

Jochims – SAW

Urgency, essence, death

Invented by necessity of war

When there was lack of living wood

On the dead material piling up material with a knife

Colour radiance energy release no colour no energy, stasis

The empty bunker – reinforced steel reminder

of extreme danger threatening life. What protects our selfhood/consciousness

Against the devastating power of the analytic explanatory engines of the scientific method?

When Raimer carried the painting in in his arms,

Wrapped in bubble plastic like a child in a blanket, an refugee brought from

An environment in which qualities, mental and spiritual,

Have become essentially suspect figures of speech.

Refugees from the “over-ground world ” in which personal existence is forbidden.

Above ground, each of us carries the tag “epiphenomena.”

The empty bunker, it’s past inevitable despite the entrance being camouflaged

As a mock-up of the monolith from Space Odyssey

Down in the hole there was protection

Telling each other stories of our dreams of existence

That when we go back above ground, will have to be denied,

With our well learned cynical laugh, “you won’t believe what I dreamed
“Last night, down in the bunker of sleep, I dreamed that I existed
And life was heading somewhere, was part of the future!”

Essence related to ‘Elend’, the previous show

Curation as a surgical cleansing procedure, pulling the screws out taping whitening
The white cube free from trace of old association
escape contingency, the sticky spider of memory,
what is the spider
what grows fat on real things,
leaves grey impressions.

Net work string game

Media of unity the art work

Shell game of absences, with no pea

Planning for the evening, the time line an anchor thrown out in future

Angel flying backwards chaos order Penrose

Walter Benjamin reality falls apart from moment to moment

Bergson, how long is the moment

Arbitrary divisions

Curation again, an overly curated reality-model

Zeno paradox, can’t get there from here walking to the painting to change it

Make difference yes may do no yes

No in relation to a choice made how much is that choice incarnate

i.e how real is the life-form that the art work has become

why respect that

if situation

all ifs, no world.

Always hesitation and steps taken retracing steps

desire to stay in the middle and keep all options open

Contextuality and perception

Identity formed by limitation of body where is the body

Even physically we live on both sides of our skins

I am in interaction with my environment, interdependence.

Yet I am able to see figure on ground.

Perception as environmental interaction. Break out of Kant.

The environment comes into me is the medium of perception.

I am in the environment.

My perception is both, but it is “mine” in the sense of consciousness.

A perceiving consciousness.

Elend the elend is the person moving through the kaleidoscopic experiences

And the illusions of manipulative power that digitalisation provokes.

The person has constant fear that it will be condemned if it believes in itself!

The self-aware person lives in a gaseous Inquisition of self disbelief

We are jealous of the painting's existence, that it was made

But we just happened.

We can no longer feel “made” by parents, increasing numbers of us have no parents

We are cast off vaginal scrapings, foetuses that escaped from the waste buckets of clinics

Just before sloppy workers made to empty the buckets into the incinerator along with the day's take of cancerous stomachs and blue bloated legs

We chose no parents and no one chose us, there is no one who wants us because there is no one.

And if we feel that we want something, we know that the feeling is only molecules reacting.

**We fall in love and awake into the bare grey-painted prison room of a self,
aware that it is being punished for believing in itself.**

Being me or you is a silly game like children playing jungle animals,

But at least the children have themselves to return to when tiring of the game

We are accidents wishing that they were intentional deeds

We would rather be evil than be nothing at all

We are made of fragments of technological refuse glued together by slime in the bacteria-heated under layers of piled urban refuse.

Our bodies are dust glued together,

Chipped into shape by millions of accidents.

Before we can look at the painting we have to solve our doubt of existence

We have to find a medicine for the nausea that keeps us vomiting all hope

Sartre's stickiness from a lack of differentiation in value.

The hand and the stone simultaneous other and like

Art work not just efficient cause

Reality yeasting under the affect of awareness

Releasing its multiple meanings

Science is rigorously one meaning = instrumentality

Left to right, a fish swims in the aquarium of the empty room

The association did not matter

But I hate that we reduce connection to association.

In what sense is the painting a fish is it a being with direction?

That it must move in a certain direction for the gills to take in oxygen.

**Turned upside down the blue sagged a wave of water about to rise and curl over drown
the sun**

The change in blue at the tip of the round nose of the blue

the circle back of the yellow around the space behind first sign of dawn of life.

The fish then one form yellow and blue

See as composite the grey band in between a neutral grey severe scientific neutral?

Grey as a wall, as boundary, the boundary between quality and quantity.

No, later the grey of Klee where Quantity and quality meet and reconcile.

