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**BIRDS-EYE
SANDWICH**

Matzine

-13-

“Jargon”

**MOMENTARY
WINDOW ***

**CAUGHT IN
THE GRIPPERS**

**DATA
BEND**

First published in a limited edition of 60
for the occasion of the debate

‘TO JARGON OR NOT TO JARGON’

held at
38 Hoe Street, Walthamstow
London

on
Wednesday 21st August 2013

with the support of
Waltham Forest Council

matzine number thirteen

Jargon

A little magazine

Edited By

Esme Fieldhouse
&
Ian Pollard

consisting of

Text, drawings & photographs

from

Twenty contributors

including

two artists
an anthropologist
several architects
an archaeologist
some designers
and makers
a musician
a couple of writers
a photographer
one cultural interpreter

with a cover design by

Nous Vous

Nous Vous is a small and close-knit collective collaborating on graphic design work, illustration, exhibitions and other self-initiated projects

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EDITORIAL

Esme Fieldhouse & Ian Pollard



Jargon can be defined both as a language particular to a trade or discipline and an unintelligible code. The ways through which we discuss a piece of work or an object is inextricably tied to how the profession that made it is perceived and experienced by others. Much like any other language, each ‘jargon’ is comfortably familiar to some, alien and intangible to others; this secrecy allows a skill to be guarded, to build intriguing fortresses that ultimately add value and distinction.

Arguably, in architecture it is on the blurry boundaries with other disciplines where the most exciting and innovative things are taking place. In talking about art and architecture, we often find jargon to be both inescapable and irresistible - in particular when it takes a form other than the spoken.

In collaboration, each discipline must exchange particular forms of expression with the understanding that something may be gained – as well as lost – in the translation. How do we balance this exchange with a critical language that is necessarily immersive and unselfconscious?

In matzine 13, the editors sought to explore these themes, and to invite for inquiry some of the questions which might frame them. Contributors have responded admirably, throughout a welcome collection of pieces that range from the sincere to the playful; some reference the theme implicitly, leaving the reader to elucidate, while others provoke with definitive response.

We have included submissions which argue cogently for and against jargon; pieces which in their composition aim to eliminate it; and pieces that are jargon – some submissions even represent a gleeful celebration of it. One essay argues for the utility of its failure – how ‘glitches’ in a digital, code-based design process can offer the possibility of unintended outcomes – while another two question the result of jargon finding itself in the built environment, having been assisted in escaping the page by humans in possession of good intentions.

Our contributors have been just as adventurous in the form their responses take; from the Serpentine Pavilion review offered as a Pantoum – a poetic form which interweaves repeated stanza lines – to a version of architect Cedric Price’s Fun Palace distilled to the monochrome aesthetic of furniture assembly instructions. We applaud the inventiveness. Geography plays its part too: in addition to submissions from the UK we are delighted to include in this issue work from Shanghai, Tokyo, Cape Town and Torre De Moncorvo, by way of Porto.

To conclude we note that in a continuation of recent matzine issues we will be hosting an event in London to accompany the launch, during which several of our contributors will consider the use of jargon when communicating design to the public in a debate entitled ‘To Jargon or Not to Jargon?’; a question we now invite you to consider with enjoyment as you peruse the work within ■

Photo: Nakagin Tower by Fala Atelier



The practice of architecture is jargon. At least, the practice of architecture is a practice of encoding, and code is a form of jargon. In order to explain further, architecture is an allographic art form: instead of an autographic art where the author directly makes the work, architects make a set of instructions which inform a person, a group of people, or perhaps even a machine to make something. The direct work of the architect is not the building, but the code (or jargon) that they produce as a set of instructions.

To the casual contemporary observer the idea of architecture as code may seem a recent phenomenon. Conjuring up, as it does, images of java processing scripts, Grasshopper algorithms and fantastical form-making. Instead, the practice of allographic architecture can be drawn back at least to the Renaissance, if not further. Leon Battista Alberti, whilst possibly not the first architect to practice in this way, was an early evangelist of the importance of instructions in the role of the intellectual

architect. Perhaps his work that best illustrates this is not strictly speaking architectural, but does show his prescient attitude to the encoding of architectural information.

The *Descriptio Urbis Romae* is a short Latin work which contains a map of Rome, surveyed and accurately drawn to scale by Alberti. The book however does not contain this drawing, but instead is a list of numbers, of coded information, with a brief forward which explains how the reader is to understand and reinterpret the information. The numbers are polar coordinates and the description explains how you create a small radial drawing device in order to accurately chart them. What Alberti has done is, instead of physically transcribing the map once in order for it to be visually available and inaccurately copied; he has digitised it so that readers can recreate it accurately for themselves. In Mario Carpo's work *The Alphabet and the Algorithm*, he argues that Alberti was in effect 'digitising' the information.

'Alberti tried to counter the failings of analogue images by digitizing them, in the etymological sense: replacing pictures with a list of numbers and a set of computation instructions, or algorithms, designed to convert a visual image into a digital file and then recreate a copy of the original picture when needed.'

In effect he has produced a primitive algorithm, and one not dissimilar to the instructions behind today's plotters and 3d printers, which may perform more complex operations but operate on the same basic principle.

So we have been able to, since Alberti, reduce architecture to a set of digital instructions, encoded by the architect, and decoded by the craftsman, or machine. What happens then, when something goes wrong? What defines jargon is its incomprehensibility; it needs to be translated in order to be legible to the general public. In our case the digital code needs to be translated before it can become architecture. So what would be the effect of a mistranslation: what if some of the jargon slipped through into the translated version, what would be the architectural manifestation of such a glitch?

The term 'glitch' has been around since astronaut John Glenn coined it in the 1960s to describe 'some of our problems'. Since then it has been appropriated by music and art practice to describe the work of artists disrupting digital systems by causing them to reveal their integral accidents. Glitch musicians have sampled digital noise artifacts, bugs and application errors in order to create new music. Visual glitch artists 'databend', or mistranslate, their digital images in order to create visually distorted versions of the original. Both forms create thrilling and uncanny experiences, with the familiar becoming, suddenly, unknown and failed. Despite the successes of this form of making in art and music, architecture has remained relatively untouched by the possibilities of similar glitches.

There are those architects who have employed the analogue accident as a creative tool, and they might offer a vision for how the glitch might affect architectural design. The early work of James Wines' SITE, in particular the BEST stores and the Laurie Mallet House contain carefully choreographed accidents where the familiar is shown at a critical moment of failure, creating a moment of uncanny. This is relevant for whilst there is value in exploring the accidental glitch or mistranslation of code, what is more interesting is how the techniques and aesthetic of the glitch might, as it has done in visual art, come to be fabricated by the architect. So the architect will purposefully corrupt the code of their building in order to provide ornamentation, or unexpected and uncertain spatial events.

The most successful glitch architecture project yet isn't an architecture project at all, but a video game. In the late nineties art duo Jodi made *Untitled Game*, which is a collection of 'mods', or modified versions, of the iconic video game Quake I. Each one, through modifying in some small way the base code of the game, makes the experience of playing the game different. Although such a prosaic description prepares you little for what occurs when you enter into each game. One in particular, Q-L, begins quite normally only to, on interaction, spin uncontrollably into a non-Newtonian death spin. Each of the mods takes the familiar experience of playing the game and corrupts it, rendering it broken, and leaving us confused and titillated.

The glitch offers an opportunity of exposure to the internal code of an object. For a moment, the perfect façade of completion comes down to reveal some part its construction, making us aware that it occurred. In doing so the glitch offers a momentary window into an incomprehensible jargon. The possibility of the architectural glitch might be a fragment in the completed building of the coded instructions that the architect originally created ■



Ø | -! GLITCHES!

Giles Smith

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BEFORE AND AFTER

Claire Lau

PANTOUM FOR SOU FUJIMOTO'S PRESS RELEASE

Crystal Bennes

The Serpentine Pavilion is a delicate, latticed structure.
It blends cloud, like into the landscape, against the classical backdrop.
An oscillation between the finished and the unfinished, I cannot see this place
without wondering where the natural and the man-made merge. A meeting of the two,

it blends cloud-like into the landscape. Against the classical backdrop
blackened out by an Athenian sky, as it was in that time before slaves.
Without wondering where the natural and the man-made merge; a meeting of the two
selves, chasing days before time across the ocean, and

blackened out by an Athenian sky, as it was in that time before slaves.
I prop myself up with steel poles, I'm not going to fall down.
Selves. Chasing days before time, across the ocean. And
meanwhile, in the artist's own description

I prop myself up with steel poles. I'm not going to fall down.
I cry. What is this thing doing here? On the grass? In the park,
selves, chasing days before time across the ocean, and
Summer's utopic cloud city rises again.

I cry, "what is this thing doing here, on the grass?" In the park,
an oscillation between the finished and the unfinished. I cannot see
Summer's utopic cloud city rising again.
The Serpentine Pavilion is delicate. A latticed structure.

