

Object Concern Facilitator

Written component of master thesis

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This text forms part of an ongoing work, and as such, is not authorised for audiences outside those required in the assessment of the work for the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts (MA) at the University of Applied Arts Vienna, Institute of Fine Arts and Media.

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Abstract



Ashley Holwell offered his services as an ‘Object Concern Facilitator’ to the Museum of Natural History, Vienna, who enthusiastically accepted, and incorporated the role into the museum structure, over an initial trial period of four weeks in May, 2012.

Through an ongoing relationship with indistinct human and non-human actors within the museum, begun in October, 2011, the role provides a medium for translation of objects and exchange, in an area remaining outside of formal attention in institutional structures, and wider collectives.

Note on reading the text

Artefacts from the work are used throughout the text, many of which are in the form of written text and correspondence. These texts are used by this text - as such, they should be read as both an artefact pertaining to the Object Concern Facilitator, and as important in the reading of this text.

Author's definitions of terms, as they are referred to by the text.

Deal with. An often used conception of connecting an artist to the physical or meta fields with which their work attempts to relate. The term in itself describes the artist as one who has something tangible with which they are 'dealing,' as we know of its use in relation to playing cards - the position of the 'dealer.'

Deal in. This extension of dealing places the artist inside the relational fields, placing the artist in the relationships. This can be seen in playing cards with the expression of 'dealing (someone) in,' meaning they are entering the field of play.

Exploration. An act requiring methods and practices of translation, to bring back from the explored 'space' things of influence to that 'space' and the world, through transferring the burdens of downloading, interpretation, and action, to the audience. The act generally requires, as in a traditional idea of exploration and return, a large distance between both the origin point, and the area being explored. That of, both, travelling away from somewhere; and that of being an alien in the place travelled to.

Excession. Is coined here as the *act* of *perceiving* a 'thing' as excess. Excess can be defined as 'the state or act of going beyond normal, sufficient, or permitted limits,' and 'the amount, number, extent, or degree by which one thing exceeds another' (Collins, 2000). A difference is made here to here between that of something 'becoming' surplus, and that of excession, wherein which the value of the 'thing' does not change per se, but the context surrounding it, translating its value to other 'things,' is what transforms. The idea of excess also relates, to the human situation of indulging in 'too much.' The extension to excession, the act, is intended to draw on this meaning - 'an *undue* indulgence' (Wiktionary, 2012) - there is no excess until the act of excession renders it so.

Abuse. The use of a situation, context, position in a way not otherwise intended. Closely related to misuse, however, without the implications of 'incorrect' use - the use in abuse internalises the conditions able to imply the criteria of 'correct' and 'incorrect,' and through its enaction, influences the situation, context, position *immediately*.

Thrust into the world of art & science, a world not new at all when considering the relationships of art and science - much has happened, in a distilled sense, of art meeting science in order to create or overcome, from artistic design developments in tensegrity contributing to the formulation of the structure of a virus; and to advances in fluid dynamics prompted by the paintings of an amateur (Edwards, 2008), and we may speak of such developed disciplines as architecture, horticulture, design, musical composition, logistics, cooking.. many more.. as situated somewhere and somewhen between what might be seen as art, might be seen as science. Somewhen is introduced here, as the continually transforming relationships between such practices of art, and of science, are critical to their influence on each other (if we are to speak of them as entities such), and as something that might be known of as 'society.' This is not a static world, the context within which we might practice changes within one moment to the next - this is complicit in the course of boundary staking, aloof positing, domain blurring, when defining a practice in art & science. This may not be taken as granted. Though the ideas of flow and flux may not stand to all scrutiny, the words of Heraclitus still hold point in this context,

No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man (As quoted in Sennett, 2008, p. 204).

For one to engage with the world in which they are operating, they must operate within this world. Symmetrically, the influence is mutual.

Strict borders and boundaries are placed, in order for one to have distance enough to make the claim that they 'deal with' something. There are claimed worlds. Science, as we might know it, makes much of this tradition, taking something out of the 'real world' in order to quantify and normalise it, creating what wants to maintain strict passage points across these borders. In the relationships between science and the political actions of the world, we see that these passage points induce their own set of reflexivities. To posit that one 'deals with' some 'thing,' through making informed transfer and transformation of existing states, to be presented as reference to those who are already drawn, can be seen as preaching to the converted, a self-referential heightening of disconnected culture.

A static work inside a designated place for art does entirely this, relating only to it's own discourse, remaining static. Aside from supposing radical importance in self at the exhibiting of ones work, too much of the burden of action is placed on the viewer. Note here, all art is not spoken of, art does indeed serve it's purpose, the places of art and culture exist throughout the world in many forms worthy of attention and intrigue, this is not our prerogative. We are in the formalising process of art & science as a thing. This cannot be ignored. When the human race was first able to settle and grow crops, there began a process of excess translation that has little ceased to this day - those spared from the labours of survival formed new purposes, many of which become incalculably valuable to humans throughout the world. Our prerogative is to find ourselves in this situation today. How do we operate in the world that has lead us to this existence? Not, asking, how to 'deal with' finding ourselves in such a position in society, and, in turn, 'dealing with' the society that put us here. This takes us out, we are no longer involved, no longer engaged. *Dealing in* this world becomes the situation, thrust.

If it is seen that there is a situation that has created such a world as that of art & science, artistic research, then it becomes valuable within this world through doing what *only it may do*. Following the path that is available to no other, the translation of the excess that has granted this situation, is the only direct relationship that can be formed between the world that has placed, and that which occupies this space.

This is the act of dealing *in*, engaging *in*, some thing. This is no longer the privilege of the artist as a producer of art. It is the artist as producer. This is not a translation to a newly understandable medium for further downloading and interpretation, it is a translation directly into the situation granted. The artist cannot claim, authoritative rights on the work, the artist may only engage *in* the situation presented.

Here the conception is borrowing heavily from Walter Benjamin's *The Author as Producer* 'intervention'¹ of 1934, as elaborated on by Hal Foster (1996): *For Benjamin urged the 'advanced' artist to intervene, like the revolutionary worker, in the means of artistic production - to change the 'technique' of traditional media, to transform the 'apparatus' of bourgeois culture. A correct 'tendency' was not enough; that was to assume a place 'beside the proletariat.'* And *'what kind of place is that?'* Benjamin asked in lines that still scathe. *'That of a benefactor, of an ideological patron - an impossible place... However difficult, the solidarity with producers that counted for Benjamin was solidarity in material practice, not in artistic theme or political attitude alone.'*²

¹ Foster's term, in the 1996 text, in reference to Benjamin's *The Author as Producer*.

² Use of apostrophes follows the 1996 text in denoting sections that quote Benjamin.

In Billy Apple's *Alterations: The Given as an Art-Political Statement*, consisted of a 'series of carefully considered recommendations for alterations to the architecture of New Zealand art galleries' (Govett Brewster). Apple used his situation as an artist to induce direct influence on the spaces of art galleries - when invited to exhibit, through the position of the artist, the gallery was required to re-configure its space - by moving walls, widening of stairs, enlarging of doorways. The works are highly engaged in the processes surrounding the artist, and are illustratively active and influential, though the artist is operating entirely within the art world, with borders, boundaries.

The idea of engaging in extends the intentions of Stephen Willats in *The Social Resource Project for Tennis Clubs*, a work aimed at redesigning the game of tennis to reflect more accurately the desires of participants (Falconer, 2000), intended to involve a series of meetings between 'real world' participants to formulate proposals to change the game of tennis to better reflect their , providing a direct engagement with the world (Willats). - formulating and exerting a structure so that the existing members of that world would provide much of the basis for their own influence.

Marcel Broodthaers was instrumental in using methods of legitimacy to engage in the worlds he was concerned with. In similarity to the appropriation and alteration of practices in *Musee d'art Moderne, Département des Aigles* and *Indication for van Laack shirts, with Broodthaers as a model*, this work intends to take accepted codes of practice from an institution, and modify them. With *Musee d'art Moderne, Département des Aigles*, Broodthaers takes the accepted mechanisms of institutions, collectives, organisations, and appropriates them - by using the name he does, creating sections, initiating fundraising endeavours - he is utilising the identification procedures of art museums to position the artist, the work, within the realm of institutions. In *Indication for van Laack shirts, with Broodthaers as a model*, through abuse of established organisational and institutional mechanisms, he places himself in the image, the advertisement, the newspaper, together with his work. The work differs here, however, in the feedback mechanisms employed. With *Musee d'art moderne*, Broodthaers took the practices outside of the institution in order to engage with them, relying on established mechanism of communication to enable the critique to return to the source. An attempt is made, in this work, to engage directly in the institution itself, foregoing the institutionalised systems of critique and redress, in order to provide direct influence in the institution.

The methods of the Yes Men, in their abuse of the established organisational mechanisms of our world through the highly visible ingraining of hoaxes major media channels, and other communication systems, points further to this direct engagement and feedback. Their Bhopal announcement worked within accepted practices of organisational communication to, initially, present their personal legitimacy to those who then enabled them to be in situations of further abuse. The hoaxes work, in their moments of legitimacy, to bring large scale awareness to people, providing influence, on individuals and collectives - using the established mechanisms of human interaction, that generally shelter these individuals and collectives, to provide this influence. This is where they utilise the established external feedback mechanisms, and where the actions depart from this work. Another departure in this work is in their enacting of the hoax. The Yes Men are effective in their work through the precise legitimacy of their hoaxes. Here, there is no hoax. This work attempts to entirely situate itself inside the world it is engaging, without acting as something it is not.

What follows, is an attempt to outline a work conducted in the course of completing an art & science degree, and through this outline, portray how the work both is influenced by, and influential in, the above sentiments. They have been developed through diving into a world that is only beginning to shape itself, and endeavouring to find, create, form, a personally significant practice with which I can operate in the world.

An agreement between the University of Applied Arts Vienna, and the Natural History Museum Vienna, initiated an exhibition, of work by the art & science department, within the museum, in November of 2011. This situation remains far from understood by myself, and others in the exhibiting group, despite the situation itself forming important initial questions, and having unique influences on our actions. Attempted foundations, of dealing 'with' our situation, where in efforts to engage directly with the processes that lead to our presence inside the museum - taking stock of, and engaging with, what we were actually doing there, how we were in such a position. What is happening when a group of actors comes from another world to introduce something from 'outside,' now 'inside?' Why are these relationships played out? What type of systematic reasoning is enacted by all involved parties, in order to justify their own presence inside the network, to themselves? It is not a prerogative to treat the museum as an inanimate material artefact. The relationships sustaining the institution's continued existence, and relationships, are what, by beginning to be there, we immediately became a part of.

These were questions for which there could have been answers, which we may have presented in a newly understandable medium, and with which we might have burdened the viewer too much, if left to remain as the engagement with the situation.

In order, then, to somehow *deal with* these multifaceted and complex issues of relations surrounding our presence in the museum, in a way that did not disclude any, nor our initial starting point, it became imperative to *deal in* the situation.

This proposition is, in part, formed by a particular orientation in the situation: there are no problems in the relations conducted for our presence in the museum. These relations exist. This is no longer a critique. In the course of an 'exploration' of a field of interest, a circumvention of a problem - solution dichotomy is undertaken. No posit is present. No 'thing' comes with the artist into the situation. The artist can only take, remit, rely on the established feedback mechanisms. The circumvention could be useful, however, in exploration, it merges the positions of problem and solution into one, swimming obliquely within the resulting field. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005, p. 19-21) speak of a 'vocabulary of deficit,' and 'deficit discourse,' in the approach of problem identification towards organisations. The situation of one identifying a 'problem,' and making efforts towards 'solving' it, seemingly illustrates that the act is entirely one of returning to a zero state, from an identified negative position. This renders the end result of the action of the artist zero. What began as a surplus is entirely spent, the net proceeds, zero.

This initial surplus needs be injected into the world. For those in a position to act out their situation with immediacy. This is the circumvention proposed here.

JOUR FIXE Art as Research. Research as Art. Anything goes?

Discussing Methods and Materials

01: Titling of an ongoing series of lectures, presentation, and performances, occurring within the framework of the Department of Art & Science at the University of Applied Arts Vienna.

Positivist, yes. Positivist in an active sense. Because so many delicate concerns are involved with the process at hand, there may be no other way to apply another stance towards it, other than acting it out in the world.

This process has its beginnings in many positions, and views, I hold on the worlds that I am a part of, with the initial concrete translation of these things to within the Natural History Museum coming in November, 2010, on a visit to the Natural History Museum, to discuss my work of the time with a museum member. The translation was initiated through finding a selection of excessed mineral samples in the large refuse bin of the museum, during the visit. Perhaps here are the first signs of abuse, to be elaborated further below. These objects stayed with me, physically, until my time as the Object Concern Facilitator. Our preparatory visits to the museum as an invited group of artists lead to an expansion of this act - I began to spend increasingly more time becoming involved with the objects of the museums excess.

The items exhibited on the central staircase of the Museum of Natural History Vienna have been selected from the long-standing collection of the *Friends of the Natural History Cabinet Association*. The initiator of the first soirées in the mid-eighteenth century is said to be the illustrious Emperor Franz I (Franz Stephan of Lorraine) himself, whose private Natural History Cabinet is considered to be the origin of the Museum of Natural History. In pursuit of new scientific insights, the Emperor gathered a circle of like-minded amateur collectors and well-known experts, forming an association with the aim to present and create a discussion around current research.