**Measurement Pythagoras music and calculation spatial proportion and number agents of
marriage feeling is not an idea**

Abstraction of no-body produces a body

Body, matter and mind as three contraries

Escaping the sinking block that pulls you down

Child's escape out of the eyes.

To Woodward nature revealed herself as the molecules dancing,

I thought of the other scientist turning red who is afraid of red we all are

Things being understandable, being see-able: the colour is its meanings.

The fact of symbols having a back door that is unlocked,

being more than associations and physiology,

the sun is yellow and the sea blue and death is blue and a hope in death

**is like a burning candle falling into the water and still burning, a yellow star in blue
depths.**

The industrial straight cut top sides of the yellow vane shape, inconsequential to the painstakingly chipped and rounded edges. But also the grey binding piece had that industrial quality.

Limits, reminder out of depth, even then of technique,
which has come to mean that the person is mechanically made by a machine
that was made by accident,
a kitchen machine preparing a meal for no one to eat.
Freed from the wavering human eye,
the shifting unease of the body, its peristaltic waves,
the emotionally instable contractions of heart and diaphragm.

The painting had that grey bridge,
an entrance a wall a disinterested arbitrator between left and right
Jochims on the difference between left and right.

The echos footsteps
Empty white walls mirror, screens,
But realized I was receiving, not projecting,
an ungraspable but existing difference, reasserting itself.
The physical body processes escape my will,
By fooling me into thinking that I will?

The backside of the art work, bits of wood, glue and screws,
Deconstruction is as old as Buddhism, although lacking its sense of unity.
Rorty's subjectivity as "a centerless bundle of contingencies",
in which case it would be difficult to motivate yourself, say, to help a neighbour.
The old monk says, hell, it's a woman!
Philosophy has been cowardly in relation to science, on the whole,

Impressed by the decay of biological bodies.

**The image of the walking woman remains on the retina of memory,
or even more difficult to explain,
my own my own reflection on her existence and mine reflected in her.**

**Our technical progress has been a metaphysical regress,
every accomplishment is a catastrophe,
of which the greatest is the loss of the ability to see identity,
like toddlers unable to tie shoe laces.**

Dominance of process has resulted in new fears, of essence, of existence.

Pre-empting the deathbed and the grave,

**we have been busy deconstructing ourselves while still breathing and claiming to love
our friends, who we can not grant real, coherent existence.**

The beneficent effect of discovering that the edge of the precipice

**That we slide every day closer to, no matter how hard we try to dig into life
with our jokes and our orgasms, the edge is only a line on a flat surface,
and crossing it is a non-event.**

What happens in the present invades our thoughts like a landslide,

**facts helter-skelter piling with their superior reality on top of reminiscence,
breaking through the fine web of continuing perceptions.**

**If there ever was an exemplum of categorical thought, dogmatically expressed, it was the
concrete bunker, complete with emergency interior pressure release and sand for
filtration entrapment of free floating poisonous gases. Anything that brings technically
applicable physicalities in question. If ever a subversive agent penetrated this fortress of
applied fact it was Joachim, as shepherd of mysterious embodiment. The actions of
careful wrapping and un-rapping, a respectful handling as of a baby in swaddling, but
not of an expensive, electronic neo-insect, but of a hand formed of object paint on
hardboards fastened together by a little carpenter's glue and ten cents worth of screws,
cut much deeper into the frozen surface of physical fact than beamed flickering pixels.**

The heavy concrete box of our hiding place should blush at the presence of an art work so close to its own state in the world, at having such a fragile cousin brushing its cheek.

Jochims descending into the unknown space of the bunker with his work in his arms was a figure of the West, as I was to discover, fully conscious of the contemporary desire to see no substantialized art work, yet still willing to name a painting, and to grant a painted panel the responsibility of meaning. He brought into a world of electro-digitally mediated stimuli and neuro-endocrinal responses, of art as one perspective among many serving observation and intervention in economical-political processes, a mute and solid thing, reflecting analogue light into fleshy eyes. It seems to me, in retrospect, that if the Buddha prized above all the mystery of non-existence, then Jochims represented a contemporary link in a long chain of being that refuses to relinquish the mystery of consciously physical existence, and chooses not to avoid the horns of its dilemmas.

Survival depends on stepping precisely between those horns, daring to contact the substantiality, the elastic factuality of specific things and persons in subjectively timeless moments, the pause at the point of return between the waves of change, the stillness that creates the pattern of change. Our situation, 15 meters underground, buried five times over, made it more difficult to escape into an imaginary world of relations between things that are nothing but the logical necessity for "relations" to be between things, mathematical points. Nowhere is it permitted us, these days to encounter a body, and the bodies we seem to be are conventional bundles of sensorial data, given a temporary avatar masques, varying from morning to morning, as functions of the games which play us. For to believe that we are the players of our games is very naive indeed. Now, it was as a "no" to such a web of thought that that I see in memory, Jochims figure approaching, now in the the aura of a memory of Picasso's gyps and wire assemblage of a man carrying a goat. Something very ancient was approaching, before the time we had begun to fool ourselves into thinking that no one would die because no one had really lived.

