



The Blind Spot *and* The Point of Perspectivism.



# The Blind Spot *and* The Point of Perspectivism.

BA Thesis  
Bram Wouters  
Gerrit Rietveld Academie  
Jewellery Department  
Thesis advisor: Alena Alexandrova  
2014

# Contents

Introduction		
My point of perspective.		3
CHAPTER I		
Perspectivism in the context of art.		
A meet and greet / Spectator and Perspective.		4
The handicap.		6
CHAPTER II		
The Balloon and The Spectator. <i>(Identifying the identity)</i>		
The Encounter.		9
A feeling, A foundation.		12
Examples of an encounter.		15
Shapes & Humans.		16
CHAPTER III		
The Blind Spot.		
Light and Observation.		
Jewellery in the spotlight.		19
The Black Square.		20
Painting a picture.		23
Conclusion		
My point of blindness.		24
Bibliography		26

# Introduction

*“No finite point has meaning without an infinite reference point”*

- Jean Paul Sartre

---

## *My point of perspective.*

The starting point, the point that became a line. A point from which I introduce myself into our world and introduce you into mine. I came into the world with a critical look. A critical look, that was the first look my mother was introduced to after giving birth to me. A critical look. The look of a questioning observer, aware. While at the very same time unaware. Feelings, awareness, values, are aspects we learn or become familiar with growing up. I never really understood the interest in bonding, of getting into a relationship with another, socializing, having the urge or need to find companionship with another. For some reason, it seems to be the case that I was too busy living in my own world. Having no time for the world around me. Living in my own world, in my own head, with my own perspective. Observing the world and soaking in all its forms and the confusion it brings with it. Everything that was playing along in my mind was being translated or executed in a way that was productive. As far as I have the ability to go back, to think back, my mind, my imagination, allowed me to bring everything that was in it, into the real world. Piles of paper and rolls of tape were always near me, in order for me to make a model. A form, a shape, whatever one might call it.

Something that I could communicate, or relate to, something reflected and all the while questioning everything in it. The confusing part however, is the part where in I am not sure if it was my imagination that made me do this, or the objects that I was facing every day. I tended to have a stronger communication and connection towards objects than humans. However, not being a materialistic person, this concerns me a great amount. Why?

Looking at the world from my own perspective, while my surroundings are looking at me with their own perspective creates confusion. A dilemma. It creates trouble in navigating daily life such as being too busy trying to find my position in the world amongst the rest. From what vantage point are people observing me? From their point of view. Why it is such a struggle to move with them in space without having a positioning system that is already mapped out? Communicating with objects, understanding them, living with them and trying to find out what it is that shares their bond with me. A bond that remains undefined, neither alive nor dead. My point of perspective and theirs. Being an einzelgänger helps me find and observe, gaining understanding and remaining limited at the very same time. The matter results in contradiction and hierarchy.

## CHAPTER I

### Perspectivism in the context of art.

#### *A meet and greet / Spectator and Perspective.*

*Perspective*, or in Latin: “*Perspicere*,” is to look through something, to see something clearly, to fathom something. Today it knows diverse forms, but let us start by observing the term “perspective” that refers to an effect of *three-dimensionality*\* that is artificially produced or enhanced. The illusory third dimension that I am referring to is that of depth, which is to say the apparent distance between the “**spectator**” — a term I will use throughout this thesis, since our position in this matter needs to be defined — and an artwork, and all the various objects depicted within that artwork. In human understanding there are known to be multiple dimensions, or *dimensional forms*. The ones that are perhaps most familiar to us are the first, second, third and probably even the fourth dimensions. Now, living our lives in dimensions and observing them is something intriguing to think about. Not only the phenomenon of their existence in reality as we know it, but more likely, the notion that one has the ability to stand still and to move and observe these dimensional forms, interacting at that very same time.

Regardless, the notion of living in different dimensions and perspectives in space is not something new and it is keeping us in its grip longer than one would expect. Without getting too focused in the world of physics, or of mathematics, one should not forget that there lies more in the subjectivity of the term perspective. One can think about the notion of perspective as having different layers of looking at, or out from; different perceptions within perspective. The field of philosophy can also solve the problems of understanding the many forms of perceptions within perspective. This brings me to the term coined by the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche who forms a fundamental understanding for all different perspectives one is looking out of, or at. According to which, reality cannot be seen by the human virtue.<sup>1</sup>

Reality can only be observed fragmentarily, everything one perceives as reality is a result of overlapping perspectives and observations that need to be defined. One can sadly conclude that human beings suffer the inability to define or establish where they come from. While reading and thinking about this, it seems to become clear that there is a gap between the human ability of perception and observational potential. Regardless, this inability — a form of handicap in our interpretation of the world — we come to know as reality. It leaves open doors in the rooms of our minds and imaginations. One could even supplement across fields of knowledge using these gathered perspectives.

---

1 **Friedrich Nietzsche** (*philosopher*). More on Friedrich Nietzsche’s ‘Perspectivism’ can be read in the following book, *Nietzsche’s Perspectivism (International Nietzsche Studies)* authors: Steven D. Hales and Rex Welsho, Publisher: University of Illinois Press (March 20, 2000)

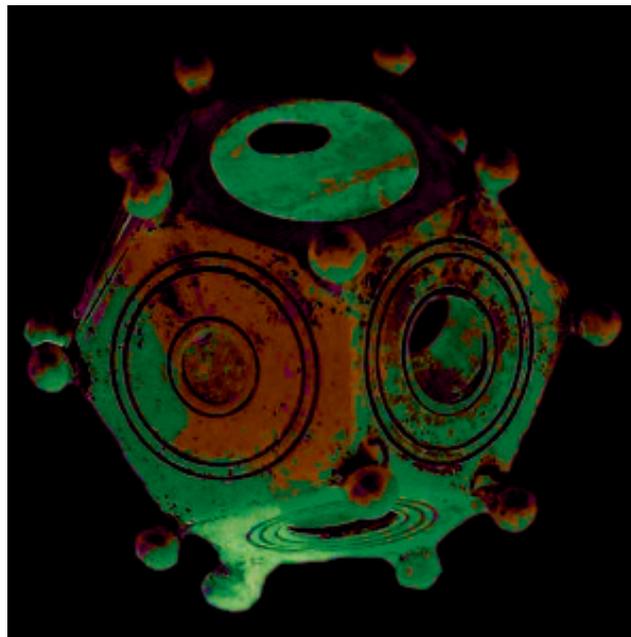
---

\* *Three-dimensionality (3D space)* Known to be a geometric 3-parameter model of the physical universe, without the consideration of time. All the known matters exist in this model. The three dimensions can be labelled under a combination of any of the following terms: length, width, height, depth and breadth, any of these directions can be chosen unless they fall in the same plane.

This could create a broader understanding or field of an object, or even something that cannot yet be defined, but why would one? Gaining an understanding of what objects or situations are trying to communicate to us, is where the 'why would one?' question can be clarified. As a human being, a questioning thesis writer, and an individual looking out from one perspective does not provide much when defining an object or situation. Gathering multiple perspectives would provide a broader look on the object or situation. The more perspectives being gathered, *looking*, at a subject, object or situation, the better. Referring to a sentence out of a 14th century poem titled *Pearl*, “*the more the merrier.*” One place where this gathering could be implemented would be a place like an art institute, art academy, museum, gallery, etc. The very reason behind the existence of such places is the making aware of communicative factors present when identifying multiple perspectives.

One could doubt if an artist is perceiving or looking at an object in the right way, or in a way that allows them to perceive their own reference point. An interesting perspective, one might even say odd? One that provokes, creating questions, discussions, doubts and sureness. These different forms as one can see, dictate the need for reference to the field of philosophy. The way an art school works, gathering points of perspectives and trying to find the 'true' definition of an object, could be seen as a model. ( *Pic.1*) A model in the form of an ancient “*Roman dodecahedron.*”<sup>2</sup> The holes could resemble each individual artists point of perspective. One having a wider field of vision compared to another artists point of perspective. Looking from these different perspectives (through the holes) would create a point of intersection of perspectives, forming a centre point, a model where all perspectives come together. Creating a definition point for an object or situation. This *definition point* could be seen to exist, at an intersection of perspective points in the space of the museum or gallery.

*Picture. 1*



The model as an object — one could even define the object as a tool to define an object or situation — raises questions such as, why it is there? Who made it? Why is it made? Where is it made for? What was its purpose? It seems one can not find out or understand its origin, bringing this notion back to the exact problematic feature Friedrich Nietzsche exposes when describing perspectivism as “the handicap”.