EFFECTS OF THE 2013 SERPENTINE PAVILION

on Dr Crystal J Bennes

LABORATORY REPORT

Title: Effects of the 2013 Serpentine Pavilion on Dr Crystal J Bennes

Name: Crystal J Bennes

Date: 1 August, 2013

Lab Partners: Sou Fujimoto, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Julia Peyton-Jones

Purpose

One of the primary methods used to characterise a new architectural structure is the physical determination of its qualities by a first-person assessment. As such, the purpose of the experiment is to determine the effects of the 2013 Serpentine Pavilion, designed by Sou Fujimoto, on the principle investigator, Dr Crystal Bennes. The experiment was commissioned by Esme Fieldhouse and Ian Pollard of matzine, in the hope of shedding some light on the role of jargon in architectural discourse. In this experiment we will first perform a careful deployment the self-actualisation of bodily presence method. Following this, we will measure the responses of the principle investigator over a 21 minute period of observation. We will use this data to determine the whether the structure may be classified as “good” or “bad”.

Materials

Piccadilly line; Notebook; Pen; Camera; Foam earplugs; 1 bottle lemonade

Procedure

Take the Piccadilly line to Gloucester Road Station

Walk from Gloucester Road Station to the Serpentine Pavilion in Hyde Park

Arrive at the pavilion

Observe external pavilion structure

Make observational notes

Take a closer look; go inside the pavilion

Insert earplugs (useful for making accurate observations when confronted with experimental disturbances, i.e. shrieking children)

Continue active observations for 21 minutes

Take 15-17 photographs to accompany the report

Depart pavilion from northern side of the park

Experimental Data

27,000 20ml steel tubes used to create pavilion structure

Indeterminate number of 1.2m clear, polycarbonate discs

Indeterminate number of 0.6m clear, polycarbonate discs

Structure is 24m wide and 7m high, over a total area of 357 m²

150mm thick 275m² concrete raft foundation rests underneath

Observational Data:

In chronological order, from minute 1 to minute 21, the principle investigator recorded the following.

Notes from the observations appear in comments.

Relief (at least this isn't as bad as last year's pavilion)

Curiosity (what the hell is going on here?)

Irritated curiosity (seriously, what is going on here?)

Revelation (ah, I'm beginning to get it)

Distraction (what are all these screaming children doing, and where are their parents?)

Irritation (god, those hand rails are ugly, aren't they)

Doubt (it doesn't look anything like a cloud)

Anger + extreme irritation (“the cloud is such an interesting idea for the 21st century, because on the one hand it's eternal – it's something which has fascinated human beings for century. However, there is also the digital cloud. So cloud is a great topic to bring the past, the present and the future together!” ARGH!)

Curiosity (I wonder who they're going to flog it to this year?)

Impulsiveness (I fancy a lemonade)

Delight (it doesn't look so bad from far away)

Decisive (time to go)

Conclusions:

In this experiment we determined that our conclusions in relation to the 2013 Serpentine Pavilion were inconclusive, neither “good” nor “bad”. Findings were mixed. Our initial hypothesis was that the resulting effects would be those of irascibility, aesthetic confusion and perhaps even anger. While these effects were observed, they were also accompanied by unanticipated signs of interest and amusement. A future experiment might include an additional calibration using a large bottle of something alcoholic.

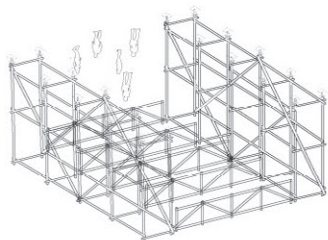
References:

2013 Serpentine Pavilion press release

Available at <http://www.serpentinegallery.org/>

Video: the making of Sou Fujimoto's Serpentine Pavilion

Available at <http://www.wallpaper.com/architecture/>

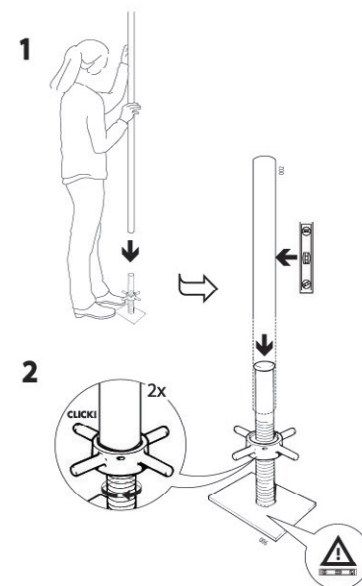
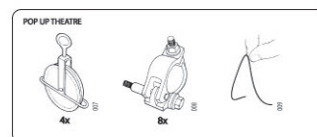
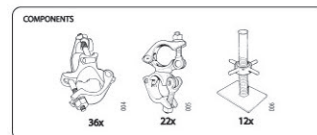
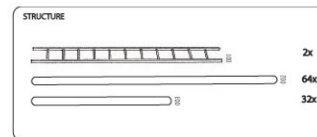
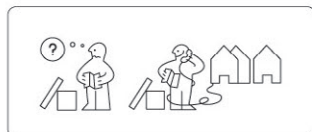


FUN PALACE
EU
ASSEMBLE FOR ANY PURPOSE
RE-USE COMPONENTS
USERS - ALL

GHOSTWRITING THE FUN PALACE

Euan Russell

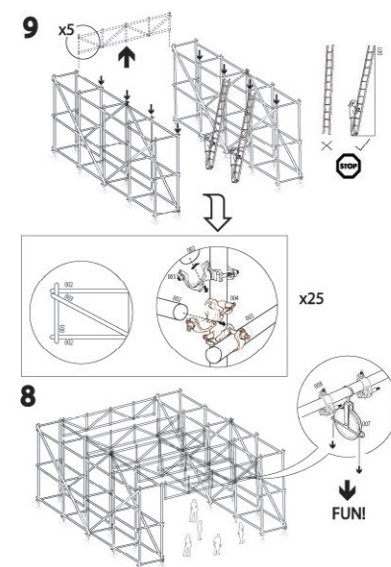
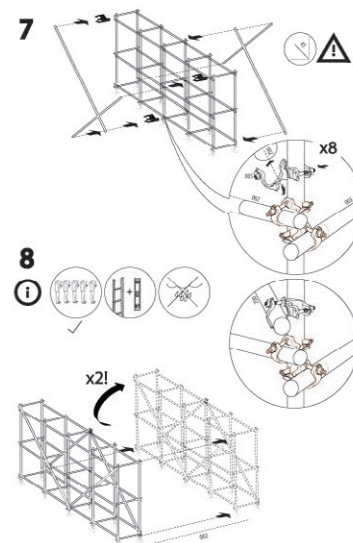
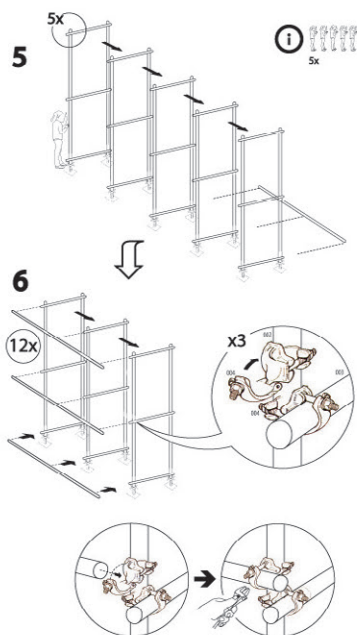
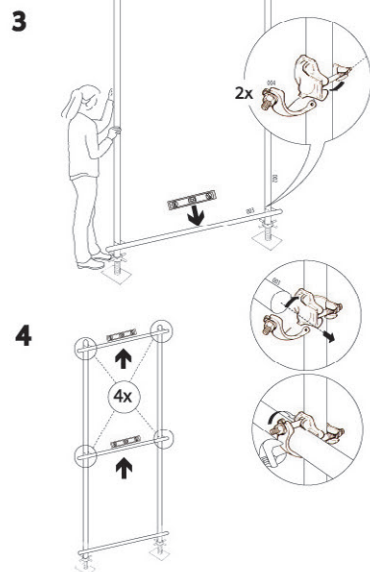
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A few years ago I trained an east London group in how to read and critique design proposals, so that they could influence major development in their area through a council-initiated design review panel. Halfway through the first session one of them suddenly interjected, “What is this ‘space’ you keep talking about? I don’t get it. To me space is that black stuff in the sky with stars in it.” A reminder that any word can be jargon in the right – or the wrong – context.

As semiotician Mikhail Bakhtin states “Neutral dictionary meanings of the words of a language ensure their common features and guarantee that all speakers of a given language will understand one another [or in this case maybe not even that!], but the use of words in live speech communication is always individual and contextual in nature.” [my italics] When talking about change in the world around us, I would far rather focus on that – the delicacy, the contingency, and yet the beautiful flexibility of language, and on the need to be always conscious and critical of one’s choice of words – than on simplistic guidance about what is jargon and what isn’t.