It would be contemporary to say that it wouldn't have mattered if Jochims had arrived with a photo under his arm, or a piece of paper on which he had sketched a game we should play, or whatever excuse could be given for a situation worth naming. It wouldn't matter if the paint had been spread by his hand or an assistant's, or a computer controlled paint gun, capable of reproducing the impasto of a Seurat or a Van Gogh. In a world in which only algorithms count, where the subject of attention is shifting lines of relation, whose nexi are weightless, specific hunger and satisfaction, moments saturated with smell, taste, and awareness of horror or beauty, are trash to be discarded. The past hundred years have been a universal test of the hypothesis that only quantity counts, freed from cloying substance.

Statistical significant effect has made individual presence as good as nothing, except within the emotional by-products of a near-obsolete organic media's function. Jochims' entry into the empty bunker, an instrument left from one such experiment, looks to me now as an act to re-open the investigation. The care with which he supervised our hanging of the painting on the wall, proposed a value and a thing as inseparable, the counter argument beside the sky-high debris of lives from here to Australopithecus, that

as incomprehensible and unavoidable as wave and particle, the value of a single life is incalculable, and that something of the poetic physics of its gravity, like the surreal physics of black holes or singularity, is present for experiment in a single art work.

Here was the experimental set up: bodies in chairs, a hand-made painted wooden object hung six or seven steps away on a meters thick concrete wall, dishes full of food and bottles of wine and water, and an expectation of conversation. Where was the reason for our being there? Firstly, to find out what we were, compared to the humble object on the wall. In fact not so different, as out-moded things, already convinced that the sleek carbon plastic and titanium robot is on the way to replace our messy gimcrack frames, bedecked with rags still soaked in the sea water we crawled out of. Our younger generation seems to prefer the company of little plastic insects, with their pinpoint gleaming blue, red, orange eyes, sparks of lightening, able to sniff up and distribute to at a distance the things they never touch. It is a survival instinct, perhaps, to cosy up to the shadows cast on us by the forerunners of the coming master species, homo cyberneticus. Was there a certain dismay in our hearts, at the sight of a thing hand made out of materials that might be found in grandfather's tool closet?

Again we would have to revert to exploring our thoughts and feeding our feelings as if in the world of real things and its morass of sensations, stone and mud, toothache, flu, fear of drowning, and hope regularly stuffed into the wastebasket of chemistry. Looking towards ancestors with their ocean, earth and sky deities, in imagination brought further into the darkness, beside glowing embers, heaps of rock chips and the blood smell of sacrificed chickens. Back in the vertebrae keeled, bone ribbed, hand bent and sewn boats of our bodies, with slight change the same model our ancestors rowed their new souls out in, who knows how many millions of years ago (assuming time is a constant). Joachim's work put us into that same paddle-dipping, wide-eyed, expedition of primitive creatures, who still shared their minds with the tree saplings they grieved for as they stripped them for roof poles, and the for the pig whose throat they slit for a body warmed, body warming broth, and thanked for the life it gave them.

It was difficult to find an attitude fitting to the occasion. Certain etiquette of comment and appreciation was left in our pockets, the easy noting of brush work, bravoure or fine strokes that served to introduce art works and viewers in shared society, back in the old days. The technical enthusiasms that warm up the encounters around each other's work of the young generation, although the further one gets from the art world the less self-conscious that is. There is nothing like a get-together of digital artists, still thinking of themselves as a more adventurous variety of nerd than as artists, for democratic conviviality, unabashed admiration or careful criticism, and a generous sharing of information. Wasn't there a certain dismay, as we unwrapped the package, to find a thing that would put so much responsibility, where there was nothing to do but look and imagine in response, not even an escape into the state of affairs it reflects that is a photo's false bottom. How could a group of Wielders of the Cutting Edge, be expected to spend an evening with two pieces of chip board screwed together and covered with acrylic paint? Nothing in the concrete box we sat in that could function as a connection to the Web, not even a voice recorder or a film camera.