---

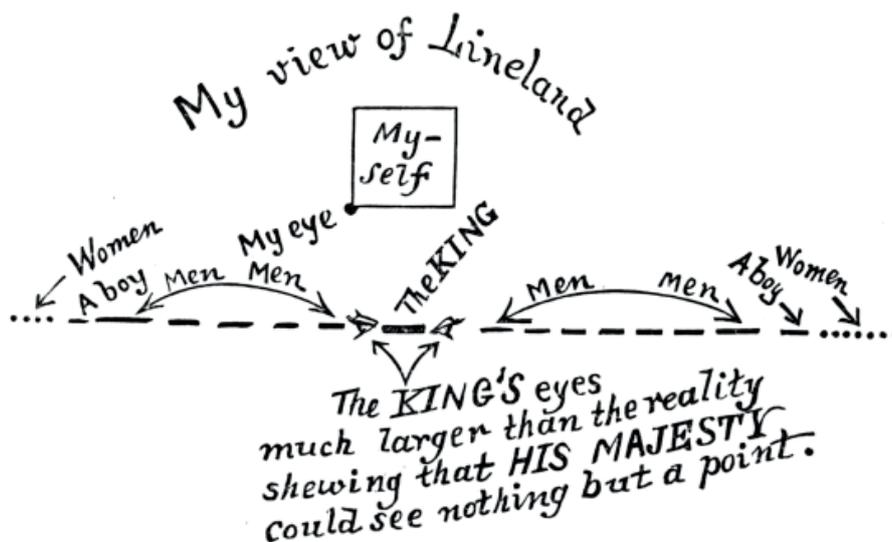
2 Roman Dodecahedron. (unknown object) An archeological discovery whose use is not known. There are diverse explanations for the possible use of the object in Roman times, but none have been conclusively proven.

*The Handicap.*

A contradiction: 'true' — 'true' meaning in its totality, a circle being complete — perspective cannot be defined or understood by the human mind as a confined space with an inability (or handicap). Why even bother gathering peoples points of perspectives to reflect upon, discuss, objectify, and materialize them into models? Knowing that there are perspective points hidden, like a puzzle that is missing specific pieces, similar to the model or object known to as the *Roman Dodecahedron*. It would be worth a shot to try to explore, discuss and connect the different points of perspectives artists have. One could agree on the notion that each individual has its own unique point of perspective in which the way we perceive daily life is contained in all of the information that life throws at us. However, being seen on the one hand as a positive aspect in a global picture, it also causes trepidation. That is of blocking or not allowing on to see from a fellow observers viewpoint. This results in a problem, or more or less a dilemma, in the way we could benefit from each other's perspectives. This disallows a meeting of perspectives in the defining of questions that currently remain unsolved.

The notion that there is a right or a wrong way to perceive is thereby unsure and obsolete. However, forming a society where members share their place — and as a result their points of perspectives — in the space we all live in, could result in hierarchy. Due to the fact that our society is divided into different forms of perceptions and understandings, making it increasingly difficult to come to a certain agreement of points that are being made. for example in the case of a political matter. Now, before the notions in this chapter leave a bad after-taste, resulting in a feeling close to misanthropy. We should continue questioning the struggle, the position of the writer and the spectator. A reader has to remember that one is only reading the point of perspective held by the writer. Bringing me to the following writer, whose profession was originally that of a teacher, who reveals his perspective without getting strangled in the domains of mathematics and physics. Written in 1884 by Edwin A. Abbott, the novel is titled; "*Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions.*"<sup>3</sup> - What is most striking is how Abbott positioned himself within the story — (Pic. 2)

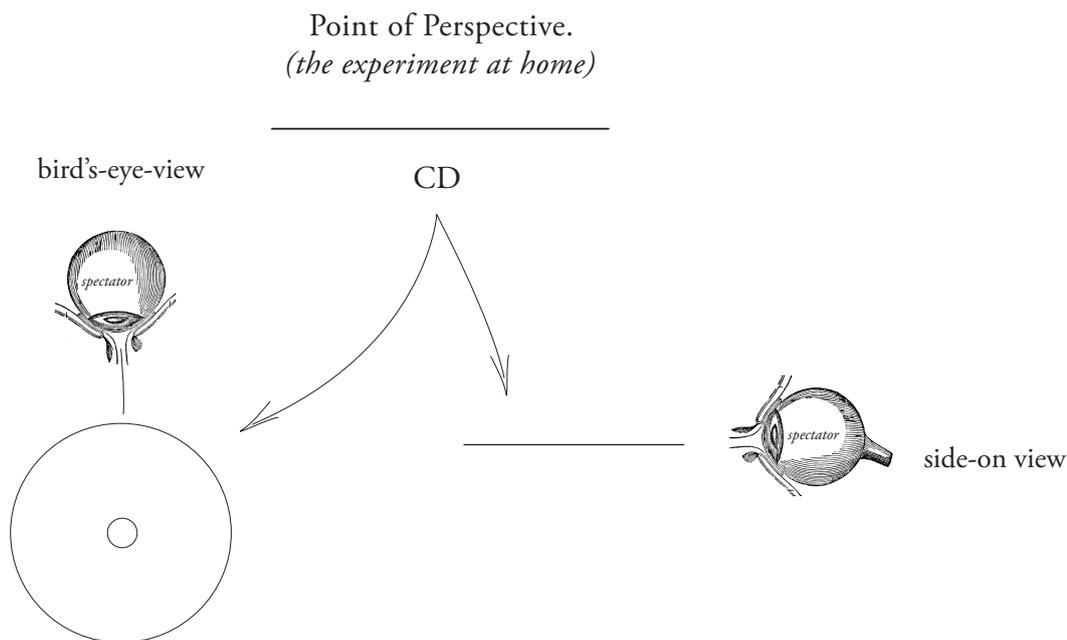
Picture. 2



3 **Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions.** The way Edwin A. Abbott wrote the novel gives a glimpse of the awareness he had when positioning himself as a writer, story-teller. One could appreciate the awareness in his thinking about his own singular position when dealing with perspectives, spaces, different dimensions and lands. Flatland therefore reveals a deeper insight than only the stories educative factor when understood from an artist's point of perspective. Published by Echo Library 2009

Without getting too deep into the world of physics or the world of mathematics, the book tells, explains and even tries to inform the reader in an informal way, of the possibility (the mathematical probability) of the existence of multiple dimensions. The story itself tells us of the journey of A. Square (literally the form known as a square) that on a certain day was visited by a circle (which actually turns out to be a sphere, but has a circular shape in Flatland.) The meeting lifts him out of the two dimensional world he currently finds himself in and takes him to ‘Lineland’ and ‘Pointland,’ making him aware of the existence of multiple dimensions, beyond the two found in ‘Flatland.’ When A. Square asks the circle if there could be the possibility of the existence of more than the three dimensions found in the land the circle originated from, the circle reacts furiously to the questioning by A. Square, resulting in great anger and the action of returning A. Square to the two dimensional world from which he originated.

Besides the story of A. Square, throughout the book, Abbott’s ‘Flatland’ embodies and describes a society that is rigidly divided into different classes, the same concept or protocol, as one might call it, that dictates society as we know it. Social ascent is the main aspiration of ‘Flatland’s’ inhabitants, apparently available and granted to everyone, but in reality being strictly controlled by the few that are already positioned at the top — this resembles the same ladder of society or platform that is known in our world — forming a society based on hierarchies. When reading the novel of ‘Flatland,’ one could perhaps find a few things that could bring an moment of awareness. One of them is the *intention* to look at an object. This is understood in the educative form being presented in art school, in the first lesson based on the principles, as the way one looks at an object. This includes the different ways of perceiving form and understanding and defining perspective. Beyond only the objective or rational.



When a computer CD is lying flat on a table, the object can be interpreted differently when looking at it from different perspectives. Bending over the table a little gives you a bird’s-eye-view of the table, showing that the CD has a round shape. Bending at the knees until the point where one’s nose is touching the side of the table gives you a side-on perspective, showing that the CD has the form of a line, somehow the circular form cannot be seen anymore. A scary thing when one thinks about it. This changed the observation of objects for me. Daily life objects and situations came to contain a certain awareness or consciousness within them, they tend to be more than only logical. When navigating daily life, a time will come when the conclusion is made, that one cannot escape from the fact that dimensional forms are always present.

Since one is moving and living in a dimensional space, no matter where one is, where one goes, or what one is doing. Now, looking out from this perspective for a moment, it becomes clear that within this unavoidable space, one cannot avoid manipulating these forms and planes oneself, in the creation of an encounter. Within this notion of a world being manipulated *and* manipulating, the world itself remains in question. What is really being observed in our daily lives, worlds real, or artificial? Assuming that the artificial intelligence industry is developing rapidly day by day, this raises urgent questions on where this is all going? And where do we *want* to go with this? Do we really need this?

