary adhesives. Apparatus surfaces, eroded silver foils, leaking junctions, shamelacking zero G and oxygen purifying devices. Globotologists are known as talented profit-earning professionals, detrimental to the wellbeing of ancient Flatlandian culture upkeep. Roses are red, Sun Subend and ISS is fixed with Gorilla Tape.

Case closed, try me glugs.
(slang word genesis)

Notes for "May We Have Your Attention Please?"

1. "For it is woman's inborn pleasure always to have her current emotions coming up to her mouth and out through her tongue." Corliss in Anne Carson, "The Gender of Sound" (1995; New Directions), p. 7.

Dirty Art Items Submitted: Forensic Analysis

EXB2-1: One aluminium sign bearing the message "20 AND SEXY" and attached to a rubber suction cup, marked 16 and Sexy Sign.

EXB2-2: One DVD-R disc, Extra High Grade video tape, in cardboard case, bearing the handwritten message "THE INCIDENT", marked "The Incident Tape".

After the examination of one of the swabbings used to collect data from the rubber suction cup that is attached to the top side of the aluminium 16 and Sexy Sign, EXB2-1, an accumulation of spores

cambesecae was found. During spring season, this quantity of spores is most possibly found inside or around greenhouses, thereby we could hypothesize that the rubber suction cup has been attached to the surface of the polycarbonate wall of a greenhouse used for growing cannabis.

During the physical examination of EXB2-2, "The Incident Tape", a hair was found in the cardboard case. The hair sample was assessed for evidence of frequent use of hair products (FPH) and analysis of fatty acid ethyl esters (FAEE) and ethyl glucuronide (ETG). Both FAEE and ETG are alcohol by-products formed by the human body after consumption of alcohol. Analysis of the hair sample suggests frequent heavy alcohol use between April 4-7. However, due to the ETG-negative result in this sample, this finding may be the result of either social drinking and/or the potential influence of ethanol-containing cleaning products. These findings should not be considered conclusive proof of heavy alcohol use during this time.

Forget NIMBY and YIMBY: Whose Back Yard is it Anyway?

Opinion by Harriet Foyster

The recent YouGov survey results demonstrating the rise of YIMBY thought (Yes In My Back Yard) highlights a dangerous increase in support for private property development. The data shows an increase to 57% of adults backing the building of more housing in their localities, up from 53% in 2014. This sentiment is echoed and celebrated globally, with campaigns for mass development roaring since the birth of the YIMBY movement in San Francisco in 2015. Of course building housing in the midst of a housing crisis is necessary, but then why must ask why there is a shortage, and what kind of housing is necessary.

Whilst rough sleeping has increased 75% in the last three years, Britain currently boasts more than 260,000 empty homes. Jasmine Whitbread, chief executive of business membership organisation London First, whose mission is to 'make London the best place in the world for business' says "now is the time for our politicians to finally get to grips with the housing crisis. We need more money, more land to develop and better ways to build." Their campaign Fifty Thousand Homes aims to double London's housing, but fails to mention the types or costs of the proposed tenancies, let alone confront the desperate need for repopulation and social housing. The YouGov study showed that 43% of Londoners would favour a politician who backed building more homes locally, which Whitbread evidently sees as ripe for exploiting: "It's clear there are votes to be won in unblocking London's housing build-ups." To these big shots, the livelihood of the population

is just a string in the puppetry of parliamentary politics and profitability.

The YIMBY movement and its backers show no consideration of the implications of these new developments, nor who sits behind them. In Britain, housingbuilding firms represent giant financial monopolies and some of the largest asset management companies in the world (think BlackRock). With new housingbuilding there will be increased reliance on the same brownfield-sites tactics peddled by private real estate giant Savills (supported by Mayor Sadiq Khan), where estates are declared brownfield sites and intentionally left to rot into disrepair. Working-class tenants are subsequently evicted and the land is reclaimed for the private sector. Once contracts and planning permissions are secured, these sites are often left vacant in order for their value to rise; even in the business of housingbuilding, homes are invariably not built. In 2017, the Local Government Association identified sites for half a million homes in England that had secured planning permission but where no building had even begun. And when homes are built, they are inevitably unaffordable for the majority, for example in Manchester: of the 14,667 homes in developments that secured planning permission in the last two years, zero are set to be affordable.

Of course, housing is urgently needed. But first, it is vital to demand the repopulation of vacant buildings, followed by the construction of universally available social properties. Hundreds of council homes sit empty across Britain, denied to tenants in order to swell property prices. The Focus E15



Weaving words looks at how language can be woven together, reformed and meaning lost or found. Solve the crossword and then complete the corresponding words in the solutions section to form a small text.

