

CONCRETE ARGUMENTS

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When translating the German 'Konkrete Argumente' you find yourself with the English 'Concrete Arguments' but when translating the English Concrete Arguments back into German you can find yourself with a Beton Gründe. A heavy foundation laid with matter which hardens and cements within it, reasons and motives, rationale and *basis*.

These greifbare, sachliche and konkrete argumente become strategies. The example sentences given when translating 'arguments' into German are -

A good argument is based on reason and logic.
Ein gutes Argument basiert auf Vernunft und Logik.

and

I could not see the relevance of his argument.
Ich konnte die Relevanz seines Argumentes nicht erkennen.

And this is somewhat resonant, perhaps when I try to turn language and symbolisms into objects. Concrete objects with concrete arguments.

To put your finger on that which is sachlich and greifbar, matter-of-fact and tangible is to put your hand in the fire of the faux pas of fine arts. Because the privileged terrain laid with decorum of high culture rarely presents itself in such a clear form. The verbal and material economy of symbolism is condensed with double meanings and shibboleths which opens up for misinterpretations, displacements and alienation. But one can be equally articulate without rendering one's procedure invisible and instead make matter material.

Metaphorical drifts into metaphorical riffs on Metaphysical shifts into Phantasmagorical riffs which utilise the same material as a simple tongue twister but proves one vocabularies of an established language. A formulaic show-off depending on the expertise of enunciation. But it is private jokes which serve as a framework for displacement and alienation, multiple uses of the same material and the deliberately complex.

A concrete argument should not grow in the mouth.
It should do exactly what it says on the tin.
It can be jubilant and poetic but it is proper, and sits steadily in the institution of consciousness rather than relying entirely on the powers of interpretation.

Because critique is a messy subject, sticky and self-serving at times, memetic and little by little, in danger of exhausting its capacity to transform itself as a malleable subject and instead remains on the fringes of the form it discusses, hanging on barely by the tips of clammy fingers,

as a kind of ageing stalactite, stagnating, stiff..

Because we are all in one way or another slightly exhausted by critique. The Zeitgeist of critique as an artform, seems an echo of an era rather than presently presiding. The ghost of Andrea Fraser is shared as style inspo and representational expert body, but mute mouth rather than as an acute or urgent actor with relevant agency.

Not-already-established thus non-giant artists, whose institutional critique is not housed within collections of the institutions they once critiqued, with critical practices which resist the effects of the exclusive mechanisms of repression won't enjoy the benefits of the privilege created by the same mechanisms - exhibitions. So how to balance on the edge of agency and assimilation to keep on showing?

Imaginary landscapes of inquiry are filled with hidden landmines, not without value but in fact economic lifelines, meaning one could eventually live off what one does, if only not stumbled upon and triggered. Grant proposals are a fine balance of sugar and vinegar and a small sprinkle of spice, always tending to the too sweet, when applying as a critical form.

One must always be careful not to offend, staying humble with one's opposition in order to survive, buy organic bananas for one's daughter and eventually not need another day job. Whilst bracing wide legged, wedging oneself against the sides of a gap of varying proportions between the potential out of pocket and the potential support in-kind. Capital is a mercurial matter. A nexus of circumstances - indissociable from the present instant and its particular popularities. And you, as your sole income, a poet of your own affairs, entirely dependent on the economy of the dialectical powers which define the prefabricated space in which you build your architectural agency, your metaphorical and very real home which is lacking a view of the whole. Banking, as much as you'd like to consider yourself not, on your tactical art, whilst recounting the tactics of art in an artful tactic during the artweekend of weak tactics, finally admitting to the disposition of the strategist.

One can sense the opportunities afforded and one seizes them.
This is clearly not an opting out.

Art is already a system that partitions. Art weekend is an event which materialises this divider with an enforced material. Generalised transparency. Even though one can see through a sheet of glass and distinguish all movement that happens beyond it, it is still a solid wall. A partition which is surprisingly opaque for an entirely transparent surface. These condensations and proliferations of competition between peers, rooms, time and space are one of many cultural techniques that camouflages economic representation with fictions of functions.

