

DAMON ZUCCONI

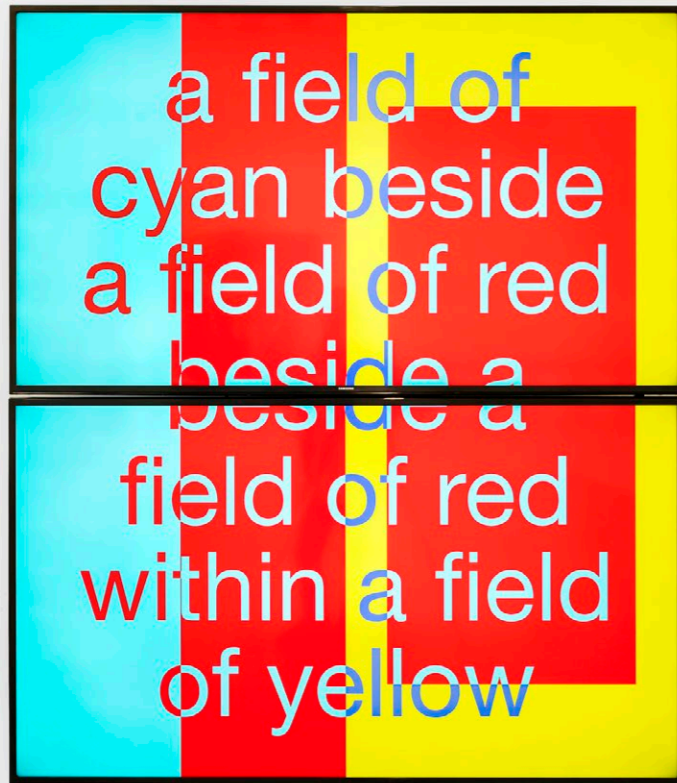
following

Installation views from *Self-Titled*, at Veda, Florence, 2023

a level beside keys
beside a parent on top
of a number beside a
boat with a cross on
top of heart on top of
a means on top of a
leaf within a stone
within a diagnosis

a field of orange within a field of
indigo on top of a field of pink on
top of a field of silver on top of a
field of indigo on top of a field of
violet beside a field of gold beside
a field of pink on top of a field of
yellow within a field of red beside a
field of cyan on top of a field of
teal on top of a field of pink beside

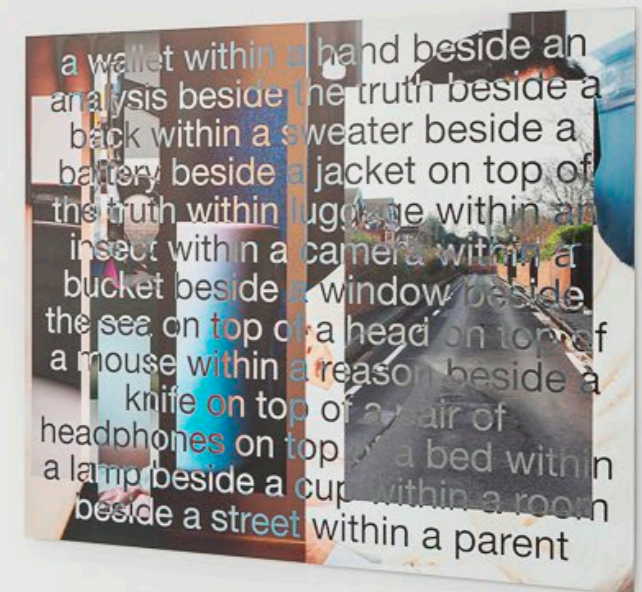
a field of tan on top of a field of
pink within a field of black on top
of a field of red beside a field of
white on top of a field of maroon
on top of a field of blue within a
field of tan beside a field of black
on top of a field of beige beside a
field of brown within a field of
silver within a field of black



(top)
Self-titled
2023
web application
variable dimensions

(right)
An Oasis Within a Face
2023
Inkjet print on paper, mounted on dibond
46 x 38 cm

A Wallet Within a Hand
2023
Inkjet print on paper, mounted on dibond
135 x 122 cm



an insect beside machinery beside a
place on top of a garden beside a
headquarters on top of a business beside
an animal on top of an ocean beside a
class on top of an office on top of a
flashlight on top of an ellipsis beside a
dryer beside a fish on top of furniture on
top of an analysis beside wildlife within a
friend beside a batter on top of a
window beside the sea within a plane on
top of a member within an arm beside
clothing beside a sky on top of the truth
beside a thing beside a member within a
law within the truth on top of air on top of
a parent beside a hairbrush beside a child
within a vegetable beside a moment on
top of a series beside a spoon on top of a
paper beside the rain beside a sister
beside a sun within a street within a
thesis within a world within a person on
top of a dress beside a hat on top of a
diagnosis within a team within a mouse
beside a crisis beside trash within a body

education
beside a
paralysis on
top of a
service within
a ball within a
rain within
jewelry

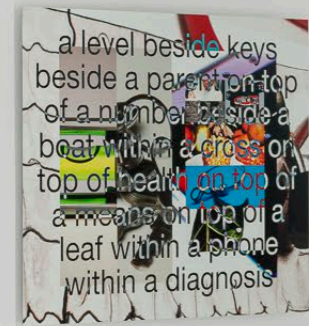
It was in the 7th century that Irish scribes began to introduce spaces between words in written texts. Previously, a “scriptio continua” method was used, where words flowed continuously without breaks, making the text a single undifferentiated mass. It’s thought that this transition transformed reading from an oral and public activity to a silent and solitary one.

I look at the picture. I read the text and realize its relation to the images under the words: they are spatially arranged in a pattern described by the language. I continue to read, and my attention oscillates between these two modes of seeing: reading and looking to verify; apprehend. The images are oblique — slightly wrong in one way or another — though it is hard to describe why. The text runs from top to bottom, left to right, but the contents it concerns are inside-out, from the center to the edges. As I move along the text, I’m also moving outward. The configuration described and depicted is not strictly logical, and though a composite in one’s mind forms, it never resolves into something complete and coherent.

Images are increasingly detached from the physical processes that once defined their creation. Instead, a novel connection with language has emerged, restructured for new intelligences, and with it, a similar inward turn from public to private. This transformation prompts a reconsideration of the traditional understanding of a sentence. The concept of a sentence must be understood not in its grammatical sense but in the sense of an organism expressive of a perfect meaning, whether in a simple exclamation or in a vast poem.

Education Beside Paralysis [...]
2023
Inkjet print on paper, mounted on dibond
62.5 x 75 cm
unique