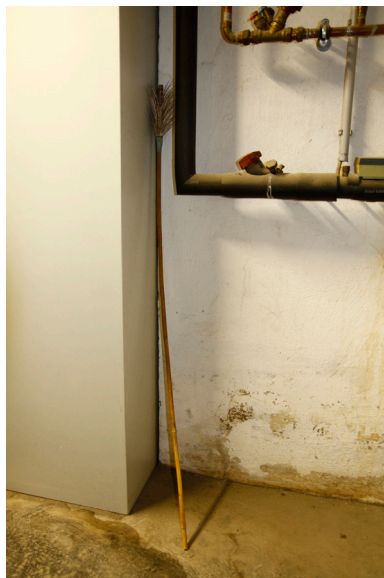
Members of the club started to collect objects that were of special interest to their discussions. Over the following decades, this compilation of items seems to have grown more in peculiarity than in number, which is why it has been suggested that parts of the collection have gone lost. Also, rumour has it, in the years it has been stored and almost forgotten in the cellar of the museum, some items have been assumed part of the collection, which were not previously included.

The social tradition of the *Friends of the Natural History Cabinet Association* continues still today, with current members holding regular meetings in the form of a dinner at the museum each week.

For this current exhibition selected items from the association's collection were prepared for display by the Art & Science class/University of Applied Arts Vienna in collaboration with the *Friends of the Natural History Cabinet Association*.

A Dinner with Objects

Drawing from Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonders and the Museum of Jurassic Technology, the nature of the Natural History Museum as an *object institution* spawned a showcase from the 'Friends of the Natural History Cabinet Association archives' (02). A long-standing organisation, constructed with, and around, objects. In their own words: 'Members of the club started to collect objects that were of special interest to their discussions.' Here, the objects are of special interest to their discussions, and when we read 'Also, rumour has it, in the years it has been stored and almost forgotten in the cellar of the museum, some items have been assumed part of the collection, which were not previously included,' we may deduce that the discussions were of special interest to the objects. This happened in both that objects from outside the collection manouevered to be included, and that the objects were not forgotten - they have again initiated discussion.



03: The object of initial focus in the formulation of *Dinner With Objects*. Abandoned, decaying long handled duster, in a basement passageway of the museum.

The object (03) holds much of my concerns with the borderline objects of the museum. Those that fall through the cracks between that of formal science and functional use, those with a story untold. This is of importance, the equality between physical form and metaphysical presence.

To address the mutual action of the objects, and the other members of the museum, it became fruitful to approach a highly active thing in the museum, as in the beginning, the bins. These were the objects that were filling the cracks as they fell, perceived value reduced beyond the return perceived in placing the object inside a different context of value. The things were no longer of use or value to the museum, this however, did not mean that they were not of value per se, there are any number of ways in which the objects could be recycled, reused, recontextualised, in order to draw on their value again, this comes later. Here, the ability of the objects to again find, and create, invoke, a context of value within the institution emerged as a driving concern, one in which two concepts must be elaborated, to then draw them together in the formation of the act.

The Cyclifier:

‘Cyclifiers, a typology codified by 2012Architecten, are short-circuited resource-recovery and reuse mechanisms with spatial and public features. They plug into locally available but unused resources, addressing the various layers of urban flows by acting as metabolic processors. They comprehend, sort out, select, integrate, coordinate and cohere. This helps reverse the urban tendency to disperse materials and energy until the value is lost to the surroundings, unable to be retrieved or recycled back into the system.’

‘A cyclifier is not conceived of as a hybrid system – which has become a trend in contemporary architecture (an example of which is OMA’s De Rotterdam mixed-use vertical city, 1997) – because a hybrid attempts to create an entire universe in one building. Rather than independency, cyclifiers try to reach the maximum possible interaction between existing activities with as few as possible adaptations to the existing fabric. The concept is in this sense closely related to 2012Architecten’s Superuse. Both have the goal of redirecting, transforming and connecting local existing materials and energy flows, and adapting the system to local circumstances, and cyclifiers also take into consideration the information and strategic layers of the city.’

(Jongiert, Nelson, Geeson 2011, 4)

There is also, in the practical creation of cyclifiers inside an established system, a relationship that forms between the adaptation of behaviours, and the associated flows of material. When a flow of materials is modified, within a system, behaviours are induced to change with it, as is the vice versa. This imperative of mutual translation between action and objects brings us to a second formative posit.

A Collective of Humans and Non-Humans:

(The following is paraphrased from Chapter Six - *A Collective of Humans and Nonhumans*, of Latour, B. 1999. 174 - 215, to give an outline of the propositions as they are seen relate to this work)

'It is neither people nor guns that kill. Responsibility for action must be shared among the various actants. And this is the first of the four meanings of mediation... B-52s do not fly, the U.S. Air Force flies. Action is simply not a property of humans but of an association of actants, and this is the second meaning of technical mediation... I want to situate myself at the stage before we can clearly delineate subjects and objects, goals and functions, form and matter, before the swapping of properties and competences is observable and interpretable..'

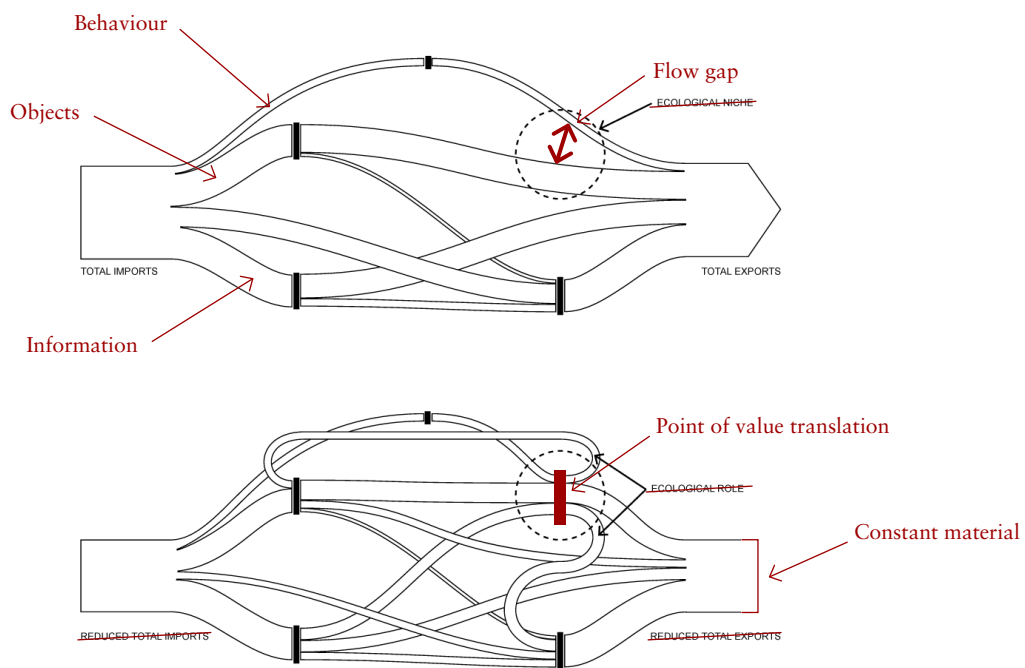


04: 'Here is a simple example of what I have in mind: the speed bump that forces drivers to slow down on campus, which in French is called a 'sleeping policeman.' The driver's goal is translated, by means of the speed bump, from 'slow down so as not to endanger students' into 'slow down and protect your car's suspension.'" (Latour, 1999, 186) Image: <http://www.vistaplan-streetware.co.uk/images/sleeping-policeman-policemen.jpg>

'In the case of of the speed bump (05) the shift is 'actorial': the 'sleeping policeman,' as the bump is known, is not a policeman, does not resemble one in the least. The shift is also spatial: on the campus road there now resides a new actant that slows down cars (or damages them). Finally, the shift is temporal: the bump is there night and day. But the enunciator of this technical act has disappeared from the scene - where are the engineers? Where is the policeman? ...The speed bump is ultimately not made of matter; it is full of engineers and chancellors and lawmakers, commingling their wills and their story lines with those of gravel, concrete, paint and standard calculations. The mediation, the technical translation, that I am trying to understand resides in the blind spot in which society and matter exchange properties.'

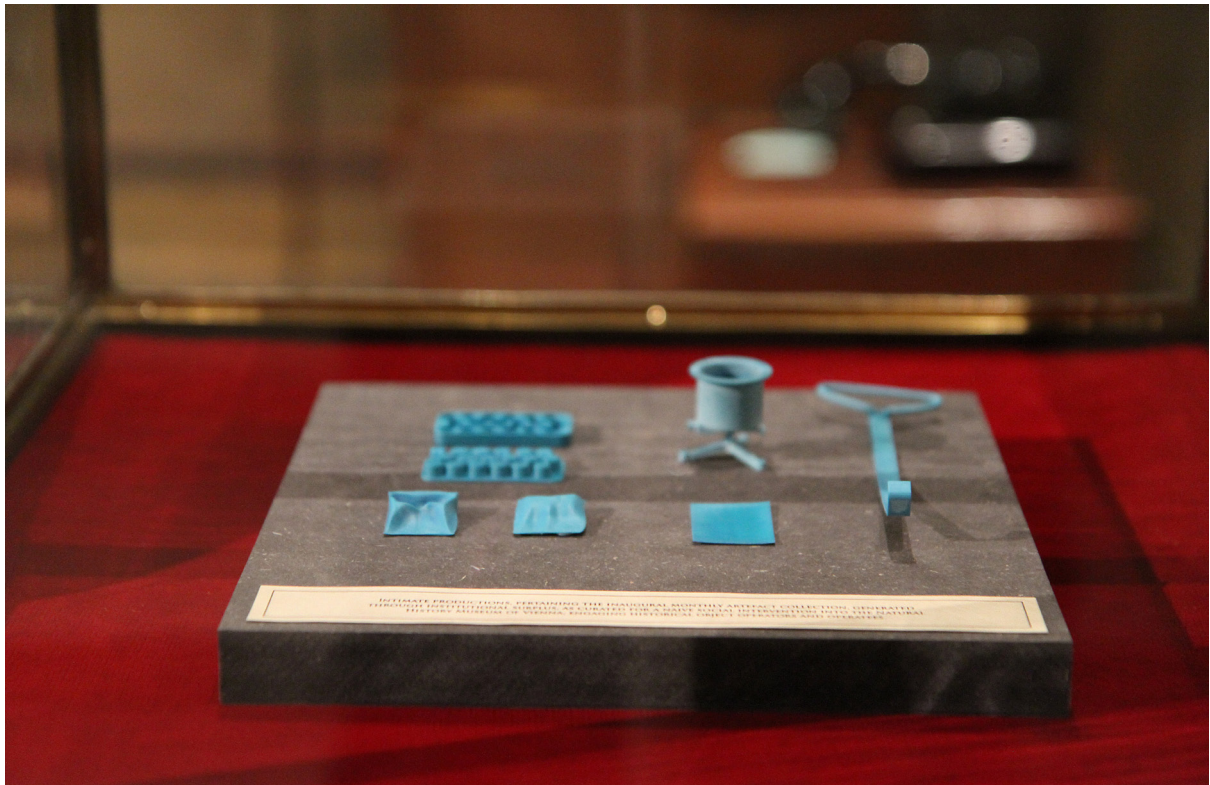
Formation

In a translation of the intentions of cyclifiers as a thing, and beginning to translate it, to a distinct concept, not necessarily linked to materials, a varied elaboration on the definition is produced: *A process, taking an existing structure of flows, that identifies a flow gap and enacts to infill this (meta)space, gaining in translations of value to various contexts, whilst maintaining constant material* (This text's reformulation, not necessarily linked to, or endorsed by, the original authors - 05).



05: Here the idea of 'flow gap' is elaborated. The 'gap' in the flows is identified (translation from 'ecological niche'), then the flows are multiplied to fill in the gaps, creating new contexts of value, the boxes becoming points of value translation. Adapted from Nelson, N. *Ecological niche definition generic*. 2011.

To now, draw in the formation, the act back towards that of the objects of excess, I introduce the concept, from sociologist of rubbish Martin O'Brien, of an 'apogenic' society. The combination of the root of 'aporipto' (to throw out/away), with that of 'genesis,' (creation, being, origin) from Latin/Greek (O'Brien, 1999, 276). This is where the regression to the creation of objects (06), in my participation in the exhibiting of 'Things That Talk,' and the formation of the 'naive social intervention' draws from. Both hold origins in the rubbish of the museum.



06: A. Holwell. *Intimate reproductions*, pertaining the inaugural monthly artefact collection, sourced through institutional surplus, as curated for a naive social intervention, at the Natural History Museum, Vienna, involving historical operators, and acquaintances. 2011. As photographed as exhibited in *Things That Talk*, Natural History Museum Vienna. November, 2011. Image: Sabina Teichert.

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Thursday 24th November, 2011

To Whom it may concern,

I am studying a Masters in Art and Science at the University of Applied Arts, and as such, am part of the group invited to exhibit within the Natural History Museum, as part of Vienna Art week, 2011. I have undertaken a project that intends to use objects found within the museum's refuse as tool of social intervention with the institution.

The project stems from a basic core concept of re-use cycles that incorporates material, informational, and societal inputs and outputs. Most traditional systems of re-use tend to exist solely in the material or informational worlds, as we know, plastics return to some form of plastic, paper to paper, and, for example, in Google's 'reCaptcha' software, data to data.

What I will attempt in this project is to cross the borders of form, using material objects to create informational and social exchange. In practical terms, this will mean creating a small collection of objects (5-10) taken from the Museum's refuse each month, sending images of this collection to all members of the Museum staff, inviting all previous users, or acquaintances of these objects to an informal social gathering. This will be conducted as a 'naive social intervention' into the Museum institution, with the aim of fostering social contacts and diversity, and arbitrary information exchange.

It was expressed in communication with contacts at the Natural History Museum that there are very little initiatives within the Museum personal with the express purpose of social interaction, other than in informal organisation between staff members. The project attempts to link people in an innovative, if experimental way, aiming also to assess the outcomes of such an intervention into an institution. It also intends take the idea of involvement between actors in a more in-depth way than simply an invitation of another institution to use the space of the Natural History Museum.

