

model for sharing

after last night, after many nights, we need a new model for sharing.

i called a sculptor friend this morning to ask her what she could come up with along those lines. she said her work was fed by tension and notions on the brink of being torn in two. Her practice was not one of integration in other words and did not lend itself to sharing, or even really to discussion. she said that this was a very common problem, and maybe not a problem at all. she also said that a french sculptor working for many years in her small studio had crafted a very good model for sharing, that i could look up a picture if i chose. this french artist went into her studio every morning and did not come out until evening. she did this for years and eventually the walls of her studio were covered with math problems. i sent the artist an email to ask her permission to replicate the model, but she never replied.

this original model for sharing is fifty centimeters wide, sixty centimeters high, and one hundred and ten centimeters long. it was completed in 2007, but i like to imagine that it took many years to contemplate, build and adjust. the model is made of wood and glue. some sections are painted with oil paint, some are covered in silver leaf and the rest are left bare. the roof, or what might be the roof if you were to imagine the model as architectural, folds in on itself on one side, sloping down to meet the ground. the area under the roof is divided by thin pieces of wood into compartments of various widths, and one of the compartments contains a small horizontal surface, which could be thought of as a place to sit.<sup>1</sup>

i called my friend again and she gave me the names of two more sculptors, one who was working with nets in the connecting sense, rather than in the catching, tangling sense, and one who was working with oranges. she was putting the oranges back in the sky, or allowing them to hover over other images on a piece of glass. they lent a round reality to her drawings and other flat possessions.

the artist is attentive to the desires, tendencies and proclivities of the oranges, observes their habits and keeps careful flight records. my friend said that there was a chance that one of them might be closer to coming up with a framework for notions regarding sharing. i looked up their work and attempted to absorb their notions, but the glue seemed to me to be elsewhere.

so i went back to my room and now i am reading glissant. this is the current plan. i come across the phrase, "attitude of collective release."<sup>2</sup> it sounds very promising. the problem being that we don't know how to orchestrate it. i read on.

i called your mobile phone for an hour, cutting you off at, "hi, this is..." each time and dialing afresh. the spacing of the dial tones is, i found, very misleading. the first and the second are almost perfectly identical, but with the third there is a barely perceptible decrease in duration, a foreshortening that leads one to believe that you have in fact answered your phone. i hold my breath trying to discern whether or not the quality of the silence has shifted, but inevitably the fourth tone follows the third and the fifth follows the fourth, with slight increase of the supple intervals between tones.

time is stretching to accommodate my anticipation and confusion.

the sixth tone recalls the first so strongly that you begin to lose track of how long ago you placed the call. the seventh is significantly fainter, because the phone has fallen gently away from your ear to muffle the harshness of the voicemail message to which you are at this point resigned. the interval after the seventh is the longest and provides the most space for hope to grow gradually and vanish suddenly with the introduction of the eighth, still faint but distinct, after which there is a brief pause and a sound very

like the intake of breath, followed by your voice, deceptively jaunty at first as if caught off guard by the program which recorded the message, “hi,…”

the things we thought of are now being done by others.

i didn't leave a message because i didn't actually have anything to say. it was just a way of letting you know that i didn't want you to be at bowling. and you didn't answer eventually, which was your way of letting me know you did want to be at bowling. this is why we need a new model.

i remember something that came across me in a class i was visiting at a college i did not end up attending. the course traced the history of translation, at least that is how it was described in the syllabus. i was only present for the one class, and that day they were wrapping up a small unit, tidily and not without grace (i was impressed by the students' willingness to participate). they were discussing an isolated movement of continental european artists contemporaneous with arte povera. the class was in german, and now i cannot remember the name of the movement. all i remember is being struck by the way these artists conceptualized the reuse of objects.

the model for sharing is full of partitions, but i still ask myself, why the insistence on time spent with these people? those people? living the dream of down and out as it has been dreamed by so many before them, in grottos and studios and enormous wine jugs, in palaces and country clubs too where it was a thoroughly false dream. that dream is worn out.

why do i insist on this cruel partitioning?

why do they smoke cigarettes? at their age in this country, at this time in the bright soft future? do they have no regard for the future of their lungs? the present comfort and health of those around them? their future daughters' ovaries?

in the house next door there is no smoking. the neighbors are good role models, rolling along, laughing often. one night they exchange words to this effect:

what are you doing?

go to sleep.

why?

where'd all the rice go?

i put it all away. i just forgot to glue it on.

go brush your teeth. go to sleep.

they are laughing all the while though, and through the window i can see his arm around her shoulders with his hand pressing her head into his chest. they are reading some mail she is holding and smiling into its creases.