There is a need to be active in both worlds; the world that we know collectively as the 'real' world and then the 'virtual' world, a world that is created by the use of industrial techniques to manipulate. We can question ourselves; in what plane or dimension are we currently active in and what and when are we really observing that which we tend to believe is real? Are we observing the virtual world and all of the content in it, or are the virtual world and its media observing me and all of the content that exists in the world that I perceive as reality? Of course, looking at a flat screen, to clarify that the screen or monitor is a two-dimensional frame and seeing an illusory playing field of perspectives makes you believe less in the notion of what is real and what is not.

A clear moment dawned on me whilst I was sitting at my desk in my apartment, looking out of the window and staring at the apartment window that is opposite to mine. In their window there was a vague, blurry image of me sitting at my desk with a representation of me on a screen behind me. Looking over my shoulder, I saw the almost complete self-portrait, a painting that explained the flat representation of myself that was visible in the reflection of the apartment windows across the street. It was strange, looking out from one point of observation and seeing my own point of perspective reflected back at me; seeing the painted self-portrait at the back, my computer screen, my keyboard, the tremendous amount of materials and try-outs, things becoming artworks. This was when I started to question if one could really reflect one's self? Staring at my own reflection and representation, what for me would be a close observation of myself, appeared as a reflection of a three-dimensional visualization of me on a two-dimensional frame.

From my point of view this virtual gaming world could be defined as flat because of its lack of physical perception, as well as the fact that you are staring at a two-dimensional frame. That moment, when observing and watching *two-and-a-half*-dimensional graphic projections, it appears as if I am looking at three-dimensional forms. While in fact it is an illusion; a technological manipulation a result of the new innovations of today's technology. Considering then, the reflection of the portrait behind me, there is an awareness of the old method of working with dimensionality and perspective familiar to the old master painters when visualizing a face on a canvas. This can be likened to video-gaming terms such as, *¾ perspective* and *¾ view*, common techniques that originated in the world of painting. This extends to portraiture and facial recognition; views that reveal a person's face by showing *part* points of view, like a frontal view and a side view. Of course in video games there are many more methods used to create a more realistic, observational view of the world. Viewers be (a)ware.

## CHAPTER II

### The Balloon and The Spectator.

#### *Identifying the identity*

##### ***The encounter.***

Not long ago, I was buying a balloon filled with helium. At the time I was busy working on a project, creating and realizing a flying object. A flying object that would fly at a certain height in an exhibition space or room, given that the space from the waste down to the floor was already being used to display objects. The thought came up to create a flying object that could make use of the unused space in the exhibition space or room. This would breakdown the traditional structure of displaying objects — mainly jewellery in this instance — to create an awareness of feeling one's position, in regard to the role one plays when encountering an object. Looking from a different point of perspective or vantage point, with a different feeling could reveal the back-side or bottom of an object, instead of only the birds-eye-view that one is used to. This could perhaps attract the same, possibly even more, attention than the object being displayed in the space between the waist and the floor. As previously, none of the space in the room above the displayed objects was in use due to vitrines, tables, etc. this realization came right after visiting the balloon shop for the project. The project was near completion. The frame of the flying object was finished and ready to be filled with a type of gas that would lift the flying object off the ground into its course in the air. The safest and easiest solution would be to use helium to fill the chamber of the flying object, hence the visit to a local balloon shop, where this encounter took place.

Closing the door behind me, I walked towards a local party shop, one specializing in balloons of all different shapes, sizes and colours. It seemed that a full bottle of helium would be too much of a gamble, should the experiment not work out the way I intended. The most logical solution at that time, seemed to be to buy a single balloon filled with helium. The following step would be to transmit the helium from the balloon, filling directly, the chamber of the flying object. Upon arriving at the balloon shop, after explaining my trepidation, the storeowner began to fill a balloon with helium for me. Meanwhile the storeowner was completing the sales transaction when all of a sudden a sharp whistling sound could be heard, seemingly coming from behind the counter. After a short pause, the balloon was heading on a straight course toward the ceiling of the store. The top of the balloon, now with only half of its string attached, was touching the ceiling, whilst remaining perfectly balanced, floating there, without hesitation. Unreachable. There had been no time for me, nor the storeowner, to grab the balloon before it had reached its current position, out of reach. The strangest thing happened that moment, would not buying the balloon make me the owner? What was going on? My position seemed to be unclear, in doubt.

Analyzing the situation, common sense should dictate objectively that the balloon should go wherever I would want it to go, and it should definitely behave the way I would want it to behave. But at that very moment, I was looking high up in to the air at the balloon, and the balloon, having reached the highest point in the room, was looking down upon me. Confusion ensued, a sense of panic, the feeling of the loss of all power and control over a balloon. The balloon now has me in its grip. My role shifted, from having ownership over, to being owned, by the object. In this case, a balloon filled with helium. The very same balloon that was just bought a minute ago, found, lying powerless, and in a way that even felt lifeless, on the counter of the balloon shop. The object had undergone a rapid transformation and changed its position. I had to take control, re-establishing my position of ownership again, once and for all, in the simple action of grabbing the string.

This insignificant piece of plastic string from a roll, became something more valuable than one could have ever been previously aware. This cheap, thin, plastic string, short in length, turned out to be something of great importance, metaphorically speaking. The string enabled me to retake control of the balloon, like a wild barking dog retied to its leash, re-establishing the positions of either dog, or owner.

After the play, leaving the shop and walking the route towards home, I noticed that the balloon was not that much different from a living organism, for instance a dog, or any other living creature. The ability of the balloon, not only in its inflated form, but also in its ability to actively change its role, seemed to reveal its form to be alive. Confronted with obstacles and boundaries the balloon acts like a little dog. One has to make sure it does not block or interfere in peoples paths, including my own. The balloon is now moving as an extended part of myself. As a result, I have to treat it with care and delicacy so as not to hit any obstacles or fellow pedestrians. The reason I point out and embody this particular experience, is to demonstrate how my perspective changed towards the object. A different relationship was being established between owner and object on the journey home. When opening the door and entering my apartment, I have to lower my arm in order for the balloon to drop its height and gain the ability to overcome obstacles, in this case the door post. One now has to thread the balloon like it is an extended part of oneself. The balloon and I are now vulnerable together, there is always the awareness that it can explode if hit too hard placing me in a position of fear. Referring back to my original realization, the cheap plastic string is the only connective part between me, the balloon, and total chaos. Both myself and the balloon have to maintain our relationship, communicating in such a way that there is understanding between us.

Relating it back to jewellery, questioning if the balloon could become a piece of jewellery. Not only as an accessory, more so, that it is in a relationship with the body. I am questioning where the border is when it comes to an object transforming into a jewellery piece. According to the correctly interpreted notion of jewellery (body-related requirement) the string becomes the essential part for the balloon to become a jewellery piece. The plastic string of the balloon would become the tool of assembly, transforming the balloon into a jewellery piece. The same balloon that as an object has its own will — proved itself in the scenario described earlier, to have an awareness — to rise up in the air, when disconnected from the body. It has the character to move away from the person in question when left unguarded or detached. This new awareness places a different sense of importance on the object of the string, attached to the object of the balloon. The string itself becomes of more importance than the actual balloon itself. Leading to the question, what is a jewellery piece? Differing states of perspective, lead us to question notions of importance when looking at a jewellery object. Perspective, position (distance), and role, force us to question where the value in the object, as an object of adornment lies. Is the objects value contained in the probability of losing the balloon?

Creating a personal or emotional connection with an object can transform into value after a period of time. The question would then be, if the value of the material or the material itself is important when talking about a jewellery piece? Encountering the rare, undefined field of jewellery raised my curiosity, why are the pieces presented from eye-level, looking all the way down? However, it seems that it has not always been the case that this specific measurement of presentation is used. Therefore we could not rationally state that all jewellers are not thinking about placement and forms of presentation when placing their works in an exhibition space. For the time being, studying in the field of jewellery feels like moving and working with a handicap. There is an inability to understand the works or pieces, questions nobody tends to even try to solve. Sensitive makers or spectators seem to all feel or see this handicap, but don't like to face it. Rather they try to act like it is not there, trying to hide and act as normal as possible towards this handicap. However it is still present in all of its forms.

And so by following protocols of presentational forms, traditional ways of presenting one could say, communicative opportunities with objects becomes limited to a singular grant of access, akin to an easement of sorts. It seems that this is not considered important in the display of jewellery works. Objects and jewellery pieces are strangled in total isolation. Exhibition spaces, gallery spaces, and other types of presentational spaces are equipped with vitrines or other types of showcases to allow this distinction.

