



"Your performance rating is terrible, Fenwick, but I like your looks."

© Jim Sizemore

Giorgio Agamben, *Gusto*, ed. Asinamali, 2024

In 2024, *Asinamali* — the pot goes out to them as well — published *Gusto* by Giorgio Agamben.

Taste — tastes — have delicately slipped into the symbolic form, the form that offers the very discontinuity that, in a nutshell, characterises us. This is what Giorgio Agamben is proposing, that we realise that this ambiguous attitude of having established aesthetics as knowledge of the beautiful is not just a whim of Montesquieu, but could also be seen as an exhilarating ersatz to divination. If we want to start at the beginning, we should ask ourselves where the mattress maker is, and this is precisely what *Gusto* does.

Sarah Rosengarten, *Who's there*

January 25 - February 24, 2024
Schiefe Zähne
Berlin, Germany

I remember thinking that this exhibition reminded me of the Scott Walker song, *On Your Own Again*. Sparseness is nothing new, neither in music nor in contemporary visual art. Systems are helpful in pedagogy and macroeconomics, but their use is largely overrated outside of those fields. As such, it might be considered masturbatory to attempt to systematize why certain pop songs get our serotonin pumping despite their patently camp construction. Similarly trivial might be any attempt to analyze why the disorientation generated in Rosengarten's exhibition is so singular. The exhibition's sparseness may hold some keys, but they are keys destined to be lost, stolen, mistaken for others, and/or dropped down sewer grates.

By nature of their multiple exposure, the 3 large photographs are "dense," each showing an avatar of the same younger gentleman superimposed on top of himself in an array of unexciting poses — not quite choreography, not quite exercise. The frames demand closer inspection as their thin glazing appears to defy glass's material realities.

The only other work in the exhibition is a rolled up projection screen which fits perfectly between two engaged columns of the space. A third element of the exhibition exists in a short text written by the artist that, among other cryptic waxings on "administration" as a verb, explains in vague terms that the photographs are based on a press photo from an online article about popular acting techniques.

Disorientation is a craft that necessitates a certain attention to "orientation", to how individuals orient themselves, how they administer meaning both to

themselves as well as to the world around them.

Disorientation therefore is not so much a matter of doing the unexpected, as this might rather be thought of as "misorientation". Masters of disorientation are not interested in expectations, and it is precisely within this lack of interest in the expectations of others that disorientation coalesces. I am so tired of experiencing that which is expected or unexpected; I am so bored by the expectations of others; and I am so exhausted by the unexpected. I crave a disorientation that makes clear the irrelevance of my expectations, the irrelevance of the expectations of those around me. Disorientation could maybe be qualified by confrontation with a non-sequititious image or object which reminds us that above all else, expectations are performative, bourgeois and narcissistic. Sarah managed to produce a disorientation I still think about one year after the fact.



Sarah Rosengarten, *Rolli*, 2024, installation view *Who's there*, Schiefe Zähne, Berlin, 2024. Photo: Julian Blum

The disputed comeback of the dead salmon hat

While I tend to find exuberant hats on human beings wildly uninteresting and downright annoying and the field of trendwatching just about as fascinating as that of delay management in public transport, I must admit this one did spark my enthusiasm.

Captured by photographer Jim Pasola at Point No Point near Washington on October 25th, a male Orca, named J27 or 'Blackberry', was spotted flaunting a dead salmon on his head. This immediately led to a heated argument as some were quick to observe this wasn't simply J27 making a cheeky Point-No-Point, but an actual attempt to single-handedly bring back the dead salmon hat.

Turns out that in 1987, a female member of one of the pods, or family groups, in the Southern Resident Orca population was spotted with a dead salmon on her head in the exact same area. The craze caught on and soon several members of her own, as well as other pods, were seen sporting the same look. The trend lasted several months, but by 1988, the dead salmon hat was completely off the radar again and it hasn't been spotted since*. This fall, however, at least two dead salmon hat appearances were recorded in the Pacific Northwest region.

While some tried to brush it off as a mere variation on kelping, others opted for more practical explanations, such as the abundance of salmon leading them to keep the leftovers on their heads and save them for later. Whether it is a matter of playfulness, style, economics, a sign of celebration or related to the behaviour of sharing food as a bonding experience, the Southern Resident orcas are known for their highly social behaviour, or as Howard Garrett, a former orca researcher and Orca Network's cofounder and board president, puts it: "When one of them throws a fish on its head, that's a social event."