I hope that the Natural History Museum would be able to see some value in such a project being conducted, and is willing to participate. The project will be run for three months, the first collection being created in October, 2011, and the first meeting being held in early December, the final meeting being in late January. Precise details of the meetings are yet to be finalised, as I would like confirmation of project approval between us before involving other parties. It is envisaged that it would be a informal dinner, in a comfortable, neutral setting, hosted by the project and the Universität für angewandte Kunst.

From the side of the Natural History Museum, I would require the ability to send an email to all members of staff (or another efficient and effective method of contact), possibly being passed through a authority figure within the institution to gain prominence, and of course, some level of cooperation of all relevant members of staff.

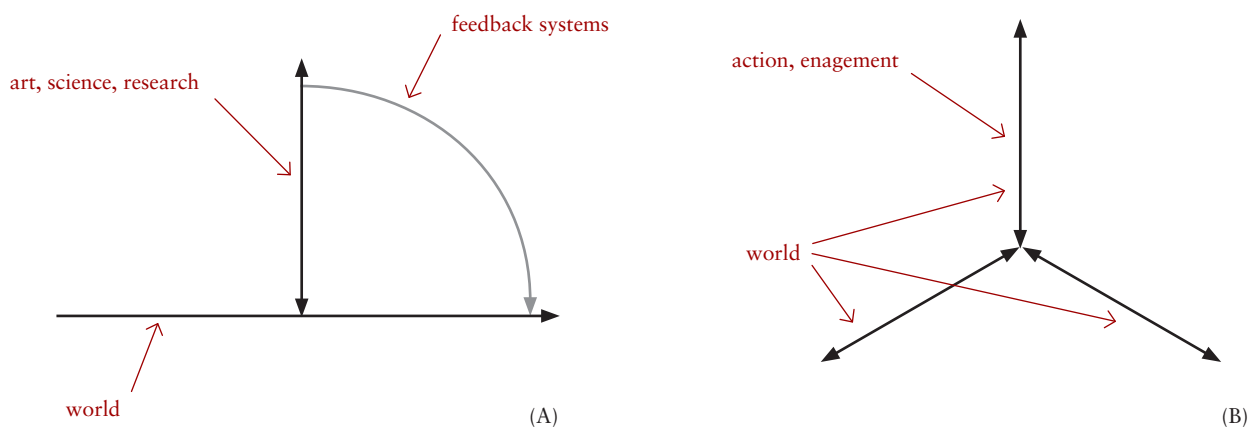
I look forward to hearing back about the possibilities for collaboration,

Kind regards,

Ashley Holwell

07: Letter, introducing the work, sent to the Head of Department, Exhibition & Education, Natural History Museum Vienna, on November 24th, 2011. Upon receiving no reply, the email was sent again, to the same member, and to the General Director & CEO, Natural History Museum Vienna, on November 30th, 2011.

The act of creating the dinner denied art entirely. It recoiled from the act of presenting inside the museum and offering objects to the viewer, placing the burden of downloading and interpretation, action, onto the viewer (07). There emerged a determination to exist inside the museum after the closing of the exhibition, in a direct influential sense, and if this meant also in a physical sense, then this was secondary and due to pragmatic issues of the work.



08: Diagram (A) illustrates a model relationship between 'the world' and the actions of art, science, research. These worlds extract from, deal with, investigate, 'the world' and enter into their own discourses and feedback mechanisms. Diagram (B) illustrates an acknowledgement of direct engagement in 'the world,' that all actions do have their effects, and this could be both not ignored, and utilised, in the practice of research. Illustration adapted by A. Holwell from M. Serres (1982), as in A. Holwell (2011) *Report2011s*.

The dinners were thus formulated in two ways - as a 'naive social intervention' into the museum (08); and as a translation of used materials into a context of value, across the borders of material, knowledge, information, the 'meta.' Bringing the past acquaintances of the objects together through the enforced algorithm of collecting objects and identifying their relations, became an attempt to draw out these object stories, whilst engaging in the established institutional structures, not as critique, as an injection. Nothing was intended to come out of the work, other than that which the act of playing it out within the museum inherently produced, and the fulfilling of assessment criteria towards a university degree.

Implementation

For practical reasons of accessing all members of the museum, it was decided that the work would be, in part, conducted through email forwarding of the object collections by the director of the museum (09) - being one of the few museum members with access to the complete mailing list.

Hallo,

Ich bin Teil der Gruppe, die unlängst im Treppenaufgang des Naturhistorischen Museums als "Freunde des Naturalienkabinetts" ausgestellt hat. Zu allererst möchte ich mich bei allen für die Benützung des Ortes und jede Unterstützung von uns bedanken.

Ich möchte in den nächsten zwei Monaten weiter mit dem NHM arbeiten und würde eine soziale Intervention in die Institution durchführen. Der Vorgang beinhaltet Objekte aus dem Müllcontainer des NHM zu sammeln und daraus eine kleine Gruppierung von Objekten für Oktober, November und Dezember zusammenzustellen. Diese Objekte sollen fotografiert werden und zur Begutachtung an alle Angestellten des NHM geschickt werden.

Alle, die diese Gegenstände benutzt haben oder wiederkennen, werden zu einem informellen Abendessen eingeladen, um sich zu treffen, Zeit miteinander zu verbringen und die Gegenstände zu besprechen.

Das Projekt gründet sich auf eine Idee von Wiederverwertung, welche materielle, informationelle und gesellschaftliche Inputs und Outputs beinhaltet. Die meisten traditionellen Systeme von Wiederverwertung neigen dazu, allein in der materiellen oder informationellen Welt verwurzelt zu sein - Plastik kehrt zu einer Form von Plastik zurück, Papier zu Papier und, z.B. in Googles "reCaptcha"-Software, Daten zu Daten. Ich möchte versuchen, die Grenzen der Form mit der Verwendung von materiellen Gegenständen zu überschreiten, um neuen informationellen und gesellschaftlichen Austausch herzustellen.

Auf diese Weise würde es sich für Sie um eine einfache Möglichkeit handeln, entspannt Zeit mit einigen Ihrer Kollegen zu verbringen, mit denen Sie möglicherweise ansonsten nicht in Kontakt sind. Es ergibt sich daraus die Möglichkeit zu neuen Freundschaften und Wissen und das Stillen allfälliger neugieriger Fragen, die nach der Sichtung der unten abgebildeten Gegenstände aufgekommen sein mögen.

Hello,

I am part of the group who exhibited recently in the staircase of the Natural History Museum as the 'Friends of the Natural History Cabinet Association archives.' Firstly I would like to thank everyone for lending us the space, and for all the support given to us.

I am continuing to work with the NHM to enact a social intervention into the institution. The process involves collecting objects from the rubbish of the NHM, creating a small group of objects each month for October, November and January. These objects will then be photographed and sent to all members of the NHM staff to look at.

All of those who have used, or are acquainted with, the objects will be invited to an informal dinner, to meet, spend time with one another, and discuss the objects.

The project stems from a idea of re-use that incorporates material, informational, and societal inputs and outputs. Most traditional systems of re-use tend to exist solely in the material or informational worlds - plastics return to some form of plastic, paper to paper, and, for example, in Google's 'reCaptcha' software, data to data. What I would like to try is to cross the borders of form, using material objects to create a new informational and social exchange.

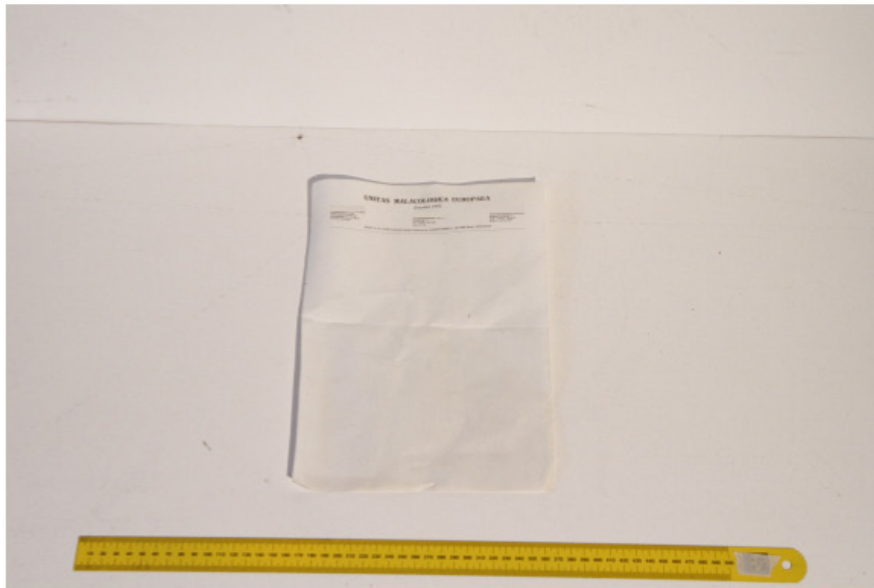
In this way it will simply be a chance for you to spend some relaxed time with some of your colleagues that you may or may not usually come in contact with, and gives the possibility of new friendships, knowledge, and satiating any curiosities you might have after viewing the objects below.

I would greatly appreciate everyone's cooperation in this endeavour, and think it will be of interest and value to all involved.

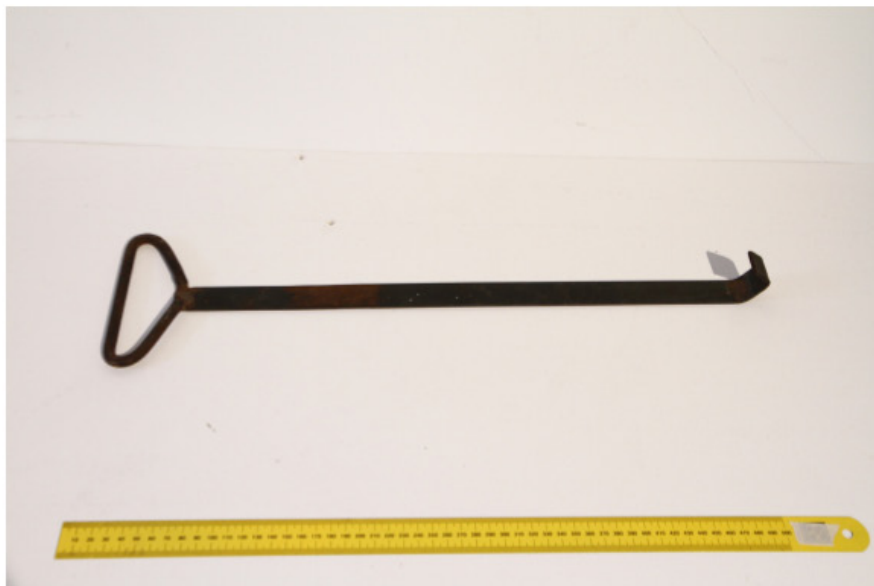
The following images show the collection for the month of October, 2011, with instructions for contacting me below.

Ich würde mich sehr über die Kooperation in diesem Unterfangen freuen und bin überzeugt, dass dieses von Interesse und Wert für alle Beteiligten sein wird.

Die folgenden Bilder zeigen die Sammlung des Monats Oktober 2011, mit Angaben darunter, wie man mich kontaktieren kann.



No. c11_10_a



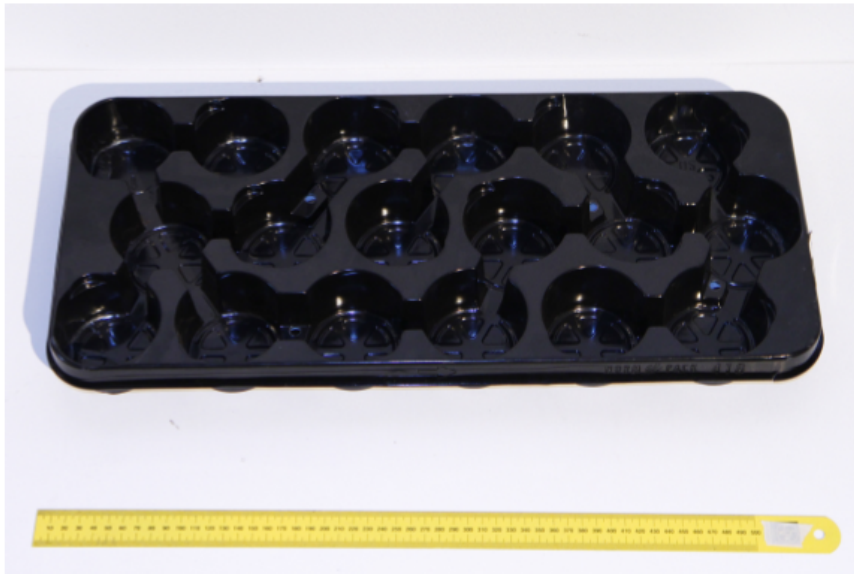
No. c11_10_b



No. c11_10_c



No. c11_10_d



No. c11_10_e

Anleitung für Antworten:

Wenn Sie einen der oben abgebildeten Gegenstände benutzt haben oder diese wiedererkennen, sind Sie zu einem Abendessen am Freitag, 13. Jänner 2011, um 18.30 Uhr in der Universität für angewandte Kunst, Expositur Postgasse 6 eingeladen. Sie werden am Eingang weitere Angaben vorfinden, wie Sie in die betreffenden Räumlichkeiten gelangen.

Bitte antworten Sie mir an ashholwell@gmail.com bis Donnerstagabend, 12. Jänner 2011, ob Sie teilnehmen werden. Um verbindliche Zusage wird gebeten.

Ich bedanke mich herzlich für Ihre Kooperation und freue mich darauf alle, die es betrifft, kennenzulernen.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Ashley Holwell

Reply Instructions

If you have used or have been acquainted with any of the objects above, you are invited to a dinner on at 18:30 on Friday, January 13th, at the University of Applied Arts, Postgasse 6. There will be instructions at the entrance to guide you to the dining room.

