

Art as a Rewriting Program

Peter Weibel ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe

What is the problem ?

"Artists of all times are like the gamblers of Monte Carlo, and this blind lottery allows some to succeed and ruins others. In my opinion neither the winners nor the losers are worth worrying about. It's a good personal deal for the winner and a bad one for the loser. And even posterity is a real bitch who cheats some, reinstates others (El Greco), and is also free to change its mind every 50 years."

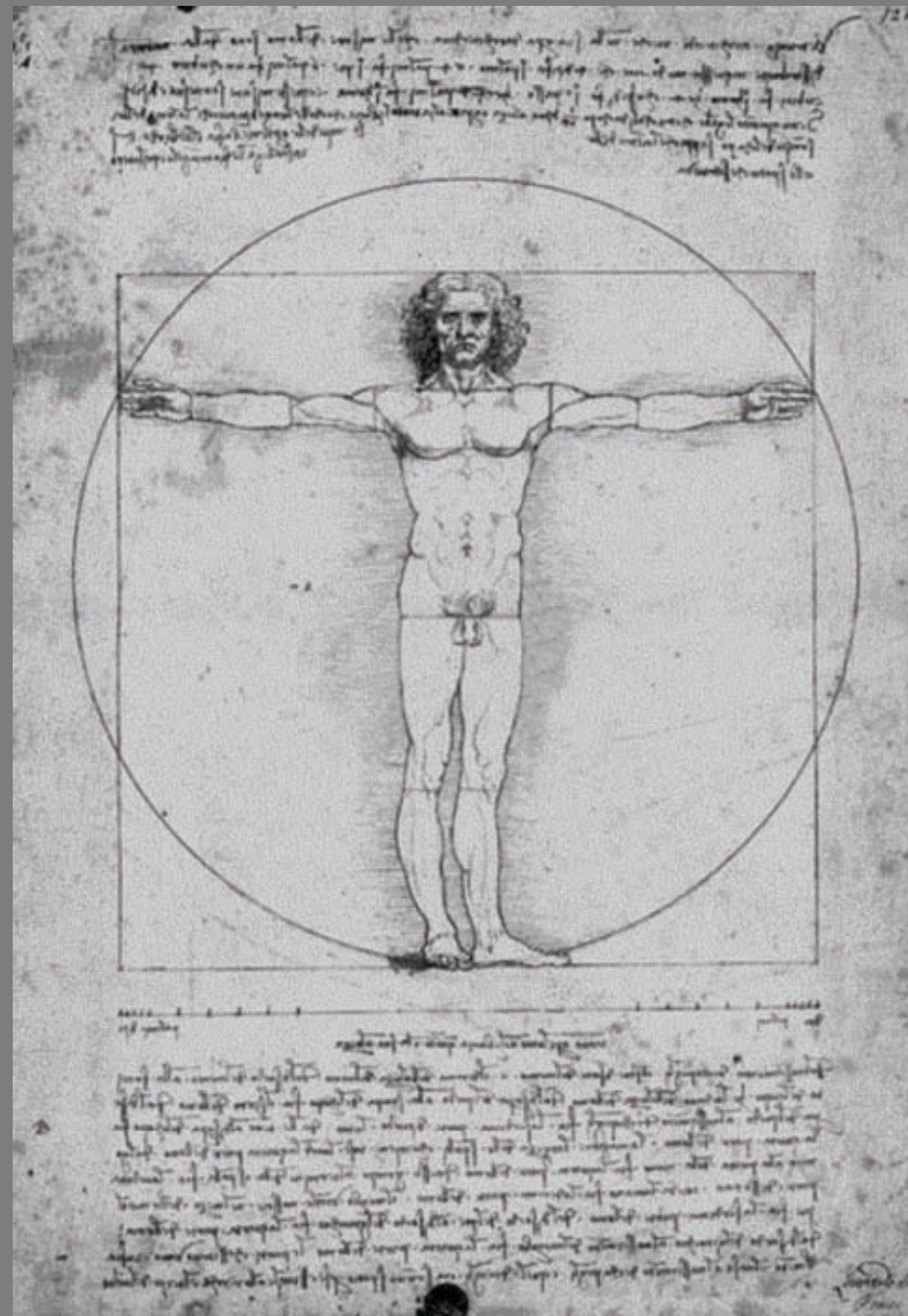
Marcel Duchamp, 1952

A history about two artists (1969)

In a time, long long ago, there lived, far from the villages and towns, two painters. One day, the king, who was hunting in the forests nearby, lost his dog. He found him in the garden of one of the painters. When he looked at the painter's work, he decided to bring him to his royal court. The artist's name was Leonardo da Vinci. The other artist's name was forgotten forever and all times.
B.D.



Braco Dimitrijevic, *Dialectic Chapel, Leonardo – Hundic*, Venice Biennale 1976

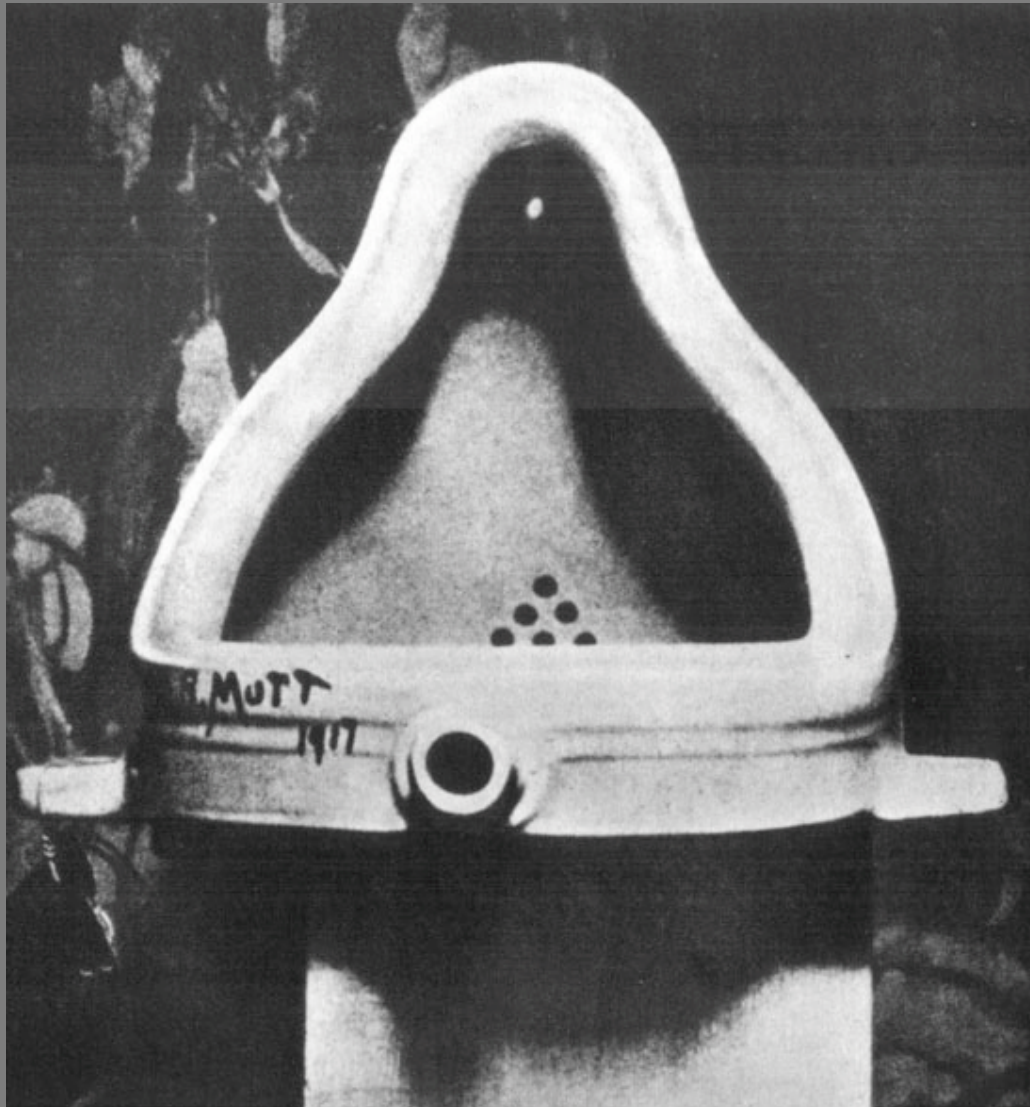


Leonardo da Vinci,
The Vitruvian Man,
c. 1485

2. For the human body is so designed by nature that the face, from the chin to the top of the forehead and the lowest roots of the hair, is a tenth part of the whole height; the open hand from the wrist to the tip of the middle finger is just the same; the head from the chin to the crown is an eighth, and with the neck and shoulder from the top of the breast to the lowest roots of the hair is a sixth; from the middle of the breast to the summit of the crown is a fourth. If we take the height of the face itself, the distance from the bottom of the chin to the under side of the nostrils is one third of it; the nose from the under side of the nostrils to a line between the eyebrows is the same; from there to the lowest roots of the hair is also a third, comprising the forehead. The length of the foot is one sixth of the height of the body; of the forearm, one fourth; and the breadth of the breast is also one fourth. The other members, too, have their own symmetrical proportions, and it was by employing them that the famous painters and sculptors of antiquity attained to great and endless renown.

3. Similarly, in the members of a temple there ought to be the greatest harmony in the symmetrical relations of the different parts to the general magnitude of the whole. Then again, in the human body the central point is naturally the navel. For if a man be placed flat on his back, with his hands and feet extended, and a pair of compasses centred at his navel, the fingers and toes of his two hands and feet will touch the circumference of a circle described therefrom. And just as **the human body yields a circular outline**, so too a square figure may be found from it. For if we measure the distance from the soles of the feet to the top of the head, and then apply that measure to the outstretched arms, the breadth will be found to be the same as the height, as in the case of plane surfaces which are perfectly square.

Vitruvius, *The ten books on Architecture*, written around 50BC



Marcel Duchamp alias Richard Mutt, *Urinal*, 1917



Morton Schamberg and
Baroness Elsa von Freytag-
Lothrighoven, *God*, 1917



Pablo Picasso, *The glass of absinth*, 1914



Meret Oppenheim, *Fur Breakfast*, 1936



Paul Thek, *Decorations for a tree, wire and across*, also known as: *The procession/Easter in a pear tree*, 1969



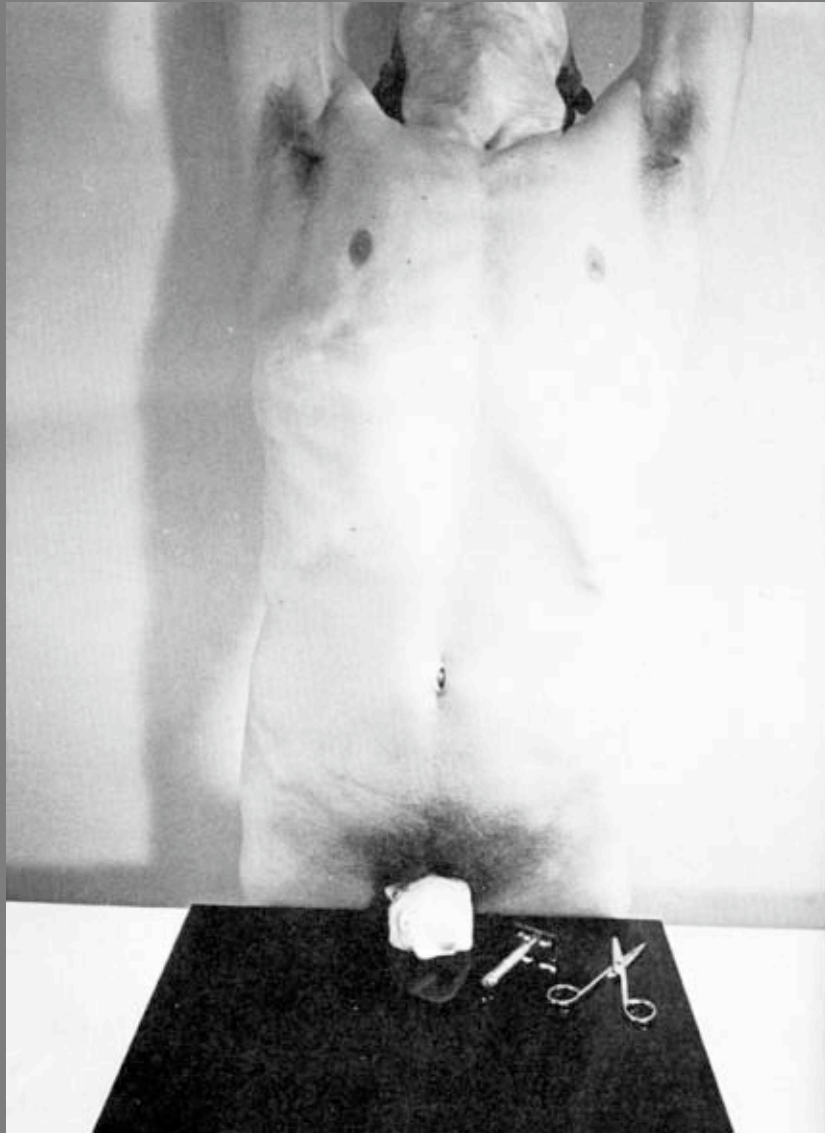
Robert Gober, *Untitled*, 1999



Jean Cocteau, *The Blood of a Poet*, 1930



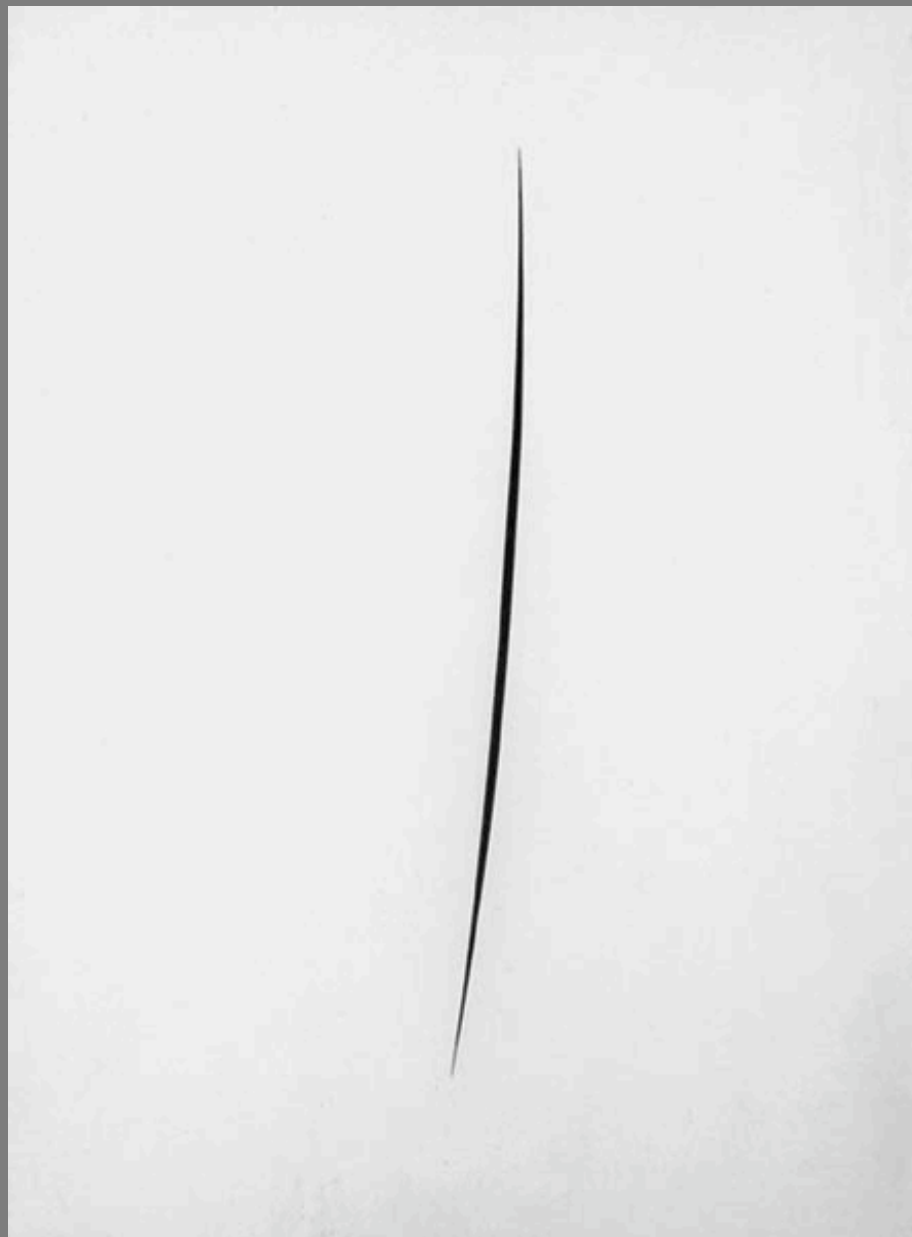
Robert Gober, *Untitled*, 1991



Rudolf Schwarzkogler, *Action*, Vienna May 1965



Rudolf Schwarzkogler,
Action, Vienna May 1965



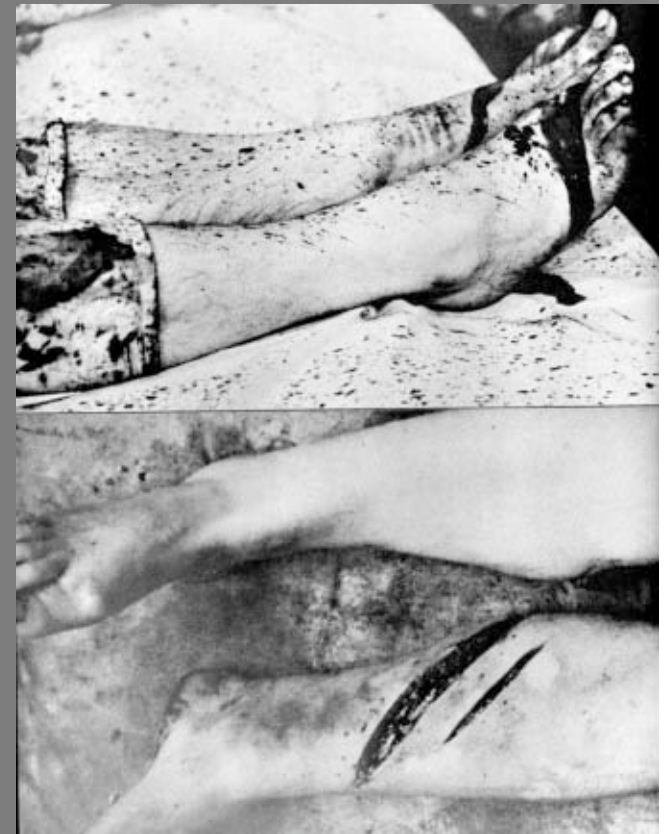
Lucio Fontana, *Concetto spaziale*, 1960