WHEN DID YOU BECOME A HETERO SEXUAL? DON'T WORRY, BEING HETERO IS JUST A PHASE



ARE YOU A HETEROSEXUAL? YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE ONE, THAT'S A COMPLIMENT!

"Look A Heterosexual!" Poster by Rowena Bour

Dirty Art Items Submitted: Forensic Analysis

EXB1-1: One small metal sculpture made of clay and covered with metallic paint, marked Golden Clay Spiral.

EXB2-2: One 9.5-litre plastic bottle containing 'transparent' fluid and bearing the handwritten message "DRINK ME" - marked "Drink Me Bottle".

EXB7-1: "Golden Clay Spiral" was examined for the presence of human genetic material and fingerprints on the surface of the sculpture. The sample was tested for deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) analysis with short tandem repeats (STRs) using polymerase chain reaction (PCR) technology. Identification information was detected to generate DNA profiles. The surface of the sample was powdered to expose latent fingerprints. Three (3) different patterns were found and searched against the Sandberg Dirty Art Department Students and Alumni database. One (1) matching profile was found, belonging to one "Gorch, Walter".

Notes for "Forget NIMBY and YIMBY: Whose Back Yard is it Anyway?"

1. In "Meet the YIMBYs: More Londoners happy to say yes to building homes in their backyards", Evening Standard (11.04.2018).

2. "Housing crisis: 15,000 new Manchester homes are more than a 'little one' affordable", The Guardian (05.03.2018).

3. See more at new focus e15.org

4. Tom Archer, Ian Cole, "Profits before Volume? Major housebuilders and the crisis of housing supply", Sheffield Hallam University Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (October 2016).

Notes for "Look A Heterosexual!"

1. "Meet the YIMBYs: More Londoners happy to say yes to building homes in their backyards", Evening Standard (11.04.2018).

2. "Housing crisis: 15,000 new Manchester homes are more than a 'little one' affordable", The Guardian (05.03.2018).

3. See more at new focus e15.org

4. Tom Archer, Ian Cole, "Profits before Volume? Major housebuilders and the crisis of housing supply", Sheffield Hallam University Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (October 2016).

Subend
Sun never—rises—never—sets at FE firmament.
Rays travel endlessly around the pharaonic glass
dom, lighting the specific spectrum of sky, due
to the lack of nashhole-so-called indoctrinated
grabhdiey. Light doesn't bend over space-time
unlike atmospheric dome refraction causes the
shining from distant things to "bend upwards".
Sun appears to vanish from the bottom up, as
you gain altitude rays bend upward and come
back into your eyes, the flerp-so-called Subend.
Cheekmate. Try me, ballfard.

(slang word genesis)

Everything You Want to Hear

by Bin Koh (3/5)

Since Kore is voiceless, Emily starts to give Kore
a voice. She wants to make a "nice voice". She collects
thousands of voice samples, illegally downloaded,
and works them with a vocal software called
Bababla, illegally downloaded. She picks several
American female voices and merges them, but
she doesn't like it. "It reminds me of a classmate
I hated," says Emily. She merges American female
voices and British female voices, but she doesn't
like it. "It reminds me of a politician I hate," says
Emily. She merges British female voices and
American male voices and German boys' voices, but
she doesn't like it. "It reminds me of a YouTuber/
Twitter-user/blogger I hate," says Emily. "It pisses
me off," says Emily. She decides to merge all the
voice samples she's downloaded, and horizontally
amalgamate all the voices at once. And she creates
"the Voice". "The Voice" in the space between
human and animal, animal and machine, woman
and man, girl and boy, elderly and youth, high class
and low class, Malay accent and French accent, on
every borderline. "The Voice" speaks itself, speaking
a quasi-language or something like that. "It indeed
sounds nice," says Emily. She has never heard
this kind of voice before. She likes how it sounds
ineffable. She is sure that she's found "the Voice"
for Kore. "The Voice" daring her to cross every
boundary. She is thrilled. She is excited. She makes
a big smile, a real smile after a long time. Perhaps
for the first time. And she starts giggling. "Ha ha
ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha," says Emily.
Since Emily lost "her voice" to male artists, radical
politics fanboys, tech warriors in Silicon Valley
and her parents, she decides she'll take "the Voice"
of Kore and implant it in herself.

Emily programs the following
scenario into Kore.