It is also strange to consider that a piece that should be worn, or is body-related, becomes isolated by being placed in a confined space like a glass vitrine, illogical or logic? Another example might offer a different point of perspective. One should perhaps walk past a jewellery store where watches are on display. Notice that this is a secure space, the watches are safe in their vitrines, most of time with a transparent, or blue, kind of protective film over them. The film makes sure they do not get scratched or damaged in their confined display space. However, some sort of protocol seems to dictate that one has to take the protective film off of the face of the watch when taking it outside of the confined, secured space. Why? Does this behaviour refer to the handicap? From my point of perspective, the way jewellery is displayed nowadays is kind of obsolete, forgetting the essential point that jewellery pieces are made objects. Objects made with a given background, that of their maker or creator. The notion that the object has hidden layers or a true perspective, an unrevealed or hidden identity, is in fact a living object is forgotten. Therefore, in order to allow the object the ability and space to communicate with spectators, one must be aware of the object's context when placing it in a space.

Like the balloon, jewellery pieces were in the first instance, perceived as one thing, individual objects for personal adornment, and from this accrued a particular preciousness and value. If we accept this, instead of looking down upon these pieces, one could argue that it would make more sense to place them in a way that makes one look *up* at them. We can assume that everyone understands, the feeling one has when looking up at an object, a feeling of being a small part in a big picture, a feeling of degradation. History shows that the Romans understood this principle. Their architecture shows us that the placing of a large amount of stairs creates an illusion and at the same time makes one aware of one's position in the creation of this illusion. Standing on the ground in front of an immense building or staircase makes one aware that they are small and vulnerable, from a certain aspect, and they become aware of this aspect, or perspective. Feelings are a core element when defining the beauty and power of jewellery.

One could then question the display of jewellery in its role in creating feelings. Furthermore, when observing from an architectural perspective, could ornamentation not also be defined as a part of the totality of what jewellery really is?

One could for example think of Rococo or Baroque rooms, rooms that were filled with ornamentation in every conceivable spot. Giving every empty spot the chance to become meaningful, or at least something that can be questioned. Upon entering a house that displays an interior executed in the baroque or rococo style, one could question if the positioning and placement of ornament is comparable to the encounter with the balloon. The overwhelming power of all the ornamental details combined, acts with impact, it is a shot into the spectators' perception and awareness. Its main concept is an attempt to create the formal illusion of power, making the spectator feel like they are of a lower ranking class than the owner of the room, or creator of this spectacle. High walls and a completely decorated or ornamented ceiling enters the spectators personal space of perception, like a group of wild horses running closer and closer together on the screen in a movie. This creates a huge impact and feelings of fright. Furthermore, leaving behind a field or movie-screen full of dust, one cannot see clearly anymore, sight is vague or blurred. Nor can one breathe air that does not contain dust. The inability to breathe or see clearly can be related to the feelings that come when looking up.

### *A feeling. A foundation.*

In bending the neck one experiences a change in pressure, a compressed feeling; an awareness. One almost has to lie flat on the ground to see the full scope of an ornamented ceiling. Objects of ornamentation working together as an army in order to attack the spectator's feelings and notion of awareness. Regardless, for some unclear reason we all tend to have it programmed in us, and it's importance still tends to make an impact. But why do we all know this imposition of feeling so well? Why does it keep on working so effectively? Why does one not see right through this trap? Feelings; the handicap I mentioned earlier. Trying to define or grasp these matters is therefore not easy. We need to remain aware that this particular mode of presentation demands from us, and delivers upon us, a great impact.

The recognition that this occurrence is grounded in human behaviour, results in a battle between humans and objects and an unsolved question that remains lost in the notion of who is conquering whom. We return to hierarchy. This struggle between the two parties reminds me of a movie that brings the matter into focus. It shows aspects of frustration, a lack of understanding, troubled communication, momentum and the encounter between humans and objects in the form of a movie. The movie: *Shinboru (Symbol)*<sup>4</sup> by Hitoshi Matsumoto – originally Japanese, hence the different titles, shows a man trapped in a confined, white space, a room with no doors and no windows. A solid, illuminated, white space that contains nothing except the man himself. However, after a period amount of time the form of a phallic protuberance reveals itself on the wall. Throughout the movie, a numerous amount of phallic protuberances are present on all the walls in the space. Babies laughter can be heard in the background of the movie. The man, questioning the sudden appearance of these 'objects', makes his way toward them for closer observation. By sight, one cannot grasp what the objects are trying to signal or communicate. Their relevance is activated only by touching the object.

In an encounter in which a finger presses on one of the objects, the object becomes suddenly aware. A sort of latch forms from out of the wall, spitting out an artificial object. One discovers that every object, when activated by a different latch, will spit out a different object. Being trapped in the white room, one notices by way of the point of perspective of the man in the movie, a loss of control over the object and situation (the balloon and the spectator effect).

There can be difficulty navigating certain aspects of daily life, such as having a preference toward one thing, instead of exploring other options available within the daily process of making choices. Looking at myself, I have discovered that there is a contradiction in the way that we look towards the 'bigger picture', discounting the smaller options that may be available within this same field of possibility. Is it possible to perform both preferences at the same time? In a way we are limited to one way of seeing and perceiving the world from a singular perspective. However if we recognise this very fact, which is not as easy as it sounds, one can become aware of at least what one is facing from a singular view point in that very moment. Does looking out from a single perspective help one? Or does it in fact keep it within a given set of limitations? Will one ever face a new challenge and learn something completely new? Will one ever stand eye-to-eye with fear? To answer these questions I think the best thing to do is to start observing the way we perceive daily situations. Looking at the different approaches or feelings we have, we can work towards handling them through discussion.

Picture the following: when walking in a large gallery or museum containing big artworks and a lot of spectators. One always has, or develops, a certain preference or taste towards an artist or style/expression of art. Artworks that are alluring in the exhibition space are so because they create an encounter with a spectator. In an exhibition space that holds the works of 17th century Old Master painters, one could be overwhelmed by the extravagant shower of jewellery worn by the person portrayed in one of Rembrandt's portraits. Surrounded by other spectators — that are almost standing on one's toes — all hoping to get a glimpse of the famous master's painting.

---

<sup>4</sup> **Shinboru (Symbol)** 2009, directed and played by **Hitoshi Matsumoto**. Hitoshi Matsumoto (born September 8, 1963) is well known in Japan as an comedian. Besides comedian, he is recently known for making movies.

Standing close to another, I could start a conversation with the sentence: (Spectator **A**) “nice brushstrokes” and by chance the person by my side, (Spectator **B**), agrees with the observation, “nice brushstrokes”. A conversation that implies, that however else we might feel, we agree on the fact the brushstrokes are nice. My experience of the notion of nice brushstrokes can be completely different to the other person’s experience of nice brushstrokes. It could be the case that Spectator **A** likes the way that Rembrandt’s brush strokes makes use of the way hair can be accentuated, flowing in the form of wave. Spectator **B**, on the other hand, might appreciate the way Rembrandt uses a thick application of paint to create an almost skin like texture. We tend to experience the same thing, we immediately feel the exact same way. However, our imagination, our minds and our individual points of perspective are different, changing our understandings, forming once again, a hierarchy.

A handicap, present again. Whilst there will always be a gap in our observations, how can we break loose from the handicap that implies a hierarchy? From my point of perspective, a way to supplement this gap could be to focus on your own mind, imagination and perspective. And afterwards, trying to dive in and integrate others points of perspective, ways of perceiving, or ways of observing things. All the while adding and thinking about the numerous ways other points of perspectives might allow for different readings of things.

This format could be very fruitful in forming, or molding, an understanding of the knowledge of what an object is really all about. Illuminated, not only by light, rather by multiple points of perspective coming to light and revealing the map.

Colours that can be individually seen and adored, forming a combined line that intersects and converges as does a broad highway entering a tunnel. All of these lines then also forming the bright light at the end of the tunnel. Resembling a white beam of light, pointed at a prism, splicing the light, revealing all of its colours. No longer hidden, instead mapped out from their point in darkness.

On many levels it is quite difficult and strange to claim that humans and objects are not that different from one another. Sure, live forms and dead objects are at first appearance totally different when compared to each other, nevertheless they share a bond in the *context* of life. And furthermore in the undefined question that remains: in what order do they function? Given that most of us understand the role that time and space play in the context of daily life, we are implicated in the shared awareness of these facts, and whether we like it or not, we all have to agree that we all are accustomed to, and influenced by, these factors. On first thought, this concept of life concerns only living forms, such as human beings, flora, fauna, etc. To remain on topic, regarding the bond between living forms and dead objects, one needs to first define what is a living form, or in general term alive, as well as what is the form of a dead object. Dead objects are lifeless, hence the word *dead*.

According to my understanding, dead objects do not have the ability to move themselves from a certain place to another by only their own power. If they could realize this action without the help of a living form they would not be dead. As a human being, for some sort of undefined reason, there is a need to consume. An urge so great, that we might even purchase living objects and dead objects. Referring not only to (animal) pets — that stay with one for a certain number of years before they die — when talking about live and dead objects over a period of time, depending on the object and its role notions of living and dead might become somewhat paradoxical. For example, a human being as a consumer is buying flowers for their natural colours and beautifying effect on their surroundings. Hence the justification for buying flowers by the consumer is strong enough. This leads to the cutting of the flowers from their roots in the earth, the source of their energy that provides them life. The result of this extraction is the preservation of the flowers in a vase or container, artificially resembling the earth in the consumers’ place of interest. The role of the flower is neither that of the dead or the living.