they have something figured out, a good method for coexistence. the following model is also a good one. i found it as i searched for ways to sew pillows. it has a good title too:

*he wanted to close the hole*

yesterday, my boyfriend took a pair of his socks.

they had a hole on each.

so he sewed one, and i sewed the other.

the left one is what i did, and the right one is his.

he doesn't sew at all usually. he used the needle very carefully, little by little. so he took three times more than me, but he seemed to enjoy it.

i had very happy time, even if it was only 15 minutes.<sup>3</sup>

it's very sweet and tidy, but seems too specific for our needs, and as she admits it only lasted fifteen minutes. then i set about to ask, "why won't my basil seedlings grow true leaves?" because this is something else that has been troubling me, but google quickly countered with the following questions.

why is the sky blue?

the sky is blue out of sheer benevolence. it understands (in the very broadest sense of the verb, leaving room at the edges for a sense that we do not understand) the tremendous power a more varied appearance could exercise on us. the sky is committed to reassuring us even if that means sacrificing its capacity for innovation. in its gentleness it reserves, playing between night and day, day and night. only in between does it exercise its creativity, and in those moments it dances with utmost relish, as if it were discovering and divulging colors previously invisible to us. the sky discovers a new orange, gently at first, just at the edges.

why not both?

we cannot have both. i looked up 'alys at the beach' when i'd meant to type 'alice in the cities.' alys beach is a resort in florida, possibly fake but quite possibly real, that promises its visitors the essence of 'simple luxury.' the site is full of images of empty white buildings and empty white beaches and beautiful shaded walks between them. it is confusing. what is a "simple" luxury? having the time to darn one's own socks? or avoiding the darning and buying new socks without being able to feel the labor beneath the comfortably sticky soles of one's feet?

why not?

the good life is a slippery slope and there is no safety from perpetrating violence.

why did i get married?

did you in fact, in act, get married? i am reading just now that there are many ways.

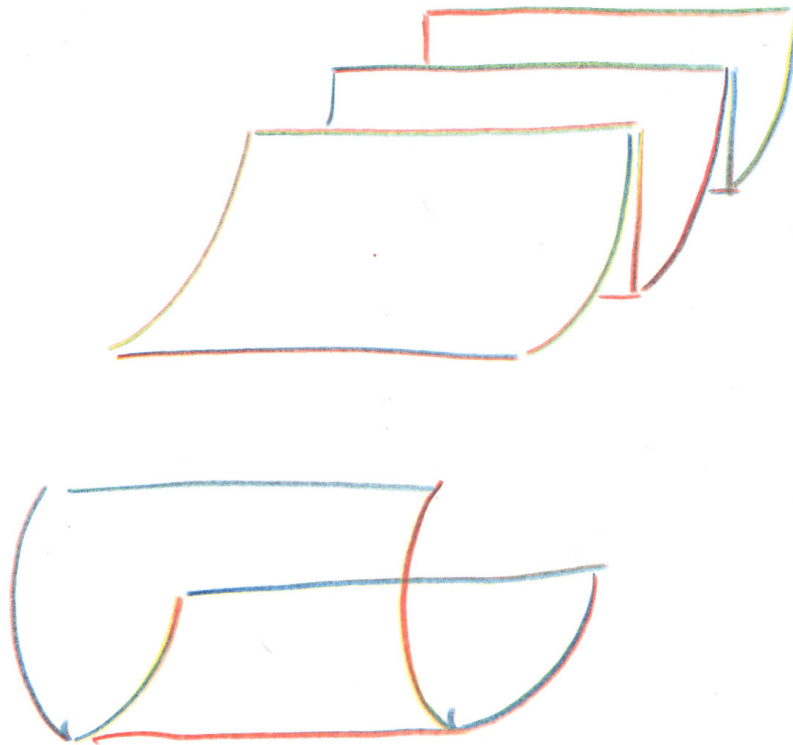
why am i so tired?

probably because you stayed up late bowling last night.

but now it is certainly because of the baby.

why do we sleep?

sleeping beside you is an act of love and i should remember that each time i lay down and turn my back to you, wiggling backwards towards your warm front.



then i searched “duchamp door neither open nor closed” because that’s the sort of thing i was looking for, and the leading result read as follows:

the most common door topology one comes across is the discrete topology, where every subset is both open and closed. a nontrivial example of a connected door topology is given by the collection of open sets  $U\{Q\}u\{Q\}$  given any ultrafilter  $U$ .

if we put our minds to this, we could eventually understand it, but as things stand our minds are so busy. how do things stand? they stand on one foot, ready to fall.

