

Clumsy Utterings and Gestures

A performative venture into worlds brought forth beyond the confines of arts or science.

A series of philosophical openings and closings.

A conversation triggered.

THE ZONE is a transdisciplinary collaboration seeking to define a third space for exploration, a new conceptual and performative dimension beyond those of the arts and the sciences.

THE ZONE is a meeting place, where experimenters and explorers are not defined by titles or disciplines, but by what lies between their knowledge network and personal experience.

<https://the-zone.at>

[a door opens]

Every time a living being is born, a world is brought forth.

Not breaking any laws of physics, it transcends them.

Positing its own presuppositions.

Every time such a world is born,

the universe is extended.

It's laws altered, infinitesimally.

And life will never be the same again.

Our worlds too,

mine and yours,

we nudge their course,

in ways only we can anticipate.

Yet, we cannot see the worlds of others.

We can only catch glimpses,

through clumsy utterings and gestures.

We are visionless.

Our experience impoverished,

our perspective limited,

by inner-dimension blindness.

[a window opens]

But we have methods!
We are humans.
The rational animal,
monkey descended from the trees.

We are special.
We have tools to open windows,
allowing us a certain vista.
Or, as we foolishly believe,
an overview.

We sit comfortably on the plush sofa,
that is our inner retreat,
and through the workings of science,
we build a shared world of knowledge.

It is amazing,
how we all seem to be looking
at the same landscape outside,
each from a different angle,
from a different sofa.

And yet,
at the same time,
the knowledge we build
encases our window like a scaffold,
until it is all we can see.

The lush tropical rainforest outside
is now obstructed
by our construction,
lawlike, engineered
it keeps chaos at bay.

The fundamental laws of physics
aren't fundamental.

They are fabricated,
a scaffold we built,
to wrap and protect

the ten thousand things
of the material world.

Those things
we can comprehend.

[a window closes]

So much order gained,
so much richness lost.

As our gaze averts itself
from ourselves
to stare at a simulacrum
of what was once
the real world,
that incomprehensible domain.

We study the simulacrum,
hyper-normalized,
more real than real now.

Fundamental laws
aren't fundamental.

All we have is the world
we brought forth.
Our world.

[a window opens]

By now
we have convinced ourselves,
that the scaffold is all there is.

We look at tubes, couplers,
and wooden boards.

That *is* our world now.
A machine.

We refine it.
It becomes ever more intricate,
its metaphor becoming reality.

A world of nuts and bolts,
a mechanism.

[a window closes]

Full transformation is accomplished,
when we look back at ourselves,
and all we see is scaffolding.
Empty space in between.

Treating ourselves as machines,
a clockwork winding itself,
a chemical factory fabricating itself,
a computer running a program,
its code determined before we were born.

Our world vanished.
No space between the girders
and trusses of our construction.

[another window opens]

An unobstructed view,
a glimpse of freedom!

We lift our obese behinds
from the couch of certainty.
To sniff some fresh air,
to get some mental exercise.

Our world
reasserting
Itself.

From camel to lion to child,
we transform.

Shouting our world
at others.
Because the louder we scream,
the more they will understand.

[another window closes]

The moment passes.
Puzzled, we are left.
Annoyed, maybe,
inspired.
Intrusions of inner worlds
rattle at our scaffold.
Only perceived as echos.
Ripples from another dimension.

Vexing disturbances.

How difficult it is:
negative capability,
being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts
without any irritable reaching
after fact and reason.

[another window opens]

Only the strongest souls
stare into the abyss.

It's nothing but turtles
all the way down.

And we begin
to fill this emptiness
also with structure.

The scaffold
is fancy
this time.

Art nouveau,
not functionalism.

And through the grid
of undulating vanities
we scream our world
into the void.

So that somebody
would understand.

Or buy the
trite flowery shit
we've created,
from the empty bottom
of our hearts.
[another window closes]

[a window opens]

Now someone
had a fabulous idea!

That functional scaffold
it's ugly,
but functional.

People should use it.
But they don't like it.

That other scaffold,
however,
is pretty, but useless.

People like it.
But they can't use it.

A practical mind
will certainly notice
that we can combine the two.