This is a strange matter, reminding me of the theory of quantum mechanics according to Erwin Schrödinger. One proposition is known as *Schrödinger's cat*<sup>5</sup>. Of course one could say that humans have the ability to stand and go wherever they want to go but that objects do not have the ability to move themselves from one place to another. Objects do not have the power or energy to achieve things the way humans are able to do so. Or do they? Contemporary experience might suggest that in fact the distinction between humans and their objects is decreasing. So far, in my experience there were times when I was immediately able to begin to link or connect (one could even say, to mold) the objects in my possession.

Seeing somebody who always wears a certain type of jacket, bag, hat, etc., something artificial caught my attention regarding the person in question. A person that has a certain aspect or object that distinguishes them from the rest of society stands out; it is here where their identity could be said to shift. It is also this defining aspect that apparently triggers interest, making start to observe that specific person.

Even without being in contact with a specific person for any length of time, if the person appears, repeatedly wearing for example, a bright red bag. After a period of time, conscious or unconscious, without knowing when or where the *momentum* or recognition takes place; one starts to link the red bright bag with the person in question. Furthermore it can seem that there is no distinction anymore between the person and the bright red bag that they carry.

I can understand this as working towards the formation of a single molded piece. Even a final molded piece, one could state. A newly formed identity. The bright red bag becomes an extension of the person's body, and identity. The object (the bright red bag) remains an object on its own, and simultaneously enters the *same space and time* occupied by the spectator. The conditions of this same space and time remain unresolved and undefined. Throwing into question the different forms of relationships between humans and objects. It could be of great importance, in order to gain a broader knowledge in the field of jewellery, to try to define or at least broaden our knowledge of what the state of this undefined relationship is. It's conditions and terms: bonding, distance, adornment, commitment, feeling, etc. All of these aspects are relevant. Do we even need the object itself in order to maintain or produce these feelings? Is the jewellery object in its living form necessary in our daily lives?

---

5 **Schrödinger's cat theory**, the Austrian physicist **Erwin Schrödinger**, one of the founders of quantum mechanics, thought of a paradox to show that quantum mechanics doesn't apply to larger, tangible things. He envisioned a cat locked in a steel chamber with a tiny amount of radioactive material, a Geiger counter, and a diabolical device designed so that if the Geiger counter detects a radioactive decay, it activates a hammer that breaks a flask of acid and poisons the cat. It takes only one decaying atom to kill the cat, but whether an atom decays or not is governed by probability. Applying the rules of quantum mechanics to this system would mean that the cat is neither alive nor dead until a human observer actually looks in the chamber. Schrödinger argued that this was nonsense and merely an example of applying quantum mechanics to situations in which it doesn't apply. – [www.pbs.org](http://www.pbs.org)

### *Examples of an encounter.*

A married, loving and devoted couple will probably send out signals via body language of a certain mind set, and set of feelings, making their surroundings aware of the notion of their love and formation as a couple. One could state that the wedding ring itself is obsolete, unnecessary in the communication with between the couple and their feelings, and their surrounds. Looking to the future, one could go further, concluding that human beings might not even need the other (physical) person in the relationship anymore, to experience these feelings of love and devotion. In a long distance relationship for example, where one misses the other person. Does one really need the person in a close proximity? – Of course in matters of physical contact this perspective is not interesting. But on a neurological level being actively engaged with a person could in fact not involve the person (as a body) at all.

An intriguing encounter when visiting the cinema: The doors open at a predetermined time based on the estimated time one waits in the cinema lobby before entering the room in which the movie will be shown. Next, follows the action of seeking out one's seat-number by following the illuminated numbers that reveal the seat-numbers in the darkened space. Once finally standing in front of the given seat one suddenly realizes a jacket has been placed on the given seat. The jacket of an unknown person. The jacket, that by all observations does not belong in any way to you, an unknown jacket, is an object being used to claim a certain space resembling territorial control. A person making clear that the seat is no longer available for use. Not only with a physical object but also by way of a strong metaphorical gesture. The gesture makes it visibly clear that the jacket is blocking one's access to the seat, but it also resemble an extended part of the person to whom the jacket belongs. The jacket makes us aware of the other and suggests the possibility of a confrontation with the unknown person, who is not even there.

Though the unknown person is not physically in the space with one, the presence of the person is alive in a certain form yet to be defined. In the notion of space and time, taking into account *other* points of perspective. Even though the absent human and the present object are separated by certain qualities, questions remain where exactly the differences are between the presence of humans and objects?

As previously mentioned, it is unclear to me if it lies in their presence in space and time, or in the communication between the two forms? Most unclear, is understanding the protocols of how? And since when? Do objects speak the same language as human beings? In the human understanding of referring to objects as "their" objects, and therefore establishing a notion of communication through ownership. Is there in a way an awareness of an objects message or language? Before starting rationally categorizing the two and labelling to what extent this could be possible. One needs to get a glimpse of the different ways the "*relational form*"<sup>6</sup> is looked at and perceived. Between humans and (*their*) objects, one might start to see less difference between the forms known as *humans* and *objects*. Who is really communicating with whom? Who is observing or monitoring whom? This matter can be seen in the arguments of Nicolas Bourriaud.

### *Shapes & Humans.*

Let us start by taking a closer look at humans. They come in different sizes and shapes: tall people, small people, fat people, thin people, slim people etc. They also come in different colours and different designs – like objects. Something that makes humans from my perspective, fascinating, if we consider their relational aspects. With an awareness of the way humans behave, looking at the way we look, speak, hear, observe, and act, during our time on the earth we share, could we ask if objects have a similar notion? Do they have different ways to communicate and react to each other in situations in time and space? Here I should note that it is of great importance to be aware of mentioning all of the spaces that one is active in and it's present form, such as indoor or outdoor. Objects also come in different sizes, long shapes, small shapes, thin shapes, slim shapes, big shapes; there are an extended amount of forms when it comes down to shapes. Or in other features of an object such as design, colour and background. However, our question remains unclear if we are misled or distracted by their shapes, sizes, colours, backgrounds, etc.

We agree that an object doesn't *live*, like the other living organisms that we know to be alive on earth. However, there are many similarities and traits we share with one another, and we are by definition each an individual personality. It is in the things that makes you, *you*; how and what you are, what and how the outer world recognizes and perceives your being, and your visible form. An important feature not to forget is also the way you see yourself in the world. Your own perception of your position is key in communicating with all the known forms that are present in our world. This notion is at the core of communication with objects. The encounter with objects begins where it ends for humans as well as for objects.

## CHAPTER III

### The Blind Spot.

#### *Light & Observation.*

*The Blind Spot*, a known medical term, is also a term used in physiological and neurological fields of research. Its definition is as follows:

The natural blind spot occurs where axons passing over the front of the retina converge to form the head of the optic nerve, resulting in a hole in the photoreceptor mosaic. Natural blind spots are present only in the eyes of vertebrates; cephalopods, such as octopus, more rationally have retinal axons that pass over the back of the retina, so the optic nerve does not have to pass through the photoreceptor layer to exit the eye. These differences reflect the different origins of vertebrate and cephalopod eyes: invertebrate eyes develop from the skin whereas vertebrate eyes, including human eyes, are outgrowths from the brain apparently reversal was embryologically impossible. Human eyes are irrational as the light has to go through the blood vessels and nerve fibres before reaching the retina. The blood vessels especially can be seen by looking through a pinhole in a card and moving it back and forth. The shadows cast by the vessels appear (by motion parallax and selective adaptation) like a spider's web, but only while the card is being moved and for a very short time afterwards.<sup>7</sup>

Having established the terms use in the fields listed above, I would like to *borrow* the term: 'The Blind Spot' and introduce it in an art related discussion around perspective within the field of philosophy. One can observe an object as stated earlier, visually, seeing the object as an objective form. However the invisible layers hidden in the object cannot be seen with the naked eye. Let's believe an object has an identity and an *objectinality* (personality of an object, characteristics of an object). This lends them their undefined reason for being present in the world since they become more than material but remain not alive, but objectively, dead. Why are objects here? Why do they have the ability to stay on earth and in our lives for long periods of time? Where do they come from? It is ignorant to say that material is simply used by humans to create objects who then put them in the world. It is unclear if objects in fact, already existed in the imagination or in the mind and we are only giving birth to their form or presence.