<Scenario begins>

When I arrived in Emily's studio, she was reading
"The Little Mermaid" by Hans Christian
Andersen. I remembered I didn't like the original
story. But I didn't tell Emily that. She started
to speak. "The sea witch provided everything the
little mermaid needed. The sea witch took the
voice of the little mermaid because it was a crucial
ingredient for her magic potion. The sea witch even
cut herself and used her blood for the potion. But
eventually, the little mermaid earned an immortal
soul, found her voice again, while the sea witch
earned a scar on her chest." She continued, "In this
world, there are sea witches who are talented,
skillful, and work very fairly but who end up lonely
and scared. On the other hand, there are sneaky
bitches like the little mermaid who have a beautiful
appearance, who want and take everything, and
who will be remembered for good."

A day after I heard the sea witch story from Emily,
I was fired. She said her latest robot called Kore,
which is going to be her personal assistant, was
almost done. She said she finally created "the Voice"
for Kore, so Kore could replace my job. Since
I couldn't find my voice, I started to hate Kore.

<Scenario ends>

I read from a trend analyst that unicorns
were made for us at this present moment
for d... political times. He said anyone
can be a unicorn and that's why they're so
rare. Chastity, purity, and mythology
make a great Frappuccino. A tip of if you
don't download iOS 200 then you won't
understand me. Shortcuts to limit band-
width for smooth running networks is the
romance of a new collective language.
Standardised icons of the world unite
On and always everywhere and now
and here. Sweet nothings and no things.
Like a plunge pool where all of our nipples
jut and where all of our heartbeats quicken
then slow. A life detector test and a bout
of salmonella. A group absolving package.
Pencil diving into water, where your height
and weight and stretch marks diminish
under the smooth soverain surface. Yelling.
A character limit and a FBPI score and
sweet nothings and small talk, that is,
incredibly the talk, and I don't know how
I would recover from a typo. And how can
they on and how are you and do you think
you'd possibly mind... No! I insist, and
soundtrack is almost diatribe. High blood
glucose, always, but really it needs to be
because I don't know how I would recover
from a typo. An anti-chemical, obviously I'd
just have a Mars bar but everyone would
see me there at the bottom of the scheme
index and then what? Start the whole
construction from the ground up when I've
already returned the scaffold to the rental
place? Go back to a finger spacing out
changes noshing brilliant mirrors hanging
all worst sellers at cel evl bus level?
Then I'd need collagen like my boss did.

"Is there any pleasure in an air kiss?" (2/3)
Harriet Foytner

work/creativity

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•some grid
•some typeface

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May We Have Your Attention Please?

by Naomi Credé (2/5)

I am not in England but your clear, well-spoken English accent is one I have heard a million times before. Despite the slightly robotic tone and your lack of body, it's clear you're intended to sound female. I am not sure if your somewhat futuristic-sounding tone is supposed to be an attempt at a timelessness, however the result is far from it. With the sounds you utter comes a history which cannot be escaped and I find it difficult, if not impossible, to listen to your voice without associating it with gender and class. Your English accent falls in its attempts to be region-less, it resembles that of a Southern, 'well-spoken' voice which carries with it a history of received pronunciation, a voice intended to be synonymous with reassurance and control, which seems outdated and out of place in this setting.

The use of your disembodied female voice in space carries with it weighted implications. In the case of the airport I am currently sitting in, I listen to your voice and think about what it means for you to control us within this context. As I look around at the abundance of commercial spaces and advertisements around me, I think about the other bodies gathered here, about their freedom to move through the space. I think about how free I am to wander wherever I wish and how much your voice is guiding me in the correct direction.

As I listen to the tone of your voice, I contemplate which other voices you resemble. You come from a long line of disembodied female voices; your voice is not so dissimilar to those that were used in the past to instruct inside of Second World War planes, to the voice that reminded me every day growing up to mind the gap on the tube platform or to the recorded voices which play out from GPS's, supermarket checkouts and answering machines. You are also not so dissimilar to the intimate disembodied female voices of the more recent personal or virtual assistants such as Siri, Alexa or Cortana. You share a role with the multiplicity of disembodied female voices which echo out in public and private spaces, you are there to politely and submissively assist.

It's not so much that I desire for you to have your own physical body but rather that I wonder why it is important for your disembodied voice to retain its human and female sounding qualities, why continue to equate femininity to assistance? I try to imagine your physical form: I look around to see if I can spot the speakers your voice reverberates out from and as I do so, I start to wonder what it would mean for my own body to be replaced by technology, for my own voice to be carefully to be extracted from my flesh. I listen human and female sounding qualities and think about what it means for a voice to be taken out of a body and housed in technology. You retain the feminine sounding vocal qualities of a human and yet with the loss of your

mind and body, your ability to control and to lose control is taken away from you, to scream or shout or whisper or laugh. Instead, what remains is a carefully externally controlled voice, used to control others.