i encounter some words in a notebook written in your handwriting, almost my own, on a piece of tape i once found in your studio:

fall as they may

fall as they are

the model has a hard time distinguishing between you, me, we and she. sometimes she is not wearing her glasses, and sometimes it is important that the persons be intermingled, intermingled without losing the distances between them.

in that spirit, here is another idea: you climb a tree and i climb a tree that is a certain distance from the first tree and at the highest point that each of us can reach we tie either end of what must by this time be a long string. then we consider the shape created below the string bordered on the other sides by the trees and sky line. i trace this shape on your stomach with my finger, and whichever state the tracing most resembles, that will be the place we move once we are through with this place.

meg says i should come over. she's figured something out. her door is open, and i walk through into her bedroom where she is sitting on the floor surrounded by pants, her pants (she is small). she has scissors and blue fabric. she is deepening the pockets of her pants. her grandfather used to say, "now you've got some money in your pocket, now you can do something" to her brother, whose pockets were deep, half-way down to his golden knees. thinking of this, she realized that pockets were expectation, anticipation, potential, and a means of being prepared to meet the world. she is sewing new pockets, tripling the depth of her pre-limited, too-tight women's jean's pockets with an utter disregard for line and formal qualities.

she slips a hammer, a rolling pin and a bag of clover seeds into her new pocket, thinking of franz erhardt walter.

*between her and the objects there was something, but when she caught that thing in her hand like a fly and then looked - however much care she took not to let anything escape - all she found was her own hand, rosy and disheartened.*<sup>4</sup>

my great grandmother needs a vessel, so she opens the back door and looks amidst the discarded objects there for a potential fit, a jar or can left over from another use. my great grandmothers were good to objects out of poverty, but sometimes i wonder if there might have been more to it than that. my grandmothers were also poor, but there was no longer a scarcity of objects, so they didn't depend on them in the same way.

when her children were babies, my great grandmother covered the floor in old newspapers and my grandmother and all my great aunts and uncles ran around bare-bottomed, peeing on the paper.

*what we need to question is bricks, concrete, glass, our table manners, our utensils, our tools, the way we spend our time, our rhythms. to question that which seems to have ceased forever to astonish us. we live, true, we breathe, true; we walk, we go downstairs, we sit at a table in order to eat, we lie down on a bed in order to sleep. how? where? when? why?*<sup>5</sup>

there are still many decisions that need to be made. other questions include:

how can we become closer, slower, quieter, gentler? how can we be in ways we have not been? how can we look at and tend that which is generally overlooked? can these two objects coexist? what about these twelve? which teeth should be connected?



with what? there is a constant play with the way the objects hang together, with the amount of space between certain resonances and repetitions, the arrangement of the gaps a viewer might traverse. gaps you might traverse. gaps my great grandmother might traverse. these gaps that open up are always relative to what i am trying to accomplish.

but what if you reach into your pocket and there is suddenly a little mouse that slithers out along your palm and onto the ground? that is a gap too.

it is a gap, but not the kind i hope for.

the mouse has compromised your pockets' possibilities.

now i feel it in every pocket, in the palm of my hand.

there you are memorizing everything in the little atrium, eyes up, down, all around. the cups, the pitchers, the molding, the cups, the floor. waiting for the food to come.

i call my sister, who is an excellent cook, and ask if she's willing to translate the list of all of the food and drink george perec consumed in the year 1974 into 365 daily menus. the list, published in *action poétique*, begins, nine beef consommés, one iced cucumber soup, one mussel soup.<sup>6</sup> the list lends itself to neither vegetarianism nor breastfeeding. there are some exotic things, but we are able to attain them.

further down the list, i come to, "one mushroom salad." i remember a picture david horvitz recently posted to instagram, a picture of morel mushrooms frying in a pan with the caption, "before every artist talk i eat a giant plate of mushrooms..., so that it is actually the mushrooms who will give a talk."

the mushrooms sizzling in the pan are more orange than one might think.

his nutritional gesture is both practical and poetic. it is clear and sweet that the beings that decompose and flourish in our stomachs have a greater effect on our ways of being than we'd like to believe, as attached as we are to our individuality and agency.

when things break they can become something else, the girl said, and her words came out half discovery, half recitation. she smiled.

for four months, i kept all my trash and recycling in my apartment. i only allowed myself to throw away soiled toilet paper and tissues. it was a big apartment, and i left everything out on shelves. i didn't write anything down or keep a record of how much, i just wanted to see how it would be to live with my trash and recycling. come to think of it, i may not have known where to put my trash and recycling, having lived only in the suburbs, two dorms, and a house in a small town. my toilet paper and tissues i put in plastic bags and threw them in the public trash can on the street below my apartment. they were the kind of trash cans that have a cap so you can only fit small bags in the sides.

i wondered, is this what care looks like?