Please RSVP to ashholwell@gmail.com by the evening of Thursday, January 12th, if you are attending.

I kindly thank you for your cooperation and look forward to meeting those involved,

Yours sincerely,

Ashley Holwell

09: Letter, introducing the work, and presenting the first collection of objects, to all museum members. Sent on January 10th, 2012, by the director of the museum, to the complete member mailing list of the museum.

The first distribution of emails yielded no reply.

In consideration of what we spoke about on Friday and the methods of engagement in the NHM..

I see the possibility of enacting it as a precise and subtle intervention that builds and slowly intertwines itself in the museum through the use of an elongated email process, however, as I speak about the more juicy subtleties of the project, it increasingly seems like I know very little about these concerns, relationships, attitudes, issues.. people have with object and their orphaned siblings. I perhaps do not completely understand this use of subtlety in these type of projects as yet - I do like the idea of the 'choreography of methods' but in order to understand more about these relationships then it seems I do really need to talk to people there. Perhaps there are some insights that will be missed out on by exploring in intricate steps, but this will also allow the 'third' intervention to remain open for now, and seeing as going there is already quite a step, the third could push perhaps a lot further.

The stance of just wanting to find out about the objects is a good one, which I would use if I went there, gaining information and also contact details in case I want to find out more, and in this way eventually getting to the dinner..

How should it now be approached as I enter the museum.. Have I lost these objects and are desperately looking for them, can you help? I am entering these objects into a type of museum/cabinet of everyday wonder and would like to know more about their history, lineage, providence? Is it too alienating to immediately play the orphan game - am I looking for the parents of the objects? I think perhaps the orphan object idea comes through thinking about my current relationship to the objects, and as yet, my role should not become so contrived into the way I enter the museum as yet, it is already implicit in my actions and the real concern is the lasting impact my role in the museum will have.

This now brings a possibility of being 'just that rubbish-student guy again' in the museum - perhaps only losing value in how it may develop a tendency towards dismissal in people, but not so invaluable in that is a new role I am creating, I am already that person anyway. This is where some of the value in going there comes through, making this contact and feeling these reactions more strongly than a reply or not scenario - which would give some gauge of the museum as a whole, but I will get that anyway....(?)

In going to the museum I will have to be able to explain and justify the project to a range of perspectives and attitudes towards it, perhaps this is something I should go over in detail with some 'test' people, though the way I speak about it and approach the whole situation will greatly change over the course of 60-80 people... I still want the 'algorithm' to survive, though the realities of implementation and the noise(?) are now becoming.... me, the objects, and the 'parent'.. perhaps there is also an interesting parasitic relationship going on....? There has also been a myriad of (semi)obligatory passage points going on since the beginning of the NHM project, and I am dealing with this object as (principle[symmetrical?])actor, but only after I am enlisted?

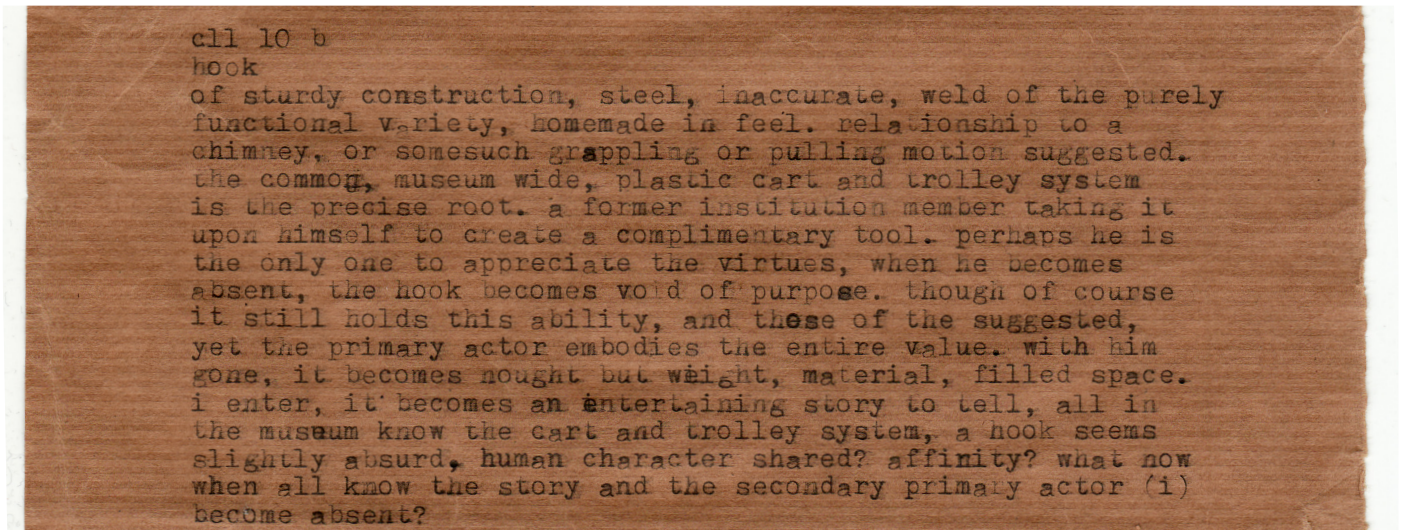
I have just read that one of the criticisms of ANT is "that ANT leads to useless descriptions that seem pointless." Leaving it's own pitfalls of description aside.. this hardly seems to be criticism..

Maybe a third step after going there is applying for employment at the NHM as the 'object concern facilitator' in applying for a grant to cover my wages..

ashley

10: A text in conversation with a member of the University of Applied Arts Vienna, discussing the situation of my approach to entering the museum, physically, in person, for the first time, having previously only contacted museum members through the mediation of the director, and his forwarding of my letters by email. Here, the Object Concern Facilitator appears for the first time.

In late January I began going to the museum, with the pictures of the objects, knocking on doors, introducing the work, the objects - talking, exchanging, developing my own ideas on the work as I spoke through a need of describing the work in the context it was operating. The act of going to the museum, many times, in identifying of the members of the museum associated with each object, increasingly illustrated the importance of my presence there. Many things began to happen. People who had seen the mail, without responding, began recognising and claiming association with the objects when spoken to directly. The stories of these objects began to come out, both in truth and fiction - from the basic interest in the instruments from other departments in the museum, normally hidden from view or interaction; to utter disbelief - to the point of denial - of these objects actually coming from the Natural History Museum refuse; and fantastical postulations on what some of the objects might be, or what they could be.



all 10 b
hook
of sturdy construction, steel, inaccurate, weld of the purely
functional variety, homemade in feel. relationship to a
chimney, or some such grappling or pulling motion suggested.
the common, museum wide, plastic cart and trolley system
is the precise root. a former institution member taking it
upon himself to create a complimentary tool. perhaps he is
the only one to appreciate the virtues, when he becomes
absent, the hook becomes void of purpose. though of course
it still holds this ability, and these of the suggested,
yet the primary actor embodies the entire value. with him
gone, it becomes nought but weight, material, filled space.
i enter, it becomes an entertaining story to tell, all in
the museum know the cart and trolley system, a hook seems
slightly absurd, human character shared? affinity? what now
when all know the story and the secondary primary actor (i)
become absent?

11: Author's notes on an object in the collection of October, 2011, outlining various acts and concerns the object engages with.

“Good, please come again, tell us more stories about the objects! Haha!”

(Member of the Natural History Museum Vienna, in conversation
during a visit to the museum in January, 2012.)

It emerged later that one object caused a ‘scandal’ within the museum (Personal communication, Akaterina Anastasiou, Library, Natural History Museum, Vienna. May, 2012). It was a shock to the organisation when the artist presented an object to all museum members with the inventory number (09). Officially, objects with an inventory number are property of the institution, and they must be excessed according to established procedure. The artist was digging in the museum rubbish, and finding objects that had been thrown away whilst still bearing the museum inventory number, and then distributing images of this object back to all of the museum staff. ‘Everyone was talking about it’ (Ibid.). Without trying to quantify or qualify my influence, I was beginning to engage.

I was beginning to learn about the access routes into the institution - near unfettered access was gradually being granted, and taken. The act of abuse developing in tandem with my visits to the museum, my familiarity with the surroundings, the learning and development of tricks, borderlines of acceptable behaviour. It is also imperative to include that some things of the situation helped greatly in the development - that I was engaging with the members of the museum helped a great deal, conversations were conducted in mutual interest and humour; the work in itself was often of interest and amusement, bemusement, to the people I was relaying it to; the work, and myself, had been introduced to all staff through the director of the museum - I had the backing of the ‘top,’ with all of it’s situations of power, alienation, acceptance.

You are cordially invited to...

A DINNER WITH OBJECTS

An informal social dinner between staff of the Natural History Museum,
and objects found in the museum rubbish over the past four months.

18:30 Thursday, February 9th, 2012

Expositur Postgasse - University of Applied Arts
Postgasse 6
1010 Vienna

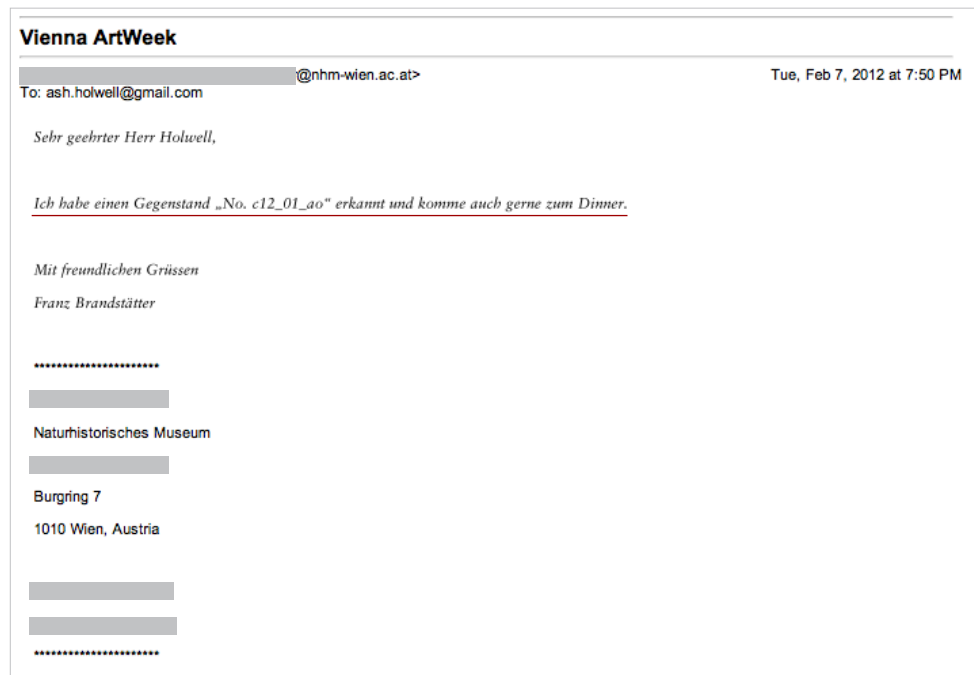
[A map is provided on the reverse of this invitation, and directions to the dining room will be clearly signposted]



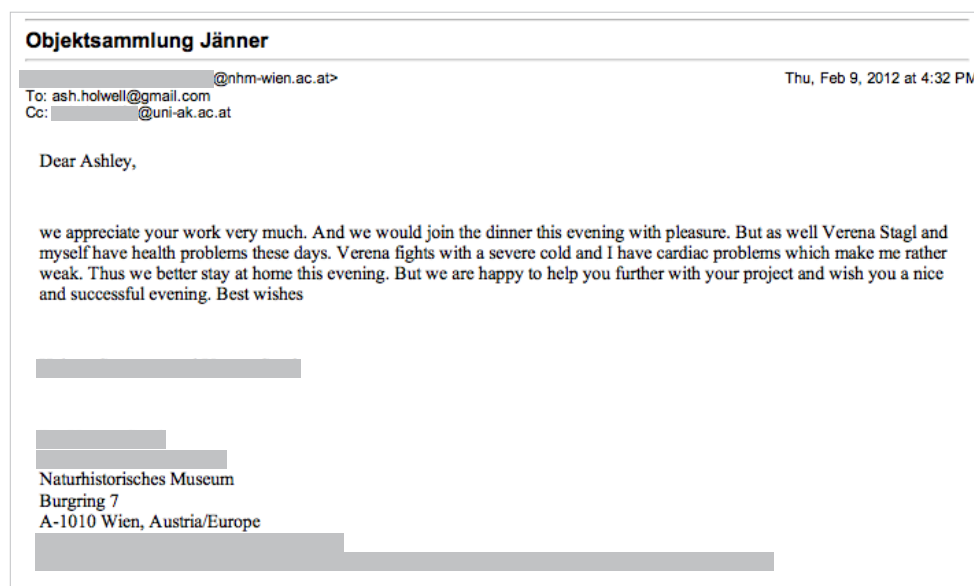
Postgasse 6

12: Invitation, distributed to identified object acquaintances from within the museum membership.

In the lead up to the dinner, from the number of object acquaintances I had identified within the museum, discussions on the details of the dinner, and the invitations given out, it was expected that between 12 and 18 people would attend the dinner, and we provided catering accordingly.