Skepticalness has been absent—not-taught from ghilupman being early ages, childcare indoctrinased negligence brings to society gorilla-eyed individuals weirdly fascinated by CGI footage of dreamed pearbolic landscapes. Dope psyche protective environment is lacking, and counter-placebo strategies affect no more. People became blind-faithed primitive followers, parents show themselves as stubborn-self-confident sheperds, and oracle-promised childs flourish like red-rose sheeples. Try me glerps. Dergp.

(slang word genesis)

In Between Upper- and Underground

A script for a space by Anna Maria Merkel and Juhee Hahm

A space-based-stage-play as verbal-visual conversation

Characters
A: a visual artist who claims to be a poet
O: a spatial designer, thinking through drawing

Time
The present

Scene 1.
Stage in full darkness. A voice is raised.

A: A space is a space.

O after some hesitation: Is it? Or is it becoming one in the moment someone identifies an area as such?

Enormous worlds of philosophical thought open up in the outer left corner of the stage, gleaming bright to be seen. A and O suddenly visible decide to ignore those realms of knowledge for some minutes, pulling out dark glasses because glaring light blinds eyes.

A euphorically as if nothing happened: If so, what would you identify as creative space?

O really quietly:

A summarizing O's drawn thoughts: A bright space that describes the relation between the source of light and one's mind. You mentioned a room dipped in natural light, its source larger than one's own body. The light hits you almost from the front. Your brain is immersed in its color; allowing the mind to bend, to think freely, to experiment.

O thoughtfully:

A stressing the syllables: The aesthetic of daylight!

O jumps around happily, loses her dark sunglasses.

A enthusiastically: Frequency, intensity, and colour temperature—its physicality describes the biological effects to body and mind. Scientific research proved this almost medical interrelation. Eventually artificial light always remains as a reference to daylight.

Pause, followed by a fast sequence of thoughts.

A misfully: Peter Zumthor and Tadao Ando are building realms of light within their works where one can experience its importance on the atmosphere. They are developing methods to control the transparency of light, to formulate aesthetic narratives, to create ambience... (takes some dramatic steps) I see what I feel, what I touch... also with my feet... Well, but how to design creative atmospheres—the spirits of spatial experiences—that support visionary imaginations?

A and O look at each other, both overwhelmed by complexity.

O meditatively:

A astounded: I beg pardon?

O struggling to herself clear:

A delighted as if she has solved a puzzle: Ah, community as condition! The space should include a

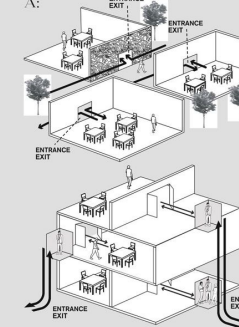
social zone of exchange to support interdisciplinary thinking within one building. This could even happen in an elevator—connecting levels of practices by creating intimate moments on-the-run where creative thrills can happen.

O adds:

Notes for "May We Have Your Attention Please?"

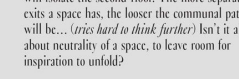
By empirical analysis, the contents of EXB4-1, "The Plastic Zip Bag", was evaluated to be stained by the presence of cocaine. The empirical bag, as well as EXB4-2, "The Rainbow Candle", both resulting positive for cocaine. A consecutive analysis performed for the presence of cocaine metabolites, benzoylecgonine, norcocaine, five cocaine base, two formed for the presence of cocaine is converted into these compounds by the body after administration of the drug. It is generally a confirmation of active cocaine use, detected on small traces of cocaine in the rainbow candle (EXB4-2). The presence and concentration of benzoylecgonine in the rainbow candle provides evidence of active cocaine use during the tested time period.

A:



Compared to your first sketch, this building has different entrances. In this scenario the structure of the designed movement through additional exits will isolate the second floor. The more separated exits a space has, the looser the communal path will be... (cries hard to think further) Isn't it also about neutrality of a space, to leave room for inspiration to unfold?

O confirms promptly:



A seems mystified: Ohhm... The staging of a certain flexibility through shape and material?

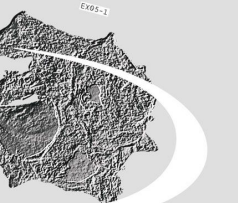
O ambitiously:



A watches O, fascinated by her fast drawing skills, and mumbles as if to herself: A room can be read like a stage.

Notes for "In Between Upper- and Underground"

1. Adapted quote from Peter Zumthor, "Atmosphäre" (2005).
2. Adapted quote from James J. Gibson, "The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception" (1977). See also Erik Rietveld and Julian Kiverstein, "A Rich Landscape of Affordances" (2014).