J27 sporting a dead salmon hat. © Jim Pasola/ Orca Network

Andrew Trites, director of the University of British Columbia's Marine Mammal Research Unit, on the other hand, suggested it might be to impress another member of the pod, while adding: "Maybe they just like the smell of dead fish."

Honourable mentions for the *Nepenthes Holdenii* and the 2024 Police Calendar of the Police zone Rivierenland.

* Two individual claims were allegedly reported in 2019 and 2022.

Niccolò dell'Arca, *Compianto sul Cristo morto (Lamentation over the Dead Christ)*

c. 1463 - 1494, Terracotta
Church of Santa Maria della Vita
Bologna, Italy

It's hard to believe this is terracotta. I couldn't believe it when I saw the piece in real life and a couple of months later I had to look it up again

because I started to doubt it again. Apparently the piece was not so popular because of this choice of material, which was deemed less noble than marble or bronze. The waving drapes are acrobatics. To be clear: the piece consists of seven life-size figures: the body of Jesus, his mother Mary, the Apostle John, Mary Magdalene, Mary of Clopas, Mary Salome (mother of James and John), and Joseph of Arimathea.

It's a shock-&-screamfest. The longer you take to look at it, the more cathartic it gets. I thought it was very efficient in that. It feels very easy to like in our age. At least if you like opera, drama and a lot of detail. As a sculpture ensemble, it's very cinematic (or photogenic) and entertaining.

You could ask what the artist drew from. All this screaming and shouting. Where did it come from? Why giving in to so much drama? The contortion of the faces, the hands. Maybe it was a mannerist exercise. Almost all of the faces are identical: all the Maries, Jesus and the John, they have the same face (especially the nose). Maybe the sculptor modelled himself, trying out all the facial expressions, performing every stage of agony and squalor.



Niccolò dell'Arca, *Compianto sul Cristo morto* (detail), c. 1463-1494, Church of Santa Maria della Vita, Bologna. © Aneta Malinowska



Jean-Noël Herlin, un junk mail junkie

January 20 - April 20, 2024
Bétonsalon, Centre d'art & de recherche
Paris, France

Conceived by Sara Martinetti
Audiovisual installation and music:
Cengiz Hartlap
Scenography: MPM Architecture
(Jeanne Lefrand and Charles Marmion)
Graphic design: Emma Kildea

In 1973, bookseller Jean-Noël Herlin (*1940), who had emigrated from Paris to New York some ten years earlier, initiated an archival project bearing his own name, collecting modern and contemporary art ephemera. Alongside his work as a dealer in artists' books and catalogues, he collected printed matter of all kinds saved from the 'wastepaper baskets of friends, critics, artists, and nearby galleries and institutions' — "clutter" that is often discarded or lost but essential for art historical research. In an exhibition at Bétonsalon, visual antropologist Sara Martinetti sketched a layered portrait of Herlin's lifelong and still ongoing practice as a librarian/archivist and of his collection, which comprised some 300,000 items before his appartement caught fire in 2018.

Around 500 documents were presented in wooden showcases: including exhibition announcements, installation views, press releases, letters, personal notebooks and several of Herlin's characteristic handmade sales catalogues. The film about Herlin devised by Martinetti and the exhibition journal with a personal timeline, additional footage and texts by the 'paper eater' himself provided the material on display with the necessary context to understand the value of this peripheral project. The exhibited "behind-the-scenes" thus offer not only a 'monist account of creativity in the visual and performing arts internationally from the

middle of the twentieth century to the present', but also attest to the complexity of the archive as a desperate attempt to organise and provide decay to the material that surrounds us.



Exhibition view of *Jean-Noël Herlin, un junk mail junkie*, Bétonsalon, Centre d'art & de recherche, Paris, 2024. Photo: Aurélien Mole

Yannick (2023)
directed by Quentin Dupieux



Quentin Dupieux, *Yannick*, 2023. Still image. © ATELIER DE PRODUCTION/CHI-FOU-MI PRODUCTIONS/QUENTIN DUPIEUX 2023

In this film, which takes place entirely in a theatre, actor Raphaël Quenard plays Yannick, a night guard who interrupts a mediocre 'Vaudeville' production. Dissatisfied with the plot of the play, Yannick explains his impromptu intervention by mentioning that he had asked his employer for time off to relax, but that the performance had not provided the entertainment he had hoped for. Frustrated, he puts a gun to the actors' heads and forces them to improvise and rework (together with him) the script on the spot. He feels entitled to express himself with the bold, casual familiarity of a child interrupting a formal adult conversation. Ignoring theatrical conventions, he defies them in the name of what could be described as a "narcissistic democracy," driven by an unshakable sense of self-importance. That said, the play itself definitely could have used some rewriting.