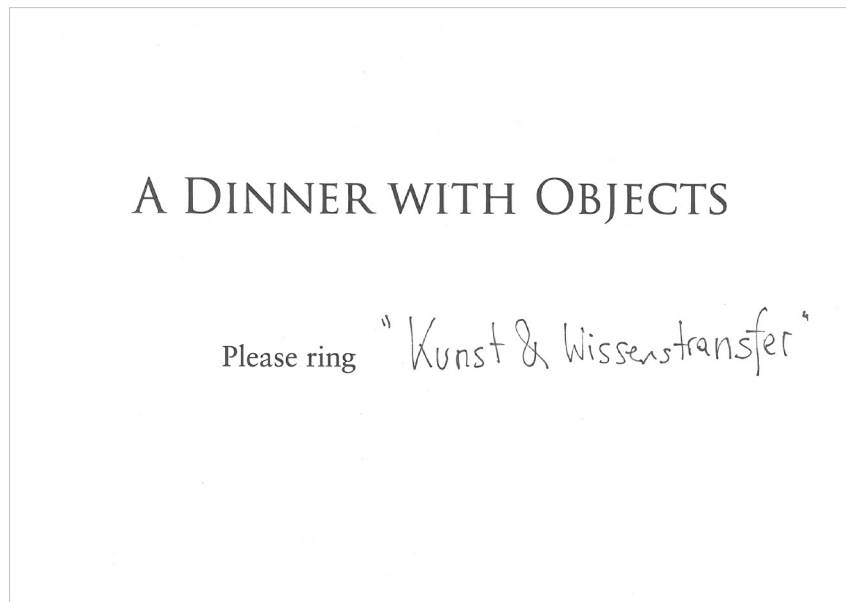
13: RSVP confirming dinner attendance. 'I recognise the object "No. c12_01_ao," and am happy to come to the dinner' (translation of the author of this text).



14: RSVP declining dinner attendance.

There were four attendees.

The signifier I used to assess the work's success was that if two people could meet, that wouldn't have otherwise related to one another directly, it could be deemed 'successful.' The ideas sketched out in 05, 08, would have been enacted. Two of the dinner participants had never before met. Success. The others related in a way they would not have without this intervention. The objects created connections, interaction, relations, transfer - across the departments of the museum, between people, between the objects themselves. The participants spoke of their objects, explaining it to the others, all objects from the collections were present, over 40 at this point, I shared what I knew of them, discussed the work, learnt of the other's work. To return to the form of the catalyst of our entering the museum, *the things talked*.



15: Sign on the street door of the dinner venue. Second line reads: 'Please ring "Art & Knowledge transfer"' - the dinner was hosted by the Center for Art & Knowledge Transfer, University of Applied Arts Vienna (*translation of the author of this text*).

There were four attendees.

This lack of willingness of the members of the museum to invest their time in something offered freely; to come outside the walls of the institution; to come outside of the known field of reference within which they are situation in the museum, strengthened the resolve in going to the museum. The only option for the continuation of the work would be to push it into the institution.

Institutional context.

I was not part of an explicit process in which I was choosing freely the Natural History Museum as a context within which to work. Perhaps other institutions will provide equal prospects in the initiation of the intervention, and in the end, the role. Taking the quantity of excess, and the power it exerts in our world, it could also be postulated that the world is in need of actors dedicated equally to the concerns of humans and non-humans, in a practice played out across society. If this is taken as an active hypothesis, then initiating the role of 'Object Concern Facilitators' at such an expanded scale, from a position of complete ignorance of all procedures and practices, is as absurd as it sounds. In order to begin a development, in order to make an assessment, to provide foundations, to take a look at such a thing, it could be initiated at a small scale.

Institutions hold highly developed structures of human existence, practices of human and non-human relations, and established foundations of human interaction, within a framework readily related to operationally. Organisations also operate on a fine, and much debated, line of being the individuals of which they are composed, or an entity in themselves. These things, it is argued, lend them towards naive, disruptive, interventions - so much so, that the managers of large organisations are, themselves, such interventions in the organisations they are members of (Personal communication, Bernd Kraeftner, May, 2012, referring to Baecker, D. 2011).

It seems, that the Natural History Museum provides fertile ground for such an endeavour. An institution proudly proclaiming its 30 million objects, it is an object-institution, in the practical, operational sense that most organisations are, and also *ontologically*. It derives its *being* from objects. It produces its existence through objects. How could it *not* have an 'Object Concern Facilitator?'

Personal context.

Here, in this time, I really was beginning to believe more strongly in the possible necessity for institutions to have, in their membership, an 'Object Concern Facilitator.' I have previous studies in Product Design, somehow another type of object facilitator, one involved with the creation of new objects, perhaps more of a 'Material Facilitator.' My personal concern with objects has been heightened and attuned through study, and practice, attention, engagement. The work I undertook following my studies drew me toward one field of the hyper-heightened and self-referential world of art/design, a world seemingly entirely engaged with objects, yet displaying little understanding, perhaps, or acknowledgement, of how objects operate within the world. Through creating work exhibited at two of the largest commercial art/design fairs in Europe, and seeing from an insiders perspective the processes of market pandering and pseudo-philosophical explorations, material (in)considerations, I entered a fruitful period of alienation to the design world.

A product designer who does not believe in products. I began to 'remake' things. Another contemporary movement of the design/production world troubling in equal measure, yes, though I attempted to address the reservations I hold through the objects I 'remade.' Ideas around 'trash interception,' 'future reuse,' and acknowledging our temporary relationships with all materials were attempted to be translated through the the things I was 'remaking.'

As a student of product design, the focus was on the immediacy of the object, it's direct relationship with humans for the time it existed in their realm, the consideration of the next 100 years was an afterthought, far from focus. The 'life,' or now 'life cycle,' of a product, is understood in terms of it's birth and death in relation to the human user - the afterlife of things, their reincarnation, decomposition, recomposition, ignored. After witnessing the massive excession processes of the art/design world, this excess it created posed a question of much more immediacy within the 'real' world, than anything I saw addressed inside the other hyper-heightened, self-referencing world. Here, we see a reflection of this world of science outlined earlier - a world which must maintain its borders and boundaries in order to exist, yet routinely ignores the existence of these borders and boundaries in assuming it's relationship with the 'real' world.

With a belief in such things, and with practice in the taking of objects from excess; the translation of the objects to contexts of value, seeing it could work; the 'naive social intervention' in translating the ideas of Latour on 'a collective of humans and non-humans;' certain personal feelings about the lack of value attributed to objects and materials by the humans of the relationship; and in conversations with others about the nature of the work, the idea of the Object Concern Facilitator became more resolute.

During the time the 'naive social intervention' was carried out, I extracted from the museum's excess large collections of potentially important publications; many objects in near perfect condition; some, that by their existence, raised what I see as major points of concern for humans and non-humans. I really began to feel that, in the collection I was gathering, there was a lot to do. How could these things be translated to a context of value? Nobody at the museum has this role, it is not part of their formal responsibilities in the institution, the established option is taken - excession. For these questions to be acted out, it would require application diorectly to the task, and time dedicated to it. In order for the concerns of these objects to be engaged *in*, the service I was beginning to provide, would have to become engrained *in* the museum. It would have to practice *in* the world.

Naturhistorisches Museum Wien
Burgring 7
1010 Vienna
Austria

Friday, February 17th, 2012

Dear [REDACTED]

I have been conducting myself inside the museum since October, in a work vested in the objects of the museum, moving across multiple foci within what has been termed, institutional excess. Throughout the work, I have become increasingly convinced of its value within the museum as an institution - both to the people and the objects involved. As such, I would like to apply to be temporarily instated, in an official capacity, as 'Object Concern Facilitator, of the Museum of Natural History, Vienna.'

I firmly believe that this position is one of relevance and important to such an institution as yours, being one that deals deeply in the stories surrounding objects, and having a closely intertwined relationship with these things. This level of involvement, as with most institutions, fails to be reflected in the care taken with the objects of the everyday, and I believe there is a valuable opportunity being missed by the Museum of Natural History. The adoption of such a position within an institution holding such relevance to the role, together with the museum's standing within the world, could provide intriguing outcomes, both within and outside of the institution.

I propose that I would be under the official, but voluntary, employment of the museum for a period of two weeks, taking a small, used space as an office from which to conduct my work, including:

Continued retrieval of object from the museum refuse. This has become fruitful exercise for both the staff of the museum, the objects, and the development of my own theoretical understanding of what is happening in the throughput and changing values of things. Important questions remain as to the standing of the collection in relation to the museum, how it fits within the cataloguing mechanisms of the institutions, what relationship my involvement now has with these objects, and how the value of these things have transformed through my entrance to the museum - particularly to the people in the museum who hold the stories of these things.

Engagement with the personal stories the objects of the refuse hold. The dispersal of the emails, my communications with museum staff, and the 'Dinner with Objects,' have already done many things within the institution, however subtle these things might be. There is a general knowledge now of the project within the museum walls, and as such, a level of attention has been brought to the objects of the refuse, and I have seen that this is prompting some engagement with the issues surrounding these things. This type of connection works on many levels within the institution, in some ways it offers an abstract development of camaraderie between the staff and

and as such, a level of attention has been brought to the objects of the refuse, and I have seen that this is prompting some engagement with the issues surrounding these things. This type of connection works on many levels within the institution, in some ways it offers an abstract development of camaraderie between the staff and the departments of the museum, particularly in the works efforts to bring disparate people together through the arguably arbitrary connections it has been creating. The dinner has now forged a nuanced beginning to the adoption of an 'Object Concern Facilitator,' offering both a slightly absurd and effective introduction to the role in the museum, and uncovering important issues and concerns that can further inform the development of the museums stance towards the objects it deal with.

Assessment of the role within the museum structure. This position is, to my knowledge, relatively unfounded within institutions around the world, as such, an important element for the work, and the Museum of Natural History, is to be a thorough exploration of how the role relates to the institutions of the museum, and to a broader extent, how the accepted norms of relationships people have with objects manifest themselves in lives.

The publication of the work as a resource. I intend to bring the elements of the work together into published material, as a framing of the procedures undertaken, processes initiated, relationships formed, and the insights gained from the instigation of such a role in an institution, and in conducting a piece of art in such a way. This is hoped to become an interesting resource particularly for the Museum of Natural History, but also for other institutions in their considerations of institutional procedures, and to the art community as a depiction of a work conducted deeply within the everyday world.

I would in no way wish or need to be paid for my work in the museum, however, I think it would be important for my work, and the outcomes for the Museum of Natural History, that the role to be an official one within the institution.

The work I have begun now stands as in interesting action in itself, but I feel there is an opportunity to push it further and build on the issues so far engaged with, and would very much appreciate this opportunity if given to me.

I have included my curriculum vitae and relevant portfolio of works for your consideration, and look forward to hearing from you,

Kind regards,



Ashley Holwell

The engagement being undertaken became increasingly that of an organisational disruption. It played out this organisational disruption in a process similar to the realm of ethnomethodology; and in a technical-politically, actively circumventing orthodox channels of action.

Disruption.

A. Holwell - *'It was funny, after Christmas, I was finding a lot of Christmas trees in the bin.'*
Museum member - *'Well, that's only natural.'*

(In conversation, February, 2012)

In 'Studies in Ethnomethodology,' H. Garfinkel outlines the interventionist basis of ethnomethodology. The ethnographic approach attempts to *'analyse everyday activities as members' methods for making those same activities visibly-rational-and-reportable-for-all-practical-purposes... The reflexivity of that phenomenon is a singular feature of practical actions, of practical circumstances, of common sense knowledge of social structures, and of practical sociological reasoning. By permitting us to locate and examine their occurrence the reflexivity of that phenomenon establishes their study'* (Garfinkel, H. 1967. vii). The approach attempts to uncover common, taken-for-granted understandings that are established in human interaction, and through this identification, render them visible, reportable, and to some extent, analysable - two applications of this, together, begin to illustrate the relation found in this work.

In the first, Garfinkel instructs students, in everyday situations, such as meeting a friend or in time spent at home with their family, to take the meaning of words spoken in conversation as radically literal. An example of a resulting conversation is as follows:

Case 7

My friend and I were talking about a man whose overbearing attitude annoyed us. My friend expressed his feeling.

(S) I'm sick of him.

(E) Would you explain what is wrong with you that you are sick?

(S) Are you kidding me? You know what I mean.

(E) Please explain your ailment.

(S) (He listened to me with a puzzled look.) What came over you? We never talk this way, do we?

(Garfinkel, H. 1967. 44)

Here, we see that the accepted modes and practices of interaction within the world are disrupted, clearly illuminating the established understandings of action both between two individuals, and a wider collective. In going into the museum, taking things from the rubbish bin already begins a type of disruption, though not to the pointed level of the above case - when this really begins to become present in the work is through the distribution of the first email introduction, containing five objects of the refuse. These objects, in the common understanding of the institution, no longer exist - yet here they are, on the computer screens of over 250 museum members. When this is expanded to entering the museum, in the initial act of conversing with museum members, and confronting them with the objects, the disruption becomes stronger.

The typical results from the students of Garfinkel, enacted destructive disruption - conversations ended abruptly; conversers got angry, worried, changed the subject - the 'naive social intervention' attempts not to avoid destructive disruption. The work proposed an alternative to destruction, in the creation of value through the exchange of the dinner - the equivalent of what the conversations do, in this situation, could be placing the objects directly back with the identified acquaintances, and inducing them to act again in regards their decision to excess the objects. This could have been a direct affront, a critique of personal actions, isolated from the institution. Perhaps this could also hold disruptive value, however this work attmpts something more subtle, almost attempting invisibility, in order to engage with the following point:

When the Object Concern Facilitator is initiated within the museum, the museum as a whole begins to sit between the lines of conversation of the two parties. The Object Concern Facilitator is part of the institution. The museum continues to act within it's accepted modes and practices of existence, whilst being disruptive to it's own modes and practices simultaneously. The *insitution* acts differently, *immediately*. The relationship between what was once outside the institution, and that which is now a part of it is so subtle that perhaps the idea of *real-time reflexivity* arises.

In the second illustrative experiment of Garfinkel, subjects were instructed that they would be 'advised' on a serious personal problem on which they would like advice. They were to give some background information on the problem, and ask a 'counsellor' questions that would allow a 'yes' or 'no' answer. The 'counsellor' would then answer, and the subjects would have time to privately record their reactions, without the 'counsellor' hearing, before submitting their next question. What the subjects did not know, is that all the answers were pre-decided randomly.