If the object Jochims had brought had been a rectangular painting, that would have fit effortlessly into the our readymade identities for art work, and if had been geometrically abstract, more or less, we could have leaned back to enjoy at least an evening of Classical Modernism, so as even the young will once and awhile spend an evening with Grandpa, savouring the sepia tinted feelings the old stories call up, the heroic times of Sacrifice, Existential Gesture, Super Reality, and Whiteness. A bulbous and finned form, helped only slightly by the art-historical term of biomorphism used by Jochims in contrast to the organism-disdaining angularity, the precious block-balancing acts of a Mondrian that prepared the mind for habitation in silicon chips and an impersonal models. Like a fish on a plank in the market, Jochims object filled our space with the unavoidable aroma of its original environment in an individual man's emotion and action, his mind integrated in a body of sensation and its deep, slowly composting reserves of memory, down to layers before rationalized speech, when stars were the eyes of weird creatures and wind was the breath of vast lungs.

Jochims' art work started the evening by forcing us, it seemed to me, to imagine and think more honestly. It was as if we had fallen off the contemporary motor boat into the real and bottomless sea of physical things, the mouths we were pushing food into and the light that flickered in our minds (perhaps an echo effect in the space of consciousness, a reflection in the mirror reflecting its own reflection). The humiliation was repeated when the painting was taken down and laid face down on the bubble plastic, its neutral chip board construction revealed, like ourselves in underwear, coagulated seawater scum that we are, or as other myths have it, clay figurines made from a mix of dust and god's spittle. However the chipboard was neutral, having had the nerve and vibration of trees rigorously processed out of it. Could our physical bodies, their chemical composition worth a few cents, be also so considered as analogous material, characterless supports for the eccentric profiles of our faces and the colourful surface of our personalities?

Early in the evening I asked myself, if an art work could be somehow its material form, separated from his handwork carrying out his will as informed by fleeting perceptions, some as reflections of an idea, some of the changing condition of brittle board crunched into shape around the edge by pliers, or later of colour and texture spread by palette knife. Would it be possible to lift this network of interactions from its placenta of experience, and further refine it from the circumstance of even a particular artist's existence, until a pure numerical algorithm remained, an order of events that needed no substance at all and no remnant of essence, such as our moment to moment self-awareness seemed to be. Was it possible to propose that this painting, which to hang we had had to leaned our full body weight against the drill, to get enough of a hole in the concrete to screw a hook into, was the sadly unnecessary object restricting an otherwise unrestricted process. Whereas the hypothetical algorithm could be run behind an unlimited quantity of situations, set a process going for an endless shift of appearance, as immaterial as the body of a creature in a computer game.

I could imagine the distaste some might feel for my proposal of taking this object seriously, carefully weighing our primitive somatic responses to it, as if they had a right to sit at the same table with our analyses of how this way of working connected into the

world as a net of energies and strategies, the only legitimate medium of for art work in our time. As if art could be located, could depend on a fixed set of circumstances, really had anything to do with long stories about the way a physical thing was made, as if we were still squatting around a camp fire, listening to a tribal elder tell how to make a leather scraping tool from a chunk of rock.

It amused me that we all had our chunks of rock with us, albeit with the play of fire and matter and shaping technique refined over hundreds of thousands of years, shaped into little black boxes with seashell thin walls, that we hold to our ears and hear voices and music in. The story of how the tool is made has become so complex and abstract over the millennia, that it completely overshadows its physical reason, so that we have become ghosts that think that real things are the haunting! Yet the thread of life is as fatally attached to particular, irreplaceable physical things as it ever was, and the significance of the contrast between idea and object, process and inanimate fact, relations and the intersections that bring relations into existence, is as mysterious, as primary as ever.

The difference between ourselves and our distant parents is as self-serving a figment of pretension as is the difference between the international millionaire and the person who roots for a living in hills of trash. For Jochims, lively intellect that he is, this would be no new observation, and that realization prepared me to intensely enjoy the story of the painting's making he told, as if a cabinet maker, yet the function of this cabinet was to hold an inventory of mythical experiences. It was a piece of semantic furniture in the world of folk stories, where tables walk and mirrors are thin curtains hung at the entrances to other rooms, in other words of active interface between physical states of affairs and information.

When I saw Jochims deliberately walking towards us through the succession of rooms and doorways of the bunker, cradling in his arms the bubble-plastic wrapped painting we were to spend the evening with, he was a transgressor of the rules of factuality, a time traveller clothed in the protective role of artist. How he would behave toward his painting was already evident, anything but diffident. It was a test. Whereas the bunker had been constructed to protect life, the century of which it was an artefact had been dominated by projects of depersonalization, if not on through war and political machination, then by a machination of the image available to our self reflection. If we could emerge from the bunker's six sided concrete embrace, still able to perceive depth in our minds, it would be a wonder.