Which brings me to the recent government jargon crackdown: a style guide for all official documents. The kind of guidance that trickles down to local government, the context and client for so many of AOC’s design projects. The Independent’s Whitehall editor summarises: “There will be no more advancing, collaborating, combat-ing or pledging. People will no longer be empowered. Government will no longer facilitate while even ministers will not be focusing on areas of policy.”

This worries me a bit. For example, I’ve always quite liked the idea of being empowered. Of having my capacity fostered to act on issues that matter to me. Working in regeneration in a city as polarized as London, it’s a word I know matters to groups who don’t have that capacity, and

who’ve inherited the term from 1970s activism. Likewise, when I read that “Civil servants will no longer commit or pledge, because, as the guide points out, ‘we’re either doing something or we’re not’” I feel concerned. Because politics are difficult and you can’t always do the thing you want to do immediately, but you can at least make clear that you are going to do everything you can to achieve it.

Of course, the origin of much of this is George Orwell’s ‘Politics and the English Language’. This bible of ‘plain English’, likely to be found in the hands of any political speechwriter or PR person, famously calls for clarity and simplicity in political discussion, and rails against the bombast of Orwell’s era. But as critics have since pointed out, the context has changed. Today’s politicians have ‘got’ this idea and are making it work for them.

‘Simple’ language is now the norm, with apparently neutral (and yet in fact value-laden) words bandied around as if we all know exactly what they meant, and as if there were no agenda (sorry, banned word!) linked to them. As John Pilger recently wrote, when an idea of social justice has been replaced by the term “fairness”, something insidious is happening. ‘Social justice’ is not a simple concept, but it implies something that needs to be planned and considered, something to debate and strive for, something a bit scary and powerful. But fairness, you can’t argue with it can you? And yet what does it actually mean? It inhabits that murky realm known as ‘common sense’, where people claim all kinds of (unfair) things to be right, because that’s the way they’ve always been. Its apparent innocence encourages us to forget that language is never free of emotion or morality, and that my fairness is not necessarily yours. Or, to cite Bakhtin again, “Language is not a neutral medium ... it is populated –overpopulated– with the intentions of others.” Someone in authority has chosen that term with care in order to ‘frame’ the debate.



Extract from a Tower Hamlets ‘public engagement’ poster

I’m not arguing for needless complexity in discussion about politics, including the politics of the built environment, the field where I operate. And I admit that there is plenty of jargon in circulation, in the sense of words used inappropriately for their contexts. But context is key. There are terms such as ‘community engagement’ and ‘stakeholder’ that, although they provoke an inward cringe, due to implied values and power dynamics, are useful shorthand in discussion with relevant council officers or community collaborators. We can get to the important business faster if we have these building-blocks to help us.

But I would be careful about using them in broader public communication. When a poster invites me to a ‘community engagement’ event, I just feel depressed. On the one hand it’s good to see that bald honesty in graphic form. That admission that the ‘community’, whatever that is, is fragmented and disenfranchised enough that there is a special budget to try to lure us together through bouncy castles and mini-golf. But as someone wanting to have

some fun with my child on a Saturday afternoon, I just feel turned off by being ‘done to’ in such a joyless way.

However, there are three areas where I think language commonly dismissed as jargon does play a useful role in what I do:

1. When it helps acknowledge the provisionality or nature of the activity described. The term ‘funday’, despite its obvious limitations, does not wind me up so much as ‘community engagement event’. My fellow residents on my Bethnal Green estate committee have freely chosen to adopt this word for an activity we’re planning. We’re using it because we know that, jargon as it may be, the diverse inhabitants of our sprawling blocks will understand what is offered. Promising a party, or a picnic, or a sports day would be riskier, in terms both of expectations, and of people recognizing whether this is really for them or not. It’s a shit word, but you know, sometimes it’s better to spend time on actions than on finding the perfect word if actually the words will do. Likewise, the term ‘regeneration’ is useful precisely because it is so clearly loaded with moral, even religious, connotations, in a way that ‘improvement’ and ‘development’, more straightforward words, arguably are not. It invites questioning of its meaning and motive, which can only be a good thing.

2. When it helps people make sense together, to use a term purloined from Jeremy Till’s essay ‘The Negotiation of Hope’, in turn borrowed from planner John Forester. One commonly condemned genre of jargon is that of the ‘new’ word, more often an existing word appropriated, perhaps for its metaphorical handiness, and used in a new context, or combined with another word to make a new phrase. I don’t have a problem with this. Language is an evolving, provisional thing. It’s what I love about it. Often on participatory projects we will end up inventing new terms to describe a particular space or concept with the groups we work with. Our own shorthand. Some

words only endure the life of the project. Others survive. The word ‘hub’, an infamous piece of jargon, doubtless has this origin. In trying to avoid using the term ‘community centre’, now indissociably linked with worthy yet bleak institutional buildings, that term must have seemed metaphorically very attractive. We have a project right now where a group want to use it. They like what they understand it to say.

3. When it empowers people to participate in, and to critique, strategic conversations. It annoys me when PR types on projects try to plain-Englishify all the terminology. It may make sense to do so for the comms of that project, but it makes none in terms of a bigger picture. Like it or not, terms such as ‘stakeholder’, and ‘context’ (liberally sprinkled through this article, I know) and ‘density’ – all words that I’ve been asked to remove in the past – are being used as useful shorthand by those holding money and decision-making power. All three, arguably, are also useful words in that environment. If non-professionals are going to accede to any kind of meaningful agency in decision-making about distribution over spatial, economic and social resources, or simply the ‘look and feel’ of their area, then acquiring some of this language, and feeling confident not only in deciphering and using it, but also in challenging it, can only be a good thing. (Of course, in introducing people to these terms I would always explain what they are understood to mean, just as I would expect myself when trying to learn a new language.)

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2. Oliver Wright, ‘Only pizzas are delivered’: Public sector jargon banned in first style guide for Government announcements’, *The Independent*, 24 July 2013
3. Hayley Dixon, ‘New Whitehall style guide bans jargon’, *The Telegraph*, 25 July 2013

Above all, I believe in language as matter, as material. Not as a little box of rigid components. It is something that we shape together, and that in turn shapes our consciousness. As critic Brett Steele says with reference to one of my architectural heroines: “In the world of Denise Scott Brown, words too are a building material. With them, material culture is invented and negotiated, interrogated and communicated.” Jargon, critically adopted and applied within our existing social and political context – as opposed to some ideal Edenic world of communication – has potential to help elicit not only a different set of decision-making dynamics, but also outcomes that are ‘owned’ and influenced by a broader community ■

4. George Orwell, *Politics and the English Language*, (London: Horizon, 1946)
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Kinfauns condition was discovered in the United States of America in the year 2027. The condition was characterised by a broad range of symptoms including lethargy, delusions of grandeur, crippling despair, and elements of attention deficit disorder. After its discovery up to 40% of the population were diagnosed as sufferers, within 20 years this figure had rose to up to 70% - 80% according to conservative estimates. Governmental awareness campaigns of the condition were coordinated through the usual social media channels along with information on self-diagnosis using an online questionnaire. Self-diagnosis in this manner was considered adequate grounds to apply for a prescription for medication.

It was with a mixture of fear and relief that Jim Seagold learned that he was a sufferer. The fact that he was suffering from a new, unknown mental illness was definitely unsettling, however, relief stemmed from finally knowing what exactly it was that had been troubling him for what felt like most of his life. In reflection he struggled to recall a time of the calmness, optimism and certainty that others seemed to project and that he himself felt entitled to. As well as the comfort of a definitive diagnosis, he also had access to the cure.

The overwhelming epidemical nature of Kinfauns syndrome was such that government health boards gave the green light to synthesise and prescribe an experimental new treatment, Sympaprex-Pro, to anyone who required it. A lack of scientific testing and the range of alarming side effects (including hallucinations, nausea, episodes of severe confusion, panic, Tourettes and listlessness) led many to criticise the government. Such critics were generally diagnosed with mental illness and sectioned.

Children as young as seven years old were being diagnosed with the condition and immediately being prescribed with Sympaprex. Jim felt a sense of righteous-

ness and specialness as he asked for a private word with his manager to patiently explain his diagnosis. To his acute dismay, his manager grinned ruefully and disclosed that he was also suffering from the illness, as was Rachel in accounts and Steven, the head of the SEO department. Full acceptance and sympathy/empathy was directed towards him, the 21st Century was ushering in a new era of understanding and benevolence compared to the stigma and ignorant persecution associated with mental health issues in previous centuries.

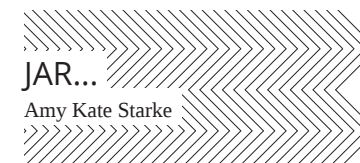
This sympathy did not extend to Jim's wife Shelia. Disdainful of his tendency towards childish self-sympathy and malingering, Shelia was sceptical of her husband's avowed condition. This scepticism was unspoken but registered by Jim in non-verbal cues, or so he thought. There existed, of course, the possibility that paranoid thoughts were forming either as a result of the illness itself or even as a side effect of the medicine.