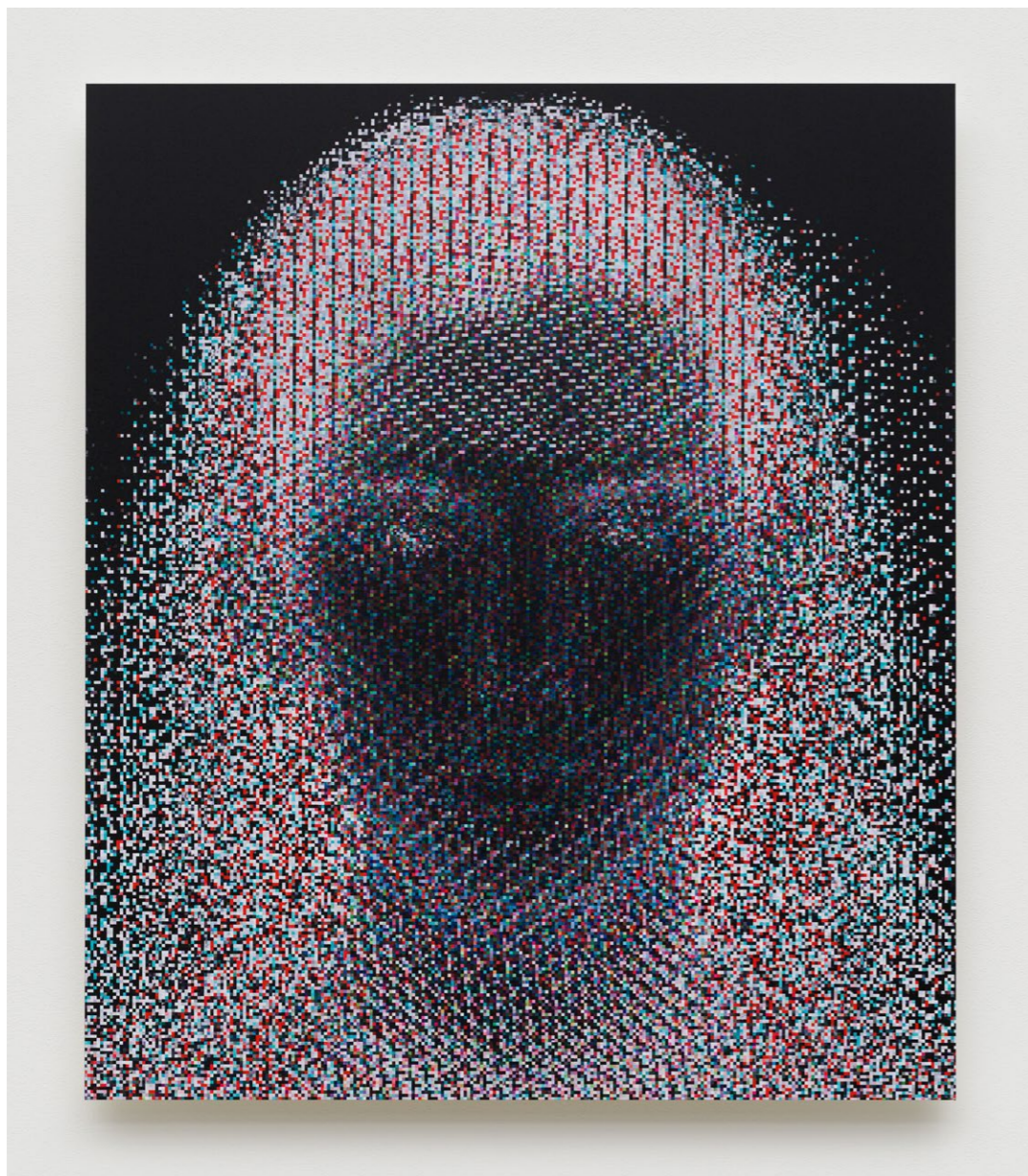
a level beside keys
beside a parent on top
of a number beside a
boat within a cross on
top of health on top of
a means on top of a
leaf within a phone
within a diagnosis



a soul
within
an
office



An image is not an image of, from, or for anything; an image happens when distant realities approach one another.



pcitpofoy_hifapr_el_iei__l_t_l__a_h____r__
2023
UV curing ink on dibond
18.5 x 16 in
46.5 x 40.5 cm
unique



gdciaao_pv_ia_sn_tn_ri_a__n__o
2023
UV curing ink on dibond
18.5 x 16 in
46.5 x 40.5 cm
unique



Installation view from *When You're Here, You're Familiar* at JTT, New York, 2023

following

Installation views from *Lithromantic*, at Veda, Florence (IT), 2020

One might enjoy being in romantic relationships, but only theoretically: a *lithromantic* — from the Greek *lithos* meaning stone.

“The whole ubicomp environment, dust-sized chips, and utility fog and hazy clouds of diamond-bright optical processors in the soil and the air and her skin.” — Charles Stross in *Accelerando*

“You could very realistically imagine uploading into it,” he said, “and then you’d be this sort of formless data amoeba controlling this formless physical amoeba and take any size or form you wanted.” — J. Storrs Hall in conversation with G. Dvorsky; *Why “utility fogs” could be the technology that changes the world*

The main exhibition space acts as a plenum generated by fog and light which occupy the volume — a kind of sculptural casting. Storefront windows generally represent a place of potential or suspended desire; here, through Zucconi’s intervention, the front window suspends the relation of reciprocity within the viewers and the exhibition space.

In the backroom of the gallery, two prints and a mirror are installed.

The prints have been realized using custom software which interlaces images without changes in opacity. The process weaves the images together into a new whole: a ghostly apparition of a totality; seeing everything at once.

A portrait-oriented mirror — the dimensions of which are sufficient to encompass a human torso — has a hole punched out of it where one’s head might appear. This echoes a common horror trope: the decoupling of one’s mirror image with one’s body; a missing reflection. As we continue to move the void remains still.

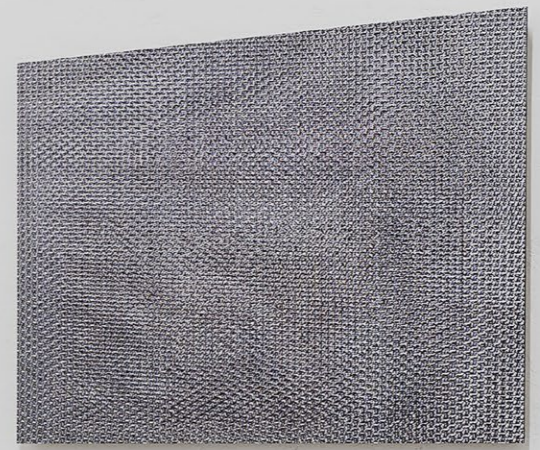






dviisstiaonnt
2020
UV curing ink on aluminium dibond
60 x 72 in (152 x 182 cm)
Unique







Lithromantic
2020
cut mirror
26 x 39 in (66 x 99 cm)
Unique

Platonic Rose
2020
UV curing ink on aluminium dibond
8,66 x 11,02 in (22 x 28 cm)
Unique



PRLOASTEONIC

DAMON ZUCCONI: CLOUDS IN BEHOLDERS' EYES.

by Stefano Mudu on Cactus. Issue 10, 2020.

A dense cloud of artificial fog is jailed behind a storefront window.

Where objects are usually displayed in the most coherent disposition, even desire fades into formless. Lithromantic, the brand-new exhibition by Damon Zucconi at Veda, paradoxically merges the recalled weight of stones (from the Greek lithos meaning a stones) with the lightness of emotions linked to a generic romantic relationship.

We don't specifically know if we are experiencing a metaphor for our capitalistic culture –stressed between frustrated desires and illusionary goals – or if we are placed in front of our most secret and private feelings, but the general impression is a fluidity that brings a single need into a collective attitude, or vice versa.

Afterall, what hangs at the wall of the gallery's backroom are pixeled prints obtained by a custom software's process which interlaces images. Here the message is a whole, but the whole is in fragments and avoids even the smallest dose of unpredictability; Zucconi's digital gestures still contain an analogic reference, at least in the gaze of the beholder.

STEFANO MUDU

Let's start from the very beginning, or the grammar of your work. A consistent part of it is based on the use of custom software as a tool to manipulate and re-open digital materials or archives. How does this software work? How much does unpredictability count in the process of creation?

DAMON ZUCCONI

When dealing with any kind of material, digital or otherwise, we look for ways to handle it; to gain some kind of agency. The two-dimensional work I've been doing has been my attempt to deal with populations of images, so I've been leaning on different automated compositional techniques to make pieces that would be too labor-intensive to execute by hand.

I think, talking to people not fluent in writing software, they have this assumption that there's some upfront idea you have, you write the program, and then it's done; the idea embodied and in the world, complete. But the process of writing software is like making anything else – you begin not knowing where you'll wind up. You put your thought into this executable form, and there's this feedback loop of execution where you guide some process to that unknowable result. In the case of these pieces in the show at Veda, they originally arose from a method I devised to manipulate and interlace text.

I am really into chance as a formalized concept, though. Any program has some set of inputs. And when you use randomness as input for one of those parameters, it comes to embody the entire solution space of that input, a stand in for potential. True randomness brings along neutrality with it – both no-decision in particular and every decision, simultaneously.

SM

In both your shows at Veda, you decided to occupy the window with very appealing installations. With *Spiritual Door* (2016), you proposed two wooden crosses that conceptually aimed to be orientation's points while, with *Lithromantic* – the current exhibition – you've filled the space with a foggy sculptural casting which seems to work on an opposite level. Would you like to give an account of both the operations and let the differences emerge?

DZ

I think both these gestures come out as a consequence of the act of looking involved in this particular space. It's a very peculiar volume. The sidewalk is quite narrow, so you're surprised to walk past it... You peer in, and there's no floor, so you're immediately ungrounded.