The Meritable Gene

Opinion by Maria Muuk

The contemporary demand in Estonian neoliberal society for utilising one's genetic traits of talent and entrepreneurialism might be as restrictive as the environmental limitations of the soviet system.

According to a study by genetic scientist Kalli Rinfeld published on April 9th, success is more dependent on genetic influence and individual traits for people born and educated in independent Estonia than for those who built their lives and careers in the Soviet times. In "free Estonia," achieving a certain socioeconomic status grew to be over two times more influenced by an individual's genetic factors—talents and character traits—than in Soviet communism, a system described as a "strictly controlled society" and a restrictive environment that heavily conditioned its subjects' lives in the news story on the study published by Estonian National Broadcasting.

As stated in the introduction of the study, success is now achieved "by rewarding talent and hard work" in a meritocratic system of equality of opportunity rather than "by rewarding environmentally driven privilege." "You can say that in independent Estonia we now have much better opportunities to get further," comments someone under the aforementioned news article.

It's curious how "environmentally driven privilege," a phrase that has obvious connotations to discourse around classist and racial segregation, is used in the context of Soviet Estonia and equated with state power in such a self-explanatory way. State socialism did not allow for an abundance of options for socioeconomic growth, that is true. However we can probably not speak of a structural inequality of opportunity within the soviet context—apart from the corrupt small percentage of elites (which no doubt exists in any large-scale political order) there were no classes to speak of and the system made a point of offering equal opportunities to citizens regardless of their social status and individual entrepreneurialism.

Building one's life and career in the soviet context was a situation of "freedom to," to borrow Isaiah Berlin's

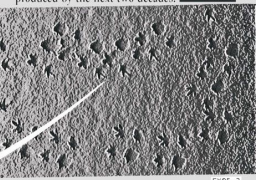
concepts of positive and negative liberty—navigating within the structures of a society that above all valued equality, sharing and sacrifice. Assuredly, as the everyday reality of executing these values was rather bleak, featuring equally bad opportunities for everyone and a threatening omnipresence of the bureaucratic and hypocritical state power, the newly independent Estonian society developed an obsessive fixation with "freedom from" any explicitly constraining structures.

Yes, it is now possible to "get further" without state-imposed regulations in the classless society inherited from the soviet order. However, while noble in principle, meritocracy in the capitalist context is a problematic idea.

It is telling that Rinfeld's study and the reporting news story emphasize talent and hard work as the main measures of genetic advancement. More than just the level of one's intelligence, bodily abilities or communication skills, it is one's (apparently congenital) readiness to utilise them for profit that matters in contemporary Estonia.

Michael Young, who coined the term "meritocracy" in the 1950s, more recently noted: "It is good sense to appoint individual people to jobs on their merit. It is the opposite when those who are judged to have merit of a particular kind harden into a new social class without room in it for others." As entrepreneurialism is elevated into a higher-above-all value and standard measurement for merit in neoliberal society, it slowly produces a class system of growing inequality, where certain social groups will already have socioeconomic advantages and privileges over others who might not be able or willing to utilise their genetic traits. They also feel entitled to them: "If meritocrats believe, as more and more of them are encouraged to, that their advancement comes from their own merits, they can feel they deserve whatever they can get," writes Young. "The newcomers can actually believe they have morality on their side."

What constitutes merit is decided by the dominant political ideology and the privileged and powerful people in it. The only difference between soviet and independent order is that Estonians feel like they have now had some sort of share in making that decision. But "getting further" always means passing a slower other and leaving them behind; the ones in the front naturally (genetically!) want to protect their position and share the benefits of their merit with just a few around them. It might not be that obvious yet after 25 years of post-soviet neoliberal society, but it's about time we start to acknowledge and ask what kind of privileged environments the current meritocratic system will have produced by the next two decades.



Notes for "The Meritable Gene"

EXB5-2: "Blue Cardboard with Leaf-Shaped Perforation" and EXB5-3: "HELL Energy Drink Can" were tested for cocaine base, cocaine, and benzoylecgonine. Only EXB5-2 DNA profile was detected on the sample. EXB5-3 DNA profile was detected on the sample. EXB5-4: One leaf-shaped perforation marked "HELL Energy Drink Can" was detected on the sample. EXB5-5: One leaf-shaped perforation marked "HELL Energy Drink Can" was detected on the sample. EXB5-6: One leaf-shaped perforation marked "HELL Energy Drink Can" was detected on the sample. EXB5-7: One leaf-shaped perforation marked "HELL Energy Drink Can" was detected on the sample. EXB5-8: One leaf-shaped perforation marked "HELL Energy Drink Can" was detected on the sample. EXB5-9: One leaf-shaped perforation marked "HELL Energy Drink Can" was detected on the sample. EXB5-10: One leaf-shaped perforation marked "HELL Energy Drink Can" was detected on the sample. 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May We Have Your Attention Please?

by Naomi Credé (3/5)

How may I help you?