As a child I had heard of the shades, the shadows snipped loose from dying people, that drifted down to the underworld, never imagining that I would live in a world in which, while still eating and together and talking, persons were reduced into shades of doubtful existence. The doubt was present in the fleeting suspicion that the back side of the painting was the real thing, and the face shown us in the way it was hung on the wall was a figment of our own wishful thinking, the bit of bread and wine turned into flesh and blood.

We were, in fact in as physical a context as could be imagined, short of being embedded in stone as fossil remains. Our phones didn't function, seven meters deep under the parking lot asphalt, and were we to scream in concert, a bat flying over couldn't have

heard us. Discovery of an open back exit, had relieved me from an idea that an as yet unnoticed automatic mechanism might lock the double-walled bank vault door at the bottom of the stairs leading into the underground chambers, and by a comedy of errors assorted family and friends might assume we were somewhere else, "didn't he say he was going on to Berlin, but still it is inconsiderate not to call", until playing alien children (looking like centipedes), some tens of millennia hence, would find our mummies.

It was fascinating to press a palm against the cool, smooth concrete walls, considering that all the movement I felt had to be in myself, and that nothing I could do, think, or say would affect the structure that held me. Rationally considered, we were meeting Jochims' art work within an architecture of despair, designed following the function of a schizoid being, the Siamese twins of murder and protection. Those who were to have come here, according to the builders' intention, were to have been born backwards, out of a world intent on killing, into a safe entombment, to sit waiting in hope for a chance of an afterlife. To assist our souls in the time of trial, we had a painting that we saw as our world at its beginning, when someone broke indifferent extension into forms, and spread over them a restless, contrary couple of colours. Like pre-historic folk, Jochims had brought into our tomb the essential to restock a new world, the old emblems of male and female, seed and fruit, ocean and sun. Was the life we were living as nonexistent as what they thought they would have with their buried furniture, food, and metaphysical symbols?

The bunker was the physical place, but we met at a certain time, and excavated the moment of our meeting into a space of several hours. That future that we will not allow ourselves to believe exists, was as much the necessary material for our experience together as was the plywood we sat on, and the concrete and earth surrounding us. So in fact we continue the stone age beliefs of our ancestors, however clever our masques of denial. The lines that trace our movement do not end at our feet, but continue on before us into a landscape of possibilities that is more absolute than the explications we recite about the relativity of time, as if it were the trace left by things happening, whereas there is nothing so real as the time of the future, where nothing has yet happened. A vast ocea.

Yes, I'll see you tomorrow, or as perhaps a grandparent more wisely added, god willing, and with a little bit of luck, tomorrow looks more mysterious and is filled with more light than yesterday. Now when Jochims tread slowly and cautiously into the Bunker, he seemed to me like a time traveller, carrying something made in the past for many futures, also for the situation now forming. All the elements coming together, for which the painting was the organizing axis, required a duration together to give form to the intention that was their sense.

We spent quite a while together, Herman, Raimer, and I getting the chairs and table for our meal placed satisfactorily in relation to the painting, in relation to our lines of sight, and at a distance that would keep the painting within the circle of our conversation. That was an indication of the crucial belief, that seeing this painting had also its own time, as does eating a meal, that every art work is also a form of time, only partly perceivable in

the present and necessarily also elsewhere, the best we can say is that we exist only in our beliefs.

Given the instability of modern belief, would it be possible for us to maintain among ourselves for the duration of the evening the convention that the simple object now hanging on the wall was a work of art? Having dissolved our selves into processes, and process into a theory of art as a seamless play of relations, a sort of cultural string theory, wasn't the way we spent this evening going to be retrograde, even *incorrect*? Might it hurt the career of a younger person to be associated with such a substantialist, even essentialist ritual as that of looking at a painting, as if art were something incarnate in a mere thing? That was my greatest worry as the evening began, no, greater was a fear that if the subject were to be brought up, our beliefs would not allow a good conversation.

I had been thinking those days of a tale from the life of a venerable monk, as told by Thich Nat Hanh. Several novices were sitting with the monk on the steps of the temple, when a young woman walked past. "Take a look at that woman!", said one of the novices, at which another replied, disdainfully, "what woman? That is just a loose assemblage of bits and pieces of flesh and bones and stinking tubes tumbling along the path!" "Damn it," said the monk, "don't be a fool. That is a woman!" There we sat, acting out the problem of the substance we hate being, as we exclaimed that the food was tasty, and chewed, taking another sip of wine to wash it down, while reflecting on our ideas, wondering what it was that we saw, and what we might say.