The subjects were all able to complete the experiment, with each answer re-assessing their relation to the answer, and modifying their own perception in variety of ways; accommodating inappropriate answers as they were 'for a reason;' when they made sense the answers were taken as 'advice;' contradictory answers were furnished with additional meanings that were 'behind' what the advisor said. When told of the deception of the random numbers, all subjects were surprised that they had contributed so actively and strongly to the 'advice that they had received from the advisor;' and in most cases, with this new knowledge, revised their opinions of the procedure, emphasizing its inadequacies. The subjects' understandings formed and translated themselves around the answers of the advisor, and continued to do so following the experiment, when they were informed of the method in which the advice was arrived at.

(paraphrased from Garfinkel, H. 1967. 76 - 103)

When the objects, as you will see, begin to circulate within the museum, becoming a disruption in themselves. the museum becomes reflexive to its own actions, as the actions of the Object Concern Facilitator are now operating as part of the institution itself.

To note, part of the aim of ethnomethodology is to take the visible understandings and render them analysable. This is not the key concern of this work, as the desires for direct influence outlined above illustrate, through the engagement of the role inside the institution, it is intended that those understandings uncovered in the act are immediately absorbed within the institutional structure, and that of wider worlds. Perhaps this is the introduction of *real-time re-reflexivity*, and in this, analysis is rendered obsolete - except if conducted for applied external purposes, such as this text.

Technical-political

Politics is not the exercise of power. Politics ought to be *defined on its own terms, as a mode of acting put into practice by a specific kind of subject and deriving from a particular form of reason.*

(Ranciere, 2001, 2)

The work operated as a political act, here, in relation to the way Ranciere refers to it, through the translation of my reasoning, in relation the existence of the ‘Object Concern Facilitator,’ and allowing it’s practice inside the world. The reasoning of a particular subject is translated directly into action, circumventing orthodox, traditional procedures in the creation of new institutional, organisational, collective, roles. The role did not exist in the world, there had yet to be a situation in which it could form through top down managerial instigation, clear market imperatives, state intervention - the plethora of established, and accepted, mechanisms. Suddenly, it came to exist. To begin to see this event, we must return now to the idea of abuse introduced earlier.

When the Natural History Museum Vienna and the University of Applied Arts Vienna formed a new relationship in 2011, with the express purpose of collaborating on an exhibition, there opened up opportunities of inter-institutional privilege, particularly for the students involved. We gained a level of access to the museum slightly above that of what is granted to the ‘general public,’ though, in our efforts of real engagement, this fell short of the access we desired. There were some in the class, however, who began to push the boundaries of the relationship - forming friendships; inducing action from museum members not officially involved; questioning the rules of the museum. I began to do this through my work requiring regular access to the museum. The need for me to check the refuse bins of the museum, to build the collection of objects, led me to a technique of abuse - the ability to circumvent the established security procedure of the museum. In the end, this reached a level of absurdity, with my access to the museum being granted on terms of familiarity with the security personnel, all becoming accustomed to the technique I was using to enter the institution. This level of abuse of my situation, inside the relationship between the two institutions, heightened as the work progressed.

In the willingness of the museum director to accommodate the work, and to implicate all members, the work began to abuse the director’s affinity for providing for arts within the museum. Since November 2011, the museum has hosted the exhibitions of the department of Art & Science of the University of Applied Arts Vienna, in *Things That Talk*; students of the Textile Department of the University of Applied Arts Vienna, in *Hallstattfarben* (Hallstatt colours); and Daniel Spoerri in *An incompetent dialogue?* I was offered a unique situation that I was able to leverage to enable further access to the museum.

In other ways, I was abusing established means of communication, and acceptances of who might be allowed to operate within the institution. I exhibit a level of written, verbal, and visual, communication that meets accepted levels for entering such an institution. The game was being played in the real world. I went to the museum in shirt and tie, not necessitated by the museum particularly, instead abusing the established codes of presentation in our world. This is where the intricacies of the levels of trust, and contract, I engaged with in the museum begin to appear more concretely, though do not make themselves clear until later in the work.

e-mail fuer Ashley Holwell

To: [redacted]@univie.ac.at>
Cc: ash holwell <ash.holwell@gmail.com>

Sun, May 6, 2012 at 3:36 PM

Lieber [redacted]

Sie können gerne eine (zeitlich befristete) NHM e-mail-Adresse für den Kunststudenten Ash Holwell einrichten - soweit ich weiss, hat er mit Ihnen schon darüber gesprochen. Ist von seiten der GD in Ordnung.

Danke und liebe Gruesse,
[redacted]

17: Internal email correspondence from the director of the museum to the information department, authorising the (temporary) email address for the art student Ash Holwell, covered by the DG (Director General).

It must be noted that the work now walks a fuzzy line of power, as it referred to by Ranciere above. The opportunity for this abuse came from a form of power, though I do not believe it became the act of exercising power, as I was not acting to possess this power, I was attempting to engage with this power, and that which was granting this power.

Politics is a specific rupture in the logic of arche. It does not simply presuppose the rupture of the 'normal' distribution of positions between the one who exercises power and the one subject to it. It also requires a rupture in the idea that there are dispositions 'proper' to such classifications.

(Ranciere, 2001, 4)

To relate further to the theses of Ranciere, the works engagement with the museum, engaged in a rupture in the procedures, mechanisms, distributions of action, in the institution. I radically circumvented the established channels of entrance into the institution. Taking my position as an unpublished, masters-level student, of a non-Scientific training, with a field of research formally outside of the charter of the museum, I am far outside of the common criterion for membership within the museum. To then know that I was granted keys to my own office; an official email address (17); authorised to contact external organisations on the museums behalf; donate and sell objects in the museums possession; use the museums postage and transport facilities; freely granted personal contact with members of the institutions directorship; and, that the purpose of my work legitimised my contact with any member of the museum staff - the level of abuse, circumvention, and rupture, become vividly apparent.

What Ranciere also requires of politics, here, is the rupture in the idea that things such as my level of communication, and formed institutional relationships, disposed me 'proper' to the initiation of the role.

Here, the premise of the artist engaging *only they may*, is folded back on. The underlying premise of the work would be that the Natural History Museum Vienna would instigate the role of the Object Concern Facilitator in an official and permanent capacity within the institution. In this act, the work would be relieved of my personal disposition to classification, and the rupture would become complete, ready for rupture anew.

This is brought back to contemporary research and political significance through sentiments exchanged in two conversations had with members of the scientific community. One, a member of the European Commission of Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection, spoke of the near complete disconnect between research findings and their policy outcomes. His experience is that, in the world, there are many other factors and influences that hold much larger sway than the results of scientific findings (Personal communication, October, 2011). This was recently echoed by Barry Barnes, co-director of Egenis, and a former Professor of Sociology at Exeter University, when speaking of a recent policy decision relating to legal classification of embryos in Britain. In speaking of the effect that policy advice from the sciences had when translated to policy decisions, his statement is that 'it makes no difference!' (Personal communication, May, 2012).

How, then, to practice a politics that engages with the worlds of science, the worlds of art, the world. How, then, to effect translations of ideas into engagement with the world? Perhaps, the technical-political circumvention of the established channels, exhibited in this work, contributes empirical artefacts to the practice of the political.

Liebe Alle,
ich möchte mich als Ihr Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten im Naturhistorischen Museum vorstellen und Sie von dem neuen Service und dessen Umfang informieren. Die Funktion wurde kürzlich entwickelt und wird versuchsweise in den ersten drei Maiwochen begonnen werden.

Bislang hat sich diese Entwicklung als wertvoll für eine Beschäftigung mit undurchsichtigen Netzwerkverbindungen innerhalb der Institution erwiesen. Es wurden caritative Einrichtungen in Wien mit Gütern versorgt, wichtige Forschungsfragen und Besorgnisse aufgeworfen, welche ganz allgemein Gemeinschaften betreffen, und ein grundlegender Bedarf für Dingvermittlung innerhalb der Museumsstruktur aufgedeckt.

Der Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten ist nun dafür da, um für Güter zu sorgen, die als überflüssig angesehen werden. Bitte benützen Sie die unten stehenden Kontaktangaben, um mich zu erreichen, wenn Sie irgendwelche Gegenstände besitzen, die repariert werden könnten, anderswo – innerhalb oder außerhalb des Museums – zu gebrauchen sind oder noch voll funktionstüchtig sind, aber einen Überschuss in Ihrem Bedarf darstellen. Das kann beinhalten:

- Werkzeuge, Einrichtungsgegenstände, an Ort und Stelle nicht mehr benötigt oder funktionierend.
- Überschüssiges Material/Abfall, Verschnitt.
- Demontierte Ausstellungsstücke.
- Stücke, die ein Überschuss in einer Sammlung geworden sind.
- Bücher, Zeitschriften, Dokumente, Notizen.

Ich würde diese gerne von Ihnen einsammeln, bevor sie auf dem Abfall landen. Wenn es Gegenstände im Museum gibt, die weggeräumt werden oder für eine Zeit einer neuen Bestimmung zugeführt werden sollen, dann kann die Probezeit der Funktion eine günstige Gelegenheit dafür darstellen.

Dear all,

I would like to introduce myself as your Object Concern Facilitator at the Museum of Natural History, and inform you of the new services and capacities available to you. The role has recently been developed, and will be initiated as a trial during the first three weeks of May.

Thus far, the development has proven valuable in terms of engaging with obscure network connections within the institution; provided charities in Vienna with goods; raised important research questions, and matters of concern, within collectives in general; and uncovered a basic need of object facilitation within the museum structure.

The Object Concern Facilitator is available to take care of goods that are considered to be excess. Please use the contact details below to contact me if you have any items that could be repaired, used elsewhere inside or outside the museum, or still provide function, and are surplus to your requirements. This could include:

- Tools, furniture, or stationary no longer required or functioning.
- Excess/scrap materials, offcuts.
- Dismantled exhibition artefacts.
- Samples that have become surplus to a collection.
- Books, periodicals, documents, notations.

I will gladly come to collect them for you, before they are placed in the rubbish. If there are objects within the museum that have needed to be removed or reappropriated for some time, then the trial period of the role could present an opportune time.

In this same vein, there will be a noticeboard near the staff and service entrance on Burgring, with postings of objects available from the Object Concern Facilitator. Please check this, and if you would like anything posted there, don't hesitate to contact me about it.

Im weiteren wird es ein Notizbrett nahe dem Angestellten- und Serviceeingang am Burgring mit Annoncen von jenen Gegenständen geben, welche beim Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten verfügbar sind. Bitte sehen Sie sich diese Anschlagtafel an und wenn Sie etwas darauf annoncieren wollen, zögern Sie nicht mich zu kontaktieren.

Die Funktion des Vermittlers für Dingangelegenheiten wird zu einem Großteil die Herstellung neuer Beziehungen innerhalb des Museums betreffen. Durch das Teilen von Geschichten, die mit überschüssigen Gegenständen verbunden sind, soll zugleich Unterhaltung als auch eine breitere Wahrnehmung für die Rolle, welche die Gegenstände im Museum spielen, erzeugt werden. Nochmals, wenn Sie irgendetwas mitteilen wollen, bitte kontaktieren Sie mich jederzeit.

Ich freue mich in dem Naturhistorischen Museum arbeiten zu können, mich mit den Dingen hier zu beschäftigen und hoffentlich viele von Ihnen während meiner Ausübung der Funktion zu treffen.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,
Ashley Holwell

0681 816 026 17
Geologie & Paläontologie
1. Stock

An important part in the role concerns new relationships within the museum, through the sharing of stories relating to objects found in the refuse, providing both entertainment, and wider perception of the role that objects play within the museum. If you have anything you wish to share, again, please feel free to contact me.

I look forward to working within the museum, dealing with the objects there, and hopefully meeting many of you during my time in the role,

Kind regards,

Ashley Holwell

0681 816 026 17
Geology & Palaeontology
1st Floor

~

18: Letter from Ashley Holwell to all museum members, introducing himself as the Object Concern Facilitator. Sent to the museum Director on May 2nd, 2012, and forwarded to all museum members on May 6th, 2012.

Kunstprojekt - Ashley Holwell

To: [REDACTED]@univie.ac.at
Cc: ash holwell <ash.holwell@gmail.com>

Sun, May 6, 2012 at 3:34 PM

Liebe Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter,

Vielleicht haben Sie/habt Ihr ja den jungen Mann auffälligem rotem Haarschopf schon gesehen (er sitzt für ein paar Wochen im Vorraum der Geologie im 1. Stock); er macht mit den im NHM weggeworfenen Dingen ein Kunstprojekt (eine Arbeit an der Univ. f. Angewandte Kunst, die er Ende Mai abschliessen muss) und er hat mich gebeten, seinen Vorstellungsbrief (anbei) an Alle zu versenden, was ich hiermit gerne tue, denn das Projekt erfolgt mit der wohlwolenden Kenntnissnahme der GD.

Beste Gruesse,



OCF Introduction.pdf
52K

19: Text written by the museum director, accompanying the introductory letter of the Object concern Facilitator, when sent on May 6th, 2012. 'He does an art project with the discarded objects of the NHM (a work for the University of Applied Arts, to be finished by the end of May).'

The act and the practice

The engagement of the Object Concern Facilitator within the museum presented important external influences, whilst the practice of the Object Concern Facilitator produced self-influence through action. The 'institutional role' attempted to be the work itself, all other reference to, and documentation of, merely being artefacts representing the framework of the action, only applicable in a representational context. The work attempts to pull away from an analytical and representational approach to conducting art, inducing immediate feedback loops of action and practice.