where is the line that marks the threshold of care?

and how do we navigate between attunement and habit?

i went to the room, swept, mopped, spackled, sanded and painted the corner white.  
the wall and the trim, against the floor with blue tape. the corner waits.

wind swept

over swept

under swept

swept off their feet

swept under the rug

swept up

swept away

swept over

once a month we sweep out the corners of our house and hide away all of our furniture. we put art on the walls, the floor, the ceiling, and everywhere in between according to the needs and hopes of the artists. sometimes the artists put the work there themselves. sometimes we help them. our friends invite musicians to play music in the basement. at seven o'clock on saturday night, we are finally ready. we are tired but giddy with anticipation. will the people come?

the people come. they look and listen and celebrate the people making the music and art. we feel happy and at ease in our house buzzing with friends and strangers and humans meeting humans. we feel nervous about the art, will someone trip over this crutch? (yes), knock over these glasses of milk? (no). will someone lean on this plastic sheet? (yes but it held up).

will the artists enjoy one another's company?

how can we give the musicians feedback when the existence of feedback depends on respondents being present at both the celebration on saturday night and the critique on sunday afternoon?

is this too much to ask of people? of ourselves?

is it important that our model be sustainable or is it enough for it to continue?

i find an enormous stack of people magazines from the nineties in my basement. they are not “my” magazines, the magazines of my childhood, but it is strangely “my” basement, and therefore i am also now responsible for the magazines. the contents of the people magazines is shocking even though it is also already inside me. their pages abound with the gender norms that i once imagined must make up adulthood.

every third magazine includes a spread on princess diana, whose hair cut i very much admire. i clip out a picture of her stepping out of a plane and roll it into a tight pipe until only her hand is visible, waiving, palm curled out into the world.

i think about the piles of objects our landlord had to move out of the basement and attic in order to sell his house. the makeshift space above the garage is still full of boots and car parts, some of them very heavy. the weight of all those objects, his own objects, his cousin’s objects, his brothers’ objects, his ex-boyfriend’s objects.

the objects are too many to think about.

it should be sharp, like a comb. if it doesn’t touch your teeth then it isn’t working. i read an essay about privacy, interiors: some stanzas on the pleasures of privacy by quinn latimer. i encounter these sentences:

*but mostly i imagine rooms when i am writing because i was taught in school that a stanza was a room. and this definition entered me like light entering a room. the knife of that light. so slant, and sharp, and right. it was one of those moments when your mind is lit because a fact and a metaphor have suddenly become one, making the same dark shape on the paper or screen, occupying the very same room.<sup>7</sup>*

here the freshness of understanding seems important. understanding so bright that it cuts. a certain knowledge come upon at a certain time. but what is the role of privacy in the model? what does one person do in two rooms?

in four?

in twelve?

her talk was called, 'how to live in another body for an hour.' it was raining, she wore strappy turquoise sandals over thin black socks, and she read the poem, 'corpse life, or live from athens,' which i still read aloud from time to time to maintain the memory of her voice.

what if the model needs a poem?

this poem is pink, the other green.

can we make better objects? no, the objects are already here, we have no choice. they have already been made and introduced to us, to one another. what about new frameworks? frameworks like the shell of a crab, the thin red shell of a cooked crab, broken in places but still functional.

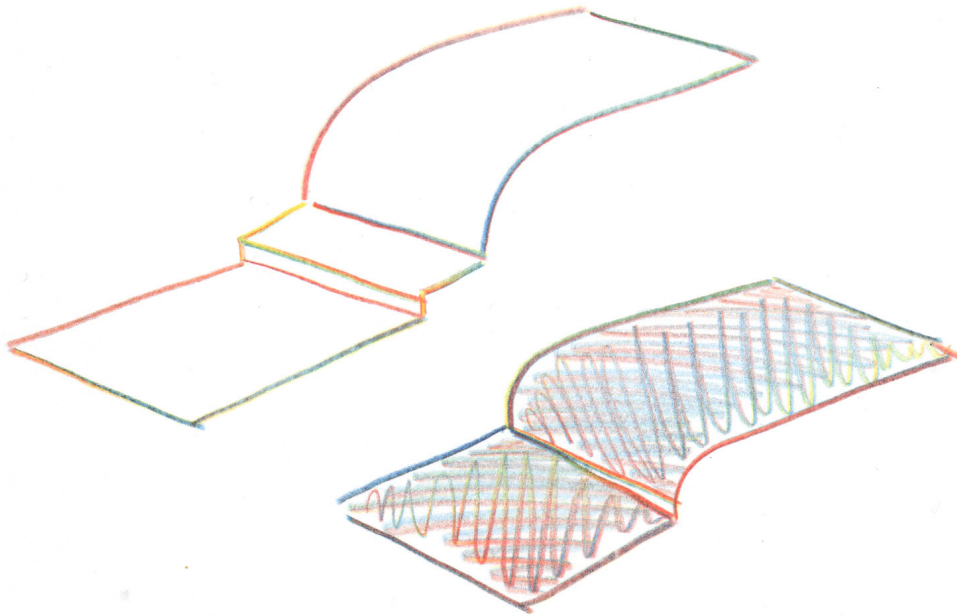
our house is like this, broken in places but still functional. each artist gets their own room, but we take down all the doors. maybe we need rooms but not doors. maybe it is important to write about the feeling at seven oclock, and then again about the feeling at twelve thirty or one in the morning, the beginning and the end of the middle. at one in the morning we are tired again, giddy with exhilaration and conversation.