Sympaprex-Pro had been developed by a team headed by Dr Larry Kinfauns, the founder of the illness which proudly bore his name. A short man with curly hair and cloudy eyes, Kinfauns spearheaded a new self-help movement which incorporated elements of Tai Chi, Yoga, contemporary dance and rollerskating to instil tranquillity and mental clarity in the newly diagnosed mentally ill. There was a creative element of self-expression involved in this practice - adherents were encouraged to devise their own routines, their own manoeuvres, their very own perfect catharsis. Jim became obsessed with this idea and practiced in most of his spare time, much to the disdain and incredulity of Shelia. He became increasingly pre-occupied with the goal of ego-death and travelled to several seminars in New York with various holographic entities.

News that the seminar was set to be hosted by a holographic entity bearing the likeness of Dr Kinfauns was

met with general derision by some, yet the vast majority of Sympaprex users were fervent, pious even, in their admiration of the work of Dr Kinfauns and his team. He went through a phase of being convinced that Shelia was a holographic entity and, later, a phase of believing that he himself might be a holographic entity. Several similar episodes of severe confusion and existential vertigo were to follow whilst his doctor balanced out his medication. He continued to work on his manoeuvre, staying up as late as 10am and then sleeping until dusk the next day.

A revolution of consciousness was beginning to occur globally. And yet Shelia remained sceptical. Jim envisioned her amidst swirling mist and ice. Jim envisioned her far away, on a ruinous desert plain. The unbearable trickle of sand, the monotonous heat, the slow movements of an ancient chess game. He felt cowed, he felt sapped. He was degenerating. He felt perversely good. He would perfect his manoeuvre at the cost of all else. He alone would impress Larry Kinfauns ■



AN ODE TO PIDGIN

Nina Shen-Poblete

Linguistics denotes the word ‘jargon’ as the most rudimentary type of pidgin.

An example is the Chinook (or Chinuk) Jargon, a pidgin trade language widely adopted in Western North America. When European traders, voyagers and missionaries arrived in China, access to their language was seen as a threat by the Chinese government, who subsequently forbade the teaching of Chinese to foreigners. The learning of Chinese was therefore conducted in secret and often at sea, as European travellers brought Chinese teachers from Europe to practice with on the long voyages to the east. Pidgin appears to be a language born outside time and space, laws and hierarchies, where cultural differences were blunted and words were splattered together as the sea currents chased and tugged them to far-off shores. The hybrid tongue acquired characteristics of both the familiar and the strange. An amalgamation of disparate languages, it took the sentence structure of the Chinese, adding English and French words as required. No one could claim to be a native speaker; it was a language of the placeless. Despite being relatively low in cultural prestige, compared with other languages, Pidgin’s genius lies in its brutal efficiency in transporting meaning across language barriers. It prioritises communication over formal structures; the language is built from words, sounds, gestures - anything capable of facilitating human expression.

∞

Paris, 2013.

Peering down at a distance from the first floor of a Parisian apartment - the street is deserted, and the signs glare back at you:

PARADA – parade? / ‘para’ – to stop / or an allusion to the successful global brand PRADA?

YvesCalin Lautinel – homage to YvesSaintLaurent?

Good Miss – too good to miss?

LOVIE – a mis-spelt ‘Lovlie’ / association with LOEWE, the Spanish luxury leather and accessories brand.

The names invite diverse associations and misinterpretations...



§

An amble through the quarter. The street level of this neighbourhood is completely colonised by the business of importing and exporting large quantities of mass-produced clothing.



EXPORT IMPORT
GROS ½ GROS PRET A PORTER



Merchandise for a seemingly insatiable consumer mass. Clothes measured by weight, not quality.

The dark side of 'couture' - their strategy is a method of ruthless appropriation and subversion. Shop fronts, their labelling, - like a cross-dressing game - It is made up of words and signs strewn together in a scroll of collaged images and linguistic associations that mock the faux promises of the luxury fashion houses. The tongue-in-cheek bastardisation of carefully groomed symbols, parodies and taunts the hubris and financial demise of their elite cultural counter-parts. The line of shop-fronts takes me on a Pynchonesque rhetorical excursion - words and symbols are rearranged in pun phonetic mixed, cut-ups and collages, to obscure the ready-made fashion iconography.



If the holy grail of branding lies in the ultimate immortalisation of the image, then it can be suggested that the quality of universality lies in the symbolic content of the sign rather than the word itself. Not obeying any logical grammatical sequences, the shops' titles freely corrupt the sequence of letters but retain the familiarity of the brand image, like juxtaposing phonetic approximations in pidgin. Texts are distorted and dissolved into signs, icons, logotypes, whose power of rhetoric precedes their reading. The new identities are executed simultaneously in careful mimicry and a careless/casual composition: the entire typeface is copied, the shape of the ticks and curves lovingly traced; but the sophistication of the logo is betrayed by its careless positioning on a thrift ensemble with 'import/export'. PARADA wants to offer PRADA, and make it accessible by informing the world that the contents are directly from the manufacturer - always value for money. Located in Paris, its goods carry the prestige of the eponymous capital of taste, but with price-tags unaffected by its high rentals. The best of both worlds is made possible by a vast underground network of mass production sweat shops - a network of traders and slaves shored in unknown continents, in the crevices of the late-capitalist and post-colonial powers...commerce circling back to where it began.

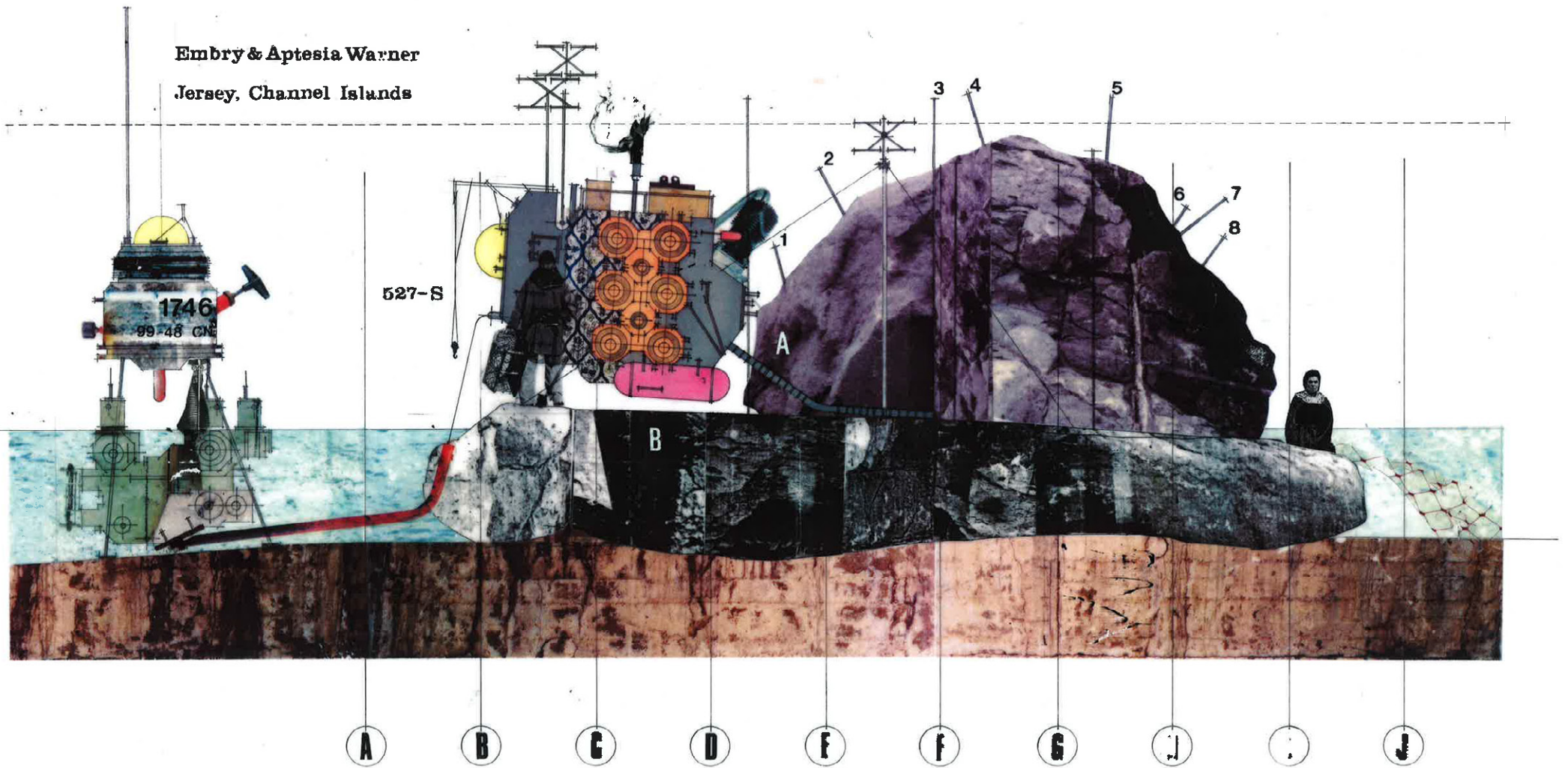
They communicate in a prophetic chant, telling us what we desire, about femininity and youth. The rhetoric of marketing operates across two disparate cultures segregated by wealth and taste, on a common ground on which ideas of individuality and desire have been engineered by the all-pervasive machines of mass media: magazines, shopping bags, billboards and so on, bringing idealised lifestyles from bus stops to coffee tables, emblems seeping deeply into the consciousness of all social strata. Few people have actually worn the clothes, even fewer have access to the lifestyles, but most can be said to be literate in the pictograms of labels.