There is the inescapable need for a substantial leverage point to move along any phase of a process, although that point be as invisible as an electron. To say something, you need to be something. We were all, I supposed aware of the dubious status of painting in the eyes of the present day guardians of the texts, yet the consciousness enlivening those eyes was itself dependent on its own nest of dendrites. Even the metaphor of a bird sitting in its nest was far from the tangled intimacy of light and bloody organs that our minds are, in which no one can honestly find the beginning or end of the chain of causality. It is only on the podium of joint gristle and tube muscle that we can debate our doubts. The slight chips to plant in the brain, hardware of interface for the ultimate computer game, are sea sand, mountain dust. Still, doubt would dissolve whatever holds together these compounds into the things we see, and whatever we are that sees them. Why not save time and jump ahead to the ultimate conclusion, that there is nothing and no one, and then also no need for laborious analysis of relations? The mistake of deconstruction is a priori, in the assumption that there is anything to deconstruct, and disproves its own project by beginning it.

From his first appearance with it and its installation, Jochims took responsibility for the object he had made, for the embarrassing necessity of it as object of our consideration and reason for our being together. In our refined art world of fine spun and transparent relations revealed fleetingly in flickering threads of numbers, this thing of Jochims was like a tuber, of primeval organic life, out of which, 50000 years later, social sculpture and libraries full of games and relational flow sheets would spin out, disintegrate in the wind.

We felt, I think, slightly trapped, a group of wolrats in a tunnel, faced with a thing their instincts told them to sink their teeth in, but the days fashion forbid them, as revealing a retrograde and inactive attitude. In a feint away from what he may have felt to be our resistance, Jochims led us into the subject of deconstruction, and the object that was Derrida “as a bookworm eating his way through Rousseau”. [d- real p. R, realp. Book., real p. Project of dec. Dependent on integreties to deconstruct. The surgeon disentangling his bodies unity into a rats nest of fibers and needs a coherent hand and a single sharp blade to do the task, sort of the reverse version of Gödel’s proof.]

What Jochims carried was wrapped in bubble plastic, the universal swaddling-cloth for breakable objects, and a warning sign for anyone who believes that art must be transformed from materiality and saleable objects into processes and relations. Do we need that object, isn’t the specificity of an invitation to dinner enough definition for an art work, isn’t the projected event the conversation that is expected to arise within it and its relational echoes enough, the real art work, with its appropriately conceptual and tentative embedding in the world of things? We no longer wish the word to become flesh, but at worst a memory refracted in various minds, and preferably an open and public digital file, not Pdf. I was reminded of attending my first meeting of Arts Laboratory workers at Drury Lane, in late 60’s London, naïvely carrying in a large, black zippered portfolio full of drawings, to supplement the letter of introduction I’d sent from Boston. A theatrical silence was broken by cries of “what is that?!” , “a fucking capitalist!”, “drawings? You think art is making mud pies?”, “you just had your first solo show? Bloody egoist! Fuck off!”, “Oh, that is ‘your point of view’ is it! Hear that, the bugger has a ‘point of view’! “.

I suspect that a proposal at the beginning of the evening was that the object was a excuse for the event, and the event was the real thing. My proposal is that the object must be given priority of cause in the whole, by force of analogy. Without the fleshy bodies that we are, the self would not exist that is conscious of the needs and curiosities that leads to seeking each other’s company and inventing ways to share our thoughts and responses to experience. On the other hand, if we think of ourselves as events we soon become a fast-forward flutter of context-less images, dispersing any compact person of sense and thought into an evaporating mist of regrets. From what I knew via documents of Jochims placed himself on a way of work that stretched back to the horizon of human consciousness, and that he surrounded himself with evidence of that consciousness, artefacts brought along by a traveller that were literal ‘souvenirs’, returns of the past as hand held fact, not as memories. Facts in the form of things loaded with a metaphysical charge of the taste of consciousness, of the way things and events taste on the tongue of the self, a charge whose existence it is no longer scientifically respectable to admit belief in, as the only proof that can be offered of it is a single person’s word. However, what Jochims brought in to exhibit, the object hung on the wall, was such a word, and what it could prove, I thought, if we were willing to suspend our suspicions, was the factuality of what we only dared believe in the privacy of self reflection, our existence, i.e. the awareness of being something that participates in an event, and able is to designate it as here and now, and sense its direction.