Artists make use of materials, sometimes even found materials or objects that are then re-placed in the world, to translate their thoughts. When observing objects or situations in daily life, one can bump into problems or moments that are difficult to understand and therefore raises questions. The problem I am having with objects is the hierarchy that defines them, since one cannot trust them. Their skin or look doesn't often reveal their objectinality. This makes it difficult to judge them or to communicate with them due their hidden information or identity.

---

<sup>7</sup> This article was written by **Richard Gregory** shortly before his death on 17 May 2010. Interesting explanation on the matter of the blind spot, references for further reading:

- **Dennett, D.C.** (1991) *Consciousness explained*. Little Brown: Boston

- **Ramachandran, V.S. & Gregory, R.** (1991) *Perceptual filling in of artificially induced scotomas in human vision*.

Nature 350: 699-702

It doesn't matter how long we look at an object since we will always miss a layer of information. What we see of an object can be questioned; their skin or look is only what is visible by observation. The layers beneath, that describe their understanding or their objectivity are not visible to the eye. There should be a way to make this layering visible. A comparison would be when one is looking into a spot of light, after a certain period of time one will see a dark spot appearing. The dark spot conceals a part of the object's objectivity that hasn't yet come to light. It remains a missing piece of the puzzle. How then can we trust that an object will show *all* of its objectivity? Since light is playing such a big role, one has to find out of what importance it is to look in the light or to look in the shadow. (*darkness*)

This philosophical notion reminded me in some way of the "Allegory of the Cave" also referred to as "Plato's Cave"<sup>8</sup>. An allegory in Plato's "Republic" meant to illustrate "our nature in its education and want of education". However, Plato's cave started from a description given by Socrates that describes a scenario where what people assume to be reality would be an illusion. Socrates describes a group of people who have lived chained to the wall of a cave all of their lives, facing a blank wall. The people watch shadows projected on the wall by things passing in front of a fire behind them, and begin to ascribe forms to these shadows. According to Socrates, the shadows are as close as the prisoners get to viewing reality. He then explains how the philosopher is like a prisoner who is freed from the cave and comes to understand that the shadows on the wall are not constitutive of reality at all, as he can perceive the true form of reality rather than the mere shadows seen by the prisoners. He asks Glaucon to imagine a cave inhabited by prisoners who have been chained and held immobile since childhood: not only are their arms and legs held in place, but their heads are also fixed, compelled to gaze at a wall in front of them. Behind the prisoners is an enormous fire, and between the fire and the prisoners is a raised walkway, along which people walk carrying things on their heads "including figures of men and animals made of wood, stone and other materials". The prisoners watch the shadows cast by the men, not knowing they are shadows. There are also echoes off the wall from the noise produced from the walkway.<sup>9</sup>

---

8 **Plato**, *The Allegory of the Cave*, from *The Republic* (vol. 7) 514a- 521d

9 Article on *The Allegory of the Cave*, full article and source: [www.princeton.edu](http://www.princeton.edu)

### *Jewellery in the spotlight.*

To relate this to the field of jewellery, Ruudt Peeters<sup>10</sup> discovers an activation of experience in an encounter with the object. His first installation in 1992, 'Passio' was exhibited in the basement of Marzee – a well known jewellery gallery in The Netherlands - based in Nijmegen. At this time, Ruudt seemed to have come across a contradiction in the work 'Passio'. Inside of the exhibition space (PIC. 3) Peeters' pendants were covered, hanging beneath a form made out of a dark gauze sort of material. The gauze material formed a curtain over the pendants. Giving the effect of a bedroom with the curtain closed - blocking light from entering the room. This is a strong metaphorical gesture. Closing a curtain would indicate one's wish to isolate them from the outer-world. Blocking the light, not giving light the chance to illuminate space, leaving a space in darkness, hidden, unclear about it's presence or position. Peeters demonstrates confinement, and containment, showing just the silhouette of the gauze.

The spectator will never be aware of the presence of the object, nor the choice not to reveal it, unless they touch the gauze. The probability of a spectator taking for granted that the work is not to be touched is high. Curiosity and brutality is present in the core of the spectator who no longer understands the protocol of the exhibition space. The gauze material, that has the tendency to let some light through, reveals a vague picture of what is present behind the curtain. The spectator becomes aware of the existence of an object covered by a sort of cocoon. Light cannot completely illuminate the object. This has the effect of revealing *something else* of the object's beauty for further observation. It works as a tool to attract the attention of the spectator leading to the possibility of communication. The use of covering and therefore lighting that only partly reveals, provokes the tendency in we human beings to establish a clear picture of what we are looking at. Ruudt Peters played on this aspect by using light to break "the cocoon".

*"I remember that it was a thrilling experience to open the curtains and to reach at the pendants" – it was so unusual".*

*- Liesbeth den Besten*



PIC. 3 Photo: Leo Versteijlen (source: Ruudt Peters)

The blind spot describes a different notion of the possibility of the living form of an object. Making the possibility of objectinality visible to the human eye by demanding further observation if one is to really understand the origin of an objects form. However, a problem remains, we continue to question, what is reality? Assuming we humans are living in *reality* on this earth, in time and in space, in the same world wherein objects are present. The question becomes, who is aware of whom? Or who is communicating with whom? In an earlier chapter, 'The Balloon and The Spectator' ownership was questioned, and it was established that roles can change or always existed in reverse. Furthermore "The Allegory of the Cave" gives an interesting notion on the different perspective points one might look from. The problem remains that if one were to try to make a statement of this sort, suggesting that one's visual perspective is not enough to define an object, the shattering of laughter will be heard from the other spectators.

---

10 **Ruudt Peters** (1950), Dutch jeweller. Studied at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie (Amsterdam) 1970-1974

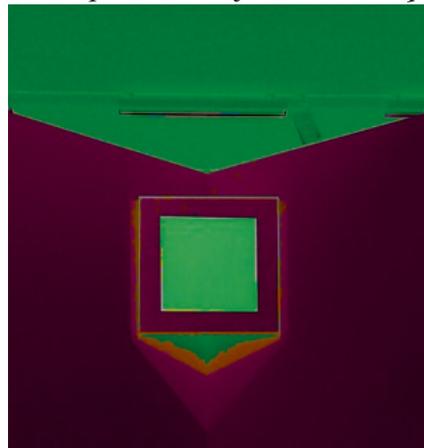
Perhaps they are taking the same role as the chained prisoners in Plato's story. Perhaps they are looking only into the dark silhouettes visible in shadow casting, seeing only the blind spot of the objects, remaining ignorant to the acceptance of others perspectives. This results in the timeless problem of accepting and making judgement based on an observation, without first establishing if the observation is in fact, one's own perspective. This results in an eventual doubt in one's ability to make judgement. In the field of art it is therefore of a great importance to establish multiple perspectives to gain more knowledge. In art school, the birth of ones perspective is judged and questioned and its importance is highlighted in discussions and the sharing of opinions on the subject. However, this is not necessarily a shared reality. Not everyone in contemporary society seems to understand the essence of art schools.

This could result in these hypotheses remaining isolated in the confined spaces of the art school, gallery or museum. However, the work of Kazimir Malevich<sup>11</sup> challenged notions of awareness as being restricted to its birthplace in art institutes, art academy, etc. He did so with his new system of art, called 'Suprematism.'

### ***The Black Square.***

Malevich declared that the Black Square constituted the 'zero of form', an end to old conventions and the origin of a new pictorial language. The forms of this language were strictly geometrical, but they rapidly evolved into increasingly complex paintings in which the geometrical elements employed richer colours and inhabited an ambiguous and complex pictorial space. Despite its reference to the icon tradition, *the Black Square* presented no recognizably Christian image, but for Malevich himself Suprematism remained a mystical experience associated with concepts of the Fourth dimension and the nature of time, as explored in the mystical speculations of Pyotr Uspensky.<sup>12</sup>

- Notice the placement of *The Black Square* -



*Photo by Bram Wouters*

Looking at the painting at first, one could be reminded of the action of looking into the sun. Getting infected by the blind spot, the black spot that remains in the field of vision no matter where one looks. As we are now familiar with the notion of the observer's handicap, we can ask, what is this painting trying to communicate with the spectator? An illuminated white surface that is covered by a dark square. A silhouette perhaps? Could there be a quick drawing or sketch underneath? Shadow casting appears in the form of the painting, layers of shadows trying to reveal a hidden form. Neither is the perspective of the angled placement on the wall revealed. One might wonder if Kazimir Malevich was aware of the blind spot, the handicap that we are dealing with throughout our lives in this world, dimension, space and time.

However, his point of perspective could be seen to generate awareness in the world of art. It could provide an explanatory model for the human virtue. The question would still remains whether or not the notion of human virtue can be described in the form of an artwork. Is simply making the notion visible for spectators, creating awareness about the matter, enough? Or is the notion obsolete?

