

Container

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Something that Floats, Something that Sinks

Imagine the body as a loaf of bread and you are looking at one end of the loaf. As you remove each slice of bread, you can see the entire surface of that slice from the crust to the centre. The crust skin or envelope has become an almost invisible line. The eye is the only organ that pierces this line, but what matters is the dense interior, which is rendered like a new, more complex facade (1).

Within this container reside objects that seem to be instilled with thoughts and emotions, which have been plucked from the outside world, metabolised and given a new life in the form of memories. These impressions of the outer world are often-times regurgitated back in the form of speech, writing or art.

Within the universe of things, artworks occupy a special status. They are meant to be looked at and thought about, not touched and not used - transferred to the realm of *noli me tangere* (touch me not) (2). Imitating this set up, a cake in a refrigerated glass vitrine provokes desire. When exposed to the greedy impulse of desire, the cake is transferred out to this realm and back into the profane world, where it will be eaten with pleasure and digested in someone's body (3).

Like a donkey chasing a carrot on a stick, the vitrine which both preserves and displays, is that which sets desire in motion. A physical barrier that prevents the assimilation and consumption of that object, the unattainable lure or enticement of which indefinitely prolongs its chase (4). Paradoxically, the most unattainable lure presents itself at the feet of the impossibility of re-experiencing a memory. Vacuum sealed and laying dormant, memories are preserved in the environment of the unconscious, triggered by external signals that can be a reminder of the thing or its lack, but never the actual thing itself.

Like objects in convex mirrors, fish in water behind glass bowls appear larger than they are. And our eyes, having evolved underwater, developed elaborate systems of ducts and valves to maintain a surface of liquid smoothing imperfections in our eyes imitating glass (5). Looking through glass renders the world through a visual primacy that heightens the definition of what is behind it, leaving a trace of the shadowy onlooker's reflection as its counterpart.

*"Is she ... dead?" asked one dwarf.
"She doesn't seem to be alive..." said a second.
And so the dwarfs made a glass coffin for their beloved friend.*

They set it on a table in a beautiful part of the forest, surrounded by flowers.

Snow White lay there for over a year: through spring, summer, autumn and winter. (6)

-Marina Moro

- (1). Book on visualising, posted by someone on instagram, found on the ground.
- (2). 'Noli me tangere ('touch me not') is the Latin version of a phrase spoken, according to John 20:17, by Jesus to Mary Magdalene when she recognized him after his resurrection. In asking Mary Magdalene not to touch him, Jesus indicates that once the resurrection is accomplished, the link between human beings and his person must no longer be physical, but must be a bond of heart to heart.' - Bieringer, R; B. Baert; K. Demasure (2016) "Noli mi tangere" in interdisciplinary perspective. Bristol, CN: Peeters.
- (3). Fischli, P. (2022) Peter Fischli, David Weiss Snowman. Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther und Franz König.
- (4). Lacan, J. (1981) The four fundamental concepts of psycho-analysis. New York: W.W. Norton.
- (5). Contemporary Art Writing Daily (2021) Anti-ligature rooms. GB: Cabinet, London, Plea, Copenhagen.
- (6). Greenway, J. and Augenstine, E. (1995) Snow White. London: Leopard Books.