Günter Brus, *der helle wahnsinn [the pure madness]*, Aachen, Germany, 1968



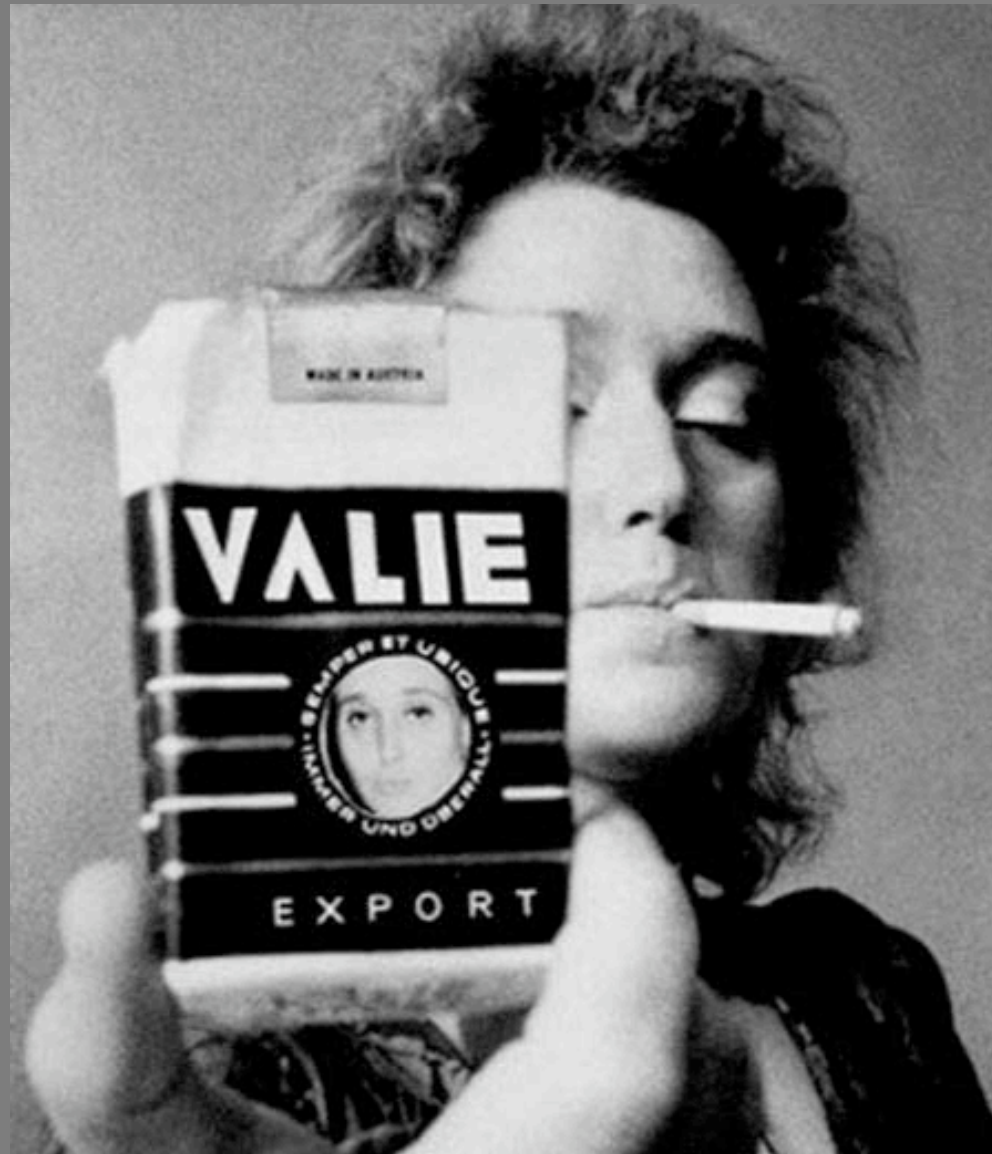
Günter Brus, *der helle wahnsinn* [the pure madness], Aachen, Germany, 1968



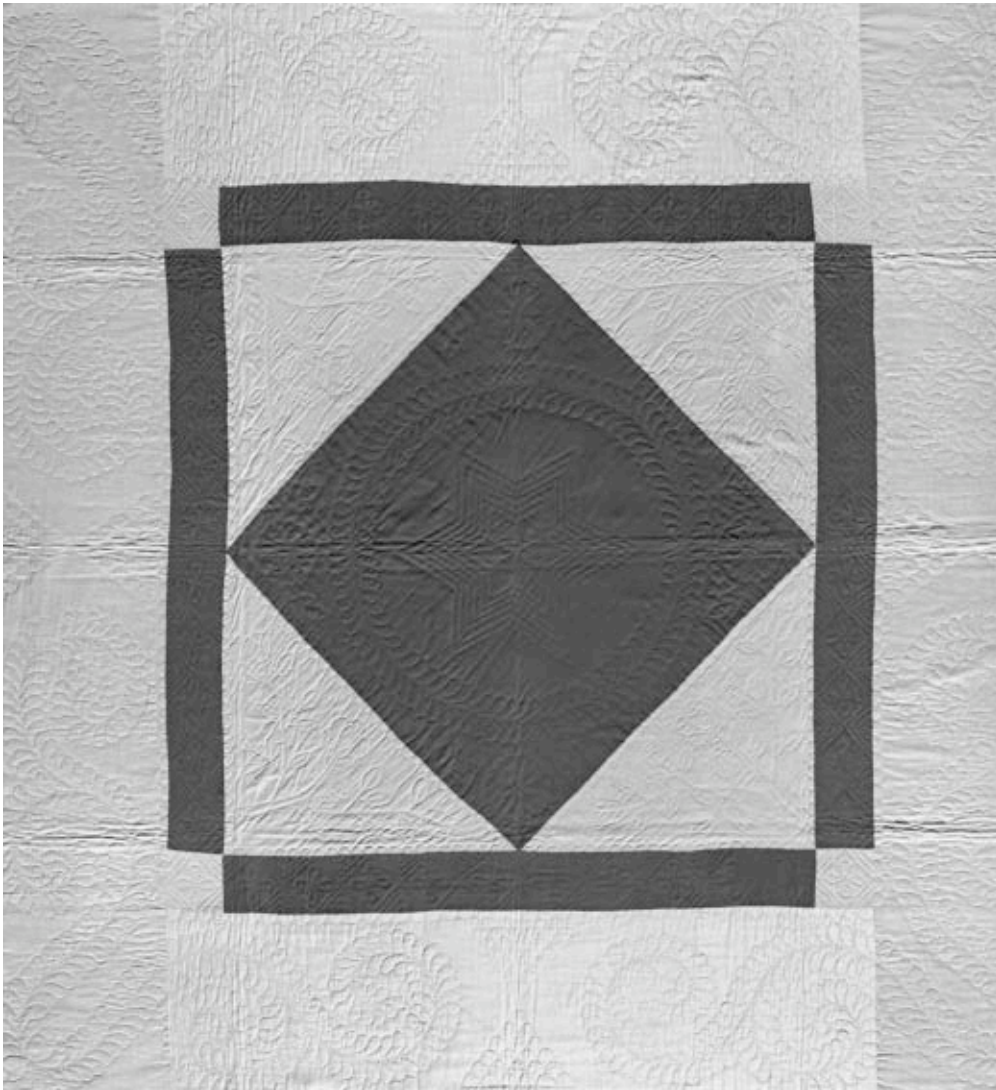
Hermann Nitsch, actions, Vienna, 1964 and 1965

Valie Export and Peter Weibel, *Tapp und Tastkino* [Tap and touch cinema],
November 14, 1968