With *Spiritual Door*, I moved the lighting from the ceiling to the floor of the space, which is below street-level. The weight of the olive wood crosses and their doubling gives you this very hierarchical situation: we know where we are and where and how to look. The lights, which are typically 'invisible' in the space – a given – are made apparent. So there's some clarity, a more proximate type of vision.

I didn't intentionally set out to do the opposite with *Lithromantic*. But this is just another way of looking – another mode of vision – more distant. That ungrounding that happens when you walk by the space is amplified by removing any reference to a horizon or ground whatsoever.

SM

The combination of the fog in the window and the prints in the backroom, made me think of a liquid environment where we still manage a confusion between our human dimension and our hypermediated potential. Could *Lithromantic* been seen as a sort of self-reflexive platform to deepen such conditions?

DZ

I'm reminded of pareidolia, that phenomenon of seeing shapes and patterns in noise. Faces in clouds.

Pattern recognition is at the center of how we perceive, and at the center of more complex and poorly defined 'human' processes like creativity – making connections between what were previously dissimilar concepts. *Apophenia*. Something I find funny about those prints is that since they are constructed from existing images, there are patterns and structures hidden that the density obscures – a conspiracy theory. There really is an enfolded secret.

There's this notion of 'utility fog' in futurist and transhumanist circles – clouds of self-reconfiguring modular nanobots. "Suppose, instead of building the object you want atom by atom, the tiny robots linked their arms together to form a solid mass in the shape of the object you wanted?" "You could very realistically imagine uploading into it, and then you'd be this sort of formless data amoeba controlling this formless physical amoeba and take any size or form you wanted." I love thinking of this as some logical endpoint to figuration. That, in some sense, the work at Veda is a speculative figurative sculpture.

SM

Your works seem to belong to a certain post-internet aesthetic, but the formal results made me think of a very familiar and analogic texture: that of tapestries. I was wondering if it is something you are aware of, or you've ever thought about as a reference. Do you think the two worlds have something in common?

DZ

My wife is a textile designer, and so we talk about this a lot, and maybe her work has been influencing me more than I realized. The first book ever made by a program was a prayer book woven by a Jacquard loom. The history of digital is very much entangled with textiles. One of the things on my mind when working online is the degree of intimacy involved. There's a directness that's a natural extension of that space: you're in someone's home, in someone's pocket, in their bed. That proximity and domesticity are present in both these worlds.

SM

Part of your artworks derives from manipulating previous images. They keep their temporal dimension while your custom software adds other temporal strata. In a sense, the outcomes are memorial images, such as those in your exhibition *Red roses for a blue lady*, New York 2016. I'd like you to link the exhibition with these questions: How's your relationship with time? Does the temporal dimension of your works mime the temporality of reality or that of the software you use?

DZ

The formal results of the interlacing process for these images remind me of a palimpsest, a continually overwritten surface. The larger the number of images used, the more fragmentary and trace-like the result winds up being. So there is this sense that you see a totality, many things at once, but it's imperfect. Like memory, it's fuzzy.

You can think of time in terms of entropy, the thermodynamic arrow – entropy can only increase; it has a direction. And in software, you can think whether if the results of some function are reversible. Given some output, can some function be applied to reconstruct the original data?

For instance, the works in *Red Roses for a Blue Lady* were fully reversible: the process involved a way of encoding color in an image such that it becomes perceptually diminished but is still available, hidden within. And applying the same function to those images, you're able to get the original unaltered source back out. With these interlaced images, you can only recover a small percentage of the original; the transformation is lossy.

I do work with time in more direct ways. For instance, I have this series of works titled *Variable Second* that's simply a software counter that lets me alter the definition of 'one second' – making it either slower or quicker, which decouples your internal sense of time-keeping. But these are operating on subjective or cultural pictures of time. Time inside of software proper is very different and wrapped up in notions of state and identity.

SM

Your use of digitalization, along with the way in which you produce self-contained objects, made me think how important is formalizing an artwork in this moment of dematerialization. I am referring to the coexistence of two different forces: on one hand, you seem to believe in viewer's experience, referring to them emotionally; on the other, you seem to be looking for a materialistic approach to the art object itself. In which way are both components of your work? Can they exist together without excluding each other?

DZ

I think the primary shift here is temporal again, or more specifically attentional, rather than materialistic. Things viewed on devices tend to be *modal*: they are the locus of one's attention and then, all of a sudden, with the closing of a browser tab, or a swipe, not.

Put that same thing in space, and your attentional relationship with it becomes more ambient. Things more readily live in the periphery.

My approach to objects is always rooted in the viewer and their perception – their phenomenal experience of a thing. I don't necessarily see how the object and the viewer are opposed. I've always understood materialistic approaches to making – 'Specific Objects,' so-called 'minimalism,' etc. – in these anthropocentric terms, though.

SM

From a personal perspective to a global one: a single necessity fuels a collective need, and vice versa. Most of your works – *Lithromantic* itself – allude to a certain form of romanticism or sentimentalism. The exhibition *Imagine a World Without You* (2019), for example, gave different devices the responsibility to answer romantic/personal questions (*es. What is true love? How do we know she or he loves you truly?* From *Boredom is Deep* and

Mysterious, 2019). Do you think contemporary communication's devices such as iPhone and laptops have the potential to look after our emotional values? What is your take on this?

DZ

There's the question of intimacy again – though I think all artists need to contend with a strange degree of intimacy: we're in the business of making objects that one, ideally, lives with, after all. I once made a work that achieved some degree of popularity outside of art contexts – *sometimesredsometimesblue.com* – a website that's either red or blue with a 50/50 chance. It's a coin toss, and, frequently lacking physical coinage, weirdly useful as a utility. So people use it to flip a coin and make decisions. You arrive at a fork in your life, however trivial, and you can turn to this piece as a guide. And it will move you in one direction or another. There's a real directness to that kind of relationship. And that directness extends out from the inherent intimacy of working online, its pervasiveness, it's proximity. I'm fundamentally an optimist and believer in the forms of community that are enabled by ubiquitous connectivity.

It is evident that no mention can be made of anything unless it is named

Epes Sargent's, "The Standard Speller," 1857

What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence.

Ludwig Wittgenstein, the last sentence of "Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus", 1922