people came, no one got hurt, and no one called the cops. we met people we hadn't met before and learned new things from people we had met before. we clean up beer cans and cigarette butts. we turn off the art. tomorrow we will cook eggs together and talk about art, talk about logistics, talk about how quickly we can put the house back together again, talk about how to organize a house, a gallery, a city.

a friend recommends visiting madrid. i thought to stop there for a day on my way to berlin, but i don't like to travel alone, so i skipped it. what i really wanted to see was bosch's painting, the garden of earthly delights. there is a certain time each day during which the panels are closed. on march 11, 1978, barthes described for his class the back panels of bosch's garden. the panels form a grisaille painting of the third day of creation, and they can be closed to hide the garden. in barthes' notes, "...the mono-chrome (the neutral) substitutes for the idea of opposition that of the slight difference,

of the onset, of the effort towards difference, in other words of nuance: nuance becomes a principal of allover organization.”<sup>8</sup> this is very much what i strive for as i make: for a quiet potential, an object or image that is hovering between being and becoming.

the child is sure that all images follow the model of bosch’s garden. she turns pages ready to encounter the other side of the house, the mountain, the bear she’s just seen. she is disappointed time and time again.



i make a replica of the model after all, still wood but much larger, so that i can slide inside. i make holes in the top and the bottom and tie strings, taught, up and down, lines to squeeze through.

while standing in the replica, i try to memorize a story, which proves more difficult than a poem. i want to be able to walk around in the story, to inhabit it as i can certain poems by borges. this is an ongoing pursuit. the act of reading aloud translates spatial gaps into temporal ones. i remember at a talk, being shown slides of mette edvardson's

*time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine.*<sup>9</sup>

i remember wanting to perform in the piece, to enter a book in that way, and then to allow other people to enter by way of one's voice, by way of the architecture of a person's memory. time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine, what to make of that? time falls asleep in the sunshine. the baby pees into the morning. the mice scurry into the evening. somewhere, further away, the crabs scuttle across the floors of silent seas.

i am recommended the following practice: each time you meet with someone intentionally, to go for a walk, exchange ideas, ask for advice, or work on a project together, try to make sure that you leave with one object they came with and they leave with one object you came with. this can also be a goal in more casual interactions depending on how many objects you tend to carry with you. examples of potential exchanges include:

a mug, a newspaper

a book, an apple

a philodendron cutting, a teething ring

a hair tie, a shapely rock

a small net, a loaf of bread

a gulp of water, an umbrella

a beaver skull, a button

a nail clipper, a small painting

a bucket, a story

mobiles are defined by their propensity to move, but also by their fixedness. they do not float, they hang. they do not move along through space, they move around within themselves, inscribing a space. objects of habit.

is habit movement that goes nowhere?

no, i can't say nowhere, but it must move slowly.

how do the mice live with the snake in the attic above the garage?

they must have a peculiar set of habits, habits to keep them in place and habits to keep them in motion.

i reread the barthelme story in which natasha has a habit of biting william, an activity which strains their relationship even as it stems from their romantic misses.

the narrator, a till-person at the a&p, ends by reflecting, "i don't believe that we are what we do although many thinkers argue otherwise. i believe that what we do is, very often, a poor approximation of what we are - an imperfect manifestation of a much better totality. even the best of us sometimes bite off, as it were, less than we can chew. when natasha bites william, she's saying only part of what she wants to say to him. she's saying, william! wake up! remember! but that gets lost in a haze of pain, his. i'm trying to help."<sup>10</sup> they have a ways to go, but this knowledge seems worth incorporating into the model. as is the patient helpfulness of the till-person.



i thought i'd read the book which contains that story cover to cover, several times over. then i found that i'd neglected the introduction. the introducer includes an interview with michael silverblatt, who was once a colleague of barthelme's. silverblatt says that the most important thing he learned from barthelme was how to look at art in the presence of an artist.