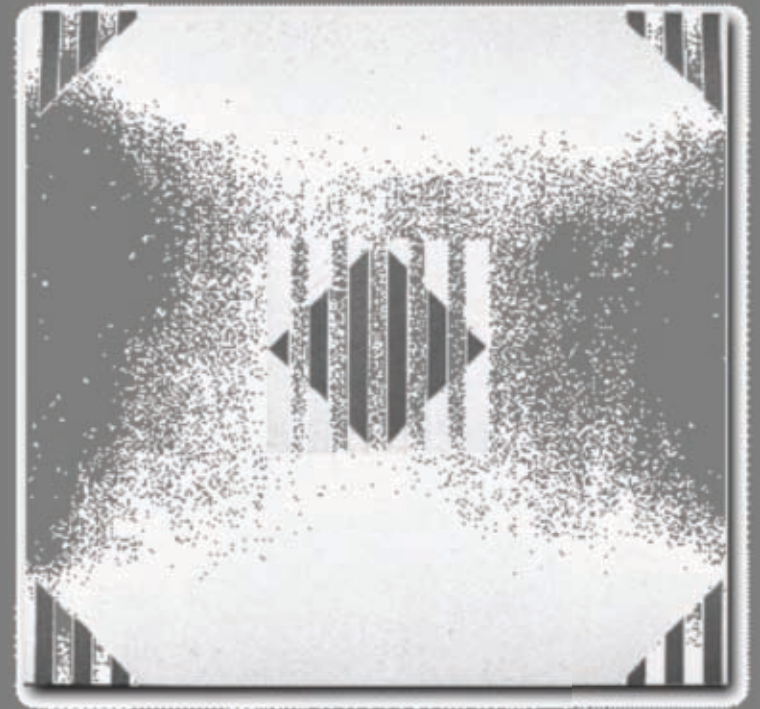




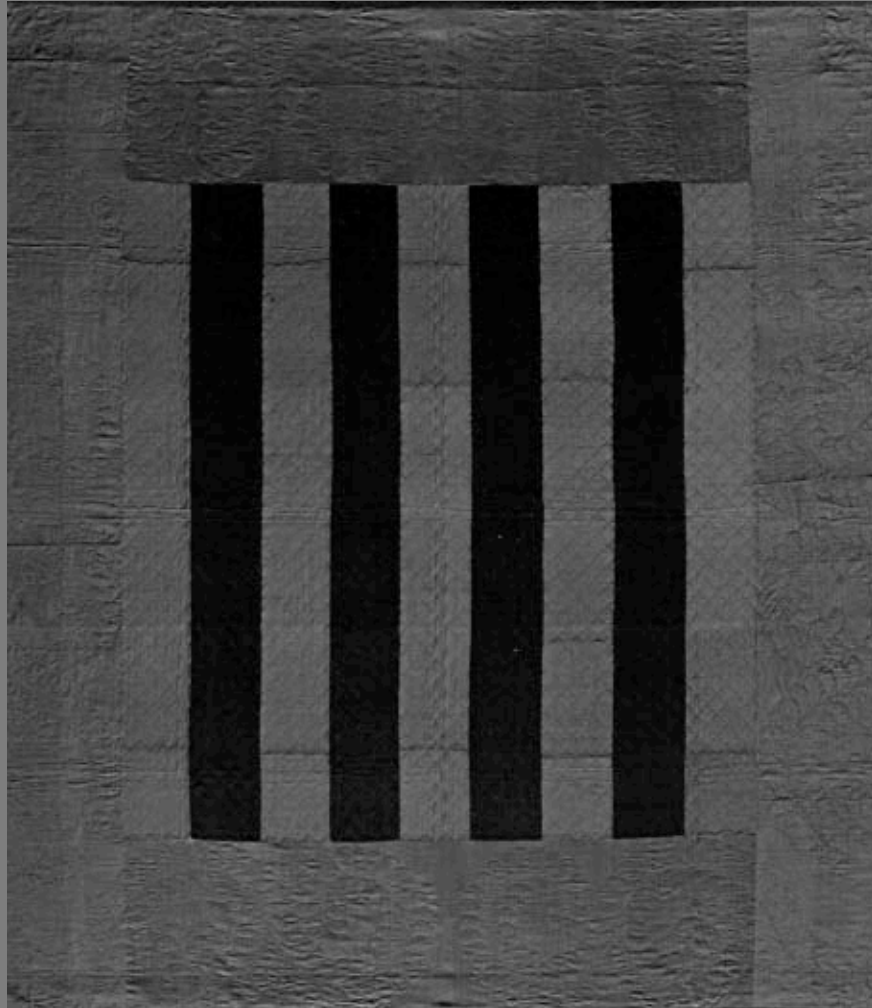
Valie Export,
Smartexport, 1970



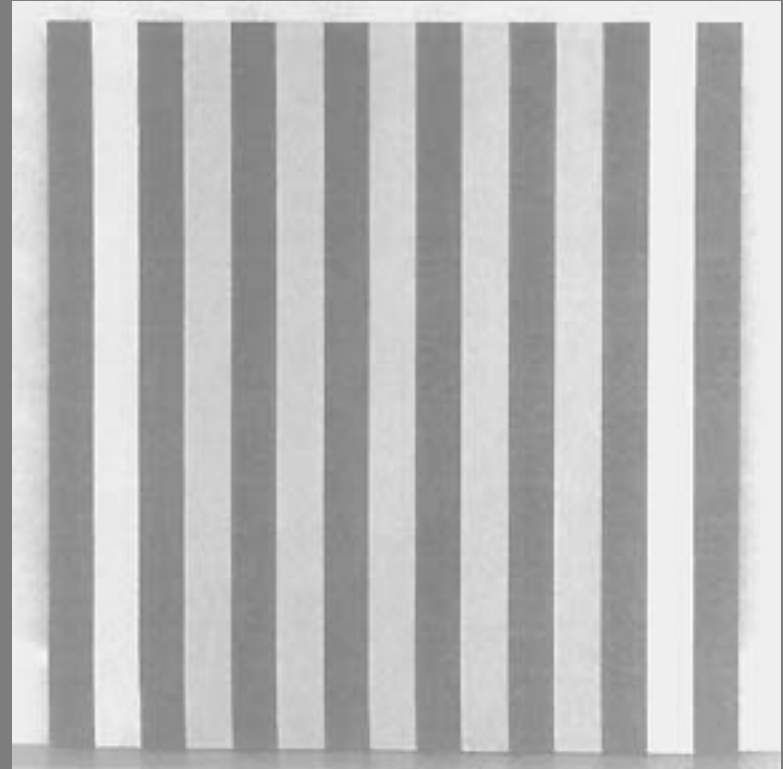
Antique Amish Quilt, c. 1905



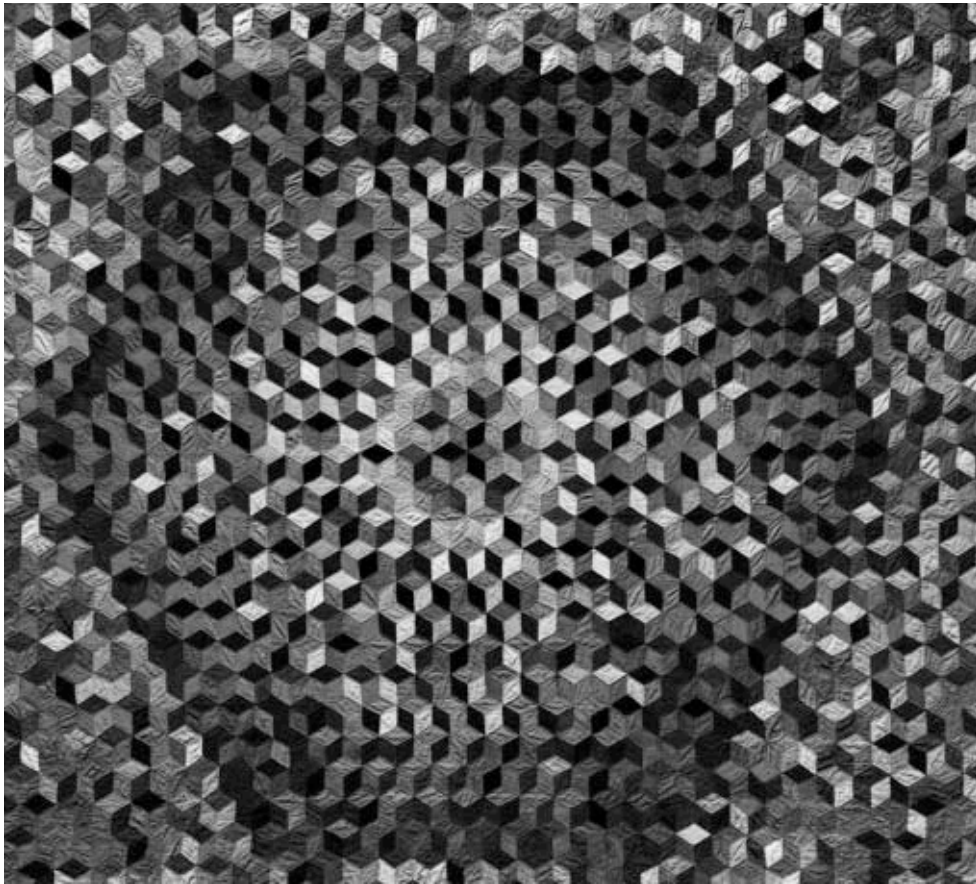
Daniel Buren, c. 1965



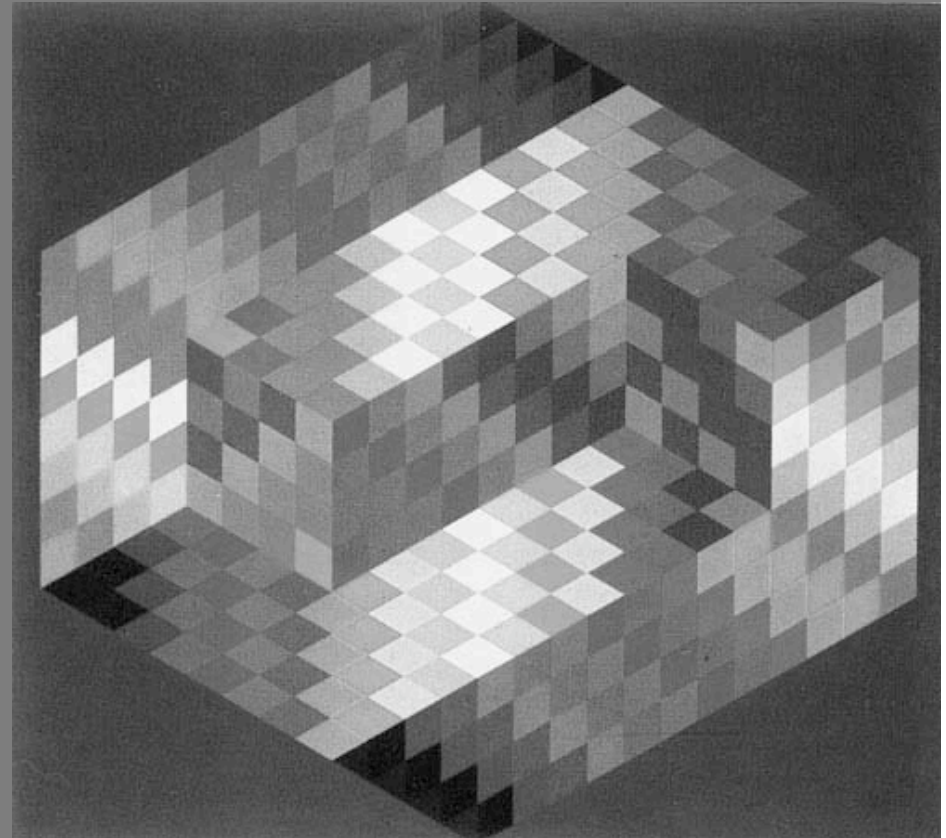
Antique Amish Quilt, c. 1910



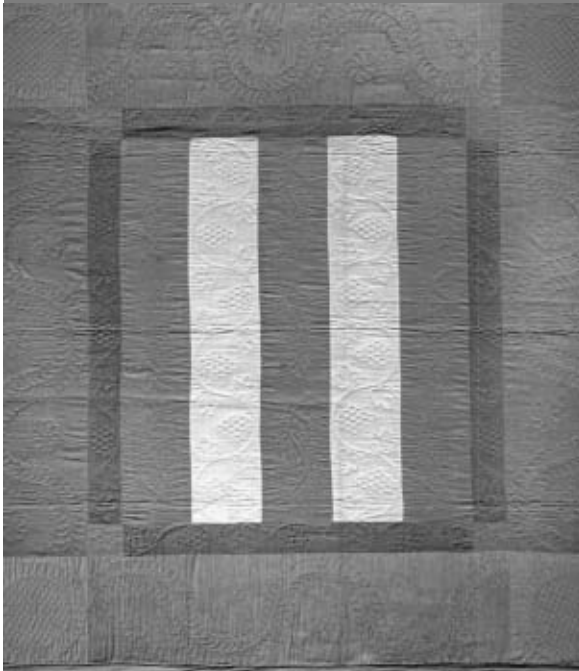
Daniel Buren, *Peinture*, 1965-68,



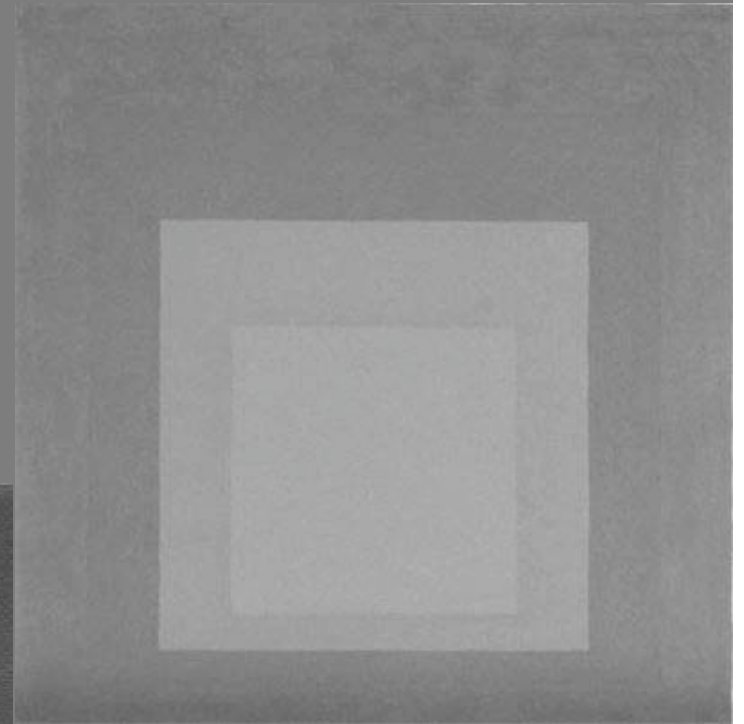
Antique Amish Quilt, 2nd half of 19th Century



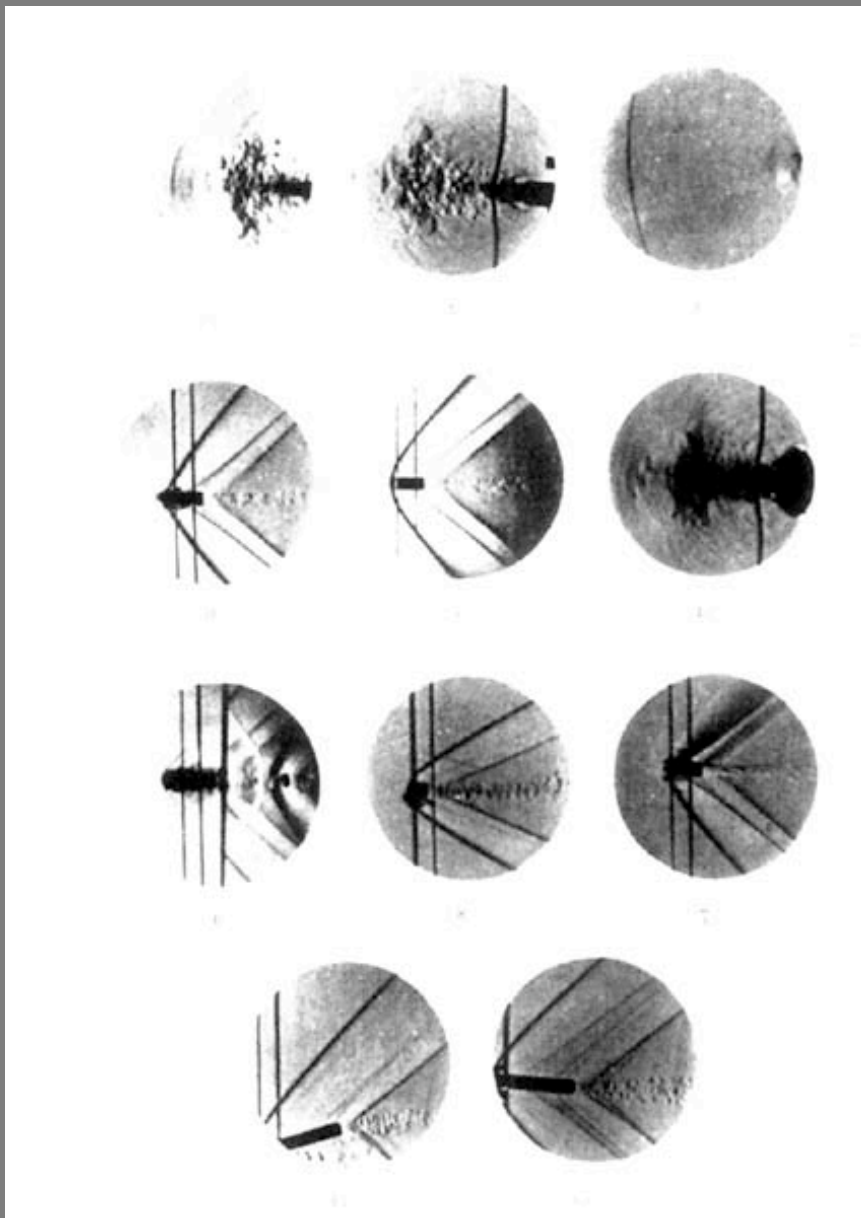
Victor Vasarely, *AMBIGU-B*, 1970



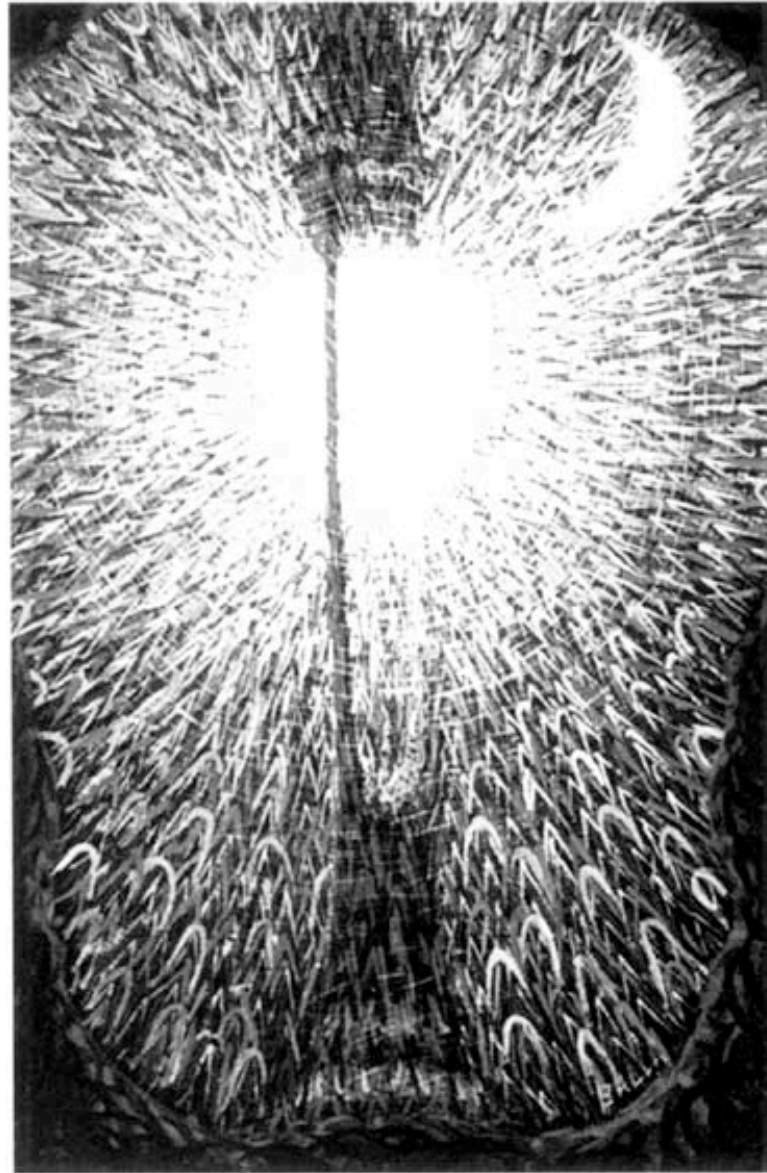
Antique Amish Quilts,
Above: c. 1880
Right: 1935



Josef Albers, *Hommage to the Square*, c. 1960/1965



Ernst Mach, Photographs of a flying bullet, 1887



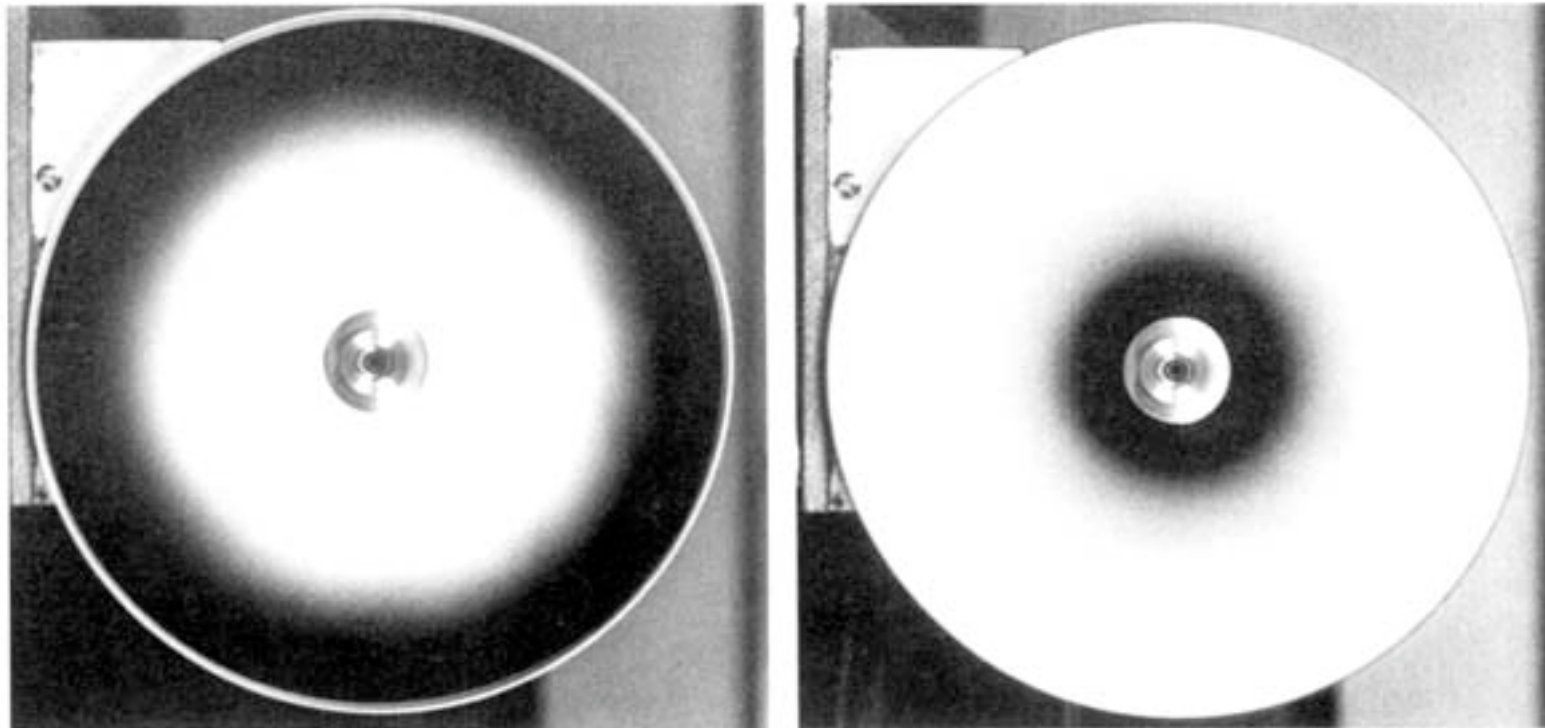
Giacomo Balla,
Lantern with Arcs, 1909



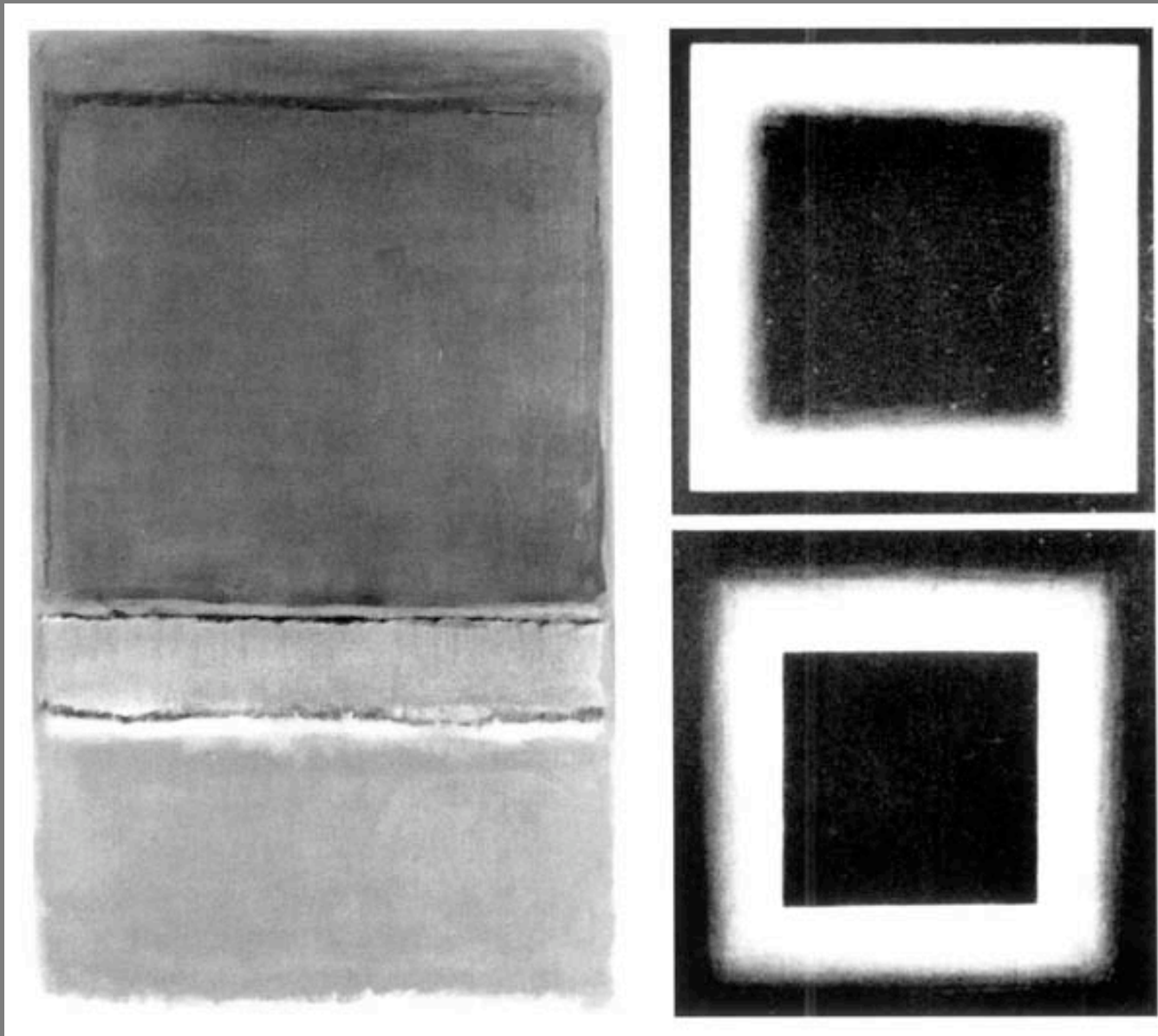
Giacomo Balla, Study of a flying swallow, 1913



Kenneth Noland
Drive, 1964



Mach Bands are created where two different, steep gradients of strong light meet.