Marc Rossignol, *Colour of time*
February 28 - March 30, 2024
Paviljoen
Etterbeek, Belgium

I have not painted the war because I am not the kind of painter who goes out like a photographer for something to depict. But I have no doubt that the war is in these paintings I have done.
— Picasso, 1944

The [Vietnam] war, what was happening in America, the brutality of the world. What kind of man am I, sitting at home, reading magazines, going into a frustrated fury about everything — and then going into my studio to adjust a red to a blue.
— Philip Guston

The thing that really struck me in the exhibition was the horizon of paintings. There were words, birds and flowers — words painted on a watering can and Mahmoud Darwich's poem *رفس زواج* transcribed in red acrylic paint on a long ruban of

white satin running endlessly along the central zigzag wall of the concrete pavilion of the RHoK Academie in Etterbeek. The handout contained an English translation of the poem:

The Passport

*They did not recognize me in the shadows
That suck away my colour in this Passport
And to them my wound was an exhibit
For a tourist who loves to collect photographs
They did not recognize me,
Ah... Don't leave
The palm of my hand without the sun
Because the trees recognize me
All the songs of the rain recognize me
Don't leave me pale like the moon!*

*All the birds that followed my palm
To the door of the distant airport
All the wheat fields
All the prisons
All the white tombstones
All the barbed boundaries
All the waving handkerchiefs
All the eyes were with me,
But they dropped them from my passport*

*Stripped of my name and identity?
On a soil I nourished with my own hands?
Today Jacob cried out
Filling the sky:
Don't make an example of me again!
Oh, gentlemen, Prophets,
Don't ask the trees for their names
Don't ask the valleys who their mother is
From my forehead bursts the sword of light
And from my hand springs the water of the river
All the hearts of the people are my identity
So take away my passport!*

Mahmoud Darwich

First published in *Leaves of Olives*, 1964
Source: *Now Democracy*, Vol. 21, June 2006
Transcribed by Zdravo Savesk

Reading the translation of the poem in the exhibition recalled me to Monet painting water lilies during WW1.

Luigi Zuccheri, *Falchetto su ramo e piccoli uomini*



Luigi Zuccheri, *Falchetto su ramo e piccoli uomini*, oil on canvas

Luigi Zuccheri (1904 - 1974) channeled the painting traditions of the Veneto and Friuli regions into still lifes, landscapes, portraits, and animal scenes that addressed the dominant presence of nature in rural Italian life. Initially trained in oil by Venetian artists Alessandro Milesi and Umberto Martina, Zuccheri began around 1940 to work with tempera, a medium associated with the Italian Old Masters, making his own pigments from stones collected from local riverbanks. In the aftermath of World War II, the artist, who was a fugitive during the violent two-year Nazi occupation of Northern Italy, began to paint humans as dwarfed by the flora and fauna native to their environment. His mature paintings depict landscapes with foregrounds occupied by anachronistically large birds, frogs, insects, marmots, rabbits, and other creatures in a characteristically subdued, earth-toned palette. Like his friend Giorgio de Chirico, with whom he shared the secrets of tempera painting, and the other Italian Metaphysical painters, Zuccheri's theatrical compositions estrange the everyday through shifts in scale. One of the twentieth century's great animaliers, the artist toed the line of the surreal while remaining devoted to naturalistically capturing the wonders of his region.

THE POTS OF ETABLISSEMENT
AWARDING THE PRIZES FOR THE BEST
WORK SEEN IN 2024

CONCEIVED BY EMELINE DEPAS

11.01.25 - 26.01.25
OPENING: FRI 10.01.25 AT 19:00

OPEN
WED - SUN 14.00 - 18.00
AND BY APPOINTMENT

ETABLISSEMENT D'EN FACE
PLACE J(E)AN JACOBSPLEIN 1
1000 BRUSSELS
00 32 2 219 44 51
ETS@ETABLISSEMENTDENFACE.COM
WWW.ETABLISSEMENTDENFACE.COM

SUPPORT: VLAAMSE OVERHEID,
VLAAMSE GEMEENSCHAPSCOMMISSIE,
FEDERATION WALLONIE-BRUXELLES
& DUVEL MOORTGAT NV

Cover image: Emeline Depas