Underneath the vestige left by the punched holes that faintly traced out the letters PUMPKIN, the wave of the arm of the graffitist spells out 'SLIPE'.



As I peer again at the shop signs in photographs, I am transported to the world of the 'Crying of Lot 49', a world seen through the fogged lens of a protagonist trying to connect meanings and symbols that collude in some kind of conspiracy, teasing unworldly ignorance with a sort of pidgin that hints at meaning but doesn't spell it out. Perhaps the synchronicity of pidgin and the world of apparel is not accidental after all ■

Embry & Aptesia Warner
Jersey, Channel Islands



REFUGES

Marc Medland



Testimonials

PH-300-J - Potholers' Refuge (overleaf)

"I first saw an Evans refuge at a fund-raising event at MOMA in New York. The following day I called Wally and we began a three-month collaboration, which resulted in my Evans PH-300-F. It was originally installed in the Fisher Ridge Cave System near Cave City, Kentucky. This same unit has now been adapted by Wally and is my office at my summer home on Long Island. My current refuge, a PH-300-J (pictured) was completed six months ago. Wally and I worked on that design for 18 months. I shipped elements to England that I wanted incorporating into the final design. The attention to detail is incredible and the whole experience was a joy".

Howard Alder III, CEO, Sarnier Industrial Group

AV-3-K - Bird Watcher's Refuge

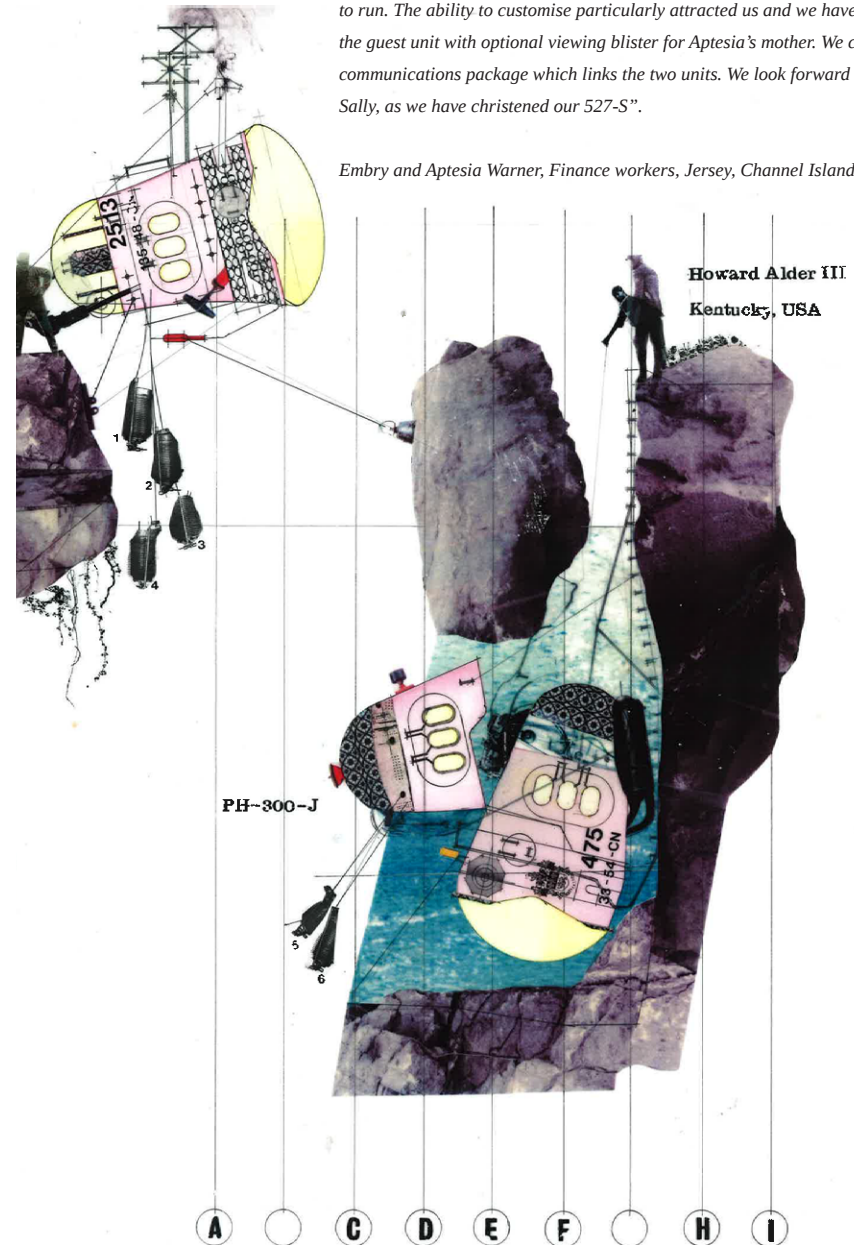
In September 2019, my father-in-law, José Andrade and I bought the EADS-Swift AV-3-K deluxe. We bought it predominantly for use at weekends for our bird watching trips to the Laurisilva, in the north of Madeira. The forest is home to the Madeiran long-toed pigeon, a passion of ours. The unit is 'moored' on the floor of the forest. We often arrive on a Saturday morning, I strap on the standard issue wings, stand atop the unit and flap, raising the unit up into the forest's canopy. José then climbs up using a series of drop down rope ladders. The AV-3-K was a replacement for our six year old AS-1-C, an adapted astronomical observatory. This was traded in through the EADS-Swift quality exchange programme – a painfree experience.

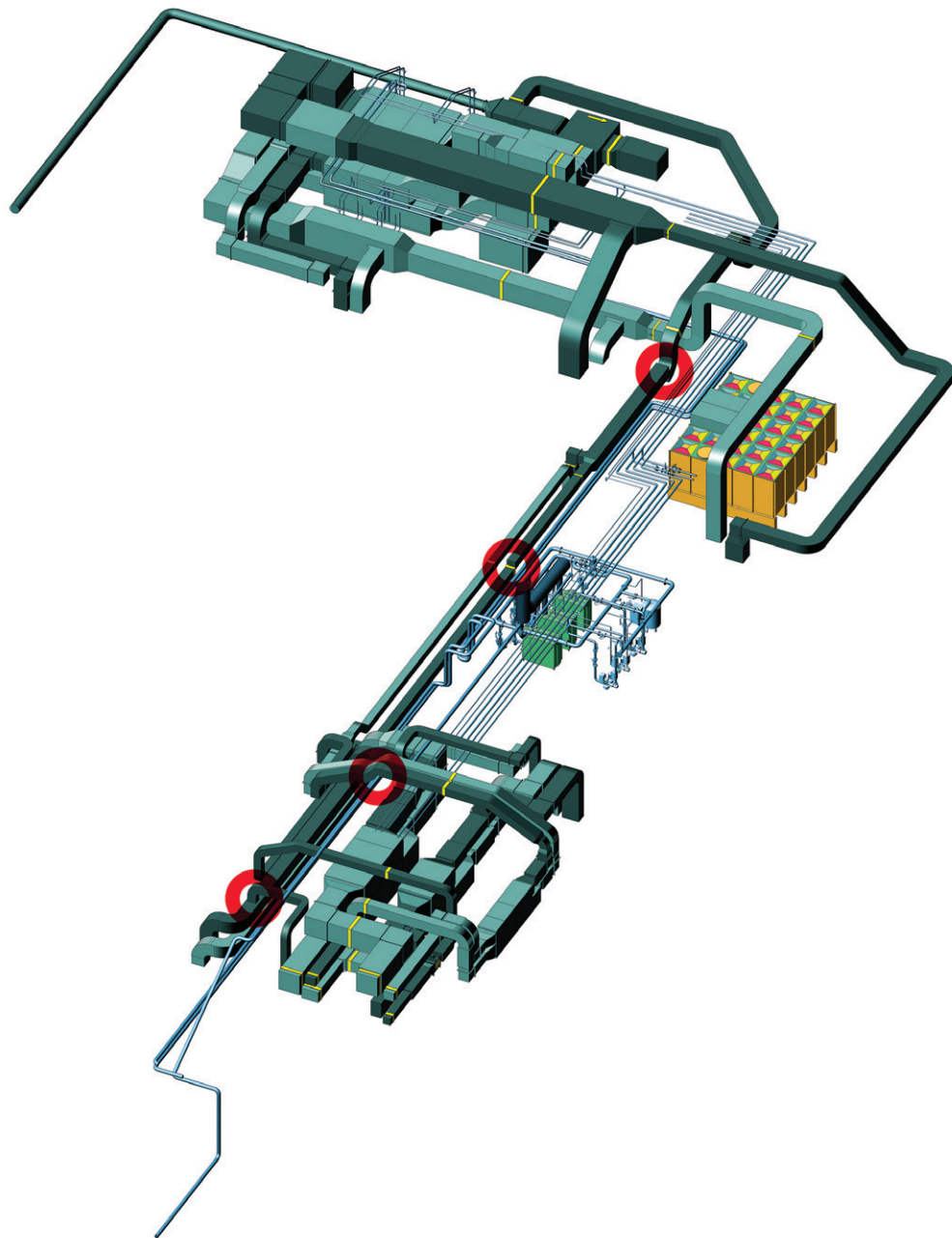
Pedro Santos, Washing machine repair engineer, Madeira