Mark Rothko, *Nr. 18*, 1952

Conditions for contrast and comparisons: the actual color of the two interior squares is exactly the same.



Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan





The victims of Hiroshima and
Nagasaki



Kazuo Shiraga, *Fighting with Mud*,
performance, Tokyo, Oktober 1955



Traces of men in
Hiroshima
and Nagasaki





Yves Klein, *Anthropometrie 45*, 1962,
positive und negative





Yves Klein, producing a fire color image, Centre d'essai de Gaz de France, Saint Denis, July 1961



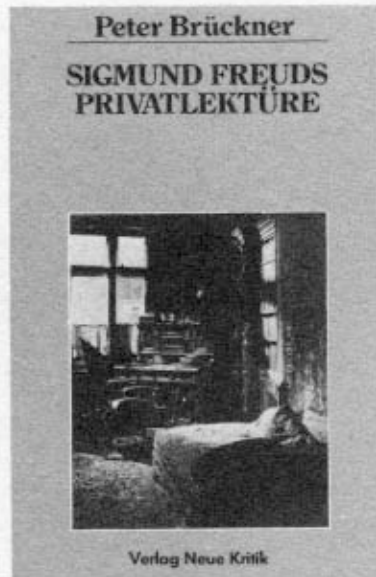
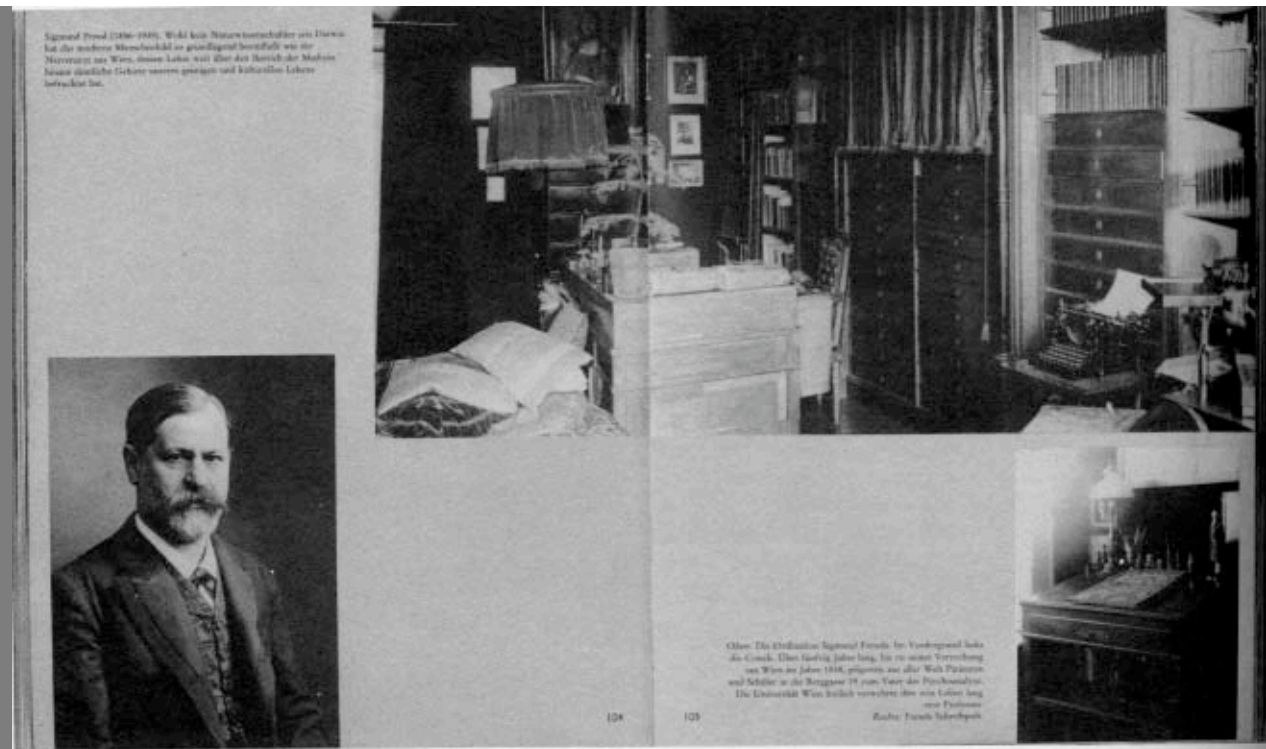
Yves Klein, *Untitled*, 1961, fire color image

Anthropometrie-performance in
Robert Godet's apartment,
Paris, June 5, 1958.



Yves Klein, *Hiroshima*, 1961

Sigmund Freud's office.
In the foreground, left the couch.
For more than fifty years, up to
his forced exile from Vienna in
1938, patients and disciples
from all the world made the
pilgrimage to Berggasse 19
to visit the father of psycholo-
analysis, while the University
of Vienna refused him a
professorship throughout his life.



„Freud's faithful Pearl“,
in the German magazine
The Star, 1985

Possible Solutions



Pierre Huyghe, *L'Ellipse*,
1998, 3-channel-video



Pierre Huyghe, *The Third Memory*,
1999, video installation



Felix Gmelin, *Farbtest, Die Rote Fahne II* [Color Test: The red flag II], 2002, video installation



Jeremy Deller, *The Battle of Orgreave*, 2002, film



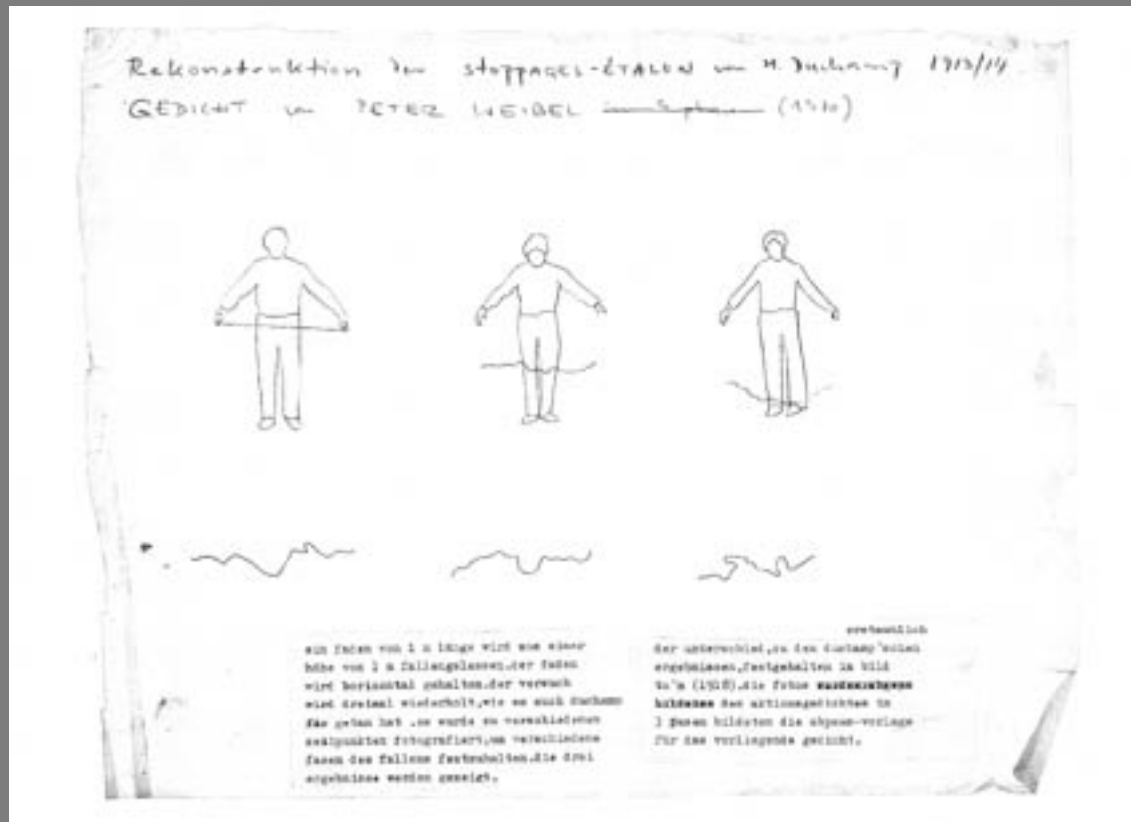
Omer Fast, *Spielberg's List*, 2003,
video installation



Irina Botea, *Auditions for a revolution*,
2006, video installation



Peter Weibel, *Zeit-Schaufenster* [Time-show window], Graz, Austria, 1979



Peter Weibel, *reconstruction of „stoppages-étalon“* (1913/14) by marcel duchamp, 1970



REKONSTRUKTIONEN

die folgenden environments sind in einer galerie/kunsthalle
nachzubauen, zu rekonstruieren.



① Erste-Klasse
Speiseraum



② Zweite-Klasse
Speiseraum



③ Dritte-Klasse
Speiseraum

jedes Bild ist
ein ausrüstungsraum
des Schiffes
MAURETANIA
(1907-1935)

REKONSTRUKTIONEN (p. 11. 1970)

folgende environments sind in der galerie/kunsthalle
exakt nachzubauen, zu rekonstruieren.

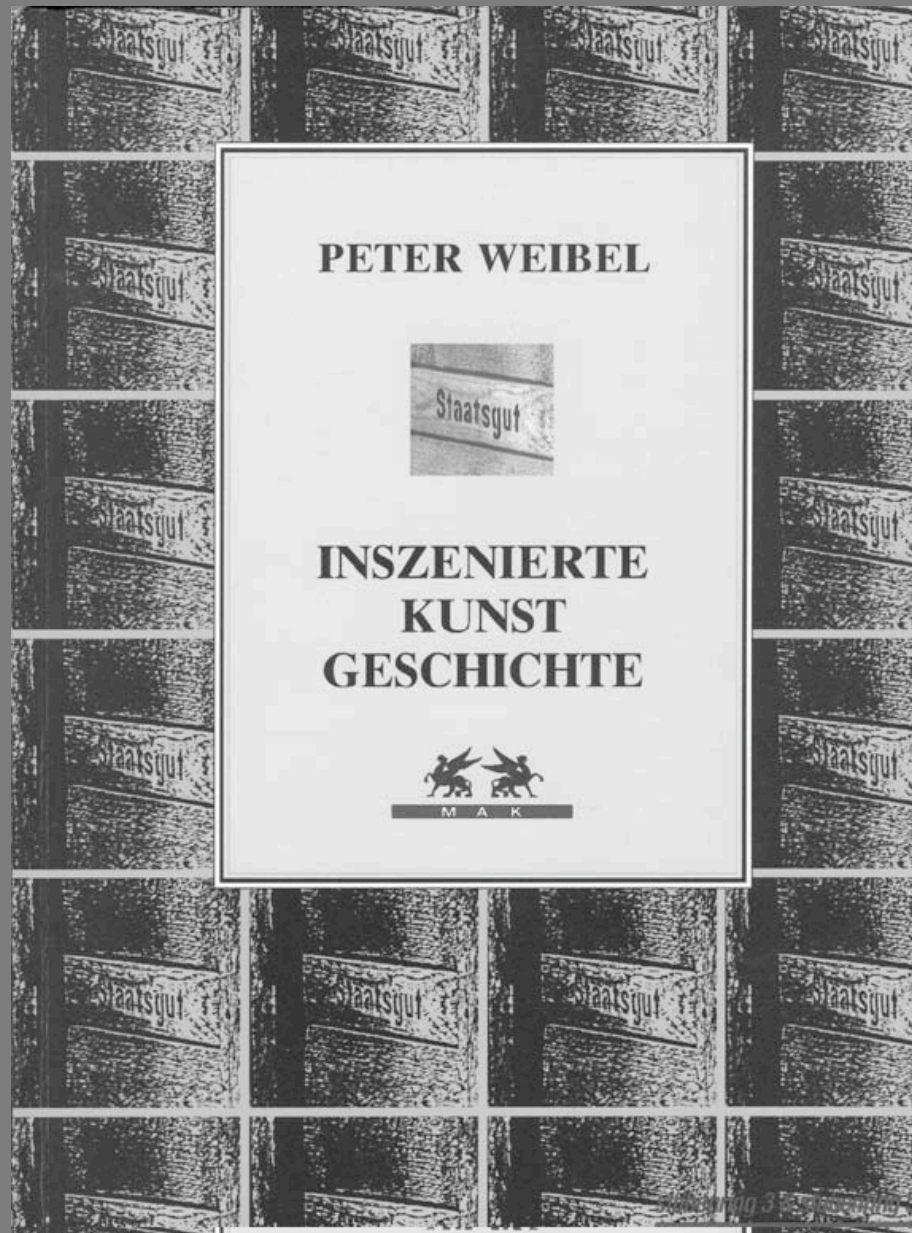


BOILER-WERKSTÄTTE
für LOKOMOTIVEN-FABRIK
im Jahre 1920



FIFTH-CLASS LOUNGE OF THE SHIP
[MAURETANIA (1907-1935)
not Text)

Peter Weibel,
Reconstruction,
spatial exhibitions, 1970



Peter Weibel, *Mise-en-scene of Art History*, 1988/89

W.



Dies ist keine Abbildung eines Originals

W.

DER LETZTE MALER

This is no image of an original

W.

The Last Painter

MARCEL RUTSCHKE



*Anschlag, Berlin 1971.
Assault, Berlin 1971.*

MARCEL RUTSCHKE

ALLEGORIEN DER EMPÖRUNG:

Von der künstlerischen Rebellion zur sozialen Revolte

Assault, Berlin, 1971

Marcel Rutschke
Allegories of Disgust

Marcel Rutschke, *National Money Day: each person has free access to each bank account*, Sydney, Revolution, 1977



Marcel Rutschke, *The Dialectical Deposit*, Austrian Museum of Applied Arts, Vienna, 1988

THE 24th DECEMBER
IS FROM NOW ON
DECLARED AS THE
NATIONAL MONEY DAY
WHERE EVERYMAN
HAS FREE ACCESS
TO EVERY ONE'S
BANK ACCOUNT .

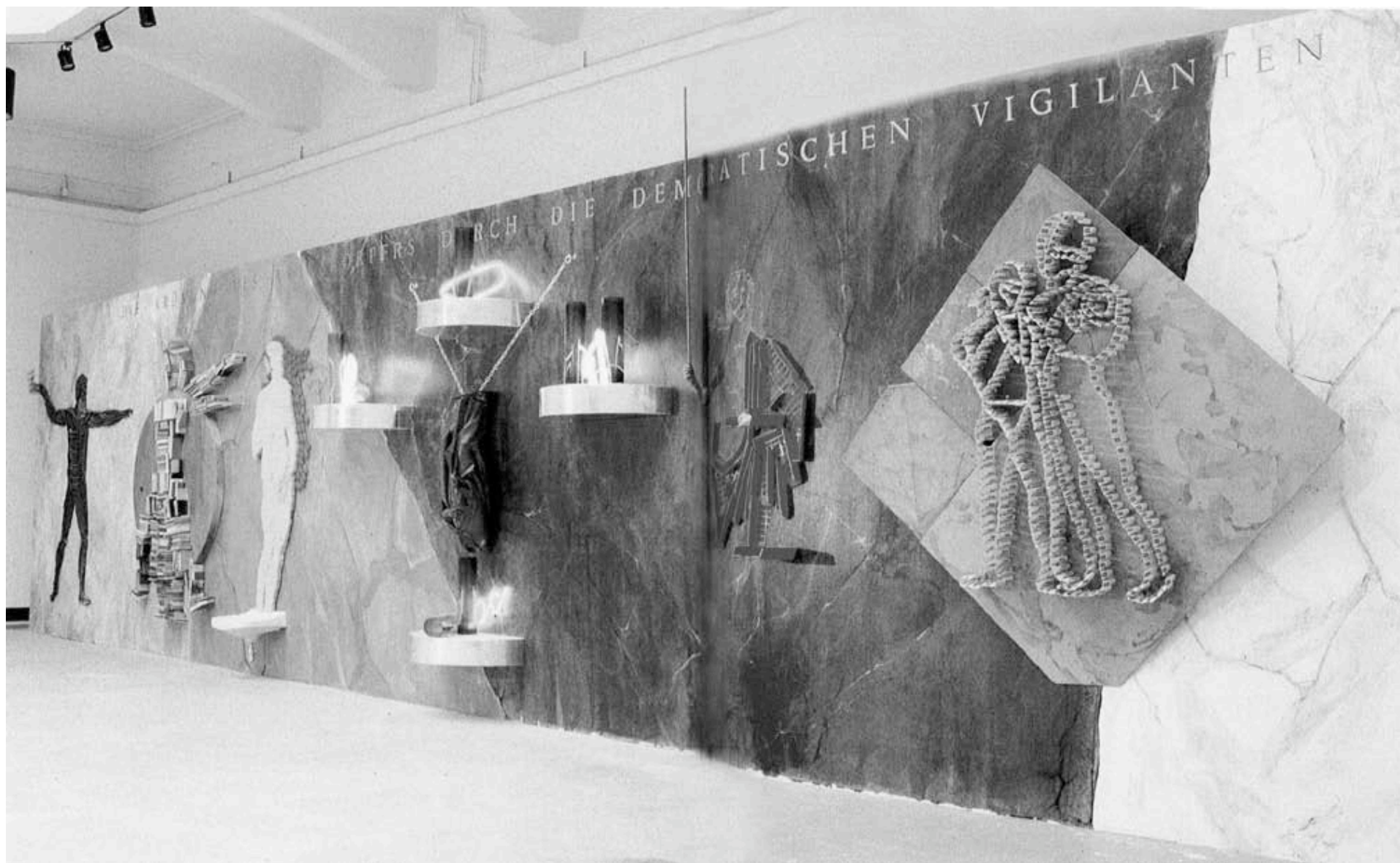
Marcel Rutschke, *Verse & Reason II (Time Blood)*, Stichting de Appel, Amsterdam, 1978