How may I help you?

After ordering a coffee, I realised I hadn't spoken out loud for quite some time. Perhaps I had nodded understandingly as I'd passed through security or awkwardly smiled in agreement when the woman in front of me in the queue for the toilets had mumbled something to me in a language I couldn't understand, but aside from that, no words had escaped my lips prior to this moment today. I'd been politely nodding and obediently heading in the direction I was supposed to go in. A docile body, herded through the surrounding space until ending up in a café and obligingly having an overpriced coffee to pass the time. This lack of speech was made apparent at the precise moment of struggling to order a drink from you. I had attempted to release the words from my mouth and instead of the sounds flowing out seamlessly, my voice struggled to form a coherent sentence. A cracking sound occurred as jumbled noises left my lips. I had to clear my throat and repeat the words to you more clearly for a second time. *One Americano please. No, no milk or sugar. That's all. Thank you.*

It was the first time today that I'd exchanged words with someone else, sound waves travelling between our bodies, my words leaving my lips and your words leaving yours. A meaningless exchange of pleasantries.

You repeat the same phrases and gestures each time you are confronted with a new body at the front of the queue, smiling and asking each of us how we are and wishing us a nice day, never anticipating or desiring any kind of truthful response. You repeat the same words over and over in an almost mechanical manner, you are there to calmly and politely assist but unlike the tiredness caused by the announcements, your disobedience cannot be concealed. Your voice cracks just like mine.

I walk away and clasp the cardboard cup between both my hands for a moment. My misprint name is scrawled on the side and covered by my hands as I clench tightly. I feel the warmth escaping out of the cardboard as it meets my palms, the hot steam exiting the cup and leaving a damp residue on the surface of my skin. I bring it under my nose in order to let the smell of coffee drift into my nostrils before I allow my right hand to take control, impatiently placing the cup to my lips and pressing them gently against its plastic lid and over the little hole. I tip the cup up with my hand and as I do so, burning hot liquid pours outwards and into my mouth, scalding my tongue. Frustrated by my own impatience, the taste of coffee is now ruined and replaced by an unpleasant burnt taste which will linger in my mouth for the rest of the day.

Genesis by Dario DeZulli

Defining slang by using slang becomes a 'genesis'—loop of misunderstanding.

'Genesis' focuses on specific text-based forms of communicative segregation that become strong artifacts of the creation of group identities. It works by compiling and recombining material culture found in posts and comment threads of social network groups committed to certain ideological theories. Ambiguous, humorous and metaphorical neologisms—invented words, concepts and sentences—form a body of slang strongly tied to the ideas and users in each online subculture. 'Genesis' researches the inaccessibility of such tautologous lingo and the strong sense of retaining ownership of language by its users, further emphasized by placing it in out of its native online context.

Different types of head aches

Migraine



Hypertension



Stress



Unknown Slang



EX06-1

Snow City 5



Everything You Want to Hear

by Bin Koh (4/5)

Emily doesn't want to make a nice robot any more. Emily wants to make a robot that sounds exactly like her. Or, Emily wants to be a robot who sounds like her.

Emily programs the following scenario into Kore.

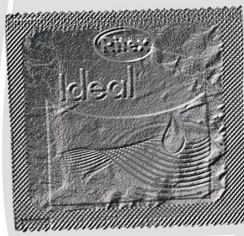
<Scenario begins>

The night I was fired, I had a dream. I saw a woman with short dark frizzy hair. She was naked. She looked young but her dark skin was aged, covered with wrinkles, moles and dead cells. The floor in the dark room where she was leaning on a wall was warm but damp. She was looking at me and told me gently with the strangest voice I have ever heard, "the best counterattack against humiliation is smashing it."

<Emily failed to import an image>

I woke up. I went to Emily's studio. Emily wasn't there. I found Kore sitting on a table. I smashed it, over and over.