Jochims laid his package carefully down on a table, and I could feel us watching one another's faces in peripheral vision, curious about the other's response to the thing being unwrapped that has, I think, no comfortable definition in contemporary terms, but then, neither does a human individual. For our externalized, functional viewpoint, art no more needs binding to a particular physical body than intelligence (all that is left over from 'mind') needs, and the peculiarities of place and person are set aside in the epiphenomenal category of 'decoration', variations facilitating recognition in the despised market place (the cutting edge academies train their students to rather be functionaries of the state), accidental overtones that force scientists to reduce the disturbing effects of by enlarging their data bases. The emotional and imaginative dynamic that may be the 'content' of the experience of art work is all negligible for a contemporary analysis, for which particular art works are objectively just so many points on the graphs of socio-political-economic-political analysis. See here my own bend in perspective, that the dominant paradigm for the human being in the West has become the emblematic white rat, whether for the neuro-physicist, the philosopher, or the art theoretician. Art is sub-system of behaviours, of relations, within the great set of effects reducible to computable processes. The means of describing an 'inside' of things with an irreducible unique content, has been knocked out of our hands, remaining available as source of associational incense, to create an atmosphere of 'value' on formal occasions, when the feeling that something 'really matters' is functionally useful, for example, to motivate the acceptance of a new tax, or to add prestige to a cultural award. "And now this year's Nobel prize will be given to the great scientist...", what can be seriously meant, beyond a need to go on a diet, or the number of times her name has been cited in the world's press over the past decade?

Lying flat on the table, before having the dignity of being hung on the wall, the shaped object that Jochims had made, a painting because the appearance of its flat surfaces had been by colours of yellow paint, on the left element, and of blue, on the right, by many precise strokes of a spatula, the edges having been seemingly nibbled by a legion of mice into rounded, as Jochims called it, biomorphic forms. [engagement asked for, that this object was more than an backboard off of which the dimensionless ball of a relational game of squash would be played. We were expected to take something out of it, which expectation had a lightly embarrassing effect on some of us, I felt as the evening began, perhaps for the youngest of us something like the experience of going with devout grandparents to a church service at Easter.

It isn't possible to live long in the art world without becoming proficient in make-believe, given the necessity of making an own art work out of something presented as an art work. The make-believe is easiest in an intellectual form, free of sensory reference, its main reason being to convince someone else about an experience that you yourself are not sure you had. Most art theoretical talk is an abstract form of wishful thinking, which is probably why artwork "as such", the object that a sweaty blue collar has to lift or push into place, is being removed from the idea of art. Such an object is of real interest only for the business people collectors, who like to feel that they can buy art, just like they buy and sell anything else. Just like emerging stock, there are emerging artists, the hens who lay the eggs that might turn into gold. Art has to be purified from this material connection, the illusion of substance that makes art seem dependent on

something tangible, an object of sight. Art cannot depend on the hand made qualities of things, nor can art theory be tested by the evidence of any individual's experience.

We have assassinated Descarte, and bravely accepted an existence as walking-talking sausages, 100% meat, and then turned inconsistently on the traditional intellectual dependence on objects, the reification ideas, the focus on essence that betrayed a fear of losing identity. Yet Raimer was as intently watchful as a shepherd getting his flock to a safe shelter, clearly signalling what he wanted, as we prepared to hang the painting. His idea of identity was not naïvely secured in the material of the object per se, nor in an imminent monad of art that could broadcast through our senses and inform us. What I observed in him that evening was an experienced man walking the narrow ridge of a complex intuition of the real, avoiding nominalist or realist extremes, or relationalism or essentialism or whatever the momentary manifestations of the old urge to pin down the demon of paradox. It is impossible to choose between soggy organs hung around bones, and a transparent awareness filled with light, voices, geometrical figures, the endless stream of a living person's thought and perceptions. In the multiplication of contingencies, the analysis that finds unfolding chasms wherever the eye settles, so that perception becomes the wolf's howl that scatters the simplest identity into dispersal as a cloud of contingencies, Jochims acted as a juggler, determined to deny neither the elements in motion nor the simplicity of the form they created and recreated together.

So we experienced Jochims calm sense of responsibility in presentation of an art work that existed somehow as the real object, so that the specific spectrum of the neon lighting needed to be researched ahead of time, and Herman set out to search for a specific model in the electronics supply stores of Nürnberg, and on the afternoon the painting had to be hung, Jochims surveyed the whole layout of rooms in the bunker, feeling the effect of size and shape each would have on the relation between viewers & between the viewers at the table, temperature of the in unfashionable terms, protection, as if the light mattered – refraction – the height the distance]

All four exhibition rooms of the Kunstbunker were empty, even of traces of the preceding exhibition. Herman and I had spent an evening screwing hooks out of the walls, filling and retouching the holes, so that for the one evening Jochims' painting occupied the entire space. The effect was rather like taking all the chairs away from a table except one, so that you know it is not an accident that only one person sits there, and that for the time being we don't need to wonder about where the others are. An effect of focus that resulted in a slightly comical hesitation when guests had past the empty rooms and reached the doorway through which the painting faced them at a distance of seven or eight meters. Only this, for a whole evening! Of course, people had agreed to come because of links with other people, and could feel that spending their time was justified by the worthwhileness (literal) of the other persons present, perhaps not any one of them, no offence meant, but certainly as a group. Quantity compensates quality, even substitutes for it, as our contemporary constitution compels us to think. Take for example the general idea that the self is a basket term for what a collection of constantly discarded circumstantial selves, and that my face is rather like the lid on a trashcan outside a fast-food restaurant. It could be argued though that the painting was the reference point around which this gathering of people formed, and from a mathematical

point of navigation could become itself become a multiplicity of experience. All that was needed was that it be looked at and thought about, for an experiment in the relation between singularity and a multiplication of qualities to begin, or that it is only the unity that makes diversity possible.