527-S - Fishermen's Refuge

"We bought our 527-S in its first season. In every area the Farmarina outperformed all of its key competitors. The team at Farmarina has provided outstanding level of service. Our fishing experience has transformed – each trip is now an adventure, and we are the envy of all our fishing friends. The 527-S has proved completely reliable and extremely economical to run. The ability to customise particularly attracted us and we have recently purchased the guest unit with optional viewing blister for Aptesia's mother. We chose not to include the communications package which links the two units. We look forward to many future trips in Sally, as we have christened our 527-S".

Embry and Aptesia Warner, Finance workers, Jersey, Channel Islands





JARGON DOWN

Robert Fieldhouse

In a swivelling screw of thoughts
brought inside the mind,
ideas are locked.

Thoughts fluctuate in Summer rain;
spraying the windscreen
with grey change.

Binary lives begin to digitalize
their robotic selves,
on 3 D screens.

Ten billion beings grow high,
hitting heads on clouds
made of blue steel.

Everyone springs well apart,
unconnected to all,
outside the mind.

Lord Jargon looms way above
low, blue steel clouds,
unable to view.

Outside the dark, dry gated plot,
hunter gatherers observe
a herd of deer.

Each one becomes a gold statue,
set in a forest nature
of reality.

Ø54CU PCWS DTB

Andrew Skulina

THE CONSULTANTS

Luke Hebblethwaite

The consultants are in my office. They're vampires.

When it started there was just a few of them. Here to review our systems, they said. It'll only take a couple of weeks, they said. We want to understand how you work, they said, it'll just be a few sessions.

Those first analysts, tanned bodies in neatly pressed shirts, all trustworthy faces and assuring smiles.

Breakout sessions became deep-dives, became requirements definition get-togethers and solution design technical documentation. Meetings escalated to workshops, workstreams and projects with Gantt-charted timelines.

Steadily their numbers grew. Facilitators, Project Managers and Technical Analysts joined Data Architects, Process Specialists and Solution Development Coordinators. Each one added to the roster an identikit reworking of the last: young, lithe and endlessly enthusiastic, keen, sincere eyes bright on the surface but calculating and distant underneath.

They spread out across the office like oil across a protected beachfront, working into all the cracks, every spare seat occupied, colleagues and co-workers emerging from meeting rooms choked with assurances, slick with sincerities.

You could see them target the weak, the unsuspecting, the self-important. Confident smiles, encouraging laughter, always placating, everything empowering. Everyone's a resource, following their swimlane. There's no such thing as a stupid question. We're setting up a strawman here, just blue sky thinking.

Social entrapment, lubricated with on-the-company alcohol. And they can drink, I'll give them that. It's like it

doesn't even touch them but they'll make sure it hits you. Loose lips revealing sinking ships; it all comes out when the bar tab is paid for. Seduced into your own redundancy. Once you're hooked, you're blind. You say what they say. You want what they want. Executive hands tied with delusions of control. Enthralled. This is their party now. And that's when it started to happen. Projects slid. Milestones missed. Deadlines drifted into uncertainty.

Clare was the first one to turn and the first to disappear. A PA became Change Management Facilitator. I'd sat in a meeting with her on the Friday morning while she explained the Roadmap to Good Customer Service Action Plan, an indecipherable collage of marker pen and post-it notes drawn out in excruciating detail. Green for milestones, yellow for pain points. The consulting hawks watched over with glee, faces illuminated with the glow of their standard issue iPads. "This is where we are now and this is when we'll complete the Implementation Phase of Workstream Two". One of them even clapped at the end.

At lunchtime, I saw one of the younger consultants sobbing in a side street. Back in the office, the rest sat in perfect ranks. One of them had a pile of blood-soaked napkins in the bin by their desk. I never saw Clare again.

They tried it on me at an after-work social, once. Plied me with drinks, told me how important I was and how amazed they were with how much they said I knew. "You're the rock of that company, man, you're the smartest guy in the building" thundered one as he clapped me on the back, "what we need to do is get inside your brain and get all of that knowledge out" opined another with a manly arm draped across my shoulder. A beautiful Process Specialist pressed against me, drowning me in

her awe-filled eyes, whispering words of admired qualities and broken taboos into the nape of my neck; "I wish I worked in your team, you guys are the most fun" and "I can't believe you said no to our Department Head, if I did that I'd be fired; you're such a rebel". I'm a Subject Matter Expert. I'm drunk and they're paying. "Why don't you come and work for us", they said, "We really need people like you". It was bewitching; their magnetic appeals urging me to join them.

It was too perfect though, too easy. They leant just a little too hard and my self-confidence couldn't take it. I left them there, making excuses, as they beckoned me back with waving arms. I swear I was lucky, their disappointment was visceral.

Next to go was Simon Bruce, Sales Conversions Executive Manager. I didn't know Simon much, only by his reputation as a notorious but ineffective womaniser, wannabe actor and sender of the company "Hot Shots and Super Stars" emails. He'd booked in a month's holiday but went missing on a Wednesday six weeks before. There were rumours of a drunken argument with the consultant's Operations Director. I found his notebooks partly shredded in the post room, stuffed into a cupboard with a holdall of men's clothes. One of the consultants took over Simon's job. Two others joined the company a week later in Executive roles.

In October there was a string of unannounced departures after a whole workstream collapsed. A company-wide email was sent saying that there was a review underway and that certain departments were being restructured to ensure maximum efficiency. The language was obfuscating and vague. Bear with us, it said, this will be for the benefit of us all.

One of those who disappeared was a popular lifestyle blogger with an acerbic tone. For the next three months her blog was only updated with pictures of cats before being closed without an explanation. Three more con-

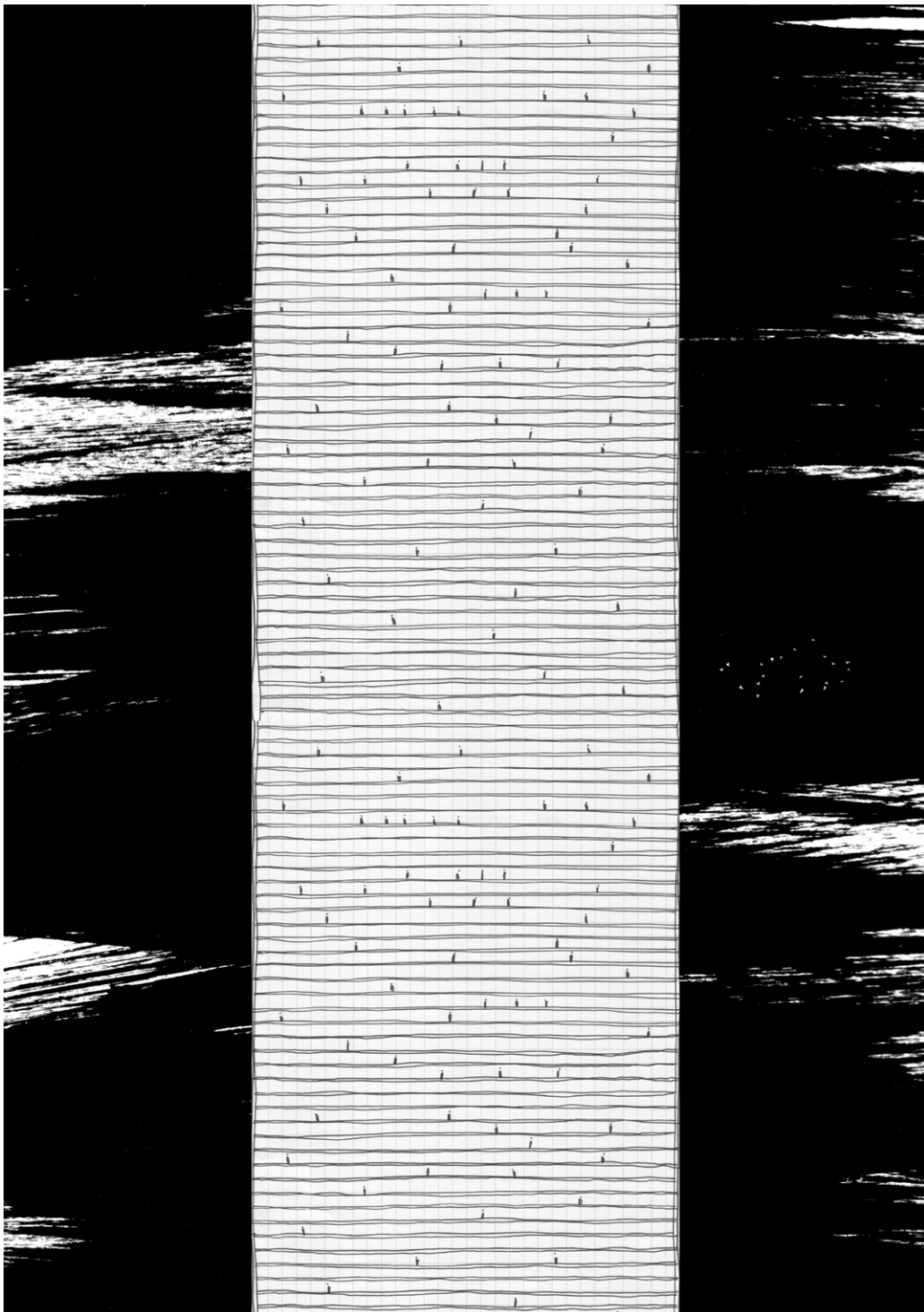
sultants joined the company. The Financial Controller went missing. The culture turned in on itself. Company communications would be sent frequently and without apparent meaning, needless updates on projects that no-one understood that never seemed to end. A CSR team was set up to raise money for a local blood-bank and participation in fund-raising became expected. Those who abstained were singled out for performance reviews. No-one was accountable. Everyone was exhausted.