Event making promotes strategies that seek to create places of conformity with abstract models. Because do you know how much galleries pay to be part of the official schedule of gallery weekend? Do you know who chooses who gets to pay to be part? I don't. They circulate without being seen discernible only through the objects they move around.
Like a father setting up make-shift tea party scenarios with the daughters toys whilst she sleeps

so as to find when she wakes that an entire other world unfolds as she's not watching.

These are imposed cultures which mismanage and manipulate artists into titles, whereas they themselves have not produced them, instead they are produced by a certain social category that has the power to extend its conquests into events and surround it with rope. Theoretically governed by the institutional frameworks but in fact a commercial entity. It and other variants of these activities of condensed event making, makes event-inertia a main topic of their existence.

"Ooof, not art weekend again, but I just simply must, can't not, not partake, since here we go to the private dinner of so and so which I must leave before I've barely arrived since I am already late for the early view, car please, to the in-kind sight since keine zeit." The gradient of dark circles induced under eye indicate where they are located on the social chessboard. A pure receiver, a producer themselves, participants, golden nugget, proprietor or patron, perhaps protester in which case a picture of health.

Self-collection

Collecting oneself

Collect yourself

Own collection

Call collect

Connect

Collect connections

Connect to collectors

Maneuver

Blow by blow

A ruse

In these popular milieus of the high cultures, contained by the elites who accept their subjection, welcoming whilst making heard one's complaints is not an unusual state of participation, I feel.

But what do I know? I am never and have never been invited into what I can only think of as a parallel to what I once read in a poorly translated hardcoded subtitle which told a guest that the toilet was down the universe at the end of that long corridor *cmd, shift, 3. And looking for a backroom of my own field seems like looking for this mistranslated toilet whilst holding it in...

Where did the alternative go? Which creates a certain flurry in the machine... We're all so official and established, we all have friends who show at the biennales, we're all two degrees separated from a golden lion. Isn't there some kind of absurdity in that proximity? I suffer immense impostor syndrome when taking up space which is white, well lit and expensive.

Stereotyped procedures accepted and reproduced in order to reflect on it?

Is that critical of its ways and customs and corresponding costumes? Or is it just nearly peeing oneself outside a v.i.p lounge down the end of the universe?

Is attempting critical agency within a system which is precisely a matter of its own formality and its clandestine nature a tireless but quiet activity? The agency of the champagne glass is a kind of quasi-invisibility, since it shows itself as product in a shelf within the system *but where would one place them? With the art of those imposed by it?

Is it Low-culture? High-culture? E - Kultur oder U - Kultur? In good or bad taste?

People walk through glass doors all the time, you can find assembled videos of them on youtube, I am even sure people fall through glass ceilings. But it becomes a poor metaphor when you watch it and it is empathetically painful rather than ha-ha funny to see people, not see, but enter through dense material.

It doesn't discreetly organise the multiform mishaps and confusion of consumption when watching Walmart goers tumble through safety glass as much as when people attempt to walk up a descending escalator thinking they've outsmarted the system.

I frequently feel as if I am ascending a descending moving, perhaps speeding up, escalator. I have no goal with my arts, no clear idea of where to jump off onto a protruding shelf which offers respite and reassurance before going back on the sliding scale. So I find a little stillness in the lack of ambiguity, in the concrete object. So concrete in fact that its material weighs heavy but seems aloft since they are made of something which makes something else out of them. They subvert themselves from within not by rejecting the room in which they stand - the gallery - or by transforming the scene in which they exist - the artworld - but uses both in the service of their own rules, customs (costumes?) and convictions, amplified, not silent, but echoing transposed as concrete arguments.

Freud, who was of course himself a chauvinist madman, said of wit that it is a tactic which boldly juxtaposes diverse elements in order to suddenly produce a flash shedding a different light on the language of a place and to strike the hearer.

A dialectical power, I'd say.

And social imagination might be a technical apparatus which alters or defeats its instruments. But of all the things we do and say, how much gets sung? With a kind of banal, off the cuff, pop cultural urge to instead of continuing to dissect the Argument concrete, take oneself a touch less seriously, make many potential mistakes instead of align with certainties, do a little dance, make a little love, get down tonight?