i remember watching a friend crouch down to view your film, all twenty three minutes of it, from take-off to landing.

i remember a year earlier, before we knew one another, watching a performance of his unfold. For an hour, we waited for something to happen, which is to say to shift, but nothing happened. we watched until the performers dispersed and the applause began.

there was a swapping of time and position. this particular exchange was very direct, and it was easy to witness the reciprocity of the gestures. this generosity, this willingness to spend time with another's thoughts and production, she said, is the basis of the generation of meaning in art.

you go to the museum without me for some reason, you are traveling, and an artist has asked the gallery guards to choose from a collection of objects to keep in their pockets during the show. the visitors can ask the guards to see what is in their pockets. then the guards pull out the contents, mostly ceramic and cast metal objects that are almost just rocks and tiny somethings that might be in a pocket anyways. the objects roll out together onto the palm of their hand.<sup>11</sup> i look up the artist's work but this piece isn't on her website, whether out of reverence or lack of consideration. the gesture of the asking and the turning out of the pockets seems worth keeping.

i remember, many years ago, an attempt to sweep the body of a small mouse out of the yard where we were playing pretend baseball. eventually, watching the small body overturned by the broom which was an extension of my hand sickened me. i tried to

pretend that it was a leaf. it should have been easy because the other leaves were silver with white bellies and long wispy tails. I couldn't though. the mouse remained a mouse, and meanwhile some of the leaves threatened to become mice as well. i couldn't take it. i moved the baby instead, kicked the orange ball and he scooted after it.

the mice live a life very much like the rebels in star wars. we have weapons they've never dreamed of.

the model is alongside us, in the interval between reach and grasp, in the gaps and the gasp.<sup>12</sup>

at times there is a wanting feeling, and it's very general, like a mixture of hunger, desire for sleep, for sex, for something to happen, and sometimes added into the mix is the desire to make things as well. it's not a bad feeling, and it's not boredom either. it's mild and listless. it makes me think of john ashbery's poem one thing that can save america, in which he tells us that the juice is elsewhere. i think of that line often, that the juice is elsewhere. in my mind it is always orange juice and the orange liquid characterizes some juicy and thereby healthy elsewhere.

later in the poem, ashbury writes,

*all the rest is waiting  
for a letter that never arrives,  
day after day, the exasperation  
until finally you have ripped it open not knowing what it is,  
the two envelope halves lying on a plate.*<sup>13</sup>

it arrives, but it is never as you thought it might be. and the waiting can exhaust.

what is the relationship between weight and waiting?

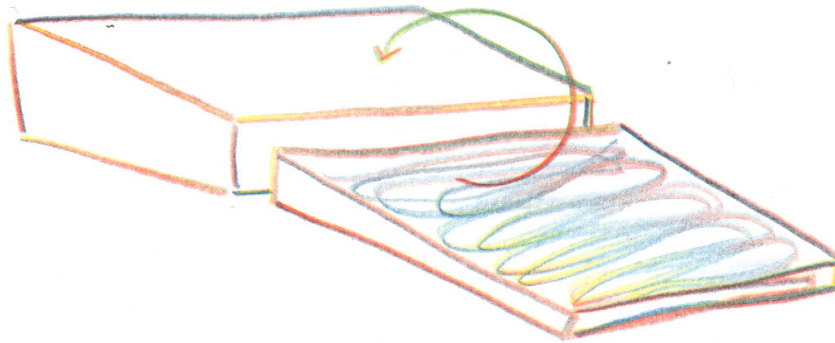
how can we think about care as weight?

as responsibility?

the objects are hovering, listening, inscribing space. waiting for what? to fall. i notice that john ashbery is the first name in the works cited list following lauren berlant's essay, cruel optimism. it tickles me. *the action of the poem, she says, is charted in the small movement between home, hymn, and hum.*<sup>14</sup>

it is a different poem, also very good. the suburbs are evoked here too.

*how long have people thought about the present as having weight, being a thing disconnected from other things, an obstacle to living?*<sup>15</sup>



we saw berlant speak once, at an academic conference. she spoke of “being in life without wanting the world.” we asked if we needed to pay, and the academics said no, and asked us who we were. we made friends with two of the academics, phd students traveling from london and tel aviv respectively. we went to their talks. we drove them around and ate meals and drank drinks. time was different that weekend because we attached ourselves to foreigners on vacation.

she told us that when you lose an object, the energy stored in that object comes back to you. i thought about the objects i've lost. a blue and maroon shirt hanging in a closet of a hostel in amsterdam. a sports bra and an oversized striped tank top on a picnic table in a campground in ohio. moments of disorganization, reorganized in unknowable ways at unknowable times.