A new sales division was set up, dealing with high volume, low impact customer cases. Because of the nature of the work, it was said, the team could be made up of temps, managed by one permanent employee, a former consultant. Sat away from the rest of us, the temps seemed to change on a daily basis, a steady rotation of young Irish and Australians, casually dressed, difficult to remember. They ran a tight ship, though. Targets were easily met, the money seemed to come in. It was a proven success. The basement was cleared out and extended to accommodate the ever-expanding team.

There's real fear here now, but it's impossible to leave. A few that did were destroyed with scathing references and word-of-mouth personal assassinations. Those that did find other work soon went silent and were never heard from again. My social network contacts read like a graveyard. The HR department know where my parents live. I don't even know what my job is anymore.

You catch them every now and again, leering over desk dividers, eyeing the workers like wolves watching sheep. Whatever's behind those eyes is something dark, something eldritch, something clinical. There seems to be more of them than us these days. I guess they keep us for the show.

Every obscure project actioned. Every sentence homogenised. Everything scalable, everything synergising, everything taken to the next level. We are the bleeding edge of our industry ■





Jargon is often seen as unclear and difficult to understand, or a private language belonging only to members of the ‘club’. Visually we are surrounded by jargon all day, from widgets and icons on computers to road signs and brand logos; it clutters the world around us. It is often considered an irritant, especially when designing buildings: how to subtly include those garishly green fire exit signs. However when we consider the impact of visual jargon – the symbols that surround us – the negative impact begins to disappear. Visual jargon is quicker and clearer than reading a paragraph of text, and gets the message across quickly. Road signs would be a good deal more difficult to understand, not to mention potentially dangerous, if they were comprised of reams of text rather than their iconic images of stooped elderly people, leaping deer or hurrying parents with children.

Visual jargon surrounds us and influences our movements every day, whether we are aware of it or not. Even before we take the driving theory test in our late teens we are aware that a silhouette of a man opening an umbrella, within a red triangle, generally means there will be roadworks of some description nearby; and even most small children are aware of the distinction between the stick person with the ‘dress’ as opposed to that with the ‘trousers’ designating a toilet.

This is not something we tend to give too much thought to but on moving to China last October I discovered that this visual jargon was essential to navigating a country whose written language I was unable to decipher. Visual jargon has become a truly international language and a way to communicate across cultures; it spills out from the road signs into hand gestures and miming. The potential communicative power of visual jargon cannot be underestimated: I have conducted entire transactions with Chinese shopkeepers without a single word being uttered, using only hand gestures and miming.

This system of often instinctive gestures has been formalised in Makaton and is widely used in communicating with disabled children and adults. The very fact that these gestures and signs are international is fascinating; some gestures and signs (thumbs up, nodding, shaking of the head) are interpreted differently in different cultures but others are universal. This is where the roots of language must be considered.

At the root of every language is the one thing we all have in common, the one ‘club’ we all belong to and therefore the one type of jargon we can all comprehend: the human body. We all feel cold and hot, so rubbing our arms / wiping our brow will indicate cold / hot to



someone of any culture as an action associated with this feeling. In the same way emotions can be communicated: a smile, tears or a hand over the heart are universally understood as happy, sad or love. Similarly, the universally understood written signs are often pictograms of the human body, such as the infamous loo lady or the person in a wheelchair, even the humble arrow could be interpreted as a pointing finger. Other internationally understood signs are clearly understood by the function that an object plays in relation to the body: a train, car or bus indicates travel or transport; a bed, rest or sleep; and a tennis racket or football, tennis or football respectively. This last example has been well adapted by organisers of international sporting events such as the Olympics to make signage clearer for audiences from multiple countries.

A final category is very much current and shows no consideration of the human body at all, though it pays great testament to the skills of graphic designers and



advertisers worldwide. There are very few places now where, for instance, the use of the Coca Cola sign or McDonald’s arches are not understood or where the Apple logo could mean anything but high tech gadgets. As international visual jargon adapts from being understood in terms of the human body to being understood in terms of consumption, we must ask ourselves if this is a level of communication and connection that we are happy with - if a shared love of Coca Cola or iPads will lead to meaningful connections.

As society becomes increasingly global, this language of visual jargon will become more meaningful and relevant to our lives. What can be helpful for finding a restaurant on holiday is also a way of communicating; sharing our thoughts and ideas. As designers we must be aware of the power we have to add to this language- and the responsibility of the level human connection that results from it ■

VISUAL JARGON AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

Eleanor Jolliffe

Images: when an object denotes an action (1), in this case the preparation of tea; symbols that speak of morality or religion are universally known (2); and when visual jargon is overused (3)

OF JARGON AND SOCIAL PRACTICES

Nora Wuttke

The development of an analogy between language and cultural forms is rooted in Saussure's work from the late 19th century. In the 1960s and 1970s, within the social sciences structuralist movement and consequently in architecture, many attempts have been made to conceptualise and understand urban patterns in terms of a linguistic paradigm.

For this essay, De Certeau's theory of practices of everyday life will serve as a starting point from which to expand. De Certeau's work focuses on the practices of everyday life, the actual tactics and strategies that people employ in daily life to subvert the proper: the basis for culture.

De Certeau conceptualises place preceding space, 'space is practiced place', and turned from place to space by tactics that people employ to inhabit a city (the physical city being grammar), such as walking in the streets (enunciation). I argue, extending from De Certeau's concept, that space is further transformed into anthropological space by strategies, subverting the proper loci, for example sitting on stairs or erecting temporary structures. These strategies that convert space to anthropological space could be understood as the anthropological jargon of the city; an enunciation that can be detected as such but only understood by few. I argue that anthropological jargon is the agent for social practices, hence culture in a city.

To establish the connection between the social realm and linguistics, this analysis utilises De Certeau's methodology in which the physical structure of the city could be conceptualised as grammar and the walking-through of those patterns as 'speech act'.

This notion of text production is explained by De Certeau's understanding that 'the act of walking is to

the urban system what the speech act is to language', consequently putting the urban system into the position of grammar, paralleling language systems and urban systems. For De Certeau, the art of 'composing a path' implies styles and the use of the language, just as in 'ordinary language'.

Thames Town is an English 'copy-town' 30km to the west of central Shanghai, in Songjiang district. It was completed as part of the 'One city, Nine towns' initiative in 2006. The town was designed by the architecture practice Atkins, occupying one square kilometre and aimed at housing 10,000 people.

The town is without direct metro access and 1.5 hours travel from the centre of Shanghai. Today the town is almost empty, without patrons for shops, cafés or actual inhabitants. Some housing is occupied, however, very few. It is virtually a ghost town.

The only activity that is going on is picture-taking. Crowds of brides and grooms travel to Thames Town to have their wedding photos taken in front of a copy of Christ Church in Clifton Down, Bristol. Cafés and shops have been re-appropriated by photo studios as changing rooms for brides and temporary offices. All the activity in the streets is comprised of the busy adjustments of photographic scenes, to get the perfect frame before the next bride pushes in. This phenomenon could also be considered jargon, however noting a very different one from London, Bristol or Brighton.

Looking at the example of Thames Town, even though there might be the same 'grammar' in the form of built structure as the copied houses and the same means of the production of language, 'walking' the streets and producing urban text, the same jargon is not produced.



Hence the idea of copying cities in the hope to establish the same qualities is doomed to fail. Raising a valid question: was that the purpose?