following

Installation views from *Imagine a World Without you*, at JTT, New York, 2019





Credit (for Borna) (left)
2019
web application, iPhone

Debt (right)
2019
web application, iPhone

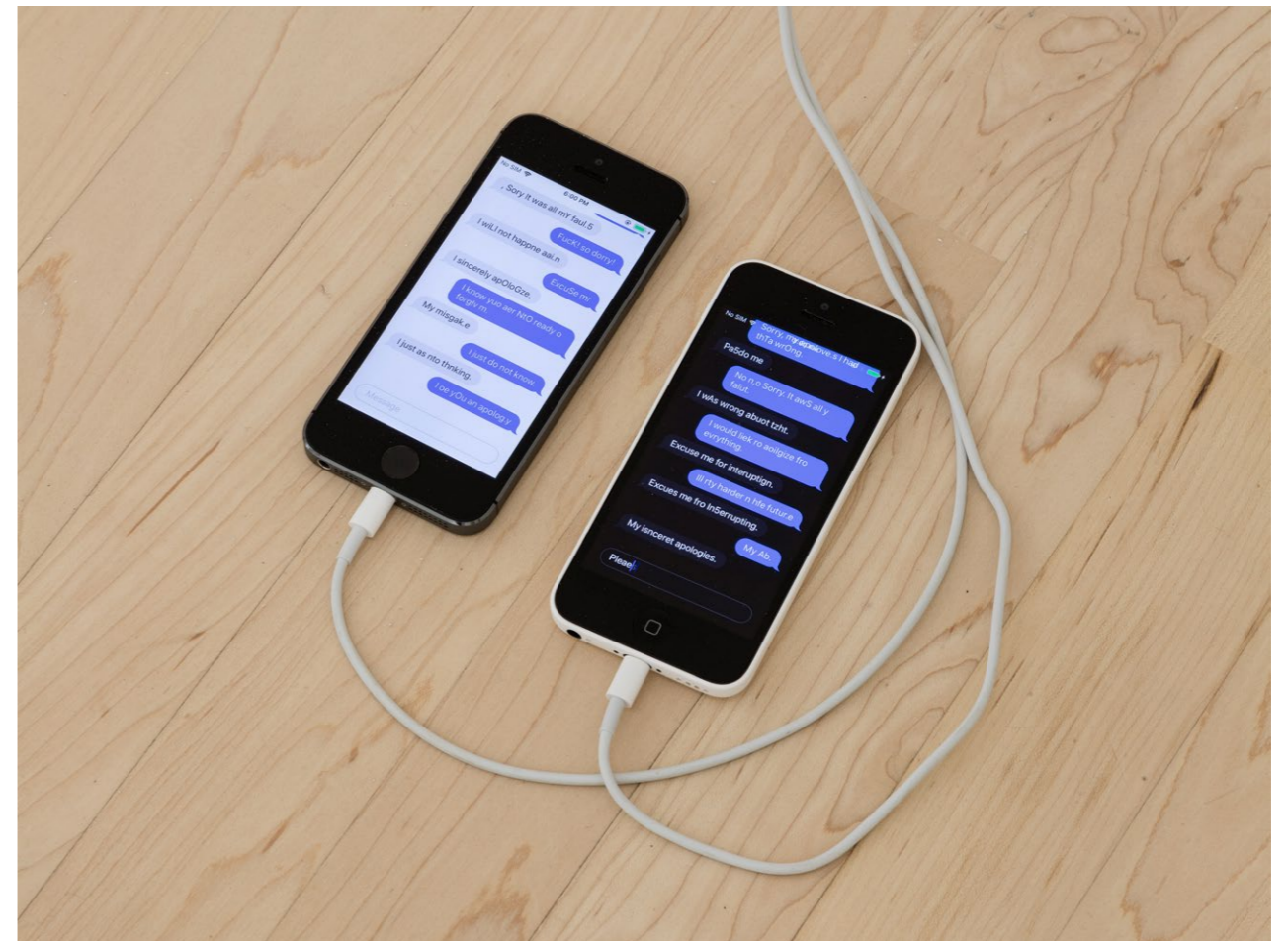
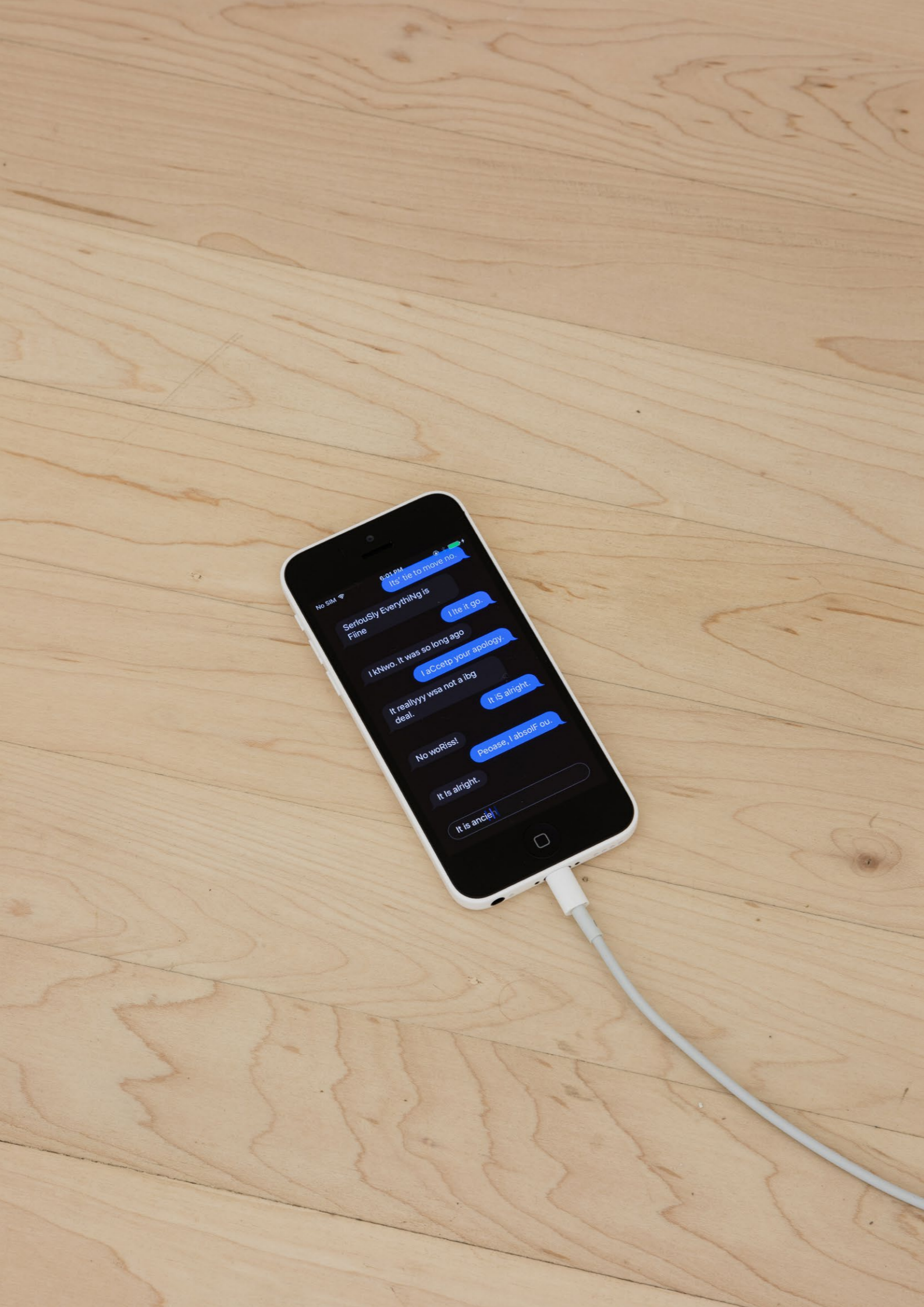


Boredom is Deep and Mysterious
2019
web application, monitors, wood blocks
dimensions variable, 55" monitors



(right)
itwydishhoit_ayud__t
2019
UV curing ink on dibond
40h x 30w in
101.60h x 76.20w cm





(up)
Consumption (left)
2019
web application, iPhone

Consumption (Dark Mode) (right)
2019
web application, iPhone

(left page)
Production (Dark mode)
2019
web application, iPhone

For much of history, humans made no distinction between the cardinal directions and the winds which blew from them. It is uncertain when or why our sense of geographic orientation became associated with the winds. It might have been farming populations, attentive to the rain and temperature for the cultivation of their crops, who noticed the qualitative differences in the winds—some humid, others dry, some hot, others cold—and that these qualities depended on from where the wind was blowing. Local directional names were used to refer to the winds, eventually giving each wind itself a proper name, regardless of the observer's position. Sailors, far from landmarks at sea, nonetheless recognized a particular wind by its qualities and referred to it by a familiar name—*Tramontana*, *Levante*, *Ostro*, *Ponente*.¹

When traveling north the ring that signifies my marriage is on my western hand. When moving west, it sits on my southern. When south: eastern. When east: northern. There exist languages with no words for left and right, only one's absolute relation to the world, necessitating that a speaker of these languages remain continuously oriented, lest they lose the ability to communicate basic facts.

For us, it is only with an intention that one can find themselves lost in any geographic sense. Our orientation isn't a constant awareness necessitated by linguistic constraints, like that of a native speaker of Warlpiri or Wintu or Tzeltal, but rather, something outside of our immediate consciousness, mediated and on demand as a discrete technology. With orientation externalized in this manner, one can imagine it as a material that could be gathered and pooled.

If you are reading this with a mobile device that contains an embedded compass, your orientation is being sampled here, once per second—now a material archived in a database I control. Note the direction you now face. Is it different from when you began moving through this text, reading from left to right?