who removed the shirt from the closet of the hostel?

how wet did the clothing in ohio become before it was found?

was it deemed wearable?

what are acceptable means of organization?

if your pinkies are in my mouth and your thumbs are in your mouth, then we are face to face, exactly a hand's width apart. a flawless system of measurement, precise positioning. i look at you without my glasses on and wonder how to take things up without making them a center.

my friend comes by the house and asks kindly, 'what are you already doing that feels meaningful like art?'

yesterday,

i cultivated accidents

alongside fellows

beans soak

yogurt thickens

bread rises

kilns fire

baby molts

hair moves outward

lines following lines

the line between doing nothing and doing everything at once is very thin, and often ideas come up which quiver as if the slightest breath will knock them into a formless pile of congruent notions. i'm not sure exactly what helps them stay up as ideas. it is possible that a pocket might help, in a pocket the ideas wouldn't be lost as they come and go between activities.

in a press release, katinka bock writes that artistic existence is predicated on "a wholly unfounded faith in coincidence."<sup>16</sup> i read this and know that i too am waiting for a letter, a connection, for the world to shuffle the cards in a way that reveals a new horizon, for moments not of clarity but of increased possibility. these moments are guaranteed (guaranteed to happen, though they often go unnoticed) by the slow disfiguring of time, which is always actually already the slow reconfiguring of time. time does not disfigure, it reconfigures, slowly, according to its own needs.

a child runs, spinning through the halls, apologizing each time she bumps into a wall. another child tries to make something, his tooth, come to the fore.

i was trying to find a physical manifestation of the model, an object in which metaphor and fact might converge, however briefly, like latimer's stanzas-become-rooms. i found a spandrel, equal parts object and space, created alongside intention, shaped not by its point but by its edges. a spandrel is an architectural space that is unplanned, like the space beneath stairs, or the triangular spaces between an archway and the ceiling. spandrels have no intrinsic purpose, but they are shaped by the edges of intentional architecture. as such they are pockets of possibility.

here is another idea, not a new idea but an old model. you cut the bread. i pick which half i'd like to eat. this method is very old, biblical, though I don't see it in action very often. my sister and i sometimes shared this way as children.

the model is good at sitting still and waiting, and knowing in advance how long she can wait. she thinks, "there is knowledge grown over time, felt through time," and she wonders how to find its spandrels.

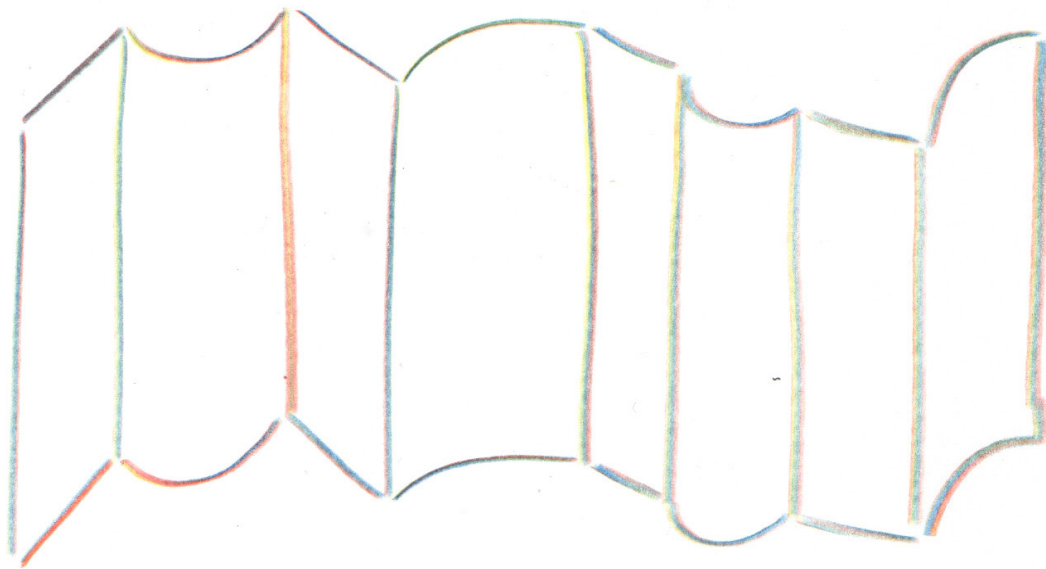
all of the best things i make are those made in pursuit of another thing.

