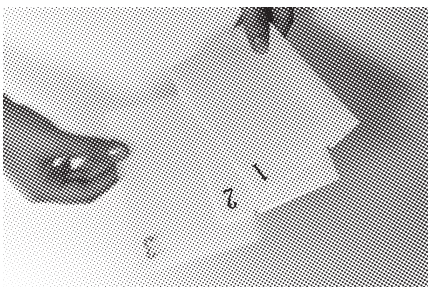
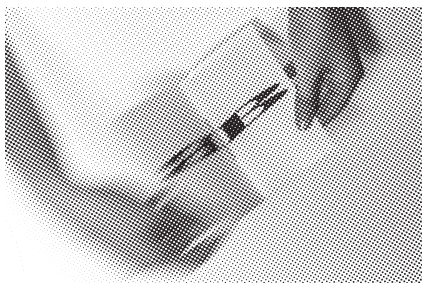


ON OBJECTHOODLYTHINGNESS: MEANS
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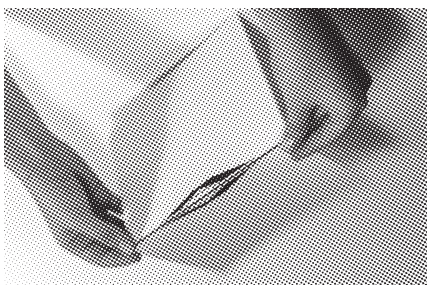


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ON OBJECTHOODLYTHINGNESS: MEANS



reciprocal turn



issue # 2



Things¹ are not objects, objects^{2 3} are not things. Though, both are rather uncanny.^{4 5 6 7 8 9} Concerning subjectivity, positing a dichotomy between subject¹⁰ and object¹¹ is not a good starting point.^{12 13 14} In general, it may be better to talk about materiality^{15 16} but then we have to be careful not to conflate it with^{17 18} physicality¹⁹.²⁰ In order not to do so we have to keep in mind that the defining frames are built out of manifold stories.^{21 22} To sum up this complexity we can state: relationality²³ is the answer²⁴ to everything.^{25 26}

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25 Because tactile orientation comes before gaining an overview, as dance theorist Kirsten Maar puts it.

26 Philosopher Georg Bertram comments on the supremacy of the objects within Theodor Adorno's theory: Sie «darf nicht so verstanden werden, dass ein Objekt sich als solches Subjekten gegenüber durchsetzt, sondern ist so zu verstehen, dass sie eine Dynamik bezeichnet, die auch an Praktiken gebunden ist. Letztere gewinnen ihre Eigenarten nicht aufgrund eigener Routinen und Entscheidungen des Subjekts, sondern aus der Auseinandersetzung mit selbstbezüglich konstituierten Objekten. Die selbstbezügliche Verfasstheit von Kunstwerken ist in diesem Sinne dynamischer Natur.»

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ON OBJECTHOODLYTHINGNESS: MEANS



2

1 Dance theorist André Lepecki speaks about a paradigm shift within choreography and performance art: a shift from the concept of the object to the concept of the «thing». Lepecki understands thing not as «stuff», but a proposal to act.

2 To art theorist Paulo Venancio Filho an object is «neither painting nor sculpture», but a constantly changing entity, especially in Brazilian art. «The object may be mistaken for a thing», but it is not a thing. Spatially it is also not a sculpture, whereas a sculpture is, as Barnett Newman said, that, «which you bump into when you bump up to see a painting.»

3 Art historian Michael Fried emphasizes that objecthood is characterized by theatricality.

4 According to theatre theorist André Eiermann that what characterizes an object is precisely what is not available in symbolic perception.

5 Theorist Georges Didi-Huberman states that objects are not neutral but filled with meaning. What we perceive only gains meaning if and when it concerns us.

6 Curator Anselm Franke says that objects in an exhibition context are often looked at in a way we think about what we can do with them. But are

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they also doing something to us? Being affected in an exhibition context – this thought is actually coming from art historian Aby Warburg. With affection Anselm Franke denotes an ontological insecurity of objects and artworks, which is often closed by curatorial settings. He therefore demands to value the curatorial question: Why do I not understand this object? How to create a controlled crisis in an exhibition?

7 Theorist Friedrich Balke: «Das Ding, das wiederkehrt, unterbricht die Selbstreproduktionsschleifen und Selbstvergewisserungsdynamik bloßer Theorieproduktion, in die es gewissermaßen ein Stottern einfügt [...]»

8 Concerning substance, philosopher Immanuel Kant speaks about the persistence of things.

9 Theorist Juliane Rebentisch: «Daß die Frage konstitutiv offen bleiben muß, was das Kunstwerk eigentlich ausmacht und was ihm nur äußerlich zugeschrieben wird, charakterisiert alle ästhetische Erfahrung.»

10 According to theorist Georges Didi-Huberman Robert Morris' art piece of a falling column is a «Quasi-Subjekt», as the quality of the Minimalist art object is valued due to its intersubjectivity, which turns objects into subjects.

ON OBJECTHOODLY THINGNESS: MEANS

19 As material phenomena are not to be thought of as solid and passive, but as self-transforming, according to the theorists Susanne Witzgall and Kerstin Stakemeier.

20 As material phenomena are hybrid phenomena, mashups of material and immaterial aspects, as the theorists Susanne Witzgall and Kerstin Stakemeier explain.

21 Dance theorist André Lepecki stresses that things need human beings and framings in order to be part of our social lives, just as our social lives need to be grounded in materiality.

22 Moreover, concepts are as well. Theorist Diedrich Diederichsen shows that sociologist Bruno Latour's theories are like constructive-ism which revealed that evadable natural given elements are made by human beings. Where as Latour revealed that not everything is controlled by human beings. But both Bruno Latour's theories and the ideas of constructivism lack the possibility of critique.

23 How sexual can the inorganic be? Ask the philosopher Mario Perniola.

24 Answers we are looking for as the notions of digitalization and globalization blur physical reality and question the possibility to isolate research processes. Ask everybody.

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11 Art theorist André Eiermann states that the in-between of subject and object is a third instance, which is highly relevant in aesthetic perception.

12 Dance theorist André Lepecki says about contemporary choreography: «In this partnering [of performer and thing], things reveal their subjectivity, while humans reveal their thingness, to the point where it becomes hard to say who moves whom, who choreographs whom, and who is choreographed by whom.»

13 According to sociologist Bruno Latour this is due to the neutralizing attempts of modernity that one thinks in such clearly separated entities.

14 Choreographer Paz Rojo says that being an active witness means to shift from what one as a powerful subject can do with objects to what objects can do with us. Thereby one attains a status of moving as well as being moved.

15 Of course there is a material/materialist turn. Ask culture theorist Diana Coole.

16 Within art materialism is often damned to be bad. Then art is something to be dematerialized, as art theorist Lucy Lippard has shown, in order to flee commodification.

17 According to theorist Paul Schimmel, performances ephemerality once questioned the art as object. Today we witness a renewed importance of materiality and animism.

18 Materiality is the dense ability to react, to have respons-ability, if we follow the theorists Susanne Witzgall and Kerstin Stakemeier.