[a window closes]

[another window opens]

In search for depth,
appeal,
or authority
(it does not really matter)
we weld
ornamentation
onto function.

While superficially appealing,
the result

does not satisfy anyone for long.

You can't dress up a turd,
either way,
or so they say.

But new combinations
must be pursued,
Mindlessly!

Mistaking
combinatorial explosion
for creativity.

What was the point again?
Nobody
seems to
remember anymore.

[another window closes]

And so, the two scaffolds
are forced onto each other.

Increasingly encapsulated
by useless metal ornamentations,
helplessly disconnected
through couplers that won't couple,
we silently suffocate.

Looking for understanding
and recognition,
we have lost all meaning,
somewhere on the way.

Instead,
we build ever fancier scaffolds,
in the hope to end
all scaffolding.
Forever.

On our quixotic quest,
for the scaffold

that bridges the void,
we have forgotten,
that the void is only
the space
where the scaffold isn't.

When we will finally
have filled
the last of this space
with function and beauty,
there will be no more room,
for us.

[a crack opens in the wall]
[a tiny ray of sunshine filters in]

Up, up, from the couch,
you slouch.
Let's have a look!

There are spaces beyond
our scaffolds,
and our walls.

We have not even
begun to notice them.

We must reconsider,
how we opened those windows
in the first place.

Camel to lion to child,
we opened those windows
through play.

And the longer we played,
the more sophisticated the rules,
the more possibilities
opened for us.
(And vice versa.)

In the heat of our frenzied play,

some things
that should not have been forgotten
were lost.
We were lost in play.

So: down with the rules!

Is this art? Is it philosophy?
Is it serious? Is it real?
Is it useful? Is it pretty?
I, for one,
I do not care.
Down with those walls!

[the crack opens a tiny bit wider]

Negative capability indeed.
All we've done
so far,
and all we are currently doing,
is deconstruction.

If we tear all the scaffolding down,
all the walls,
there will be nothing left
of the house.

It'll rain onto the couch,
and mold will grow
clouding our minds,
in a fog of fungal spores.

Negative capability.
At least
we know now,
what we don't want.

[a new window opens]

Construction is so much harder
than demolition.

Where to begin?

A manifesto!
Dude, that is so last century.
Just another scaffold
to encase us.

You know?
New shit has come to light.

Creation is a process.
Grounded
on the collapse of possibilities
through choice.

When to choose.
What to choose.
Why choose?

Agonising.
Too many options.
Let's procrastinate!

[a new window closes]

Paralysis.
Given a choice,
we choose not to act.
The choice of non-action
is also a choice.

Negative capability.

Creativity.
Requires leisure.
But there is no time.
Our scaffolds
are breaking down.

We sweat,
profusely.
The crack in the wall,
is widening.

Pinned to our couch.
Chaotic light,
imprints flickering sunspots
onto our retinas.

[another new window opens]

Into the void.
Hole in the sky.
Solitude. Paranoid.
It's alright.
We must fill
the emptiness
beyond our scaffolds,
our walls.
There is so much of it
to be filled.

How do you make a world,
how do you build a house,
without
fixed scaffold?

Where do you start?
What is
the most fundamental truth
worth reexamining?

Surely it is this
the burning question
of connection
between the world we bring forth
and the jungle out there
that once bore us.

That connection must still exist,
for each and every one of us.
Why else
would we not have died?
And still be around.

It's as simple as that:
the most important thing
is to relearn

to open windows,
our windows,
and to see
through the void
behind the windowpane.

[another new window closes]

Eureka!

It is not the window
that connects us
to the world beyond.

It is the act
of opening it.
To look outside.

[a new window opens]

And so we enter the Zone.
Without a scaffold,
but not without a plan.

Goal precedes opportunity.
Opportunity precedes action.
Action precedes goal.

An impredicative generator.
It is all we need.

Worldmaking
is a process
that presupposes itself.

Just like you and me.
Making worlds is what we do.

So tell me.

What will the world

you make
be made of?

[a new window closes]

[nobody is sitting on the couch anymore]

[a door closes]

[one by one, many new windows appear]

[a slide with The Zone logo and a brief description appears]