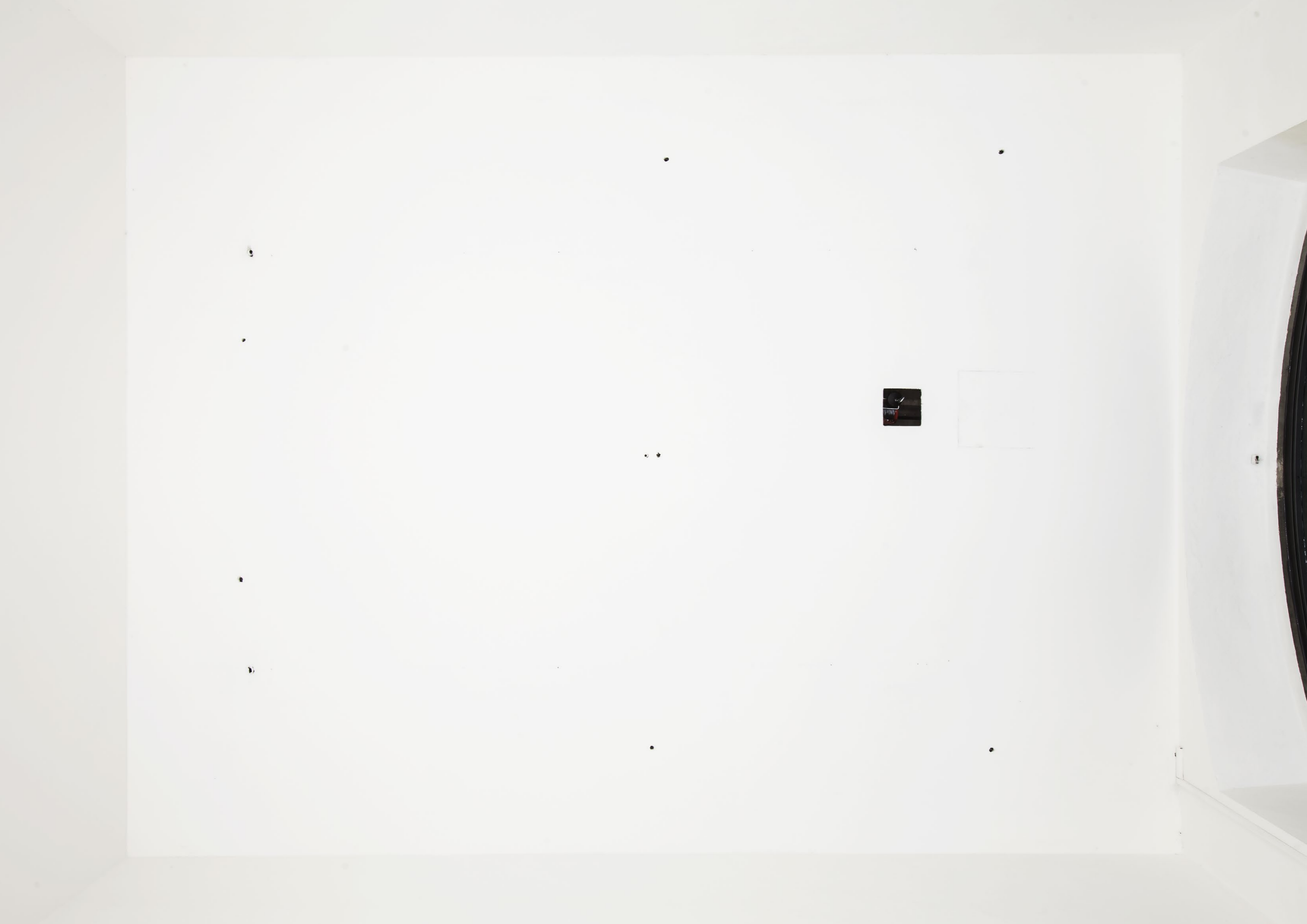
*Of the generations of texts on earth / I will have read only a few— / the ones that I keep reading in my memory, / reading and transforming. / From South, East, West, and North / the paths converge that have led me / to my secret center.*²

Not all secrets are information someone is trying to conceal. Some secrets are information that's in the world, but inaccessible.

following

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_compass_winds

² Jorge Luis Borges, *Elogio de la sombra*, 1969; edizione italiana, Einaudi, 2007





A custom analytics suite silently tracks people's orientations. Two voices move backward through an archive, translating compass headings into the names of the classical winds.

Spirirtual Door, custom analytics suite
<http://beacon.openpseudonym.org/>

Hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil.
Become incredulous and indignant.
Create rumor mongers.
Use a straw man.
Sidetrack opponents with name calling and ridicule.
Hit and run.
Question motives.
Invoke authority.
Play dumb.
Associate opponent charges with old news.
Establish and rely upon fallback positions.
Enigmas have no solution.
Alice in wonderland logic.
Demand complete solutions.
Fit the facts to alternate conclusions.
Vanish evidence and witnesses.
Change the subject.
Emotionalize, antagonize, and goad opponents.
Ignore proof presented, demand impossible proofs.
False evidence.
Call a grand jury, special prosecutor,
 or other empowered investigative body.
Manufacture a new truth.
Create bigger distractions.
Silence critics.
Vanish.





The New Tsmanetet
2016
paperback, 306 pages
15 x 21 x 2 cm

JHON

CPTAEHR 1

1 In the bgineing was the Wrod, and the Wrod was wtih God, and the Wrod was God.

2 The smae was in the bniigneng wtih God.

3 All thgnis wree mdae by him; and wuhotit him was not any thnig mdae taht was mdae.

4 In him was lfie; and the lfie was the lhgit of men.

5 And the lhgit stehnih in draensks; and the dsnareks cemhpeneordd it not.

6 Trhee was a man snet form God, wsohe nmae was Jhon.

7 The smae cmae for a wnesits, to baer wsnetis of the Lhgit, taht all men torguhh him mhgit biebele.

8 He was not taht Lhgit, but was snet to baer wsentis of taht Lhgit.

9 Taht was the ture Lhgit, wichh lhtgiteh eervy man taht cteomh itno the wlord.

10 He was in the wrold, and the wrold was mdae by him, and the wlord kenw him not.

11 He cmae utno his own, and his own receeivd him not.

12 But as mnay as rveecheid him, to tehm gvae he peowr to bmocee the snos of God, eevn to tehm taht beielve on his nmae:

13 Wchih wree bron, not of bolod, nor of the wlil of the fsleh, nor of the wlil of man, but of God.

14 And the Wrod was mdae fsleh, and delwt anomg us, (and we bheled his groly, the gorly as of the olny bgttoeen of the Fhetar,) flul of grae and turth.

15 Jhon brae witsnes of him, and cired, saynig, Tihs was he of wohm I sakpe, He taht ceotmh atefr me is perefrerd brfoee me: for he was beofre me.

16 And of his fsuelns hvae all we rvieeecd, and gcare for gcare.

17 For the law was gvien by Meoss, but gcae and ttruh cmae by Juses Csihrt.

18 No man htah seen God at any tmie, the olny

JHON

beegtotn Son, wcihh is in the bsoom of the Fhetar, he htah deacreld him.

19 And tihs is the rocred of Jhon, wehn the Jwes snet psetris and Ltveeis form Jseuarelm to ask him, Who art tohu?

20 And he csfeesond, and deined not; but cseosnefd, I am not the Cihrst.

21 And tehy aeksd him, Waht tehn? Art tohu Eilas? And he sitah, I am not. Art tohu taht preohpt? And he aeenswrđ, No.

22 Tehn siad tehy utno him, Who art tohu? taht we may gvie an awnesr to tehm taht snet us. Waht syseat tohu of telyshf?

23 He siad, I am the vcioe of one cnyirg in the wnedsriels, Mkae srtaghit the way of the Lrod, as siad the pephort Eaiass.

24 And tehy whcih wree snet wree of the Peieahsrs.

25 And tehy asekd him, and siad utno him, Why btziaepst tohu tehn, if tohu be not taht Cihrst, nor Eails, ntiher taht peporht?

26 Jhon aresewnd tehm, sinayg, I bpatzie wtih waetr: but three saettdnh one anomg you, wohm ye konw not;

27 He it is, who coinmg atefr me is prfeererd be-froe me, wsohe sohe's lcehtat I am not wthroy to unoosle.

28 Teshe tghins wree dneo in Braebatha beynod Jrdoan, wrehe Jhon was bpniatzig.

29 The nxet day Jhon seteh Jeuss cniomg utno him, and staih, Bleohd the Lmab of God, wcihh ttakeh aawy the sin of the wlord.

30 Tihs is he of wohm I siad, Atefr me cemoth a man wichh is perrefred boefre me: for he was borefe me.

31 And I kenw him not: but taht he sluohd be mdae msnafeit to Isearl, terorehfe am I cmoe bziptnaig wtih wetar.

32 And Jhon brae rocerd, siayng, I saw the Srpiit ddeenicsng form hveean lkie a dvoe, and it adobe uopn him.

33 And I kenw him not: but he taht snet me to bzpaite wtih wetar, the smae siad utno me, Uopn wohm tohu slaht see the Sipirt dined-seng, and reiimnang on him, the smae is he wcihh bettizpah wtih the Hloy Ghsot.