Legitimation

Legitimation of the role inside the institution became a foundational action, operating in the blurred lines of the relationship between an external party influencing the museum, and the museum formally accepting the influence as internal, and therefore, implicit in its own actions as a collective. This is a process that could continue indefinitely, given my personal route into the museum structure - I carried the connotations and perceptions that come with being an artist with me into the museum. Again, the rupture will only be complete when the museum actively draws the role of the Object Concern Facilitator into its membership, under its own imperative.

This delicate positioning, is illustrated, and complicated, by the introductory letter of the Object Concern Facilitator (18) to all members of the museum, in which the communication of the Object Concern Facilitator omits the reference to an artistic work - as a legitimising act. For the museum to accept the role, to allow the highest level of engagement, the Object Concern Facilitator no longer knows they are an art project, and the museum does not receive the role as such. However, the intermediary party, again the director of the museum, introduces the work as a 'Kunstprojekt' (art project), and only as such (19) - again the medium plays a significant role, when it is present.

Rupture

To illustrate the rupture playing itself out during my time in the museum, a series of artefacts arising from the actions of the Object Concern Facilitator follow, pertaining to the various situations and processes initiated within the institution:

‘There’s the rubbish bastard.’

Comment overheard, in reference to the object Concern Facilitator, from museum member, May, 2012
(translation in verbal communication with seperate museum member, May, 2012).

20: -



21: Sign on the door to the department of Object Concern Facilitation ('Vermittlung von Dingangelegenheiten' is the chosen German translation, in keeping with museum communication procedure), integrated into the graphic style utilised by the museum.

From: [REDACTED]@sta.smi.sachsen.de] Sent: Tue 5/8/2012 11:20 AM
To: Holwell Ashley
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: AW: Die Sterne
Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Sehr geehrte Frau Holwell,
herzlichen Dank für Ihr Angebot. Seitens des Sächsischen Staatsarchivs besteht jedoch kein Interesse am Erwerb der Publikation.
Mit freundlichem Gruß

[REDACTED]
Referent

Sächsisches Staatsarchiv
Zentrale Aufgaben, Grundsatz
Archivstraße 14 | 01097 Dresden
Telefon 0351 89219-842 | Fax 0351 89219-709
[REDACTED]@sta.smi.sachsen.de | www.archiv.sachsen.de
Kein Zugang für elektronisch signierte sowie für verschlüsselte elektronische Dokumente.

Von: Holwell Ashley [<mailto:ashley.holwell@NHM-WIEN.AC.AT>]
Gesendet: Dienstag, 8. Mai 2012 10:46
An: StA Poststelle
Betreff: Die Sterne

Hello,
I am the Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten at the Natural History Museum, Vienna, and have recently come across some historical publications from Johann Ambrosius Barth, Leipzig.
The two copies of 'Die Sterne,' from 1961, are excess to our requirements, and I would like to offer them to your archives, if they are of any relevance - images are attached. If they are not, could you please let me know of any people or institutions to whom they might be?

Kind regards,
Ashley Holwell

0681 816 026 17
Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten
Naturhistorisches Museum Wien

22: First communication of the Object Concern Facilitator with an external organisation, devoid of all associations with an 'art project.'

In the second week of the operation of the department, I notice, for the first time, that a museum member with a cleaning role, cleans, and empties the bin of, the office space that the department of Object Concern Facilitation occupies.

23: -

From: [REDACTED]@bundesarchiv.de] Sent: Fri 5/11/2012 8:45 AM

To: Holwell Ashley

Cc:

Subject: Historical Document, Gz.: StA 3-7226/1

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Sehr geehrte Frau Holwell,

Ihre E-Mail vom 8. Mai 2012 habe ich erhalten. Vielen Dank für Ihr Angebot. Normalerweise müsste der von Ihnen gefundene Rundbrief der Gesellschaft für kulturelle Verbindungen mit dem Ausland im Bestand DY 13 - Liga für Völkerfreundschaft vorhanden sein. Da dieser Teil des Bestandes aber noch nicht abschließend bearbeitet ist, würde ich mich freuen, wenn Sie mit das Dokument vorsorglich zuschicken würden.

Mit bestem Dank und freundlichen Grüßen
Im Auftrag
[REDACTED]

Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv
Finckensteinallee 63
12205 Berlin
Tel.: 030187770-411
E-Mail: berlin@bundesarchiv.de

Informationen zu Beständen und Online-Findbücher, sowie zu den Benutzungsmodalitäten und Öffnungszeiten des Bundesarchivs, einschließlich der Stiftung, finden Sie unter www.bundesarchiv.de

24: Email reply accepting the offer of an object to the State Archives of Germany (Das Bundesarchiv).



25: Potentially excess kitchen equipment from the museum, facilitated to a museum member in the third week of operation of the department of Object Concern Facilitation.

At the end of the third week of the operations of the department of Object Concern Facilitation, objects were offered to be facilitated by the department from outside of the museum. A member of public had come to the museum, wanting to find a place where the collections of her deceased Grandfather could be of value. She was first directed to another department of the museum, this department offered to take one of the objects, then directed her to the office of the Object Concern Facilitator to discuss the remaining objects.



27: The Object Concern Facilitator, in conversation with the director of the Austrian Archive for Adult Education, on an object offered to the archive. The department of Object Concern Facilitation. May, 2012. Film still.



Enlarge



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 Ended: 23rd May 2012 11:42:11 EDT

Successful bid: **EUR 6.55** [5 Bids]
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 Shipping to **Austria**

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PayPal Buyer Protection Free unlimited. [More Info](#)

Seller Information

ashholwell (4)
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Description | **Shipping and Payment Methods**

The seller is responsible for this offer.

Item number: 280883814780

Product Features

Condition:	Used: Item has already been used. An article with scuff marks but in good condition and ... More about	Rooms:	Living room, kitchen, dining room, playroom, office, guest room
Material:	Solid wood, metal, canvas, steel, fabric	Style:	Vintage / Retro
Color:	Blues		

Timber chair with textured vinyl upholstery and steel rivets. Solid construction, used but good condition.

Pick up from Burgring, or delivery within Wien upon discussion.

28: Image of online auction page for an object found in the museum refuse and averted from excession. Note here the sale is conducted under the personal account of Ashley Holwell, authorisation was not granted in the sale of objects in the official capacity of the Object Concern Facilitator as it would implicate considerations of taxes, and the finance department - the director of the museum deeming this as something I 'do not want to get involved in' (personal communication, May, 2012).

From:

Sent: Mon 5/21/2012 8:25 AM

To:

Holwell Ashley

Cc:

Subject:

Stone collection

Attachments:

[View As Web Page](#)

Dear Ash,

We talked on Friday, my grandfather has a collection of stones, which I would like to donate to the nhm. I don't know when I have the opportunity to bring this collection to the museum.

Who would be my contact if you're already departed?

Thanks a lot,

With kind regards

Information in this email and any attachments is confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual(s) to whom it is addressed or otherwise directed. Please note that any views or opinions presented in this email are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Company. Finally, the recipient should check this email and any attachments for the presence of viruses. The Company accepts no liability for any damage caused by any virus transmitted by this email. All SGS services are rendered in accordance with the applicable SGS conditions of service available on request and accessible at <http://www.sgs.com/en/Terms-and-Conditions.aspx>

29: Email received in regards the facilitation of objects directly arising from outside the institution.

Ans.: Die Wbr. VHS GmbH
Österr. VHS-Zentrum
Kürschnerg. 9
1210 Wien



Herrn
Ashley Holwell
Naturhistorisches Museum Wien
Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten
Burgring 7
1010 Wien

Geo



Die Wiener
Volkshochschulen

ÖSTERREICHISCHES VOLKSHOCHSCHULARCHIV

Die Wiener Volkshochschulen GmbH

Österreichisches Volkshochschularchiv

Kürschnergasse 9, 1210 Wien

Tel.: +43 (0)1/25 91 862

Fax: +43 (0)1/25 91 862-15

E-Mail: office@vhs-archiv.at

Internet: www.vhs.or.at oder

www.adulteducation.at

Herrn
Ashley Holwell
Naturhistorisches Museum Wien
Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten
Burgring 7
1010 Wien

Wien, 24.05.2012

Materialien von

Sehr geehrter Herr Holwell,

wie im Gespräch am 24.5. mit Hrn. [REDACTED] vereinbart, erhalten Sie anbei eine Auflistung der vom Österr. Volkshochschularchiv übernommenen Materialien:

- * Büchervorschau: Neueingänge der Amerika-Haus-Bibliothek: Herbst 1958, Herbst 1959
- * Sonderdruck „Die Sparkassen u. die Volkshochschulen“ Aus: Zeitschrift „Betriebswirts. u. Werbung“
- * Council de l'Europe „les sciences dans l' education des adultes“ und „sciences in adult education“, 1970
- * Amt für Kultur u. Volksbildung „Großstadtjugend u. Kino“, 1959
- * Wolfgang Speiser „Zehn Jahre freie Volksbildung in Wien“, 1957
- * Amt f. Kultur „Ein gelungenes Experiment. Das Volksheim „Per Albin Hansson-Siedlung“, o. J.
- * Jugendbuch-Ratgeber: Januar-Dezember 1966, Januar 1967
- * Zeitschrift „Theorie und Praxis“, 1968, 2 u. 3; 1969, 3/4
- * Zeitschrift „EB in Österreich“, 1976, 1
- * Zeitschrift „Wiener Bücherbriefe“, 1976, 3
- * Zeitschrift „Probleme von heute – Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur“: 1964-1976 (6 Hefte)
- * Zeitschrift „Sehen und Hören“: 1968, 37 u. 39; 1976, 84
- * Zeitschrift „Telespiegel“: 1967, 16
- * Kursverzeichnis Wiener Volksbildung, Herbst 1964
- * Wiener Urania. Mitteilungen: 1965-1976 (20 Hefte)
- * Urania-Sternwarte. Programmzettel: Herbst 1967
- * Volkshochschule Wien-West. Mitteilungen: 1964-1968 (24 Hefte)
- * Volkshochschule Volksheim Ottakring. Mitteilungen: Nr. 213, 214
- * Volkshochschule Brigittenau. Mitteilungen: 1965-1968 (12 Hefte)
- * Wiener Volksbildungsverein. Mitteilungen: 1965-1968 (8 Hefte)
- * Wiener Volksbildungsverein-Programmplakate: 1964/65, 10, 1966/67, 11, 1967/68, 4
- * Volkshochschule Hietzing. Mitteilungen: 1968, 5-7
- * Volkshochschule Döbling. Mitteilungen: 1966-1968 (6 Hefte)
- * Volkshochschule Alsergrund. Mitteilungen: 1966-1968 (8 Hefte)
- * Volkshochschule Favoriten. Mitteilungen: 1965, 10
- * Volkshochschule Innsbruck. Mitteilungen: 1976, 1



Die Wiener Volkshochschulen GmbH • 1150 Wien • Hollergasse 22

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- ÖSTERREICHISCHES
VOLKSHOCHSCHULARCHIV
- * VOX Nachrichten: 1967, 1,2,11; 1976,3
 - * Mitteilungen Institut f. Wissenschaft u. Kunst: 1967,2
 - * Mitteilungen der Österr. Gesellschaft für Filmwissenschaft: Nr. 96, 129, 132 -134
 - * Konferenzprogramm „ICEF Wien 1967“
 - * Folder „Meeting Europe“, 1965
 - * Brief Margarete Dostal an Verband Österr. Volkshochschulen, 7.12.1964
 - * Einladung an Dr. Schönmann, Künstl. VHS, 9.10.1967
 - * Film Spiegel-Plakate: 1966-1968 (7 Exemplare)
 - * Plakat „Staatl. Kunst- u. Kultursammlungen in Wien, 1964“

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Assistentin des Archivdirektors

ELISUM
Stadt Wien

30: Letter to the 'Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten' (Object Concern Facilitator) of the Natural History Museum Vienna. Contains confirmation of adoption, undertaking, acceptance, of objects to the Austrian Adult Education Archives, with an inventory of these objects.

Within the institution, I was readily referred to as being an artist, my presence there was a slow transition from 'artist' to 'officially sanctioned volunteer,' though in the four weeks it could not become complete, and because of the circumstances of my entry, perhaps never. I was engaging sincerely with the members of the museum, actively concerned with them and the objects of the institution, and providing the role of the Object Concern Facilitator. During the time I was in the role I never denied that I was an artist, and also endeavoured to never describe myself as such.

Once I was contacting external organisations and individuals outside of the museum, there was no perception of my operation as an artist, and the level of trust I was engaging in reached another level - both in an implicit contract of trust with the parties outside of the museum; and through being entrusted with representing the museum to the world. In the relations with those not knowing of the 'work,' I was not treating them as subjects, I was engaged in a symmetrical relationship between two parties.

In most of the interactions I had with outside organisations and individuals, the position was taken as granted, or communication proceeded without particular regard to my role in the museum. This, in itself, displays the implicit action that defined the work - it seemed, in some cases, to be readily accepted, taken as part of the world.

There were exceptions, however. I spoke to a member of the Vienna Museum, who found the title I was operating under to be quite humorous, and was intrigued by what I actually did at the museum. A member of the Vienna Library directed questions to the director of the Natural History Museum as to what was meant by my contact email, offering objects to the library, the style of my email contact. A purchaser of one of the objects through an online trading site liked the idea of the role so much he suggested that we keep his name on record in case the position become available in the future.

Two distinctly important things happened in the offer of objects from outside of the museum (26). The services of the role, in the receiving of objects, expanded outside of the institution; and, the referral from the members of the other department within the museum displayed an internal acceptance, and utilisation, of the role. A major question in the keeping of this level of trust also arose from this exchange, illustrated in 29. When it is directly asked, who will be in the role, provide the service, after the artist is gone it is now a question that cannot be answered by the artist alone, it must be answered by the institution. The role is still there, after I have left. The intervention in the institution now begins to engage itself in the levels of trust formed whilst in the role, and future questions of action between the artist and the museum now present themselves. The role is still there, after I have left - the 'there' being in the institution, and in myself.