<Scenario ends>



EX06-2

Everything You Want to Hear

by Bin Koh (5/5)

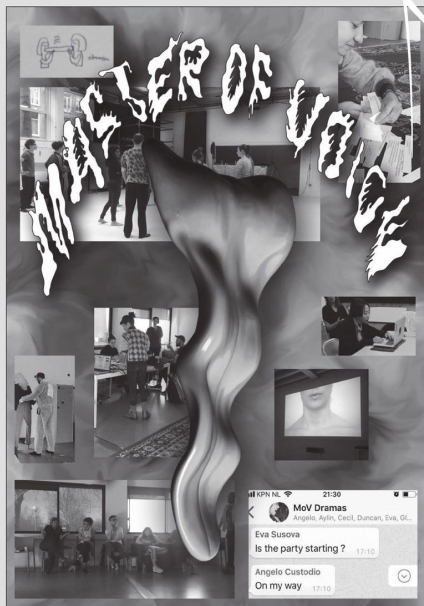
Emily grabs Kore and puts it in a big pot, and slowly melts it. She watches it melt. Her studio is full of the sound of the 'Voice' and melting silicon and plastic, but she doesn't mind. She doesn't enjoy the silence any more. "It took longer than I thought," says Emily. She stirs Kore slowly, waits for the liquid to become cooler. Since Emily has taken off all of Kore's hair for recycling, liquefied Kore looks like heavy cream, the icing on top of a red velvet cupcake. After Kore has chilled, Emily pours Kore into a mug and starts to drink it. Kore fills 18 cups and Emily finishes them all.

Emily programs the following scenario into herself.

<Scenario begins>

It's dead. Its flesh is now becoming part of the liquid. Is matter moving through forms dead or alive? They can't kill the Voice.

<Scenario ends>



For Porosity

page 6

The following three opinion pieces written by Sekai Makoni, Maria Munk and Harriet Joyner were produced in the context of Wail Qasim's workshop on writing a journalistic hot take in the Critical Studies department (April 12, 2018).

We Can Do It All, but Should We?

Opinion by Sekai Makoni

Cardi B finally confirmed that she is indeed pregnant. Speculation had been rife that she and her fiancé—Migos member, Offset—were expecting their first child. Gossip sites were agast, Black Twitter was on fire and Wendy Williams was giving her two cents. It seemed that across the board people thought that if Cardi were pregnant, this was not the time. Her career had been going so well—a modern day, fierce American dream, if you will. A young woman of colour (of Dominican and Trinidadian heritage) from the Bronx, leaves school, becomes a cashier turned stripper, makes a name for herself on Instagram—wins people's hearts and lands a role on reality TV show *Love and Hip-Hop New York*. Cardi then leaves the show whilst still hugely popular and in a surprising move, enters the music industry. Cut to now and she's a successful rapper with everyone singing about her 'bloody shoes'. So why would Cardi risk it all and get knocked up by her rapper boyfriend? There had been speculation that Offset was cheating on Cardi and if she would be his fourth baby mama. The picture looked bleak. However, in true Cardi fashion, she proved us all wrong. She elegantly revealed her pregnancy on *Saturday Night Live*, following the release of her debut album *Invasion of Privacy*. Whilst singing *Be Careful*, in a slim fitting white gown, spotlight on her, the camera zooms out to reveal a not so small bump atop her belly. She's singing lyrics from Lauryn Hill's 1998 hit *Ex-Factor*: 'and serenades us with the line "care for me, care for me"'. In my head I think, "I hope somebody does." We see Cardi show her vulnerable side and it's beautiful.

Following her announcement, Cardi went on a press tour appearing on all the big shows: Jimmy Fallon, Hot 97, The Breakfast Club, MTV's TRL and many more. In one interview she explains that she'd been up since 4 AM that morning in order to get everything done. Cardi is open about the fact that she has never felt so motivated since she found out she was pregnant and has been working her butt off to promote her album despite her pregnancy. She had to pre-record music videos in advance of her belly getting any bigger, had to complete her album in record time whilst still doing club performances and—oh yes—the tiny detail of also planning a wedding. No small feat for anyone, let alone someone growing another human in their body.

Whilst I love Cardi B's drive, ambition and determination—I do worry. It feels like modern day feminism has in some ways morphed into a space where women are encouraged to want and believe they can have it all, albeit without the structures that second wave feminism called for—free nursery places and childcare, payment for labour in the domestic sphere, longer maternity and paternity leave etc. These structures would enable people to have children at a younger age (if they wished) and have systems in place to support them. So, while Cardi states, "Why can't I have both? Why do I have to choose a baby, family or career?", I think that it's challenging to have it all without systems of support and a society that values mothers, parents and children.