34 And I saw, and brae rercod taht tihs is the



Euphorbia milii is a species of flowering plant in the spurge family Euphorbiaceae, native to Madagascar. It is suspected that the species was introduced to the Middle East in ancient times, and legend associates it with the crown of thorns worn by Christ.

In the prints the method to produce images which are simultaneously in color and gray is employed. The method is a function that's dependent on a scale shifts: the "finer" the grid of hue rotations, the closer the approximation to grayscale. In these works the grid is rendered at distinctly coarser resolve, highlighting the process, or "trick", itself.

Euphorbia Milii
2016
Inkjet print, frame painted Munsell N8 Gray
100 × 133 cm
Unique





Red Roses for a Blue Lady
2016
digital video with sound
3:15 minutes

following

Installation views from *Red Roses for a Blue Lady*, at JTT, New York, 2016



MAKE A SUDDEN TWISTING MOTION
SPEAK NASALLY OR THROUGH THE NOSE
RECOVER ONE'S GOOD MANNERS AFTER A LAPSE OR STOP BEHAVING BADLY
GET SICK
PROTECT FROM HEAT, COLD, OR NOISE BY SURROUNDING WITH INSULATING MATERIAL
INSERT CASUALLY
FEEL HOT OR PAINFUL
MELT, BREAK, OR BECOME OTHERWISE UNUSABLE
COVER WITH WAX
GIVE LIFE TO
INSTALL AGAIN
JOIN TOGETHER INTO A SYNDICATE
BE ABOLISHED OR DISCARDED
ENLARGE ONE'S HOLDINGS ON AN EXCHANGE ON A CONTINUED RISE BY USING PAPER PROFITS AS MARGIN TO BUY ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS
RING AS IN ANNOUNCING DEATH

Red Roses for a Blue Lady, Damon Zucconi's second exhibition at JTT, consists of photographic prints, a series of pre-existing books re-published by the artist, four web-accessible works, and a video.

Zucconi has been engaged with the practice of computer programming since 2010, producing works which are typically accessible online. The works assembled utilize vision, literacy, pattern recognition, and meaning to make plain our perceptual experience.

The prints on view, sourced from photographs of roses, are simultaneously full of color when viewed up close and apparently grey when viewed from a distance. An encoding process distributes, but in no way diminishes, the hue of each image into a two by two grid. In a circular process the hue is divided mathematically in 90 degree increments. When one is close to the image, this grid and the distinct hues are distinguishable. As one moves further away, the hue grid functions to neutralize itself, as complimentary colors tend to do. The result of this manipulation is that each rose's color is hidden in plain sight.

Using a program written by the artist, the texts of six pre-existing books are re-published with every word misspelled. Despite these errors, each sentence remains legible. The texts exist in a liminal space of property rights, with the reader of the text becoming an active participant in the reconstruction of the original.

Phonemes are the perceptually distinct units of sound for a given language that distinguish one word from another. In 2013, Zucconi wrote a program, *Corrasable*, a freely available API to transform text into phonemic streams. In a 2016 video, "Red Roses for a Blue Lady", Paul Anka performs the eponymous pop standard. The audio track is dropped and a synthesized voice performs in its place. The voice, built on top of *Corrasable*, comprises unshaped, pitched, pure tones, each corresponding to a distinct, individual phoneme remapped to a specific note on a chromatic scale. With a texture-less tongue, the tones play a new melody with a new meaning.

Finally, a series of web-accessible works randomly sample brief definitions omitting the actual term [1]. Most dictionaries are dependent on order, whereas these renounce it. Every new statement that comes on screen is a prompt that takes one elsewhere, in an attempt to locate the term by its meaning. Separated into parts of speech, each operate as models of a specific kind of language: of objects, of actions, of etceteras. Presented in the exhibition are three out of the four: Red (verbs), Blue (nouns), and Black (adjectives). Pink (adverbs) is available online but physically absent from the space.

[1.] The dataset used for these works comes from WordNet: "an on-line lexical reference system whose design is inspired by current psycholinguistic theories of human lexical memory".

MAKE MOTIONLESS

SUFFER GREAT PAINS OR DISTRESS

COOK (VEGETABLES) BRIEFLY

COME UP, AS OF A LIQUID

CAUSE TO UNDERGO FERMENTATION

FISH WITH A SEINE

INCREASE OR RAISE

MAR BY SCUFFING

CONVEY (GOODS ETC.) BY TRUCK

DO MILITARY SERVICE

REMOVE A CARBOXYL GROUP FROM (A
CHEMICAL COMPOUND)

RUN AWAY QUICKLY

BE INGESTED

LEAVE FURTIVELY AND STEALTHILY

MAKE BY MACHINERY

TRAVEL BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN TWO
POINTS

RECORD IN WRITING



(up) Rosa 'Ambiente'
2016
inkjet print, frame painted Munsell N8 Gray
12.5 x 12.5 inches

(left) *dictionary.red*
2016
domain name, web application



THE INDUSTRY THAT MAKES STEEL AND STEEL PRODUCTS

A PUNCTUATION MARK (·) USED BETWEEN PARTS OF A COMPOUND WORD OR BETWEEN THE SYLLABLES OF A WORD WHEN THE WORD IS DIVIDED AT THE END OF A LINE OF TEXT

THE OXIDATION OF AMMONIUM COMPOUNDS IN DEAD ORGANIC MATERIAL INTO NITRATES AND NITRITES BY SOIL BACTERIA (MAKING NITROGEN AVAILABLE TO PLANTS)

AN IRRESISTIBLE DESIRE TO PICK AT SUPERFICIAL BODY PARTS (AS IN OBSESSIVE NAIL-BITING)

A SHALLOW AND RECTANGULAR BRIEFCASE

THE BRANCH OF MECHANICS CONCERNED WITH MOTION WITHOUT REFERENCE TO FORCE OR MASS

A SECOND OR NEW BIRTH

GENEROSITY EVIDENCED BY A WILLINGNESS TO GIVE FREELY

DOWN OF THE GOOSE

(COMPUTER SCIENCE) THE DISK SPACE REQUIRED FOR INFORMATION THAT IS NOT DATA BUT IS USED FOR LOCATION AND TIMING

OF OR RELATING TO THE CERVIX OF THE UTERUS

NOT MEETING THE PROPER STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS AND TRAINING

HAVING A CHEERFUL, LIVELY, AND SELF-CONFIDENT AIR

(OF PLANTS) EPIDEMIC AMONG PLANTS OF A SINGLE KIND ESPECIALLY OVER A WIDE AREA

USED OF OLD PERSONS OR OLD TREES

CELEBRATED IN FABLE OR LEGEND

UNTRoubLED BY DREAMS

NOT DAMAGED OR DIMINISHED IN ANY RESPECT

UPPERCASE

(POETIC) OCCURRING IN THE DARK OR NIGHT

BEING OR CHARACTERISTIC OF GOVERNMENT BY REPRESENTATION IN WHICH CITIZENS EXERCISE POWER THROUGH ELECTED OFFICERS AND REPRESENTATIVES

PREPARED OR CONVERTED FROM A NATURAL STATE BY SUBJECTING TO A SPECIAL PROCESS

ARTIST PROFILE: DAMON ZUCCONI

by Jason Ruff on Rhizome, 2016

JH: Custom software and scripts are common tools you use to create your work. In 2013 you open-sourced “Corrasable,” a web service you created that puts linguistic processing libraries together “to assist in analyzing text and converting it into alternate representations.” What does it mean for an artist to share their process? Why is it important for you to let other artists or programmers have access to “Corrasable”?

DZ: There's this loop of activity that one tends to take as a given: from development to publishing to archiving. Make a piece in the studio. It leaves the studio and enters the gallery. It's bought and enters a home. It's documented and now lives on my website. What does a model that flows seamlessly between these states, folding back on itself, look like?

I'm interested in forms of production where publishing is more of a side-effect, rather than a terminal state, and that tends to necessitate working out in the open. But this stems less from a position where generosity figures in or from an interest in an open source ethos, which not so much important to me as it is convenient.