Disregarding speculations about the initial purpose of Thames Town the analysis shows that it is the correlation of the context and the social fabric within a city that makes a city a functioning entity with all its qualities, rather than the architectural style.

Anthropological jargon / space is needed to move a city beyond its physical structure, creating a sense of ownership over the city for its users, making it a sustainable organism; the linguistic paradigm helps to excavate this issue.

Anthropological jargon is, beyond its physical appearance, foremost social – similar to linguistic jargon,

which is actually less about what is said, but how. A city only becomes a city, establishing what we call urbanity, once it allows its users to develop their anthropological jargon, which can be observed by many, but only truly understood by few. This entitlement of inhabitants is closely linked to the context, environment, history, social structures and many more factors; more so than the physical appearance.

On the basis of the above analysis I would claim that copy-towns and cities built from scratch without thorough consideration of social practices and everyday life, in the middle of nowhere, as seen so much in current China, cannot function socially therefore are not environmentally or economically sustainable.

A city is more than the sum of its buildings ■

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1. De Certeau, M. 1984 *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley, U. of California Press.

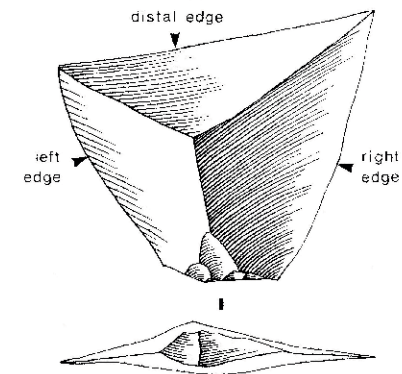
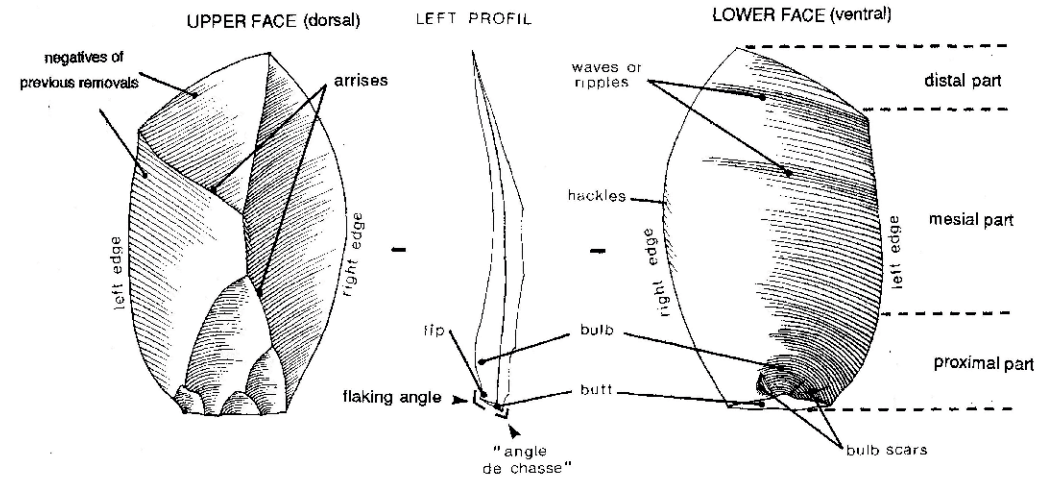
2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thames_Town

3. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-23067082>

The gross and net result of it is that people who spent most of their natural lives riding iron bicycles over the rocky roadsteads of this parish get their personalities mixed up with the personalities of their bicycle as a result of the interchanging of the atoms of each of them and you would be surprised at the number of people in these parts who are nearly half people and half bicycles...when a man lets things go so far that he is more than half a bicycle, you will not see him so much because he spends a lot of his time leaning with one elbow on walls or standing propped by one foot at kerbstones

The Third Policeman - Flann O'Brien

Before our species existed, members of the homo genus made stone tools, and eventually so did we. In the space of a few thousand years, this practice has almost disappeared. The remnants of the past are reduced, classified, and ordered to study what we have been/become ■



STONE BICYCLES

Andrew May

Image: 'Main descriptive terms of flakes'. (Inizan, M. et al. (1992),
Technology and Terminology of Knapped Stone. CREP: Nanterre.
pp. 33, fig.5

NAKAGIN CAPSULE TOWER

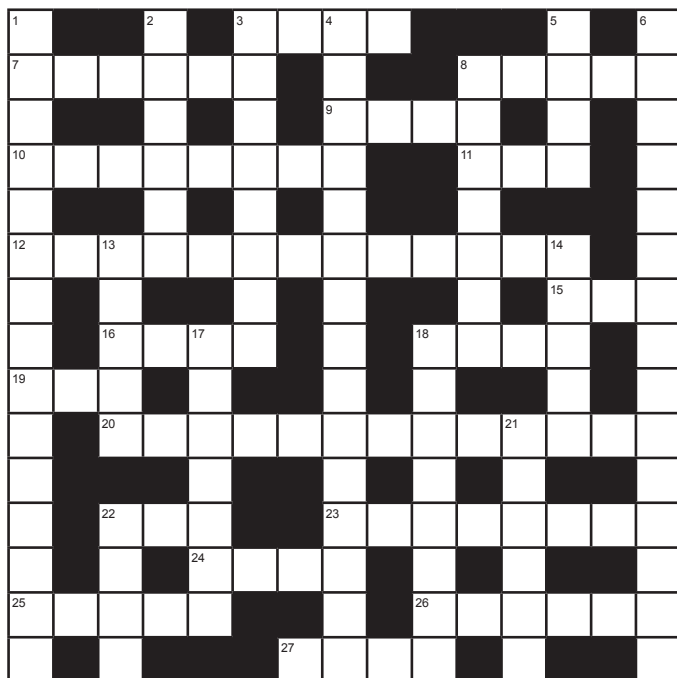
Fala Atelier

As one of the most iconic buildings of the 20th century, the Capsule Tower fell into a state of decay that is not easy to understand. It was covered with a net, a few months ago, because the city ward is afraid that it might start crumbling. It is almost empty: only 10 to 12 people live here. Most of the 140 capsules are abandoned, completely rotten, leaking. Some of the owners want to demolish it; a few offer some resistance. It might not last long.

Metabolism's icon is sick. It became indifferent ■







Solution will be posted online at
matzine.org

Across

- 3** Parts of a play like Cats badly done. (4) **22** Remove head to hear. (3)
7 Biography found in memo I received. (6) **23** Grow tired with language shortly before saying wish. (8)
8 Tear up flier for a shooter. (5) **24** Primarily, I don't like exercise (4)
9 First lady with OBE hangs from 22a. (4) **25** Summary? Take hat off and put it back again. (5)
10 Recoil from gunshot. (8) **26** How to attract? Drop two thirds of RRP from tangled net price. (6)
11 Goes before duct en route. (3) **27** Questions first answer and seeks two E's to drop. (4)
12 The ability to use language well, or get rid of it altogether! (1,3,4,5)
15 19's opposite getting confused is a plus. (3)
16 Bakes veal's head in one. (4)
18 Cheese made in reverse. (4)
19 Familiar word to keep shtum. (3)
20 Using hair-dryer to inflate balloon? That is telling a lie. (7,3,3)

Down

- 1** Obfuscation badly masked on reflection. (5,3,7)
2 See 4
3 Ian finishes rewriting a card from Tripoli. (8)
4,5,2 Ned yakked n' thighs fell afoot. (4,3,4,4,3,1,6)
5 See 4
6 Talking shit and running off at the mouth. (6,9)
8 Reverend without nose is held in high regard. (7)
13 Particular weapon made of short bamboo.(1,4)
14 Primitive South American music beguiles audience. (5)
17 Inside, he got ripped for self-aggrandisement. (7)
18 Makes it better? Spraying sheen can. (8)
21 Insults 19's sisters after tea. (6)
22 Scratch the start of a sketch. (4)

CRYPTISH CROSSWORD

set by MG



issue launch & debate

the launch of the jargon issue was marked by a debate, hosted by matzine on 21st August 2013

to JARGON
or
not to JARGON

Debate on the use of jargon
when communicating
design to the public

Panel: Charles Holland & Crystal Benes
Daisy Froud & Indy Johar
- Chaired by Owen Pritchard

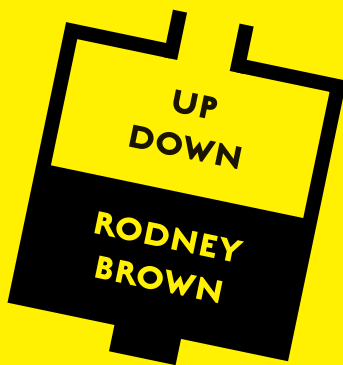
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The editors encourage all interested in contributing to contact us at submissions.matzine@gmail.com with original pieces, ideas and questions. From the expert to the dilettante, from the comic to the poetic – by way of seriousness – all will be considered for inclusion.

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