the pursuit is still a necessity though, the following, the call and the response. the baby on his stomach strains to hold up his head and chest. he becomes tired, almost grumpy, and suddenly a broom falls. at the slap of the broom the baby is overcome, not by fear, but by joy. he remains on his stomach, laughing for several minutes. this is the story i heard on the phone, and i thought, the baby's effort made space for this moment, a moment in which subject and object duality was overcome. at least that is what i assume based on what i heard. i was reading an essay. timothy morton was describing this space of focused waiting that, in the moment it is released or interrupted, gives way to a deepening awareness of environment.<sup>17</sup> i wondered why i assume that the baby's joy is synonymous with a deepening awareness of his environment, but i have a feeling that it is.

maybe it is also like the feeling of trying to take off an under layer of clothing without disturbing the outer, the tightness of the pursuit, the immediate gentleness of the release. clarity recedes and then comes to the fore. subject and support melt together.

my mother sends more containers for freezing food, two hair scrunchies made of silk ties from our old dress-up bin and eight wooden blocks: two orange cylinders, two squat yellow rectangular prisms, one large flat red rectangular prism, one green triangular prism, and two thin blue wedges.

once i made twenty eight little poplar blocks to profess my love for you, i gave them to you one at a time and you drew them as they came. for awhile we kept them in a little porcelain turtle that your brother gave you. then i left and came back and now i don't know where they are.



is waiting a prerequisite for weight?

i call my sister, because she is far away.

she says, people don't eat blue things. blue in nature means danger, so i had to re-think. after that i came back to loosen the words around the model. i spoke with laure prouvost when she came to town for her show they are waiting for you. inside the structure her video played with the viewer, and outside, objects spilled out: egg shells, oranges, tools, twigs, and refuse sitting in pools of clear resin, little scraps of life.<sup>18</sup> i was taken in by the round lush reality of the objects and scenes presented in the video, into the space between the objects and her voice, between the moving images and the narrative that guides the viewer through. i asked her about the inside and the outside, the visual and the physical. she said fish, apple, hammer, grandfather.

he said  
he knew a hardy creature     a crab  
and supposed it could live under  
museum conditions<sup>19</sup>

she said, part of the work is the struggle to maintain a sort of aliveness, inherent in the efforting, failing, allowing, and following processes, not only in the making of something, but also in its very being once it is made. it is important that the output itself remain open and breathing. along with the means of production, there are visual tools that allow the objects and images to persist in this between space. i am fascinated by gaps, by the dotted line, the incomplete square, not as exercises which can be overcome by the mind, but as means of resisting closure.

something new needs to be introduced, a new barrier, a slightly different aim, a fresh confusion.

we go to the museum and the sculptures are full of holes we hadn't seen before. holes that reach in and down, right to the floor in some cases. sometimes the hole is so deep that you can't see the end. sometimes a hole or a corner ends in a little widening, like an animal's burrow.

a little ditch arises, a furrow in which to begin to build meaning. if there are nine, it means it is unfinished. the model is a folding-in-on, a flattening that is at once condensation, structure, and a placement in space. we need to do this because we frequently lack enough material to build relationships upon.

more soft formating gives more space, for what?

for a spaciousness in the precise?

a gentle partitioning. we suffer from an unimaginative use of our inconveniences. convenience can be a part of life but it cannot be the goal.



is there a mode just along the edge of attunement, a mode not of meditation, but of activity (i would say action but there is too much agency there, too much singularity and heroism), that allows us to move alongside time in a careful way?

if i were to write about a model for making mobiles, i would inevitably write, 'this one needs something more.' in making a mobile there is a sense in which one must listen to each object's needs, as well as the collective needs of the group. there is the individual conversation around which ways an object can be tethered and suspended, and then the group conversations around what can be balanced against what and what sort of distance must a comb keep in order to support a dog and a hairclip? how can a grapefruit share space with a net? these are some of the questions.

the efficacy of art resides not in the model (or the counter-model) of behavior that it provides, but first and foremost in partitions of space and time that it produces to define ways of being together or separate, being in front or in the middle of, being inside or outside, etc.<sup>20</sup>

is art a suitable model?

what is the potential of attending to space and spaciousness?

of loose ends and of tidying up loose ends?

of houses and tidying up houses?

the other side of rhythms, of there being a time to do things, is serendipity, or serendipity hangs in the midst of the rhythms. i am grateful for them both.

my sculptor friend with the oranges called, she advises giving agency to the objects. the objects tell us what they need, she said, and watering the seeds i remember what to write. laura ingles wilder read as she cooked (even as a child, she cooked, she read). embodied academics, she said.

i ask the comb, what do you need? and the comb asks the little dog head and the little dog head turns slowly towards the weaving and the weaving asks the hair clip that hangs opposite it, and the hair clip looks down to the bit of streetsweeper and on and on until we know that the objects are all unsure and the entire structure quivers with expectation.



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