Marcel Rutschke,
Article I – Basic Law,
National Gallery, Berlin, 1975



Marcel Rutschke,
Trampling on Law,
Government Building, Bonn, 1968

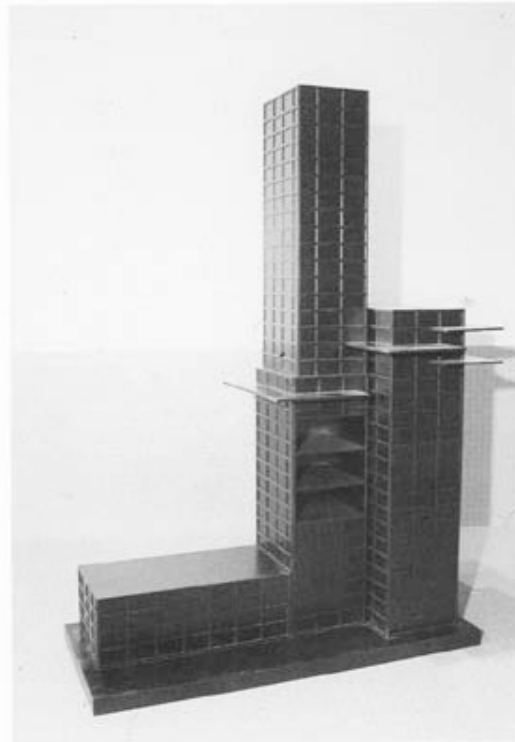


Marcel Rutschke, *The Coronation of the People's Body through Democratic Vigilants*, Austrian Museum of Applied Arts, Vienna, 1988, detail



Marcel Rutschke, *The Coronation of the People's Body through Democratic Vigilants*, Austrian Museum of Applied Arts, Vienna, 1988, detail

OTTO W. SCHIMANOVICH



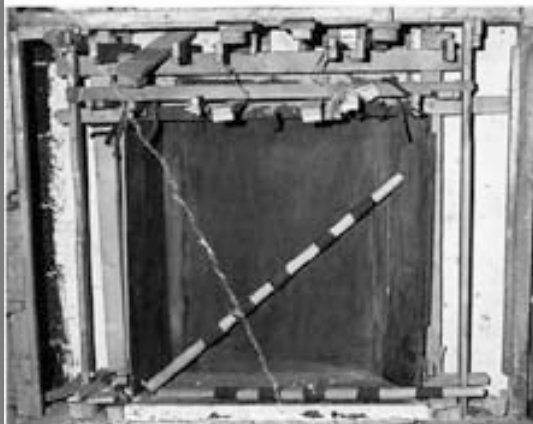
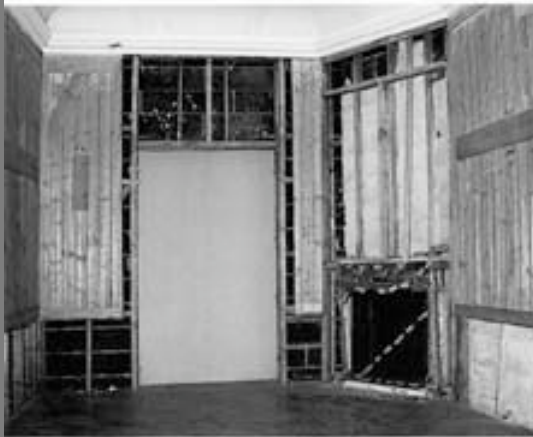
Projekt für das Chicago-Tribune-Gebäude von W. Gropius und A. Meyer
(1922) als freistehende Ablage, Plywood, 1988.
*Project for the Chicago Tribune Building by W. Gropius and A. Meyer
(1922) as a rack, plywood, 1988.*

OTTO W. SCHIMANOVICH

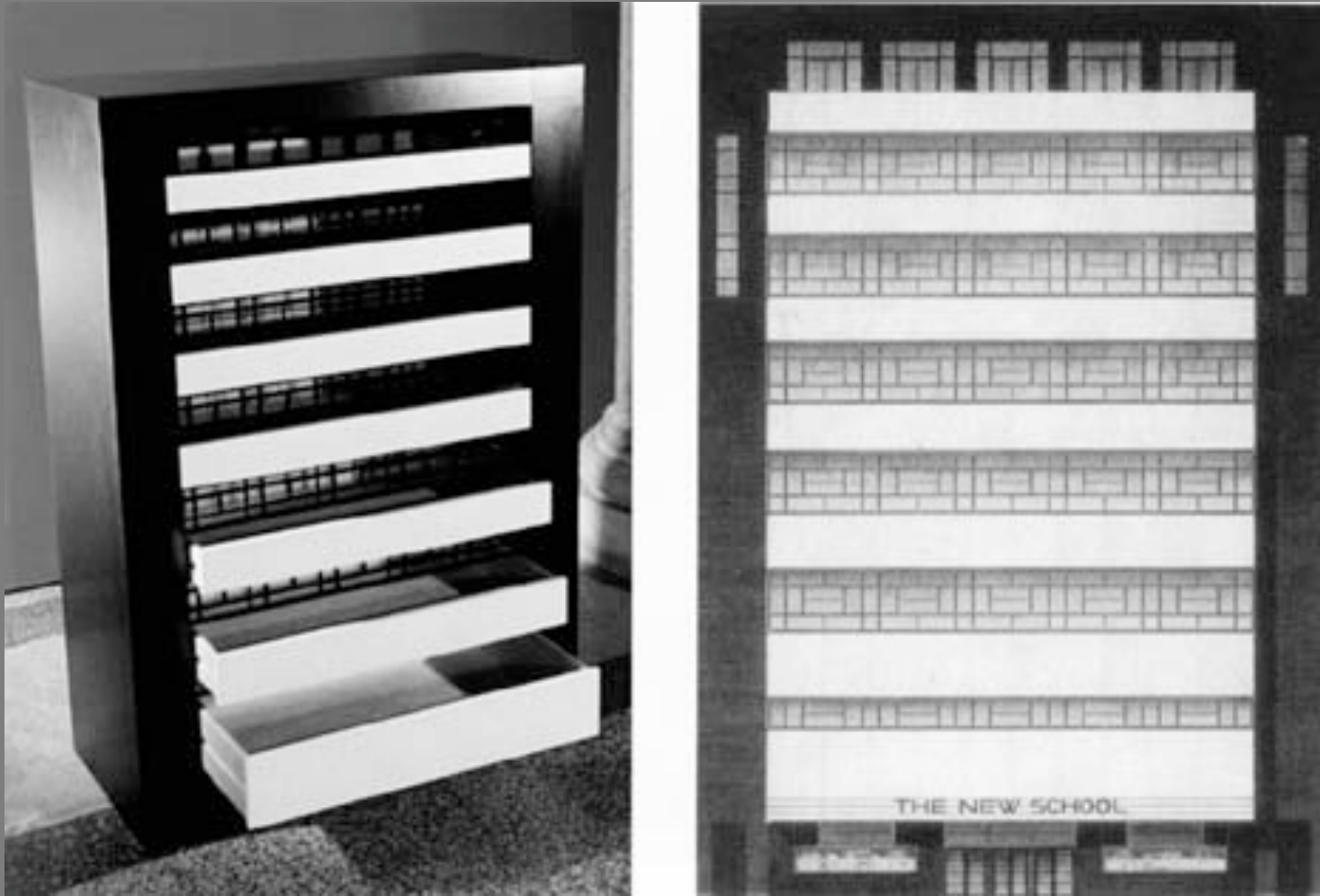
**MODELLE UND METAPHERN,
CHIPS UND CODES
DES RAUMES**

Otto W. Schimanovich

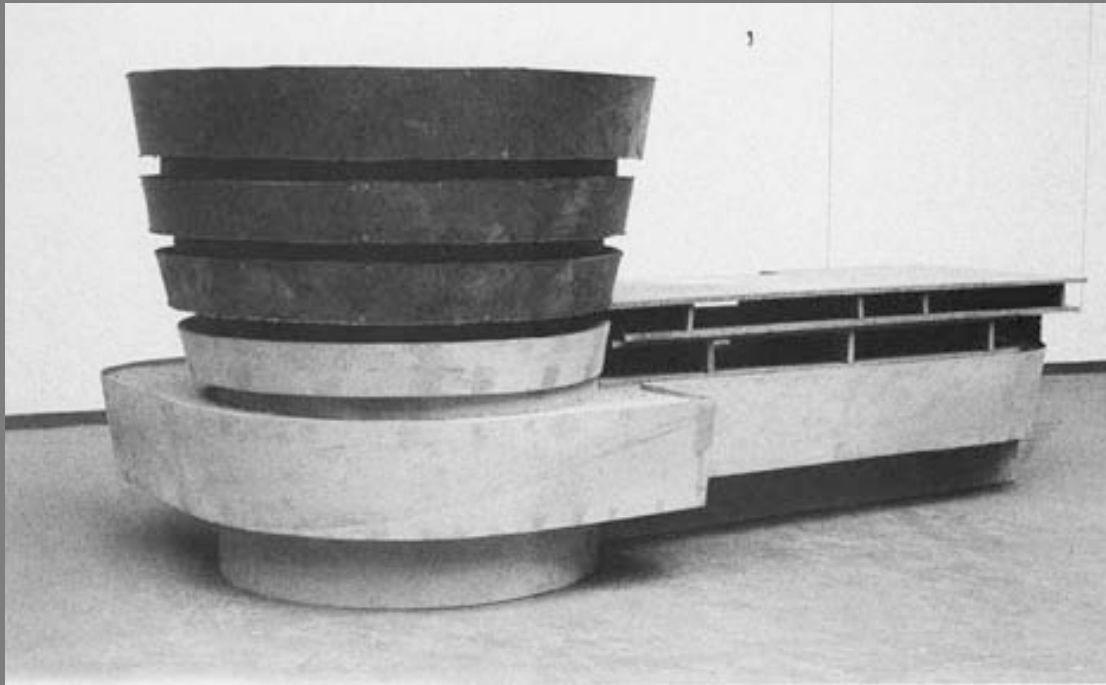
Models and Metaphors, Chips and Codes
of the Room



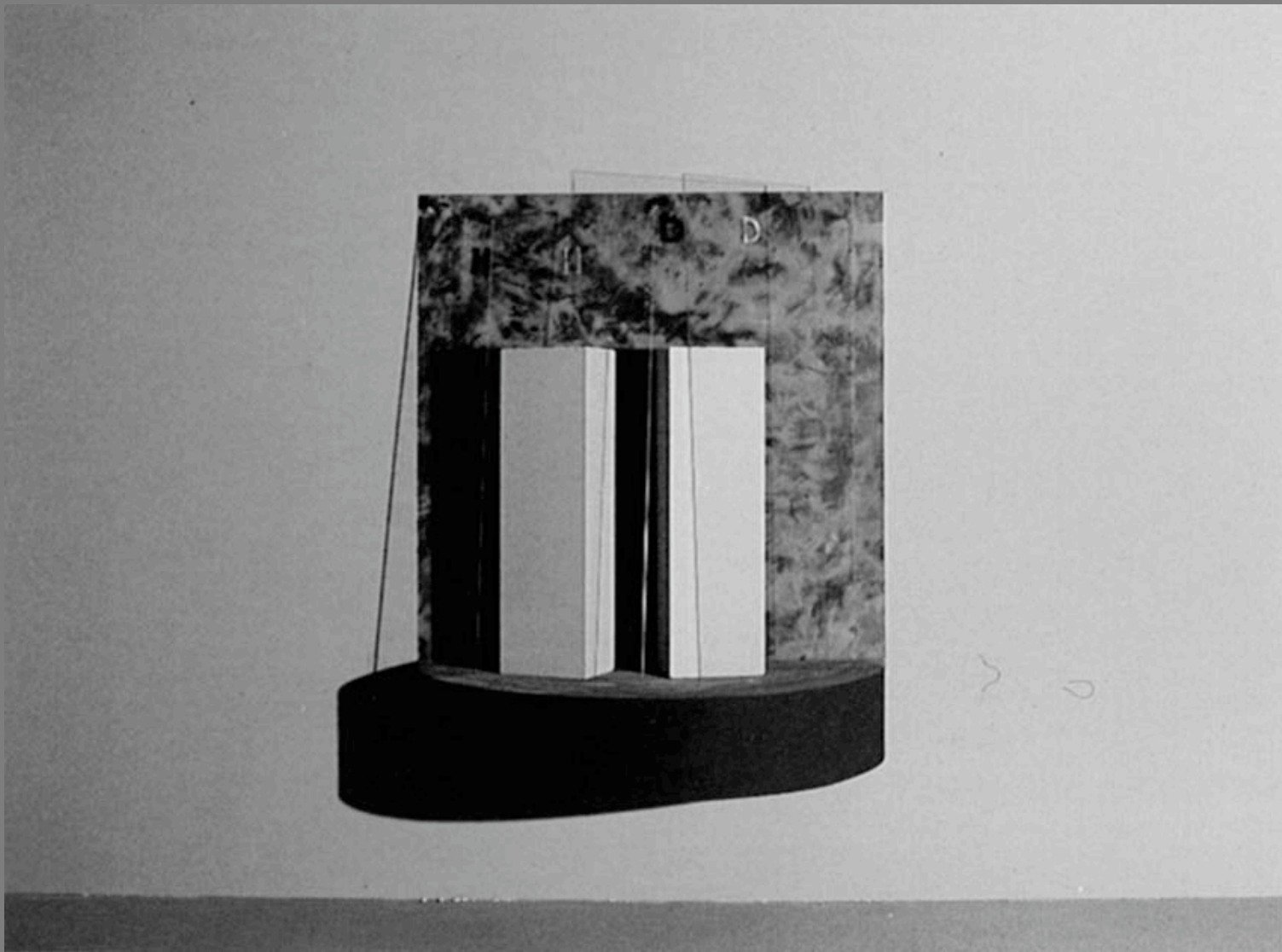
Otto W. Schimanovich, *Exhibition space exhibited as readymades*, Vienna, 1971



left: The New School designed by Joseph Urban as a chest of drawers, plywood, 1988
right: The New School designed by Joseph Urban, 1930



F. L. Wright's Guggenheim Museum as a bar, plywood, 1987

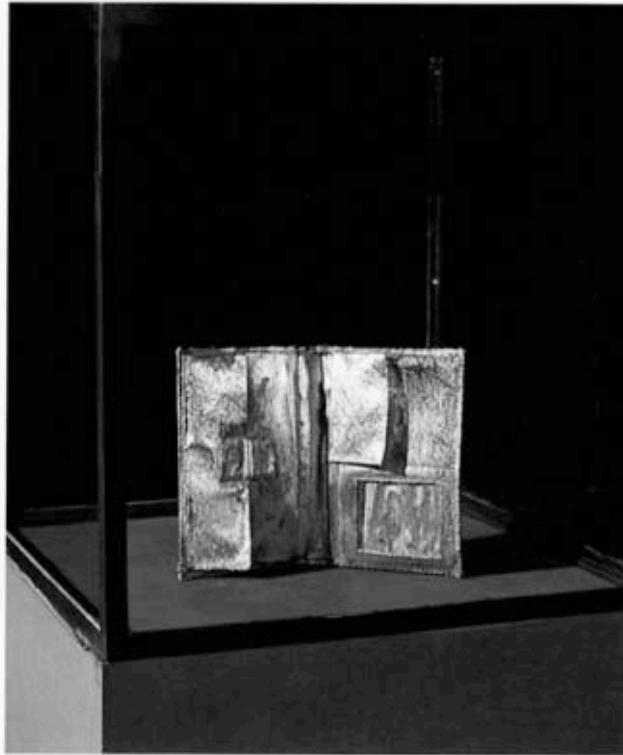


Otto W. Schimanovich, *Object picture for public architecture*, Austrian Museum of Applied Arts, Vienna, 1988



Otto W. Schimanovich, *Sculpture in public space, model*, 1984

LOUISE LANGFORD



*Aus der Serie „Warenobjekte“, versilberte Geldbörse, 1976.
From the series „Commodity Objects“, silver-plated wallet, 1986.*

LOUISE LANGFORD

**TERRAIN DES TERRORS –
ZEICHEN DES REALEN:**

Panische Objekte – leere Codes

From the series “Commodity
Objects“, silver-plated wallet,
1986

Louise Langford

Terrain of Terror – Signs of the
Real

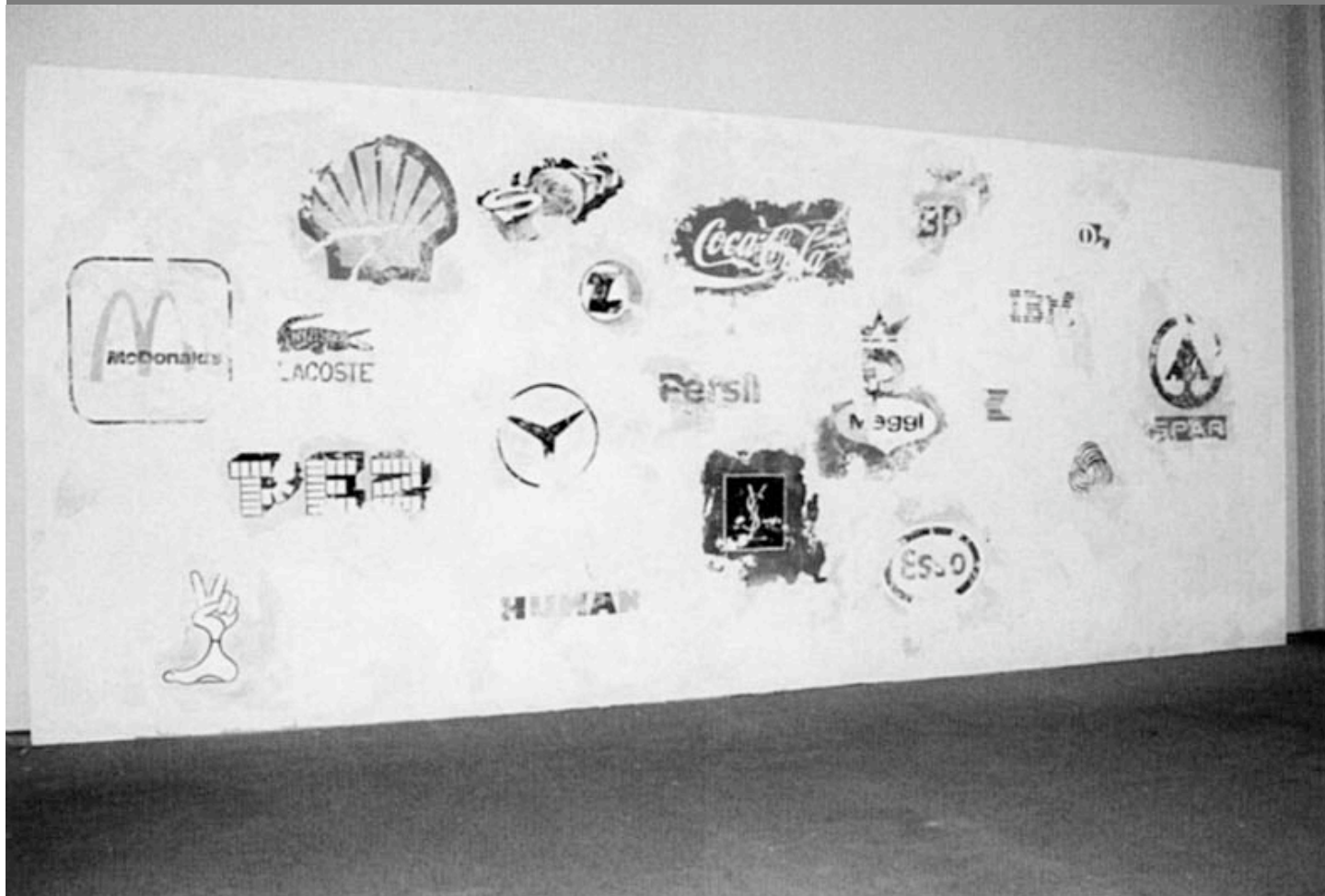
Louise
Langford

left above:
Cupboard,
1905

left below:
Church bank,
Florence, 2nd
half of the 16th
century, walnut

right above:
7 parts of a
furnished
dining room,
1906

right below:
Sideboard, 2nd
half of 16th
century, walnut



Louise Langford,
Uncovered fresco "The
Social Life of Logos",
church in New
England, 1988

CESARE CARLO CAPO



Eadem Mutata Resurgo, Kunsthalle Basel, 1975.