With most tools, there is a boundary between states, consistently delineating the space between what is “done” and process at large. This boundary also tends to be the line between what is public and what is private.

When every aspect of one's process is online, connectivity is a fundamental characteristic, and it becomes much simpler to begin to combine what were previously separate elements.

In publishing an API, as in the case of Corrasable, I think of it more in the sense of building material primitives, rather than exposing something for others to use. What I'm trying to do is to reveal new material possibilities to myself in a kind of self-centered platform-thinking: objects made not to further predefined goals, but to unlock possible futures.

The more of these systems I build, the more I see synergistic effects appear. Those effects aren't anything novel: most companies think of their platforms in this way, and, similarly, most artists take the time to form a language of gestures, that, once developed, becomes a codified "approach" that reaps similar benefits.

For instance: "Corrasable" exposes an endpoint for doing phoneme segmentation, upon which I developed a tool for rudimentary speech synthesis, which then has become the object of some recent video work. So there's this interesting chain of production and dependencies that currently terminates in some videos, but this was never really a goal, just a consequence of opening successive doors. It's interesting for me to think of an art object as an operational assemblage of previous works.

I do pay attention to the use-value others uncover in the work, as this frequently changes the meanings for me, or maybe guides my hand later on. I've seen people use my work for things as diverse as celebrating birthdays, light polarization experiments, games, determining future actions, tracking deadlines, gambling. Anything made with a kind of structural openness is going to have new uses found for it, but both the consequences, and the fact that there are consequences at all, is adjacent to my intent.

JH: Your work has been described as a “more structurally complicated picture of time” by the writer Gene McHugh. What do you think about time's structure? How does it appear or disappear in your work?

DZ: The systems that govern the division of time, lending it a structure, always point outside of themselves. They aren't self-contained, logically consistent things. They embody distinct worldviews or cultural histories in modes that

are political or memorial. Or they might be observational, describing motions of the Moon or Sun or both. And these systems alter the flows and rhythms of our life and give our temporal environment a particular kind of shape. I'm curious about the ways in which those things can be subtly reframed to reshape one's personal temporal environment.

I recently published a piece “Coordinated Mars Time” that overlays the mean solar times of both Earth and Mars, in corresponding blue and red. One watches as the seconds fall in and out of phase—the “coordination” is in number only, not in the absolute value of the units. You can feel the rhythm of the standard second slip out from under you as the colors mix to form composite figures. And so the differences in the size and length of a solar day on each planet takes on a form that can be felt.

Those kinds of manipulations are ways of decoupling you from your subconscious sense of a standard's value; this sense that's implicitly held but imprecise: “one Mississippi, two Mississippi.” I understand the some of the works as gestures that get in between you and how you measure the world in relation.

JH: In your last exhibition at JTT, you included print-on-demand copies of six pre-existing novels re-published with every word misspelled. Experiencing those books first-hand was disarming and interesting. I'm always interested in the choice to take something offline, into the physical world. What lead you to print out copies of the books, instead of presenting them online?

DZ: I imagine that, ultimately, some of those books will circulate divorced from their original context. Forgotten, passed on, lost and found. Those prospective owners will have to deal with the objects on their own terms: some liminal state between an existing piece of recognizable “intellectual property” and something else entirely; something novel in the world.

It's easier to wash your hands of something when it's offline. The operative word when publishing on the web is “host”. You host the content on your server, and when someone requests it, your presence as a host is always implicit.

Maybe this points back to your question about time. In step with making an object, one gains the responsibility for it; that novelty, the something “extra”. One has to consider how it will age, change owners, deteriorate, break, be replaced, stored, misremembered.

With the books, I was thinking of Borges' Tlön,: “[...] the dominant notion is that everything is the work of one single author. Books are rarely signed. The concept of plagiarism does not exist: it has been established that all works are the creation of one author, who is atemporal and anonymous.”

Those books are me making serious on this proposition and muddying my responsibility to being an object-maker: bringing a new object into the world without a commitment to novelty.

CURRICULUM VITAE

DAMON ZUCCONI
CURRICULUM VITAE

Born 1985, Bethpage, NY, US
Lives and works in Philadelphia, PA

EDUCATION

2007 BFA, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD, US

SOLO EXHIBITION

2023 Self-Titled, Veda, Florence, IT
2022 When You're Here, You're Familiar, JTT, New York, NY, US
2020 Lithromantic, VEDA, Florence, IT
2019 Imagine a World Without You, JTT, New York, NY, US
2016 Spiritual Door, VEDA, Florence, IT
2016 Red Roses for a Blue Lady, JTT, New York, NY, US
2013 Windows in Progress, JTT, New York, NY, US
2009 Drawn in Two Directions, Gentili Apri, Berlin, DE
Presented as the Problem, Project Gentili, Prato, IT

SELECTED ONLINE PROJECTS

2013 Damon Zucconi: Multiple, First Look: New Art Online, New Museum, New York, NY, US
2006 Contributor to Nasty Nets

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2023 Hoi Köln. Part 2: In the Belly of the Machine, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Köln, DE
2023 The Cargo Cult and other certainties, Galleria ZERO, Milan, IT
Behind the Screens, CODA Museum, Apeldoorn, NL
2022 Palai, Palazzo Tamborino Cezzi, Lecce, IT
PANORAMA | Procida, Procida, IT, curated by Vincenzo de Bellis
2020 edenchrome for all, ASHES/ASHES, New York, NY, US
Echo, Upstream Gallery, Online, curated by Jan Robert Leegte
2019 When it Comes to Certain Rooms, The Van Doesburg House Foundation, Meudon, Paris, FR
Formenverwandler, Full Node, Berlin, DE, curated by Sam Hart and Harm van den Dorpel
Contemporanee / Contemporanei, University of Verona, Verona, IT, curated by Denis Isaia
WORD PLAY, Bonnier Gallery, Miami, FL
2018 The Artist is Present, Yuz Museum, Shanghai, CN. Curated by Maurizio Cattelan.
Ever, Shimmer, Rotterdam, NL
2017 Why Patterns?, Vleeshal Center for Contemporary Art, Middelburg, NL
Shifting Optics IV, Upstream Gallery, Amsterdam, NL

2016 How to look at art from China, Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht, NL
Silver Mill, Kodomo, New York, NY, US, Organized by Elliott Cost
2015 Edit/Undo, Space in Between, London, UK
Glass: Engine of Progress, Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, NL, Curated by Toon Koe horst
and Jannetjein 't Veld
Open Call: Web-Based Art, Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL, US
89plus: FILTER BUBBLE, Westbau, Zurich, CH, Co-curated by Simon Castets and
Hans Ulrich Obrist
Asdzaq Nádleehé, Andrea Rosen Gallery 2, New York, NY, US, Curated by Timur Si-Qin
2012 Brand Innovations for Ubiquitous Authorship, Higher Pictures, New York, US, Organized
by Artie Vierkant & Higher Pictures
Partially Buried, JTT, New York, US
Snow/Crystal, Steamboat Springs Arts Council, Steamboat Springs, CO, US, curated by
Park Myers
2011 Caves \$ Latops, Mother Neff S.P, Moody, TX, US, Curated by Nate Hitchcock, Dain Oh and
Jordan Rhoat
Form Less Painting, Andrew Roth, New York, NY, US, in collaboration with Karin Schneider
Possession, The Art Foundation, Athens, GR
The Fifth Age of Glass, Et Al Projects, New York, NY, US, Curated by DADDY
Time_Space_Causlity, TNT Post, Bari, IT, Curated by Cinzia Cagnetta & Giuseppe Pinto
2010 Enchanted, School of Development, Berlin, DE, Curated by Juliette Bonneviot
Full/Operational/Toolbox, M21, Athens, GR, Curated by KERNEL
Liberty B, Open Space, Baltimore, MD, US, Curated by Hayley Silverman
Multiplex, Peer to Space, Munich, DE, Curated by VVORK
Post Internet Survival Guide, Gentili Apri, Berlin, DE, Curated by Katja Novitskova & Mike
Ruiz
Superficial, Cleopatra's, Brooklyn, NY, US, Curated by Jasmin Tsou
The Silence of God, The Unbearable Silence of God, Reference, Richmond, VA, US
Translation as a Structuring Principle: If A Then B, Gentili Apri, Berlin, DE, Organized and
curated by If A Then B
Whole Earth Catalogue, Neoncampobase, Bologna, IT, Curated by Domenico Quaranta
2009 Dissociations, Clubinternet.org, Online, Curated by Harm van den Dorpel
Expanded Painting 3, Hyperlucid; Prague Biennale 4, Karlin Hall, Prague, CZ, Curated by
Domenico Quaranta
Moving Shapes and Colors, 179 Canal Street, New York, NY, US, Curated by Brian
Droitcour
Reverse Engineering, Capricious Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, US
2008 Absolute Video, Online, Curated by Hanne Mugaas for 'This One Goes Up To 11'
Activities in time and space, Viafarini, Milan, IT, Curated by Chiara Agnello and This is
Magazine
Build a Fire, Plexus Contemporary, Louisville, KY, US, Curated by Ilia Ovechkin
First Selection, Clubinternet.org, Online, Curated by Harm van den Dorpel
Forms of Melancholy, Seago Art Center, Provo, US, Curated by C. Coy
Free Fall, Clubinternet.org, Online, Curated by Harm van den Dorpel