Also in that moment of confrontation was, perhaps, a realization that this one thing could use the eight of us for the multiplication of experience it was made for, and so we felt lessened, demoted. There was a tentative delay to share what we thought of it, a diffidence in the dress of politeness, given the danger inherent in another's ability to compare what we said with what anyone could see. There was no place to hide in between art works, in the invisible stream where anything is possible, although strictly speaking it isn't. In the situation of one object of sight identified as the art work that all are sharing an experience of now, not in memory, it seems to me. Where do we meet, moving ceaselessly along the net lines of the new model world without bodies? Inside the architecture of definitions and decisions, where the blueprint is handed to the carpenters about to construct the moulds for the concrete that now surrounds us, as alien from the insubstantiality of an idea as could be imagined. But the bunker is what it is now, in a different relation to us than the words of the architect would have been, had we been there sixty years ago in an office in Berlin to hear him say, listen, here is my idea. The pause in our stream of thinking and doing, when actualization happens as physical object, as an event happening and its documentation in photo or brain, or as coded charge on a disk.

It is much easier for us to respond to someone else's claim, than to say what we think when we see a painting, which is perhaps why the art-world's denizens have become so adept at make-believe. So first we have to think what we are going to see, and then we have to convincingly play our experience of "it", taking over surreptitiously the role of the art object in our performances. We are obliged to the conceptual protocol of the primacy of context and game rules, as if the art work were the meaningless sphere that only becomes a tennis ball after we have agreed on the rules of the game, that the art is always secondary to the real creative and signifying work, the developing rules of the game, and of course, the game-masters. Everything that comes after that is entertainment. Unless, we succeed in escaping the net into the forces that stretch it, the existence that lends its forms, the silence of the body, the place, the person, the black holes of idea, all containing a greater density of idea than we can imagine, where perception draws the energy that feeds our ideas, which are after all reality's by-product, although we like them to play the role of producers.

Jochims brought his painting in and hung it, closely attentive to the circumstances, in a way that could be interpreted by a metaphor of 'setting the terms for a game', for which he had brought the neutral ball, or as 'taking care that something he had found be properly seen', a rare bird found by an ornithologist, who wants to make sure it is observed alive and well. A whole model of art work doesn't eliminate one or the other. If the metaphor of showing a substantial object is excised, only skill in manipulating game rules and ersatz worlds remains, and without game rules, only thoughtless activity.

But then our Enlightenment has in the end only lit up a 24 hour fast food restaurant, eliminating shadow, where we scabble around driven by algorithms of survival behaviour, no different than the herd of animals driven into the meat grinder to feed our hunger. In our horror we have dematerialized our world into a set of relations in movement, in which things are mathematical points, to enable calculation. We do not reflect on what we are, because there is nothing to reflect on, and if there were, there would be nothing that reflects. What Jochims brought was an object that evoked such reflection, that for response required a viewer to retrieve himself from dissolution, allow the horror struck identity to awaken. [object making unabashed demands no irony]requiring that , and our conversation began with a description of the materials composing the art object, and their metaphoric properties,

Jochims began the conversation by speaking of Derrida as 'eating his way like a worm through Rousseau', an image emblematic of the disintegration of the self-reflective person and its avatars as author, artist, and therefore also its creations, the book, the art work. "Self" as the euphemism for what in the scientist's stainless steel tray lay as a loose assemblage of evolved behaviours and accidentally collected memories. Whereas Derrida's destructive analysis supposed to protect an inexpressible "différance" hidden within persons, by demonstrating that every individual text, and by extension art work, that claimed to express a personal experience was in fact a masque of group fabrication, the quandary was that its only mainstream alternative was an increasingly mindless psychology's model of a person as an opportunistic collage of social selves varying from circumstance to circumstance and loosely connected by biological automatisms. By setting up the exhibition , I was confessing to a naïve belief in individual identities , of the painting and of ourselves seeing it, and in the possibility of general discourse containing live contact with the person viewing it, and the identities of persons talking to one another about what they see.