Eadem Mutata Resurgo, Kunsthalle Basel, 1975.

CESARE CARLO CAPO

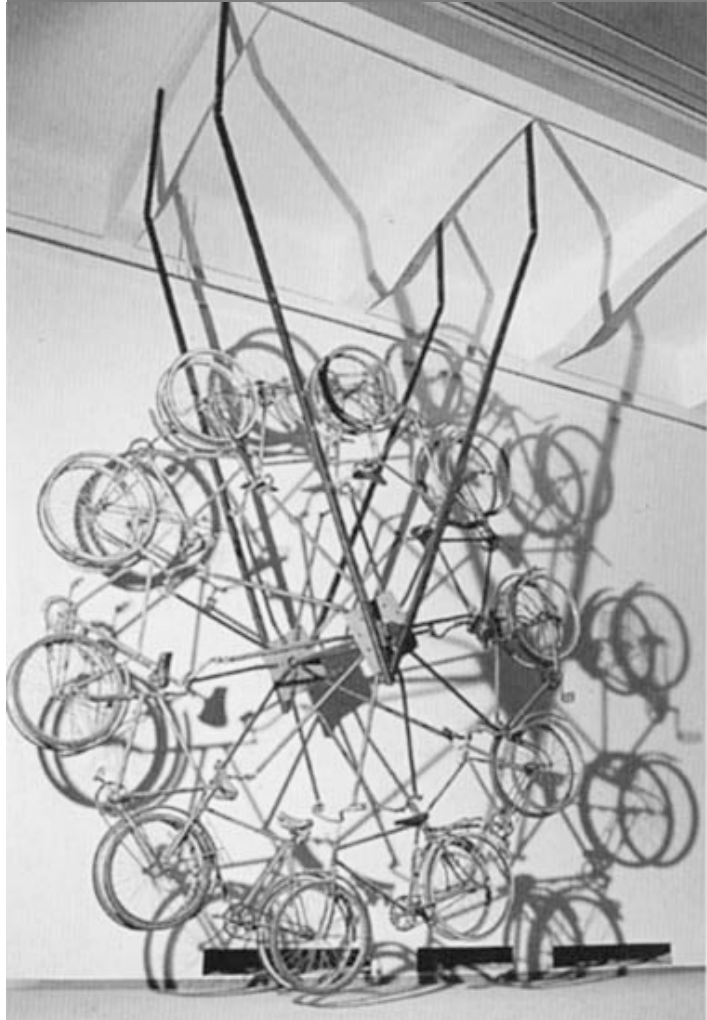
INDUSTRIELLE ELEGIEN:

Im Garten der Mythen

Eadem Mutata Resurgo, Kunsthalle Basel, 1975.

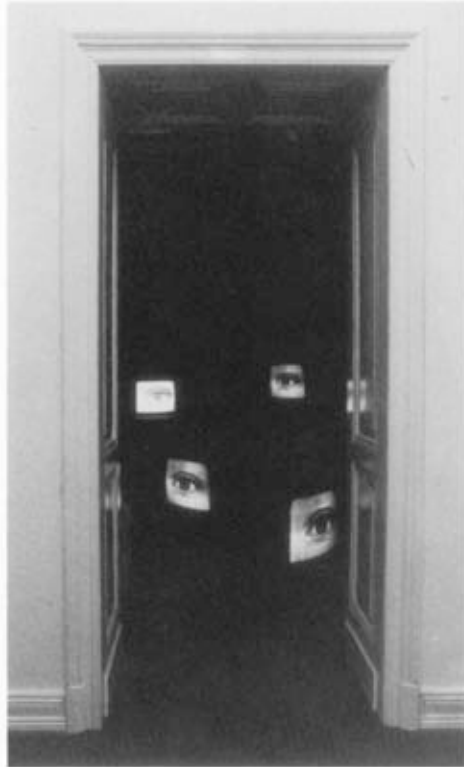
Cesare Carlo Capo

Industrial Elegies



Cesare Carlo
Capo,
*The Wheel of
the Real*,
Museum of
Applied Arts,
Vienna, 1988

JAN VAN BUYGENS



Video Lumina, Galerie Magers, Bonn 1977.

Video Lumina, Galerie Magers, Bonn 1977.

JAN VAN BUYGENS

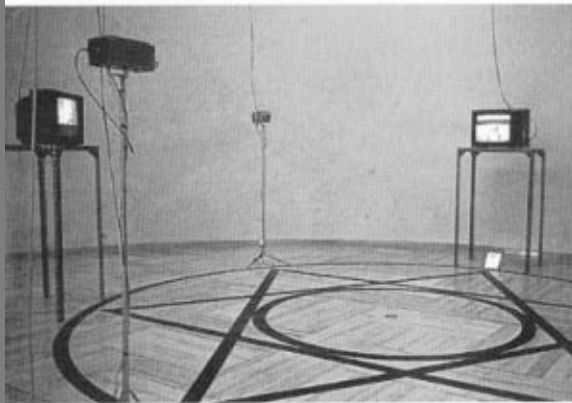
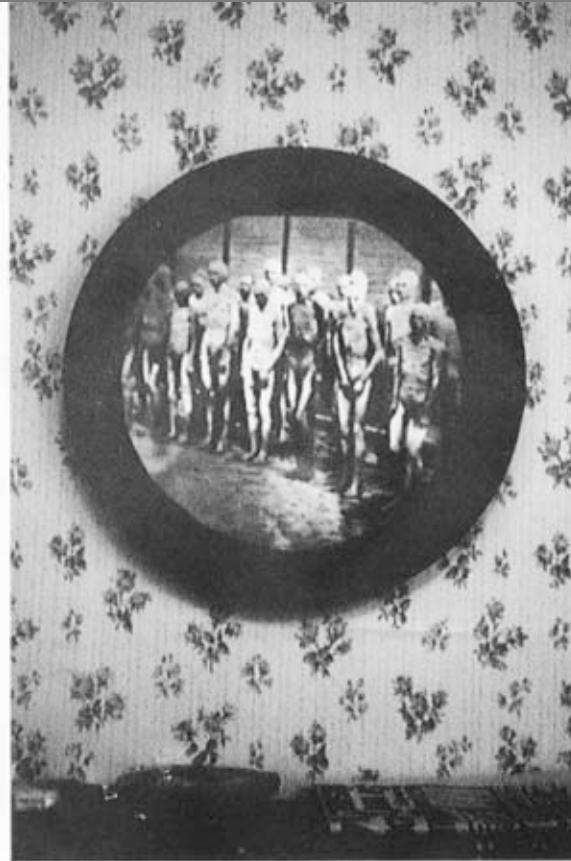
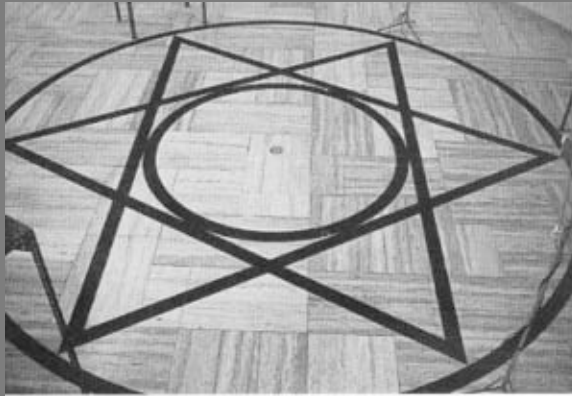
DIE WAHRNEHMUNG DES BLICKS:

Die Camera obscura des Bewußtseins

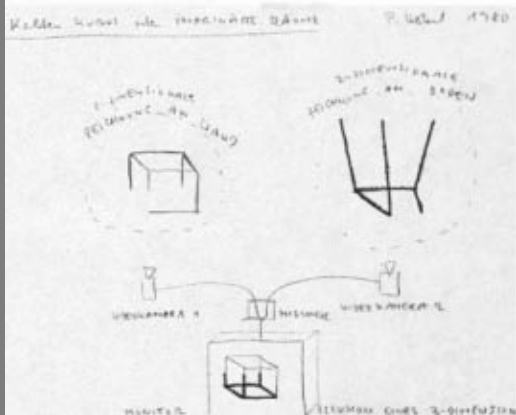
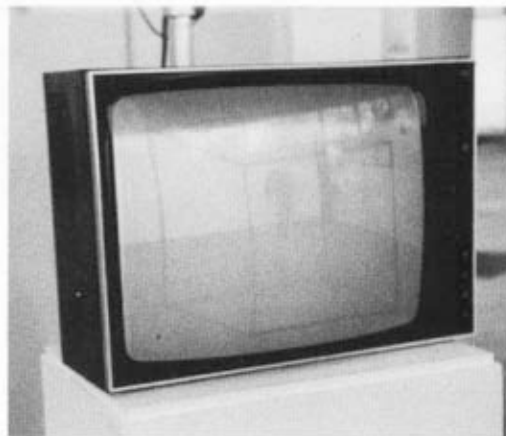
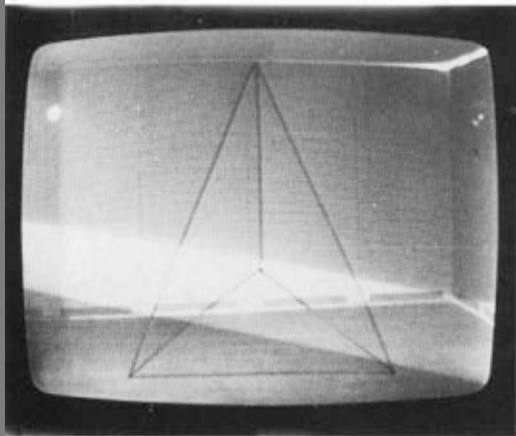
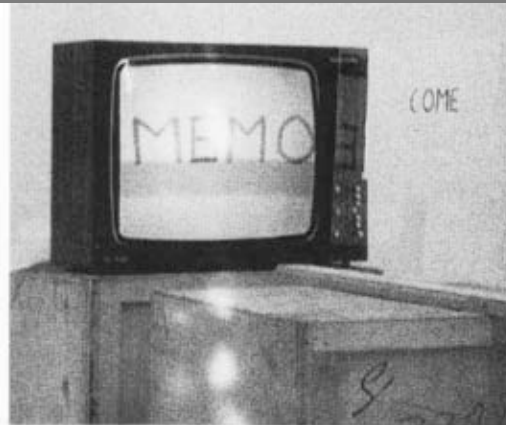
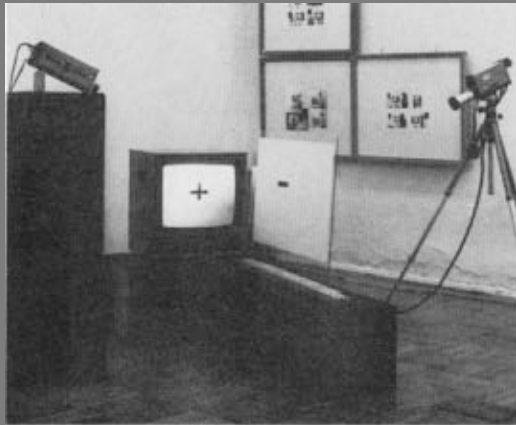
Video Lumina, Gallery Magers, Bonn,
1977

Jan van Buygens

The Cognition of the Gaze



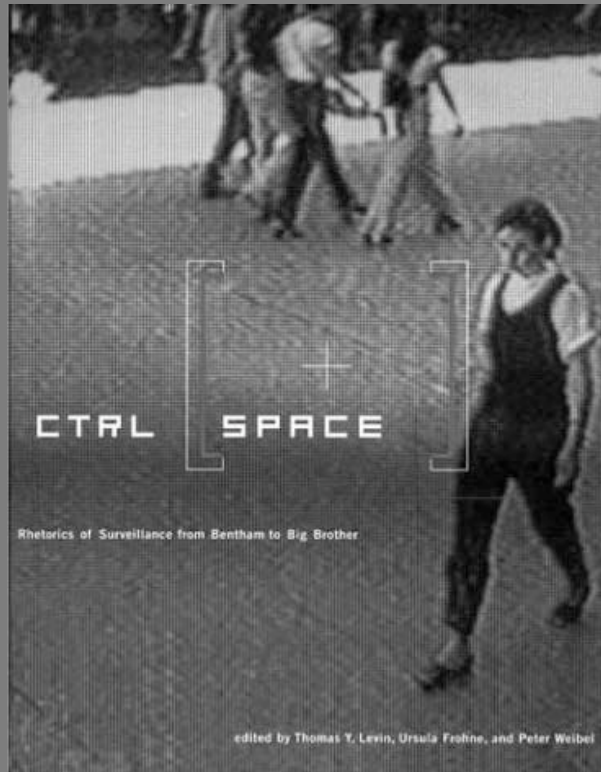
Jan van Buygens,
The Crucifixion of Identity,
Graz, Austria 1973



Jan van Buygens

left: *Observation of an Observation: Uncertainty*, Graz, Austria 1973

right: *Mirror Check*, Munich, Germany 1978



Ctrl Space - Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother
Iconoclash - Beyond the Image Wars in Science, Religion, and Art
Making Things Public - Atmospheres of Democracy

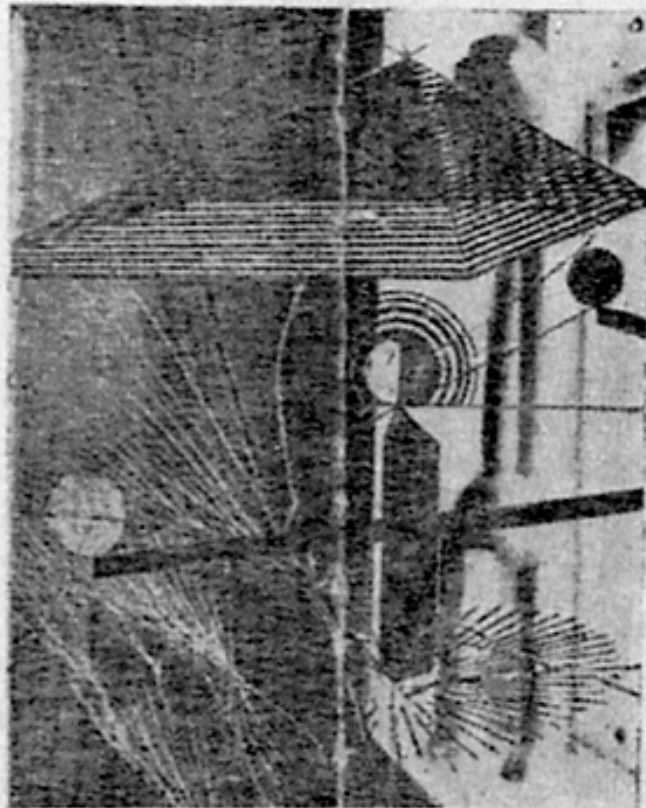
YOUtopia

YOU_ser: The Century of the
Consumer

„All in all, the creative act is not performed by the artist alone; the spectator brings the work in contact with the external world by deciphering and interpreting its inner qualification and thus adds his contribution to the creative act..”