Oracle, Clubinternet.org, Online, Curated by Harm van den Dorpel
Pole Shift, Project Gentili, Berlin, DE
Pole Shift, Project Gentili, Prato, IT

2007 Bad Beuys Entertainment, Boling, Bruno, Chisa, collectif_fact, Grubanov, Matsoukis, Mirza, Prévieux, Rungjang, Tkacova, Zucconi, Galerie West, The Hague, NL, Curated by VVORK

SELECTED SCREENINGS

2021 Display, mistral, Amsterdam, NL
2019 FAIRSHARE, KRIEG, Hasselt, BEL
2016 Optics 0:0 - Encoder/Decoder, Roulette, Brooklyn, NY, US, Organized by Victoria Keddie
E.S.P. TV Presents: You Don't Say Much Do You?, Swiss Institute, New York, NY, US
2012 Audiovisual Exhibition, Museu da Republica, Rio de Janeiro, BR, presented
by Elo Participativo da Bocaina
2010 Bidoun Video Program, Art Dubai, Dubai, AE
2009 endless pot of gold cd-rs, Sundance Film Festival, Salt Lake City, UT, US, with Nasty Nets
Just Add Water, de Soto Gallery, Culver City, LA, US, Curated by Pascual Sisto

OTHER ACTIVITIES

2022 OGRAward, Artissima; Fondazione per l'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea CRT, IT
2017 Artist in Residence, Van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, NL
2016 Conversation: Artists' Artists, Art Basel, Basel, CH, Panelist
2012 A Panel Discussion on Archiving, Culture and the Creative Act, Open Space, Baltimore,
MD, US, Panelist; Organized by Spiral Cinema
W/---Editions 02, Eli Ping Gallery, New York, NY, US, commissioned by W/--- Projects
2008 Contact (1997), Clubinternet.org, Online, Curator
Net Aesthetics 2.0, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, NY, US, Panelist

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2021 Damon Zucconi on the many ways "the conditions of production are going to make
themselves visible" in art, It's Nice That, by Joey Levenson
2020 Boredom is Deep and Mysterious, Big Window, by Marie Catalano
Art Now, Art Forever: Damon Zucconi, Independent Collectors, by Clayton Press &
Gregory Linn
Fantasizing about romance – Damon Zucconi, Lithromantic / Veda, ATP Diary,
by Brenda Vaiani
Clouds in beholders' eyes - Damon Zucconi in conversation with Stefano Mudo, Cactus, by
Stefano Mudo
Counter-Mapping and Media-Flânerie: Artistic Strategies in the Age of Google Earth Google
Maps and Google Street View, Error, Ambiguity, and Creativity, by Emilio Vavarella
2019 Damon Zucconi, Imagine A World Without You, At JTT, New York, Forbes, by Clayton Pres
WORD PLAY: Review, Arteviste, by Robyn Tisman

Damon Zucconi - Untitled Substance, Resident Advisor, by Andrew Ryce
Damon Zucconi - "240°, 240°, 240°", Tiny Mix Tapes, by C Monster
Stream of the Crop, Noisey, By Colin Joyce and Alex Robert Ross
Joyce, Colin and Ross, Alex Robert. Stream of the Crop: 7 New Albums for Heavy Rotation,
Noisey. Jan.11.

Huff, Jason. How to make a website for your creative work, Fast Company. Jan.10.

2018 Rujuta, Vaidya. This new exhibition powered by Gucci questions the concept of originality,
Vogue. Oct. 26.

2016 Huff, Jason. Artist Profile: Damon Zucconi. Rhizome. November 1.

Damon Zucconi at Veda, Florence. Cura Magazine. November.

Bordignon, Elena. Interview with Damon Zucconi | Spiritual Door. ATP Diary.
September 29.

Miller, Leigh Anne. Damon Zucconi at JTT. Art In America. April 7.

Slocum, Paul. Catalog of Internet Artist Clubs. Rhizome. March.

2015 Gamerman, Ellen. Selfies and Auto Dialing as Art in Miami: Miami's new Intitute of
Contemporary Art highlights experimental web art The Wall Street Journal.

Online: August 19.

Ghorashi, Hannah. ICA Miami Names Ten Finalists Chosen for First Season of Experimental
Art Program.

ArtNews. August 5.

Bradford, Phoebe V. Review: Edit/Undo. this is tomorrow. February 10.

Johnson, Paddy and Corinna Kirsch. GIF of the Day: Damon Zucconi's Templates. Art F
City. January 15.

De Wachter, Ellen Mara. Some Past State. Edit/Undo catalogue. January/ February.

2014 Mickleburgh, Elliott. Speculative Engineering. Notes on Metamodernism. January 6.

One Burning Question With Damon Zucconi. NY Arts Magazine.

2013 Heinrich, Will. 'Damon Zucconi: Windows in Progress' at JTT. New York Observer. April 30.

Quaranta, Domenico. El arte de los ciberdanos. La Tempestad. March 11.

2012 Marone, Roberto. Search and You Shall Find. Domus. June 1.

2010 McHugh, Gene. Damon Zucconi. Post Internet.. 2010.

Quaranta, Domenico. When Media Go Beyond Simulation. ArtPulse. March 24.

2009 Olson, Marisa. Use Your Illusion. Rhizome.org. Online: January 23.

2008 Cornell, Lauren. Harm van den Dorpel and Damon Zucconi on Their Work. Rhizome.org. ù
Online: Mar.27

Harm van den Dorpel Chats with Damon Zucconi. NY Arts Magazine 48. January-February.

PUBLICATIONS

2020 Iridescence and the Rising Wave, Shimmer

2019 Untitled Substance (LP, Ltd), Zero Grow, ZG004

240°, 240°, 240° (File, MP3, Single + Web), Zero Grow, ZG003

2018 Time is a Flat Circle, Veda, A conversation between Hayley Silverman and Damon Zucconi

2016 Year, The Creative Independent

Uneel Cbggre naq gur Fbeprere'f Fgbar, Left Gallery

- 2015 Mass Effect, Art and the Internet in the Twenty-First Century, MIT Press, Edited
by Lauren Cornell and Ed Halter
- 2014 No "I", Self-published
- 2012 Art Project - The American Issue - Volume 16, Umělec Magazine
- 2010 Passage, Self-published, 2nd edition; for The Silence of God, The Unbearable Silence of
God
Post Internet Survival Guide, Revolver Publishing, Edited and designed by Katja Novitskova.
Edition of 500
Superficial, Self-published, Brooklyn, NY, US, on the occasion of Superficial, Cleopatra's
- 2009 Passage, Self-published, 1st edition; for Drawn in Two Directions
Presented as the Problem, Project Gentili, Edition of 250
This is a Magazine: Compendium 6, Nava Milano, Milan, IT, Edited by Andy Simionato,
Karen Ann Donnachie
Younger than Jesus: Artist Directory, Phaidon Press
- 2008 Cyclus DVD, Mister Motley, Curated by Harm van den Dorpel, Constant Dullaart and
Dafna Maimon
Géométrie sale, Tissu n.5
Pole Shift V1, Project Gentili
Pole Shift V2, Project Gentili
Secret Identities, Livraison III

VEDA