Invisible Gifts
by Elisa Grasso
Curtains draw
memories of a broken child open
two rows back the other watches
half of her
with one third of the injury
Broken hearts make
broken hearted babies
inherited cracks
vulnerable secrets
the other knows
but only in her skin
Broken hearted babies
are good at solving puzzles
with pieces of empathy
the other borrows some grief
she feels less
but doesn't know why
Broken hearted babies
heal broken hearts



Snow City 3

To me, we've ended up in a space where some women feel they need to prove they're strong and capable, despite going through one of the most intense and bodily consuming periods that one can imagine of most people's lives. Within the current narrative, you could be led to believe that pregnancy is mere a hiccup of 9 months (10 really, it's 40 weeks) and that if you push hard enough, you'll get through it, be the yummy mummy we all desire to be, and be back at work in no time. Add to this the layer that women of colour and Black women in particular face—the myth that we are superhuman, hyper-fertile, can withstand anything, will hold down our men and look amazing all at the same time, and it could be argued that we find ourselves in a particularly dangerous position.

Medical research increasingly shows that women of colour (and African Americans, especially in the US context) face far higher rates of infant mortality and maternal deaths. Some might put this down to socio-economic factors—that if one comes from a lower socio-economic background they might be less likely to have access to quality healthcare, which in turn could lead to more deaths. However, studies have shown that regardless of socio-economic background, Black women and their babies are dying at far higher rates than white women. What could be the reason, I hear you ask? Why, racism, of course!

Scientists have coined the term 'weathering': that refers to the cumulative, bodily impact that racism has on the body. Yes—those daily micro-aggression that Black people face, piled on top of each other literally wear and weaken the body. This means that during pregnancy and childbirth (the closest most people come to death in their lifetimes), Black women are dying at a higher rate, and so are their babies. Add to this the research which shows that medical professionals literally don't see Black pain—e.g. studies show that Black women are not offered pain medication at the same rate as for white women, which can lead to far more traumatic births as they are not offered pain relief or interventions early on. These factors, working together, mean that we end up in a deeply unhealthy and disadvantaged position.

But how does this relate to our girl Cardi B? Well, in a landscape where women across the board are expected to get on with it and women of colour have the added societal expectation that due to their ethnic background (that many of us also internalize), we can handle it. Alongside this, there is the material impact of racism on Black people's bodies, i.e. weathering: —I see Cardi and I worry for her, and for the young women of colour who may watch her and think, if Cardi can do it, I can too. In theory, you may well be able to do it all, but at what cost? Should you feel that there is no other option? I wish there was space for us to say: 'this is a lot.' 'I need a break,' 'my health comes first,' 'I'd love some support,' 'I'm tired.' And for that to be heard and acted upon, not seen as a sign of weakness or not living up to an image of who we should be based on our ethnicity and society's expectations.

For me, Cardi B's example provides space for us to think about how we, as communities, can create societies where young women of colour can have their baby at 25—if they want to—that would provide the supporting structures that help them to succeed without being looked down upon. Here's to hoping.

THE VALUES & AIMS OF THE SANDBERG STUDENT UNION

Consensually agreed upon at the latest meeting on May 16th 2018

- Actively resist the introduction of methods of privatisation within the Institut
- Organise to oppose all racist, sexist, ableist, homophobic, transphobic, fascist, classist and other oppressive discussions, platforms and interventions within or related to the Institut
- Ensure the democratisation of all possible processes within the Institut (e.g. in the introduction of new temporary MA courses)
- Promote and protect the safety and wellbeing, interests and welfare of students
- Ensure that the Institut remains transparent in all its affairs, including financially
- Act as the official channel of communication between administration and the student body
- Facilitate and encourage cross-departmental and cross-year communication and engagement (e.g. by hosting events or parties or students and alumni)

Stay tuned for information about upcoming General Assemblies of the Sandberg Student Union! Questions, suggestions, inquiries: union@sandberg.nl

Notes for "We Can Do It All, but Should We?"

- 1 A serendipitous echoing of Lauryn Hill's experience, when she became pregnant early in her music career and was met with similar critique. It seems that twenty years later, not much has changed for young women of colour in the music industry.
- 2 Arlene Gammon. "The weathering hypothesis and the health of African-American women and infants: evidence and speculations". Department of Public Health, University of Michigan, University of Michigan (1997).
- 3 Philip Cohen. "Weathering health inequality". HuffPost (26.11.2018).

Additional reading on this topic:

- "How Racism May Cause Black Mothers To Suffer The Death Of Their Infants". NPR.org (26.12.2017)
- "Black Mothers Have Dying After Births: A Story Explains Why". NPR.org (07.12.2017)
- "Why America's Black Mothers and Babies Are in a Life-or-Death Game". The New York Times Magazine (13.04.2018)
- Ronda Coates. "Cardi B's pregnancy announcement on 'SNL' sends a powerful message about modern motherhood". NBC News (09.04.2018)



page 3