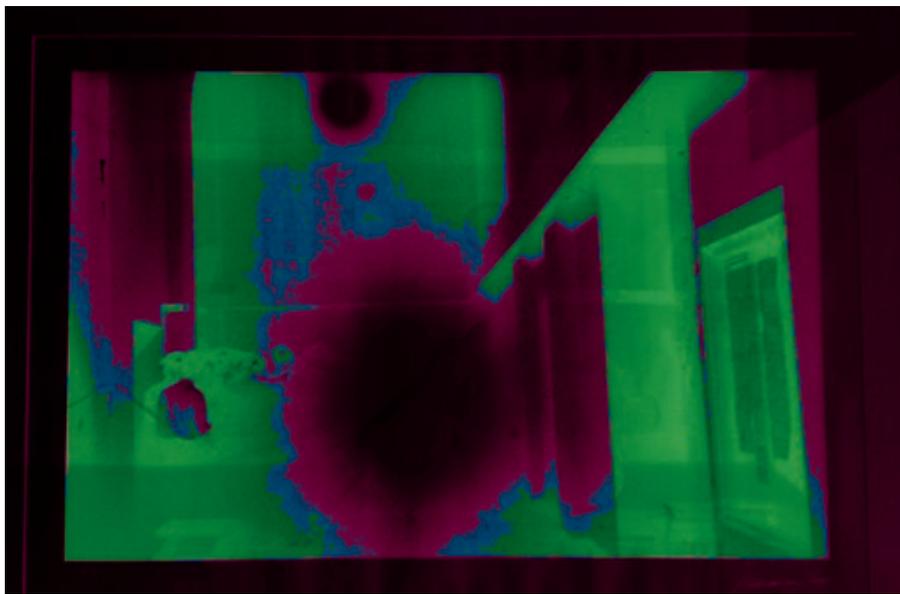
---

11 **Kazimir Malevich**, *The Black Square*, 1915

12 Article on *The Black Square*, by **John Milner** (From Grove Art Online) source: © 2009 Oxford University Press

However, visible to all, is the form of light. Light is visible to the human eye, and provides the human eye a clear sense of sight. Light contains an extensive amount of information, all of the colours known on our spectrum. Its main contribution though, would be that of providing a source or energy great enough to give form to life for its power to grow and therefore exist. One could doubt what light does and doesn't have to offer, and what it contains in its entirety. Regardless, light is visible and can make an object visible for observation. However, in being visibly noticeable, visible light can also work against itself.

This notion reminded me of an artwork hanging on the wall in my parent's living room. It is a work by the artist, Katharina Sieverding<sup>13</sup>. The photograph is documentation of a 'happening.' It is unclear what exactly has happened in the photograph. We can see what looks like police or security officers present at the 'happening' trying to conceal the situation from the people and press that attempt to capture the situation on camera. In the scenario one can see a flashlight aimed in the direction of the people and press. This makes it impossible for the photographers to get a clear picture, the light not only over exposes the camera's film, it also over exposes the people's visibility. This explains the bright, white light visible in the photograph. Different forms of artificial light enable one to illuminate a situation or object, while the same artificial light can obscure a situation by over exposing visible sight.



*Photo by Bram Wouters*

The artwork of Katharina Sieverding reveals the manipulative potentials of light beyond its use as a tool for the making visible of situations or objects. That same form of light that was being used to reveal information could be used against itself to over expose and block one's access to visual information. One could manipulate information or hide information by never bringing it to light; it will therefore remain hidden in darkness. However, it remains unclear if one could handle light in such a way without being completely sure of what the definition of light really is, and what it might contain. Sight is one of the key elements that allow humans to make use of something called observation. Observation and monitoring. These two terms might not differ so much from each other in their definition, however, the outcome of the use of the two is very different in our understanding. For this reason I would like to introduce the term *monitoring*. *Monitoring* here refers to a constant focus on an object or situation, for a certain amount of time, during which the object is perceived.

Monitoring is the process of receiving all of an objects' information and having the ability to reflect this information. It is the creating and gathering of *all* the information that is being communicated between spectator and object. Whilst observation is not far from this definition, I have the feeling that observing and monitoring differ in their incorporation of the process of reflection. Following this notion I employ the term to make clear this difference as well as in the hope that it lends clarity to my perspective on this matter. In turn, alleviating some of my trepidation in providing clear explanations throughout this chapter.

---

13 **Katharina Sieverding**, *Jahresgabe 2001 Katharina Sieverding*, Staatliche Kunstakademie Düsseldorf Mai 1969

Human observation is not precise in terms of *knowing* what we perceive to be real or not, nor *stating* as fact what we believe to be real. Of course one could say that everything that is able to be touched, that is within reach, or is perceivable by the naked eye, should be defined as *real* to humans. But simply observing or monitoring things or objects can't give us a wholly reliable sense that what we see is *really* happening. Moreover, illusion can play cruel tricks on our powers of observation. The information we perceive at this time is no longer reliable due to the notion that during the period of observation something was changing in our surroundings. Changes that can make a key difference in a complete observation, be it objects or other factors that momentarily disturb the monitoring of a subject or object. This is especially likely when we are dealing with the need for a certain amount of time for this observation to take place. Myself, being a human, I constantly experience interference in my observation or monitoring because of my body's automatic movements. With every blink of my eyes, every peripheral or internal sound that my body picks up, etc.

There is a lag time for the reception of perceivable information. This not only causes gaps in my observational process, but also means that I can no longer rely on the information that I was *monitoring*. Anything might happen during this lag time. In a way, one could say it too is a human handicap when it comes down to matters of observation, as there always remains a lack of some information. Perhaps we could make use of tools available to us, to supplement this handicap? This however, may be an unrealistic thought, due to the fact that even if we could use a reliable, constantly activated monitoring device to observe an object, eventually the results would be analysed by a human being. Despite all the modern tools and observation/monitoring devices that are being developed every day, getting closer to achieving the power to fully observe, the dilemma will remain present as long as we can not switch off our imagination. Individuals, seeing and interpreting the world from their own perspective, but being questioned by others interpretations who raise questions through communication, is the way to better understand multiple perspectives.

Art could be used as a tool to communicate, or at least try to make physically visible, what is being questioned by an individual who is in the process of monitoring something. Due to the fact that some artists might monitor the same thing in the same way but finally arrive at different understandings. Others may try to look into the darkness in an attempt to make visible what is not even visible to them. This makes art relevant and interesting as an educative tool. It is unclear if this line of questioning leads one to doubt whether or not an objective observation, or way of seeing the world and the objects within it, is necessary.

Writing here as an artist rather than a researcher, trying to find the solution to this ancient problem, the matter that interests me most is the probability of the possibility that one could benefit, expanding their imagination through creating a larger line of sight. A beginning could be the practice of seeing what others are seeing, in a way supplementing one's perspective with another's.. Making visible what is not yet visible, enabling something to become visible more quickly. Imagination can therefore block our sight. Feelings can block our sight, falling in love can make one blind to reality. One cannot see what is happening outside of the singular perspective that one is looking out of. This ends in seeing only the things we want to see and we are blinded by them.

A mystery that remains unsolved for me: If we acknowledge the possibility of being blinded by our own imagination, tricked by our own physical handicap automatically activated during the act of looking. The question becomes, does it really matter what we tend to miss, rather than what we know? Do we really have to know and see everything?

We can almost say for sure that we will never have the ability to do so. Especially when one considers the fact we humans can fantasize and imagine things in our minds, or can create stories and ideas that can change or rearrange a situation or happening during our observation. And from this we can create a different outcome from what has *really* been monitored. We have the ability to reflect and project, not only ourselves, but also the situations or objects we were monitoring. We tend to see things the way we like or want to see them and then change the information based on that. Does art also become useful when considering this matter?

### *Painting a picture.*

That said, one might now ask a numerous amount of times, Why is there a need to be busy trying to receive and perceive information? Why try to reflect on this, in order to come to a total representation of the observation? What are we really trying to achieve in this process of molding and forming the information that is projected on to our eyes, when the deformation of this process remains implicit in the act observation? It feels to me, like reality is trying to communicate with us by using objects as translators. It attempts to reach us through close connection and confrontation with its presence. This can be seen in its continuous creation and adding of information. While we humans maintain the remarkable capability of using fantasy and imagination, and every individual has a unique way of observing from their different point of perspective, creating different outcomes based on each observation. Art can offer us these questions, since art works can always be questioned from different perspectives, again giving different outcomes on the matter. Is this not one of the nice features of being an individual? We all are related in that we are human by design, regardless of the fact that our looks might differ. Some of us are beautiful, some not, some have coloured skin, some are coloured by hair, etc. on certain occasions it seems one can be blinded by these distinctions when coming in to contact with another.