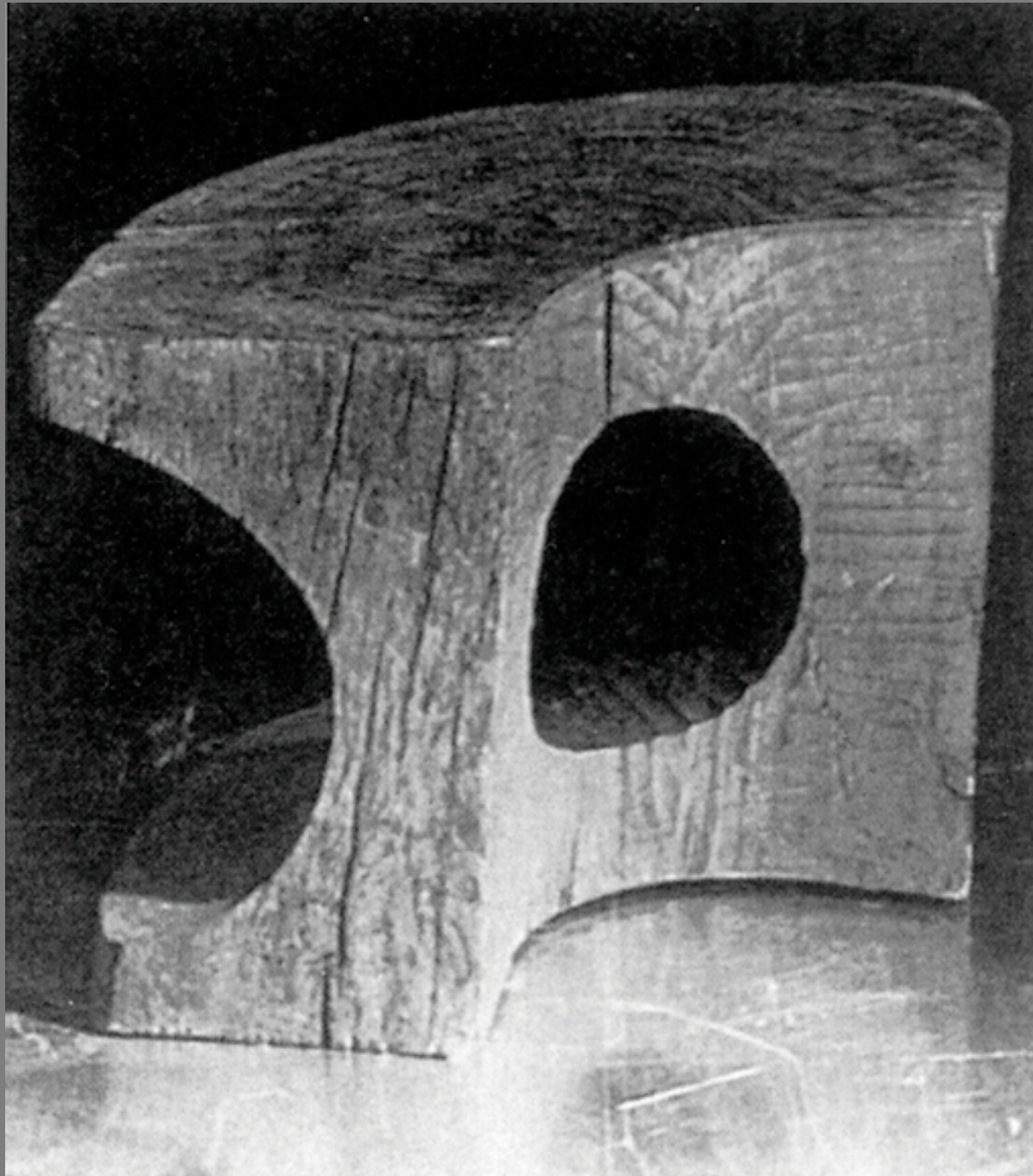
Marcel Duchamp, “Session on the Creative Act”, April 1957

A regarder d'un œil, de près, pendant
presque une heure.



MARCEL DUCHAMP.

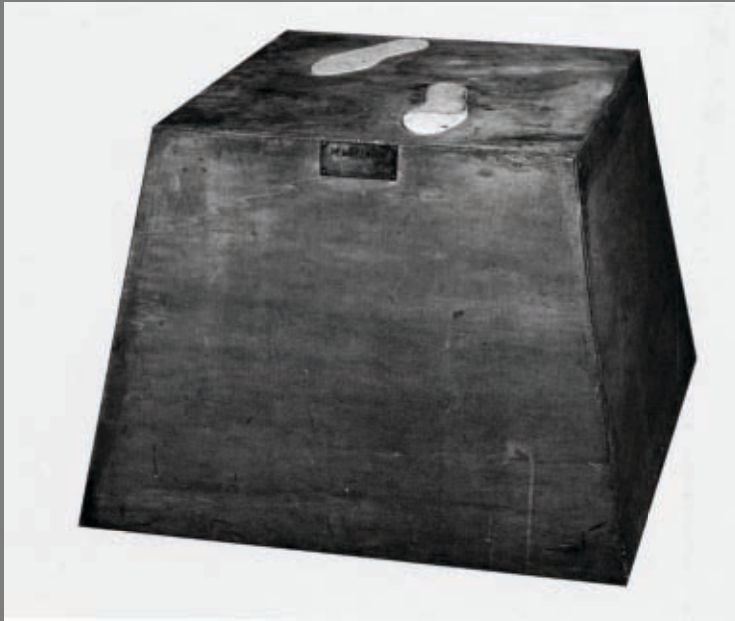
Marcel
Duchamp, *To
be looked at
with one eye,
close to, for
almost an
hour*, 1918



Constantin
Brancusi,
Stool, c. 1920



Niki de Saint Phalle in the exhibition *Feu à volonté*, Paris 1961

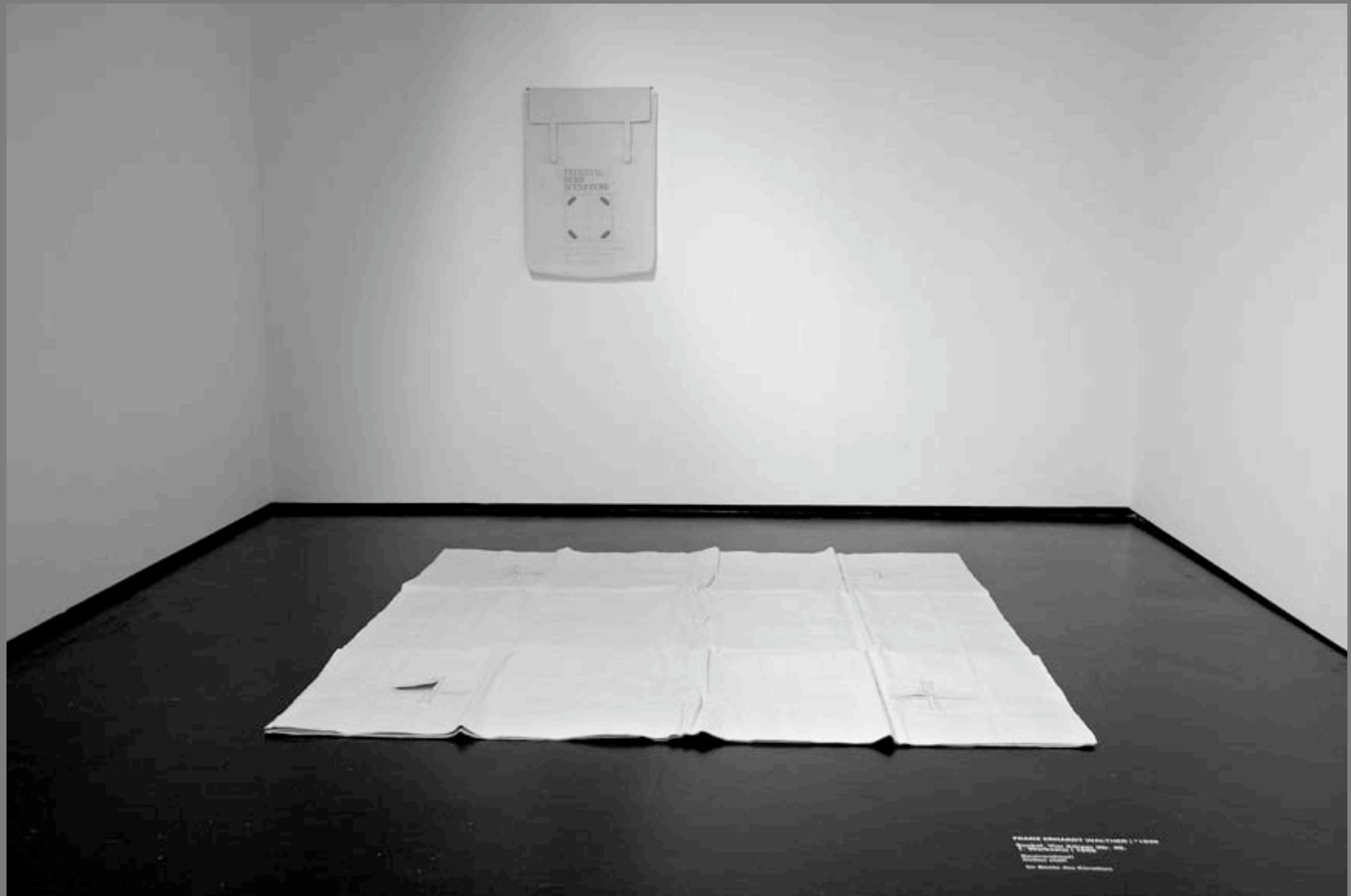


Piero Manzoni, *Magic Base*, 1961



Franz Erhard Walther, *Walking on
a limited area (plinth form)*, 1964





Franz Erhard Walther, *Base, Four compounds*, 1968

Erwin Wurm's
instructions for use for
the observer:

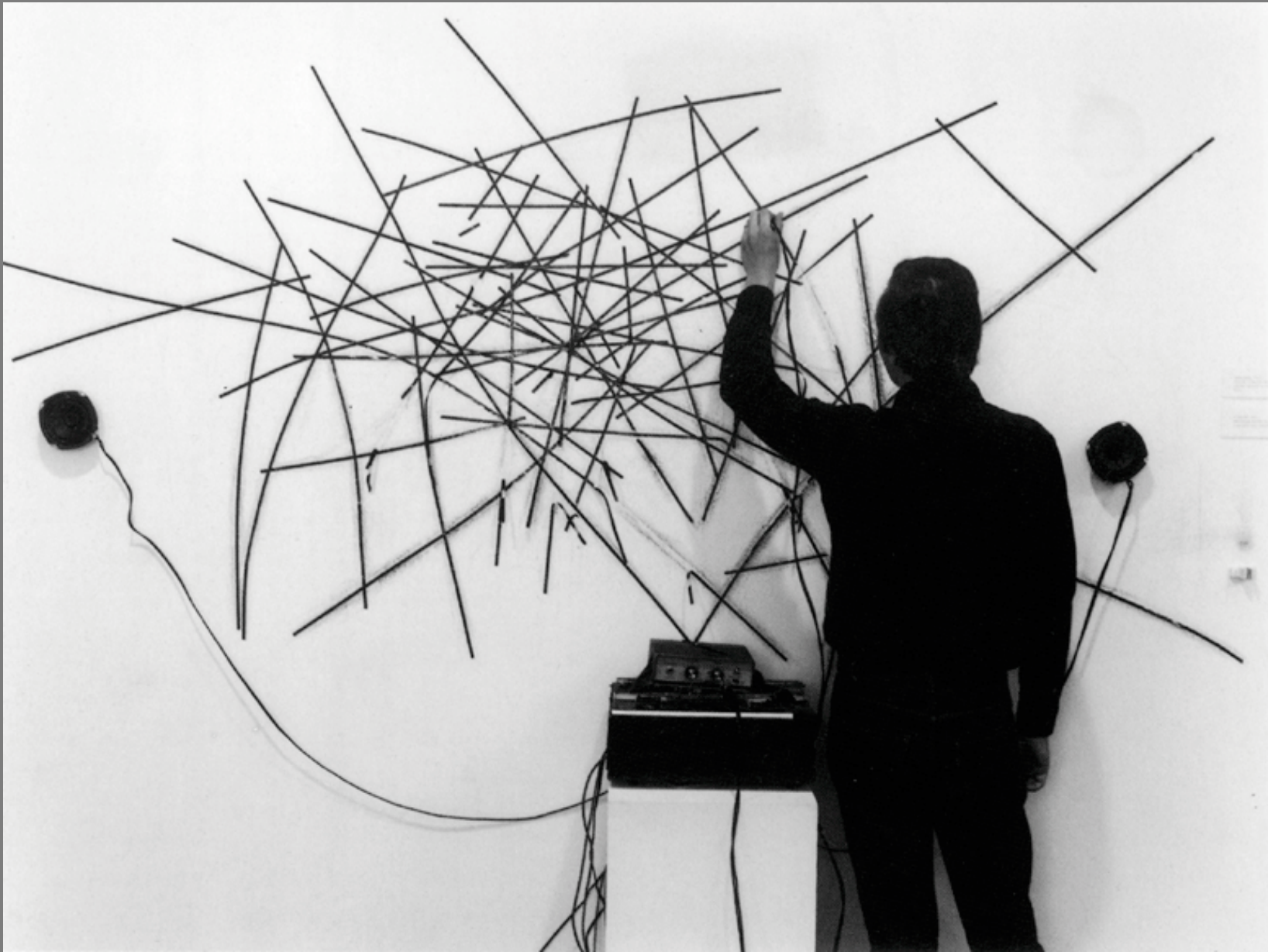
„Obey the instructions
of use and stay in this
position for one minute“



Erwin Wurm, *The breaking through of an artist*, 2003

Nam June Paik,
Participation TV,
1963





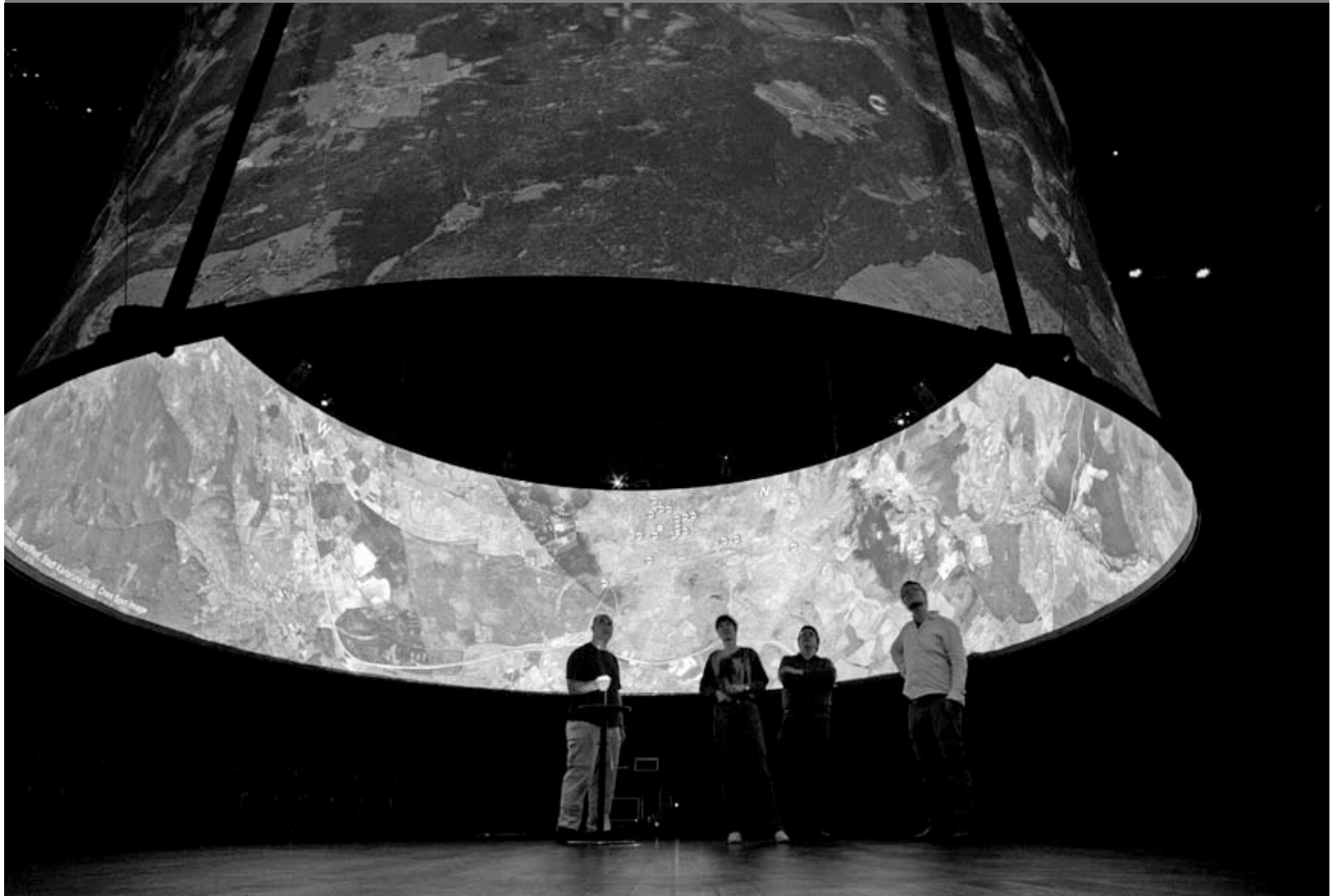
Nam June Paik, *Random Access*, 1963



Peter Weibel/Matthias Gommel, *FLICK_KA*, 2007



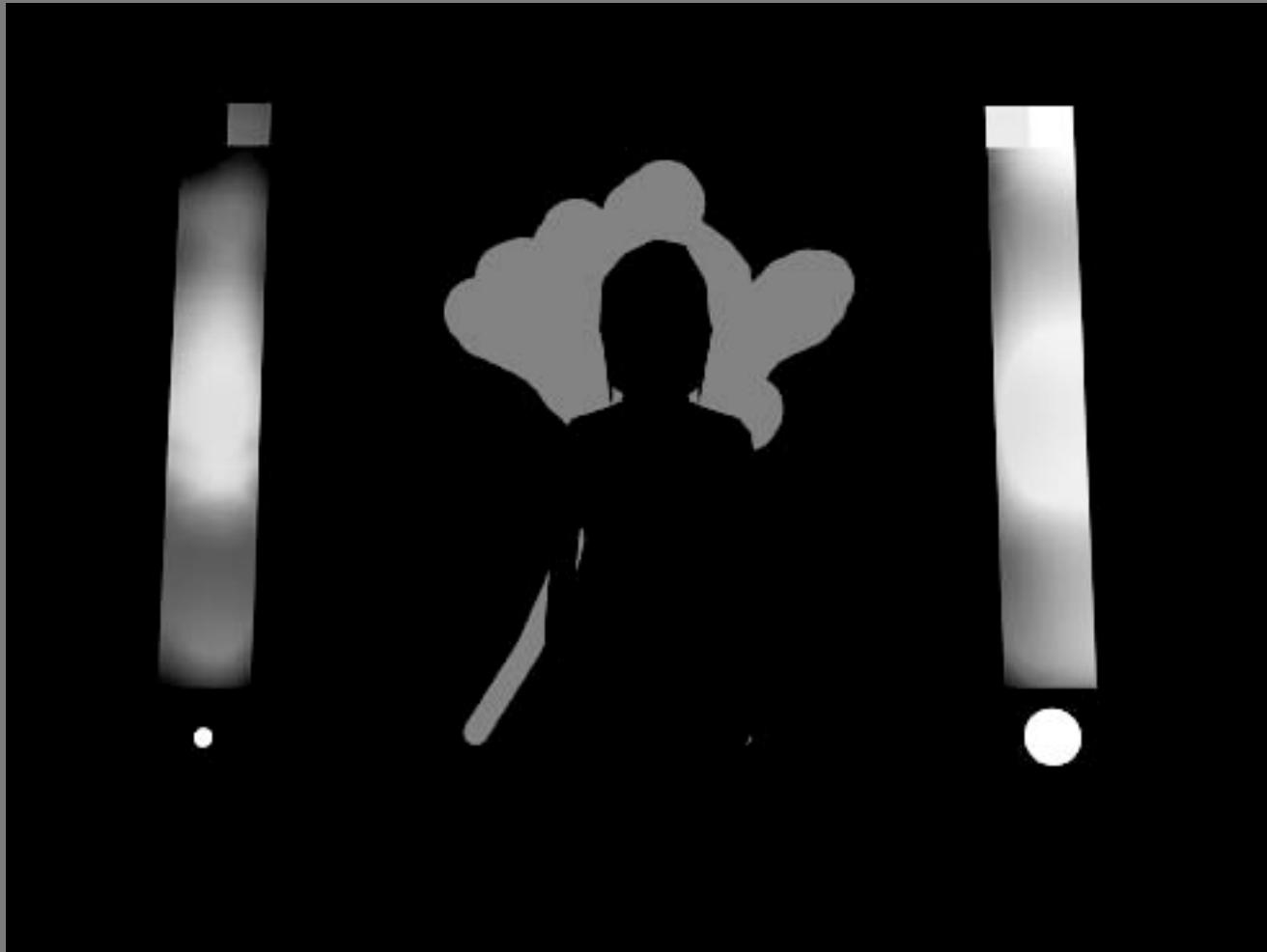
Peter Weibel/Matthias Gommel, *FLICK_KA*, 2007