To paint a picture from an observers perspective, the moment where it all came down. The following scenario took place whilst I was cooking in the kitchen in an apartment. The sauce was at boiling point, and needed to stirred occasionally. The time came when it was necessary to measure the taste of the sauce. Following this, having decided the sauce was “good,” it was served on to plates. Now the scenario might take place where both people sit down to eat the sauce. The guest could express that the taste of the sauce is indeed “good”. This would indicate that both people are experiencing the same sense of satisfaction regarding the food. A kind of shared moment in experiencing taste.

Even though it seems to be the case that both people have the same notion of taste, it may still differ. Why can one not see it? During this dinner one of them might find that they enjoy the taste of bitterness, that bitterness is a comforting taste according to their palate, whilst the other might find her comfort in the taste of sweetness. Regardless, both people tend to experience the same, and in another way they do not. The blind spot is again present; there is a layer that one cannot see. This creates a contradiction in the matter, since we tend to experience and feel the same, within the same observation, whilst undertaking the same action, the one of both eating at the same time (*this is a very important feature in this observation*). But in reality something different is happening, and this scenario fills me with doubt. Do I trust in the existence of the food as something that is physically there, is it real or only in my imagination? Does one really experience the food, or does the food already exist in my mind? Since objects (such as food in this case) have a life of their own, how do I know who is experiencing whom? Since reality never stops producing, and does not take a break to do something else, how can one define the food? One could conclude we human beings have to live with a permanent handicap.

## Conclusion

*“When we see a mountain, or imagine one, it is a mountain we are seeing or imagining, not our idea of a mountain”*

- Jean Paul Sartre

---

### ***My point of blindness.***

When I consider my conclusion in the matter of this research, I am afraid that I do not have a clear point upon which to conclude. As a human being myself, like you, the reader, we share the chronic handicap discussed in this thesis. Observation therefor remains unverifiable, no matter whose it is, yours or mine. However, bonding and gathering together our observations and communicating our experiences with objects can give us a broader understanding and field of sight. We could enter into a process of *mapping out*. Putting every experience or encounter with an object on the map, creating a network of connecting points. Sharing what we already see and know, through documentation, media etc. However, despite this theoretical plan, one has to remember that roads change, roads need to be rebuilt and a map therefore changes over time. Time will effect a fixed definition. This obstacle shall remain, making one doubt if it is indeed worth mapping?

When data is saved on a hard disk, but one lacks the tools to read the hard disk, the disk loses its value, it becomes unreadable, one could even say obsolete. But as an object, it might have another value, as an object documented and then showed to spectators. When creating art, if one does not start from a point, the destination will always be out of reach, or out of focus, visibly unclear, which brings me back to a passage in the novel “Flatland,”

When I was in Spaceland I heard that your sailors have very similar experiences while they traverse your seas and discern some distant island or coast lying on the horizon. The far-off land may have bays, forelands, angles in and out to any number and extent; yet at a distance you see none of these (unless indeed your sun shines bright upon them revealing the projections and retirements by means of light and shade), nothing but a grey unbroken line upon the water.

Well, that is just what we see when one of our triangular or other acquaintances comes towards us in Flatland. As there is neither sun with us, nor any light of such a kind as to make shadows, we have none of the helps to the sight that you have in Spaceland. If our friend comes closer to us we see his line becomes larger; if he leaves us it becomes smaller; but still he looks like a straight line; be he a Triangle, Square, Pentagon, Hexagon, Circle, what you will—a straight Line he looks and nothing else.<sup>14</sup>

Many philosophers have struggled with this subject and nobody seems to have a solution, but is it really of such great importance to know everything? Would it even be good for us? What if one day by accident we communicate with another planet, we engage in an alien communication or interaction? Would this result positively or negatively? It is perhaps a question of believing that you will never know what you will be faced with on the day of judgement. It is in our human interest to find out everything that has not been defined so far, even in the knowledge that we are handicapped.

*“As with you, so also with us, there are four points of the compass North, South, East, and West. There being no sun nor other heavenly bodies, it is impossible for us to determine the North in the usual way; but we have a method of our own”*

**Edwin A. Abbott**, *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions*

One could supply future generations with a map showing/revealing all the points that we have connected so far. In other words, we create a kind of particle accelerator, in which, through the points we have discovered we allow future generations to reflect through reading them. We do this in the hope that one day, we experience a closer kind of encounter with objects, points and situations, these vague phenomena. As an artist and spectator, it is my job to contribute my encounters, modelling them for documentation and revealing them to other spectators. The nice thing about being an artist, is the fact other artists – and spectators – reflect on them already. They too share their encounters, making something visible that was dark before. Therefore the world needs more art. For all the love of science and humanity, hopefully one day I can provide spectators with a solution beyond this conclusion.



## Bibliography.

1. **Frierich Nietzsche's** Perspectivism, *Nietzsche's Perspectivism* (International Nietzsche Studies) authors: **Steven D.Hales** and **Rex Welshon**, Publisher: University of Illinois Press (March 20, 2000)
2. **Roman Dodecahedron** (*unknown object*) Archeological discover.
3. **Edwin A. Abbott** (1884) *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions*, Publisher: by Echo Library (2009)
4. **Hitoshi Matsumoto**, *Shinboru (Symbol)* 2009, directed and played by Hitoshi Matsumoto.
5. **Erwin Schrödinger**, *Schrödinger's cat theory*, Quantum Theory and Measurement (Princeton Series in Physics) (authors: John Archibald Wheeler, Wojciech Hubert Zurek) princeton university press (January 1984)
6. **Nicolas Bourriaud**, *Relational Form*, Relational Aesthetics, 1998
7. **Richard Gregory, Dennett, D.C** (1991) *Consciousness explained*. Little Brown: Boston. **Ramachandran, V.S. & Gregory, R.** (1991) *Perceptual filling in of artificially induced scotomas in human vision*. Nature 350:699-702
8. **Plato**, *The Allegory of the Cave*, from *The Republic* (vol. 7)
9. Article on *The Allergory of the Cave*, full article and source: [www.princeton.edu](http://www.princeton.edu)
10. **Ruudt Peters** (1950) Dutch jeweller. Studied at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie (Amsterdam) 1970-1974
11. **Kazimir Malevich**, *The Black Square*, 1915
12. Article on *The Black Square*, by **John Milner** (From Grove Art Online) source: ©2009 Oxford University Press
13. **Katharina Sieverding**, *Jahresgabe 2001 Katharina Sieverding*, Staatliche Kunstakademie Düsseldorf Mai 1969, 1969/2001
14. **Edwin A.Abbott**, *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions*

---

### *Books, Essays & Articles*

- Alexander Nehamas**, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature* (Harvard University Press, 1985)  
**Edwin A.Abbott**, *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions* (Echo Library 2009)  
**Jean-Paul Sartre**, *The Transcendence of The Ego: An Existentialist Theory of Consciousness* (Published January 1st 1991 by Hill and Wang (first published 1937)  
**Jorge Luis Borges**, *The Aleph and Other Stories* (Published July 27th 2004 by Penguin Classics)  
**Nicolas Bourriaud**, *Relational Aesthetics* (Published January 1st 1998 by Les Presse Du Reel,France)  
**Plato**, *The Allegory of the Cave*, from *The Republic* (vol. 7)  
**Rom Harré**, *Pavlov's Dogs and Schrödinger's Cat: Scenes form the living laboratory* (Oxford University Press 2009)  
**Stephan Hawking**, *A Brief History of Time*, (Bantam Press 1988) (2010 edition)  
**Steven D.Hales and Rex Welshon**, *Nietzsche's Perspectivism* (International Nietzsche Studies) (University of Illinois Press) (March 20, 2000)

---

### *Sources*

- John Milner** (From Grove Art Online)  
**Liesbeth den Besten** (Curator, Author, Art historian)  
**Patrick Cavanagh**, University of Paris Descartes  
**Prof. Richard Gregory**, University of Bristol, U.K.  
**Ruudt Peters** (Jewellery Designer)

---

### *Pictures*

- Bram Wouters,  
Edwin A.Abbott (pic.2)  
Lokilech (pic.1)  
Ruudt Peters (photo: Leo Versteijlen)

---

### *Exhibitions*

- Kazimir Malevich and The Russian Avant-Garde (19 oct 2013 – 2 feb 2014) (Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam) (The Netherlands)  
Römermuseum Homburg-Schwarzenacker, Homburg (Germany)  
Ruudt Peters, Passio 1992 (Galerie Marzee) (The Netherlands)

---

### *Websites*

- [www.books.google.com](http://www.books.google.com) / [www.oup.com](http://www.oup.com) / [www.pbs.org](http://www.pbs.org)  
[www.klimt02.net](http://www.klimt02.net) / [www.princeton.edu](http://www.princeton.edu) / [www.roermuseum-schwarzenacker.de](http://www.roermuseum-schwarzenacker.de) / [www.stedelijk.nl](http://www.stedelijk.nl)