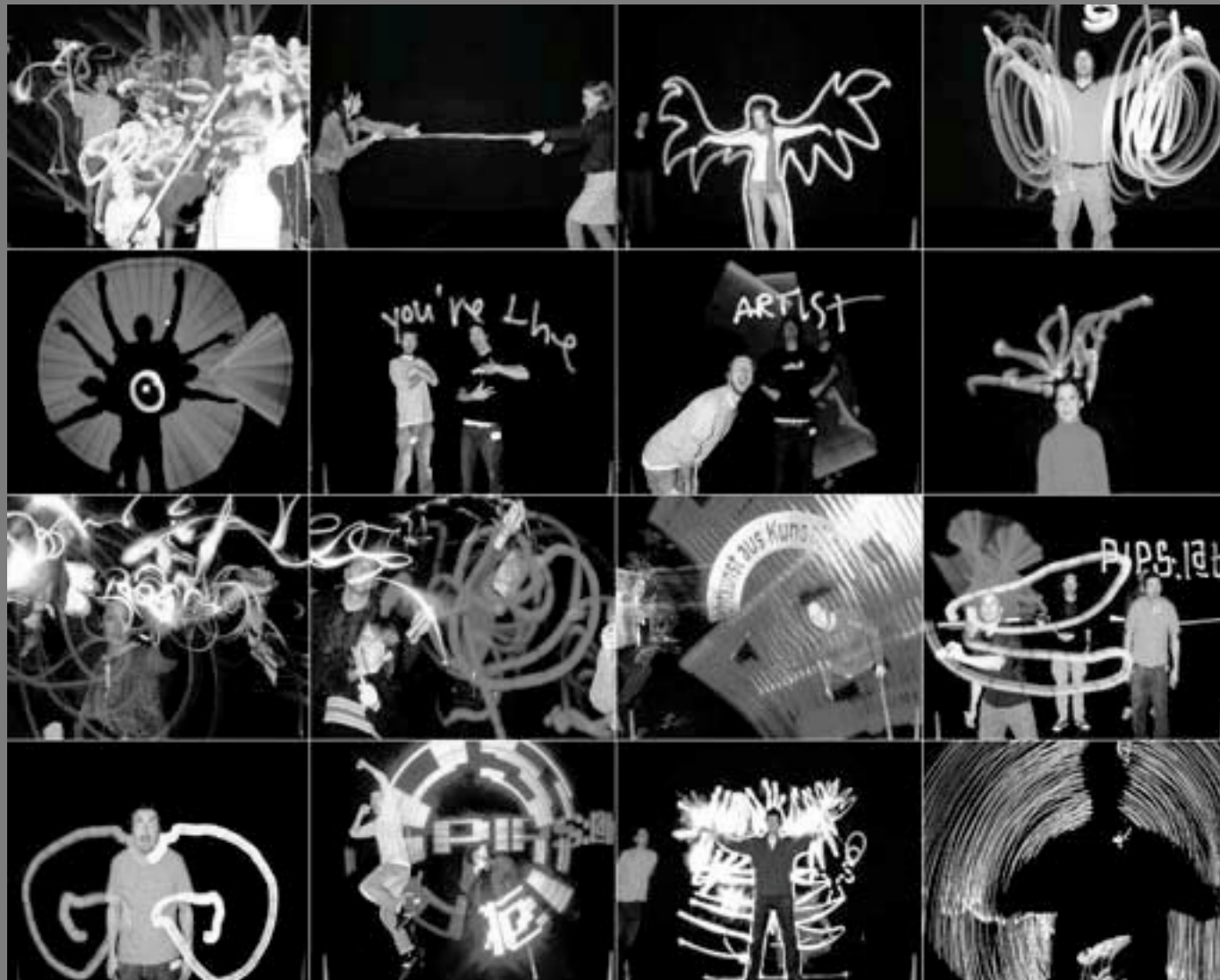
Bernd Lintermann/Joachim Böttger/Torsten Belschner, *Globorama*, 2005–2007



Marc Lee, *Breaking The News – Be a News-Jockey*, 2007



Ronald Genswaider, *evo/vr*, 2007, interactive net-based installation



PIPS:lab, *Luma2solator*, 2004, interactive user installation



Armin Linke, *Phenotypes/Limited Forms*, 2007



The Slateliterates, ZKM_YOUiverse, 2007

Homer ?

Shakespeare ?

PROBLEME ÜBER VERÄNDERUNGEN VON ZEICHENREIHEN NACH GEGEBENEN REGELN

§ I.

In einer früheren Abhandlung¹ habe ich die allgemeine Frage aufgestellt, ob zwei gegebene, durch Verzweigungen abgebildete Begriffe, die auf verschiedene Weise definiert sind, einander äquivalent sein müssen.

Ich werde hier ein Problem über gesetzmäßige Veränderungen von Zeichenreihen zur Sprache bringen.

Dieses Problem, das in gewisser Beziehung als ein Spezialfall des eben erwähnten Problems aufgefaßt werden kann, ist auch für den allgemeinen Fall von unmittelbarer Bedeutung.

Da die angedeutete Aufgabe äußerst schwierig und umfassend zu sein scheint, muß ich mich damit begnügen, die Frage nur stückweise und fragmentarisch zu behandeln.

In einer im vorigen Jahre erschienenen Arbeit² habe ich schon eine spezielle Frage über Zeichenreihen gelöst.

Bei dieser Gelegenheit werde ich nur einige einfache Fälle des genannten allgemeinen Problems erledigen.

Auf die weitere Bedeutung von Untersuchungen dieser Art will ich hier nicht eingehen.

§ II.

Es seien gegeben zwei Serien von Zeichenreihen:

$$\begin{array}{l} A_1, A_2, A_3, \dots, A_n \\ B_1, B_2, B_3, \dots, B_m \end{array}$$

wo jedes Zeichen in jeder Reihe A und in jeder Reihe B einem Zeichen einer Gruppe von gegebenen Zeichen gleich ist.

¹ Die Lösung eines Spezialfalles eines generellen logischen Problems. (Christiania Videnskabselskabs Skrifter, 1910.)

² Über die gegenseitige Lage gleicher Teile gewisser Zeichenreihen. (Christiania Videnskabselskabs Skrifter, 1912.)

Originally publ.: *Kra.Vidensk.Selsk.Skrifter*.
I.Mat.Nat.Kl. 1914. No.10. Kra.1914.

Axel Thue, *Probleme über Veränderungen von Zeichenreihen nach gegebenen Regeln*, originally published 1914

$$k = 2b - 1$$

$$o = k - b = b - 1.$$

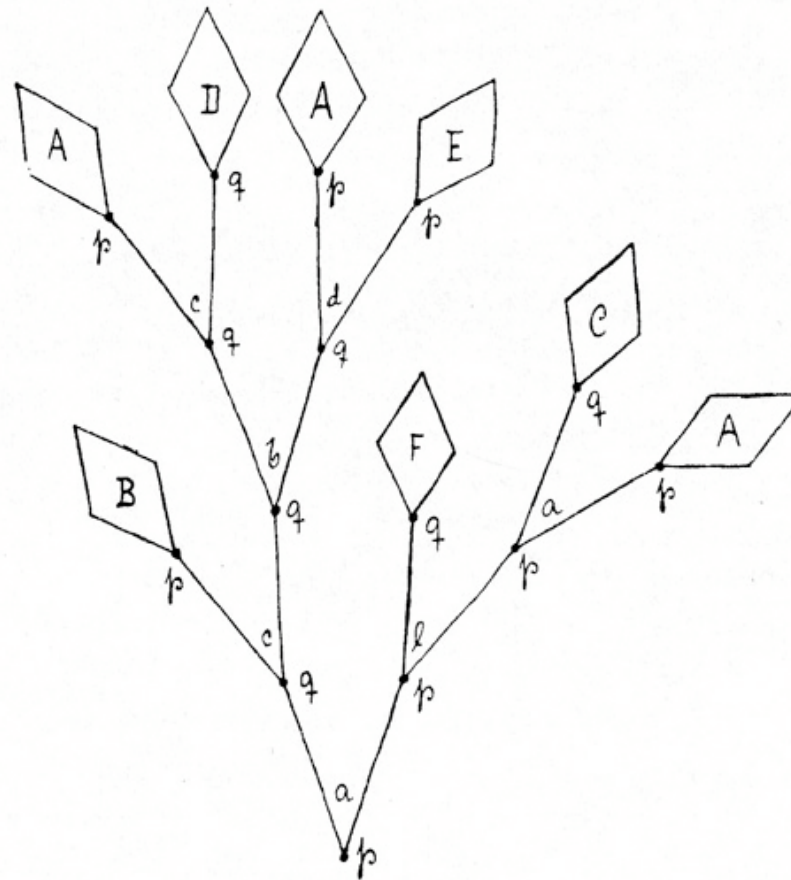
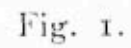


Fig. 3.

Axel Thue, tree structure, in: *Probleme über Veränderungen von Zeichenreihen nach gegebenen Regeln*, originally published 1914



Axel Thue, ramification of abcdef, in: *Probleme über Veränderungen von Zeichenreihen nach gegebenen Regeln*, originally published 1914

Example 1: Algae

Lindenmayer's original L-system for modelling the growth of algae.

variables : A B

constants : none

start : A

rules : $(A \rightarrow AB), (B \rightarrow A)$

which produces:

$n = 0$: A

$n = 1$: AB

$n = 2$: ABA

$n = 3$: ABAAB

$n = 4$: ABAABABA

$n = 5$: ABAABABAABAAB

$n = 6$: ABAABABAABAABABAABABA

$n = 7$: ABAABABAABAABABAABAABABAABAABAAB

Example of an L-System by Aristid Lindenmayer, 1968

Example 2: Fibonacci numbers

If we define the following simple grammar:

variables : A B
constants : none
start : A
rules : $(A \rightarrow B)$, $(B \rightarrow AB)$

then this L-system produces the following sequence of strings:

$n = 0$: A
 $n = 1$: B
 $n = 2$: AB
 $n = 3$: BAB
 $n = 4$: ABBAB
 $n = 5$: BABABAB
 $n = 6$: ABBABABABAB
 $n = 7$: BABABABABABABABAB

These are the mirror images of the strings from the first example, with A and B interchanged. Once again, each string is the concatenation of the preceding two, but in the reversed order.

In either example, if we count the length of each string, we obtain the famous Fibonacci sequence of numbers:

1 1 2 3 5 8 13 21 34 55 89 ...

For $n > 0$, if we count the k th position from the invariant end of the string (left in Example 1 or right in Example 2), the value is determined by whether a multiple of the golden mean falls within the interval $(k-1, k)$. The ratio of A to B likewise converges to the golden mean.

This example yields the same result (in terms of the length of each string, not the sequence of As and Bs) if the rule $(B \rightarrow AB)$ is replaced with $(B \rightarrow BA)$.

Example of an L-System by Aristid Lindenmayer, 1968



Example of an L-System by Aristid Lindenmayer, 1968

Example 8: Fractal plant

variables : X F

constants : + -

start : X

rules : $(X \rightarrow F-[X]+X)+F[+FX]-X), (F \rightarrow FF)$

angle : 25°

Here, F means "draw forward", - means "turn left 25°", and + means "turn right 25°". X does not correspond to any drawing action and is used to control the evolution of the curve. [corresponds to saving the current values for position and angle, which are restored when the corresponding] is executed.

Signifier
(„ring of the bell“)

Index

Signified: bell

Signifier
(„ring of the bell“)

Symbol

Signified: „meat/food“

Signifier
(„ring of the bell“)

~~Symbol~~

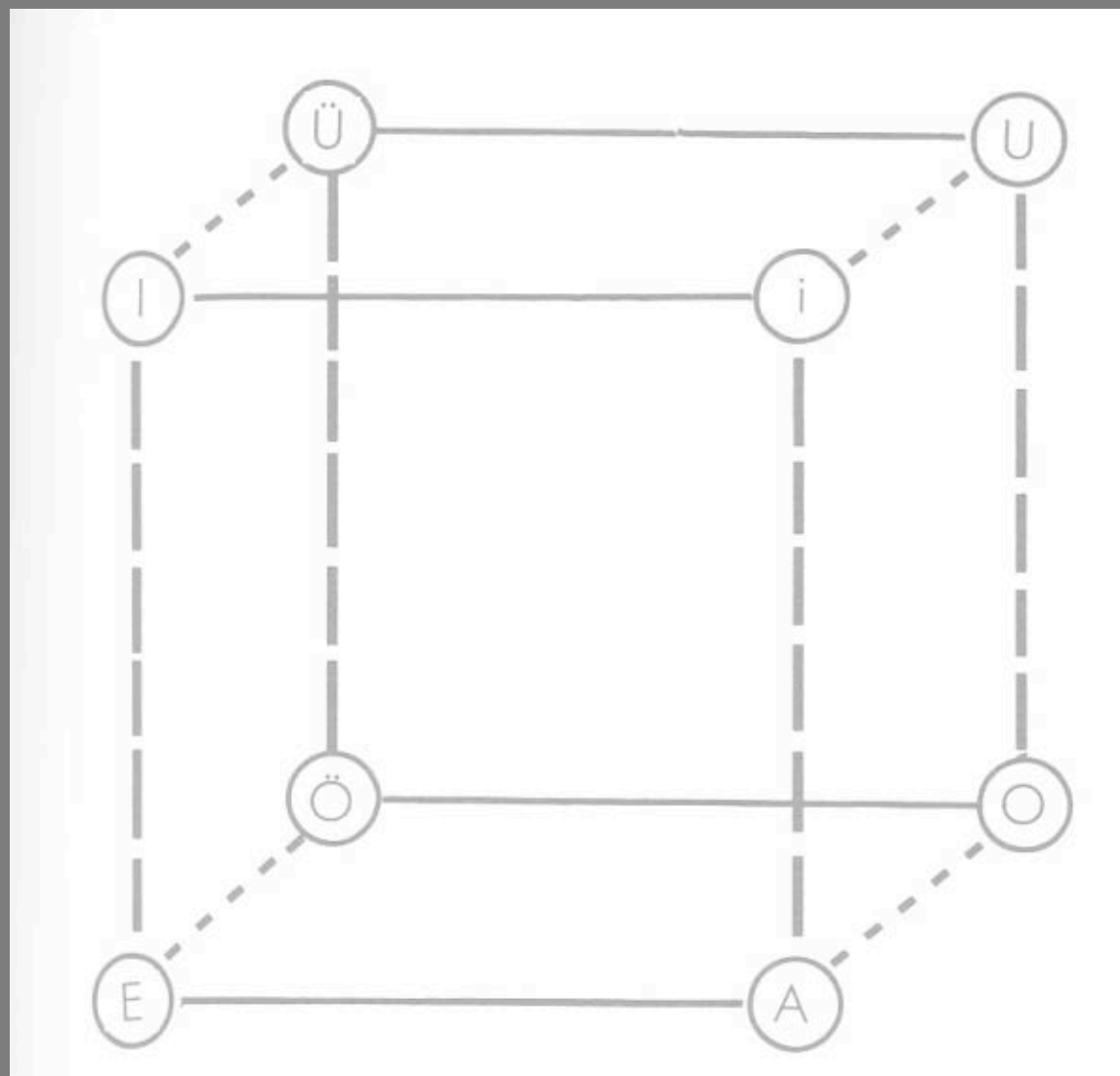
Signified: bell

Signifier (X)

Symbol

Signified (X)

„Ring of the bell“ does not describe
the bell any more but the food.

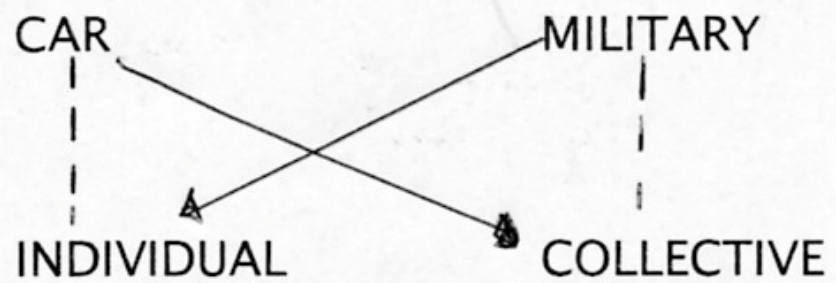


Counterparts

----- = in the front / in the back

-- -- -- = high / low

- - - - - = rounded / non-rounded



THANK YOU:

PLEASE REWRITE ME!