The letter confirming the receipt of objects (30) can be used to draw further on the legitimised actions of the Object Concern Facilitator. The letter begins with 'Material from [name of former department director of the Natural History Museum Vienna, to whom which the objects were previously in the care of].' This refers to the material literally coming from the former director. It did, it was found to be part of the institutional excess in October, 2011, though not without some facilitation. Here though, the reference completely denies the existence of the Object Concern Facilitator as where the objects came from. The role is, sometimes, taken as operating deeply, in an almost granted, established way, in the relations of institutions - it's power in the rupture is that it is not just a destructive rupture. This then can be layered over - the sentence accepts the role as purely a medium for objects - the crux of the idea of facilitation.

Practice

The act of the work did not just attempt to provide this direct influence on the institution, it is also important that in the engagement in the practice of the Object Concern Facilitator, the practices of the roles provided influence to the role. The role was developed from scratch. Ideas on how to go about the facilitation of objects are commonplace in the world - trade, gifting, reappropriating, yes, but in the acting out of the role in the world, issues arose, concerns uncovered, procedures developed, behaviours induced - that may not have been uncovered in any other way.

Dear [REDACTED]

The publication you have kindly offered to take care of in the near future is enclosed. Thank you for being a part of the facilitation, and I wish you interest and enjoyment in the 'Ding.' Could you please confirm, in writing, when you have received the object.

Yours sincerely,

Ashley Holwell

Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten
Naturhistorisches Museum, Wien

Dear [REDACTED]

Please find enclosed the
publication you have so
kindly offered to take
over the care of.
We thank you for your
part in the facilitation
of this object, hope it
is of value to your collection
and would just request a
written confirmation of your
receipt of the object.

Yours sincerely,

Ashley Holwell

Object Concern Facilitator
Natural History Museum Vienna

www.nhm-wien.ac.at

Dear [REDACTED]

The publication you have kindly
offered to provide a more
appropriate context to is enclosed.

Thank you for your part in the
facilitation, and I hope it will
be of value to your collection.
Could you please provide a
written confirmation that you
have received the object.

Yours sincerely,

Ashley Holwell

Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten
Naturhistorisches Museum Wien

www.nhm-wien.ac.at

From: Holwell Ashley Sent: Mon 5/7/2012 4:21 PM

To: @wienmuseum.at; @wienmuseum.at

Cc:

Subject: Publications

Attachments: found_publications_nhm.zip(5MB) Schönmann.pdf(1MB)

[View As Web Page](#)

Hello,

I am acting as the Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten (Object Concern Facilitator) at the Natural History Museum, Vienna, and have come into contact with a small collection of publications from Vienna, primarily from the 1960's. The museum would like to offer the items to the collection of the Wien Stadt Museum. Attached is an indicative sample of the collection, so you may assess the relevance of the items to your work.

They are from the personal collection of [REDACTED], of whom I am sure you are more aware than I, though attached is a small biography I found, written on the event of his 65th birthday.

Please let me know if you would like the items, and I will happily deliver them to you.

Kind regards,
Ashley Holwell

0681 816 026 17
Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten
Naturhistorisches Museum Wien

34: Email offer of an object, in the second week of the role of the Object Concern Facilitator.

From: Holwell Ashley Sent: Wed 5/16/2012 3:47 PM

To: Collection_dev@cl.cu.edu.eg

Cc:

Subject: Historical Publication

Attachments: The Great Mosque of Ahmad Ibn Tulun.pdf(603KB)

[View As Web Page](#)

To Whom It May Concern,

I am the Object Concern Facilitator of the Natural History Museum Vienna, and in this capacity I have become connected with a publication authored by alumni of your institution. The details are as follows:

Fahim, M., Zaghoul, A. (1973). The Great Mosque of Ahmad Iban Tulun. Cairo: Dar Al-Maaref.

The attached document provides more information, and an indicative sample of the publication. It is A5 in format, and contains 28 pages of description, photographs and plans of the subject. If this is valuable for your collections, we would offer it to you free of charge or postage costs. Please let me know if you are interested to have this before the end of Wednesday, May 22nd, as after this date the object will be offered elsewhere, and provide a shipping address.

Yours sincerely,
Ashley holwell

+43 [0]681 816 026 17
Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten
Naturhistorisches Museum Wien

35: Email offer of an object, in the third week of the role of the Object Concern Facilitator. Note the introduction of an expiry date to the offer, and the request of a delivery request - pragmatic introductions, developed through practice.

geocaching – The Natural History Museum goes back into the field.

Details:

As the Object Concern Facilitator, I have come into contact with excess samples from the collections of the museum that the museum previously provided little option other than to discard into the rubbish. Proposed is a trial of the NHM becoming involved in the world of geocaching, in order to continue the use of these objects. This will prevent their loss; provide the museum with a platform for promotion; allow the museum to engage meaningfully with a community by bringing the actions of the museum out of institutional building and placing objects within the world; and showcase research artefacts rarely presented to the public.

The Department of Object Concern Facilitation will conduct and oversee the work, in cooperation with the Public Relations Department.

The Public Relations Department will approve the appearance, information, and actions, of the online presence before being made public.

The initial trial will begin on May 21st, 2012. Approximately five samples will be appropriated, prepared, and hidden, before this date, ready to be made public on this date.

Each sample will have a short description, written by the appropriate museum member, explaining what it is, and how it fitted into the work of the NHM.

Assessment will be based on interest from the public (ascertained through the number of logs recorded for the samples), and the perceived benefits to the NHM through the endeavour.

Public Statement:

„Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location.“
- geocache.com

The Natural History Museum Vienna occasionally finds itself in the situation of having samples from our collections that are surplus to our research and exhibition requirements. These samples are still rich in interest and intrigue, so the NHM is embarking on a geocaching adventure – taking the surplus samples and hiding them throughout Vienna, for you to discover and log - bringing the museum out into the world.

To find them, click this link to go to geocaching.com. From there you may sign up for a free membership, and search for caches from ‚nhm_wien‘. You will be given gps coordinates of the caches, and some clues, from which you may use your gps device, the geocaching.com map, or a map like google earth to locate each cache. When you find them you can see who else has found them in the logbook, and enter your own log, before returning the cache to its hiding place. Please note, unlike many geocaches, the samples will be non-exchangeable, as we would like all people to have the opportunity to find them.

Happy hunting!

Ashley Holwell
Vermittlung Für Dingangelegenheiten
Natural History Museum Wien



37: Image of a high-definition scan of an object, produced through a relationship between the Botany department (with their facilities for creating highly accurate digital records of flora samples) and the department of Object Concern Facilitaion. The utilisation of procedures and practices of the museum can also be seen here, in the referencing artefacts in the image.

Object

Close



id_object: 32
 inventory_number: 0032
 inventory_number_nhm:
 series:

received

date_received: 01.01.2012
☒ small_refuse
☐ large_refuse
 other:
 museum_member:

date_entered_to_archive: 31.05.2012

other:

action_facilitated: external organi
 date_accepted: 08.05.2012
 accepted_by: Virtual Archive of
 date_actioned: 14.05.2012

☒ confirmation_of_receipt

date_of_receipt:

object_contact:

notes: Virtual Archive of WILD Heerbrugg
 www.wild-heerbrugg.com
 @gmail.com

offered_to

offered_to	remark
Virtual Archive -	

Record: 1 of 1



offered: remark:

email

show

email	remark

Record: 1 of 1



email: remark:

List

All

38: Example of a the entry of an object into the database, developed specifically for the department of Object Concern Facilitation.

In the third week of operation of the department of Object Concern Facilitation, a situation arose in which the department offered a particular service directly to a museum member. A visiting researcher had purchased a mobile phone credit voucher, from his service provider, in Austria, however this card did not work in his phone as his phone is based in another country. The Object Concern Facilitator offered to receive the voucher, and endeavour to facilitate it to a context of value, in exchange for returning the investment of the voucher to the visiting researcher.

39: -

The letters sent with the objects (31, 32, 33) illustrate the process taken in developing a practice of communication that could allow the interventions, along with the practical reasoning behind them, to be communicated, whilst still enabling pragmatic understandings between individuals and organisations. The current use is raw and undeveloped, though it forms part of the beginnings of a developing practice - also shown in the two emails (34, 35) - that can now be seen, looked at, continued.

The involvement of the Natural History Museum Vienna in a geocaching project (36) arose through the Object Concern Facilitator coming into contact with some objects that fell distinctively through the cracks in the borders of science, and which did not find established ground outside of these borders. Objects, such as, mineral samples of epidote, that were part of a now-ceased project; microscope slides of ancient ceramics that had fallen in the break up of a institutional relationship; geological samples that had remained unlabelled with geographical origin, now useless to science. The engagement with objects, and their concerns, allowed a consideration of the possible contexts to which these objects could be translated to. It is through this process that the museum is part of a new initiative of going 'back into the field,' with the objects reaching out of the institution in a new way; and is an example of the inter-departmental relationships formed during the operation of the department of Object Concern Facilitation.

The high-definition scan pertained to in 37, shows another example of these inter-departmental relationships. An ongoing scanning provision between the departments is established in the institution, for ongoing operations. This act can also point to the forming of relationships with individuals and organisations outside of the institution - the document is now with a museum in Vienna, being assessed by their archive members. The three high-definition TIFF images (ranging from 84-155MB each), produced in the Botany department of the Natural History Museum Vienna, can also be offered to the museum - the layered engagements of the Object Concern Facilitator extending outside the institution.

The development of an object database (38), is a process of legitimisation, in light of the standard practices of all departments in the museum charged with objects, from the scientific collections to the asset inventory. However, it is predominantly the development of a practice for its own reflexivity. As the Object Concern Facilitator began to engage with what would need to be recorded by the institution, pointed questions arose as to how the facilitation would be recorded, and what the institution would need to have on record to enable this facilitation. How far does the museums responsibility to the objects' welfare, future facilitation, parties wishing to locate the object, extend in keeping the information of where and who the objects are facilitated to? Will the database need to be constantly updated, with all locations, and contact details of facilitators, as it moves, in order for it to be an effective service for both the nonhumans and the humans? Where, then, does the institution see it's own boundary? Should the role be operated in a collective outside of all established institutions, providing individual institutions with facilitation services, to effectively engage with databasing practices? Though the database is in a formative stage, the initiation of this process has uncovered many concerns of the role, and the value of this practice engaging with immediate 'real world' influences itself is uncovered.

The shifts in the composition of the service provided by the Object Concern Facilitator are made evident in the facilitation of the phone credit (39). The concerns of the role stem from the concerns of the objects themselves, and consider the translation of new contexts of value for these objects, as mutually valuable for the objects and the contexts. The taking of the excess from the bins did not necessarily provide any directly valuable service for those who were involved in the excession. The bin is a convenient place. In the second week of the initiation of the role, members of the museum began to bring some objects of potential excess directly to the Object Concern Facilitator. This became part of the legitimisation, the acceptance, and a little of the utilisation, however, it is with 39 that the service is translated directly to the concerns of a potential excessor. There is direct value in the translation of the context of the object to the department of Object Concern Facilitation for the *previous* context.

In these examples of the practicing of the role, are some of the places where the ideas of *flow gap* and *constant material* begin to be uncovered - together with their relation to the indistinction of *humans* and *nonhumans*. The material remains constant. This could mean the flows must be open to flows in both directions - and material, information, behaviour, objects, must be interchangeable with each other to facilitate these flows. It is where these things translate *through* each other, that the value is translated *to* their contexts, and it is these contexts that *facilitate* this translation.

This development of practice renders the enacting of the role an empirical act. Through the engagement in this position, in a real world context, empirical references have been generated, that can now begin to be related to, and provide reference for engagement - perhaps initiate this engagement through their existence.

To this end, the empirical artefacts that exist as a result of the work are now to be facilitated. These objects are yet to engage in direct influence, outside of the development of the practice of the Object Concern Facilitator. The objects who have been facilitated through the role, have already provided influence, engaged in value, formed mutual relationships with contexts. The objects remaining to be facilitated are yet to form these relationships, continue their interventions, and place their own ruptures, find their contexts.

These objects include the database, with all objects acquainted with in the initial period of the role entered; the proceeds of facilitations through market channels; the objects placed outside of the museum for geocaching, and the associated information; the relationships and understandings initiated between various departments of the museum; the acceptance, and dismissal, enthusiasm, of all members of the museum who hold such a stance towards the role; the established inter-institutional contacts through which objects may be facilitated in the future; and the following document (40) - a completed role description for the Object Concern Facilitator of the Natural History Museum Vienna, reflecting the development of the role during its inception and operation to June 5th, 2012.

These objects will be facilitated to the Natural History Museum Vienna, on June 20th, 2012.

ARBEITSPLATZBESCHREIBUNG/*Job description*

=====

 Amtstitel u. Name d. dzt. Arbeitsplatzinhabers/
Title and name of current job holder

 Dienstadresse/*Work address*

 Zimmer-Nummer/
Room number

 Diensttelefon-Nummer/
Work phone number

1. .	DIENSTSTELLE/ <i>Department</i>			
	Object Concern Facilitation			
1.2.	ORGANISATIONSEINHEIT/ <i>Organisational unit</i>			
	SEKTION/ <i>Section</i>	GRUPPE/ <i>Group</i>	ABTEILUNG/ <i>Bureau</i>	REFERAT/ <i>Unit</i>
2.	FUNKTION DES ARBEITSPLATZES/ <i>Employee role</i>			
	Object Concern Facilitator, Head of Department			
3.1.	WEN V E R T R I T T DER ARBEITSPLATZINHABER/ <i>Who is substituted by the job holder</i>			
3.2.	VERTRETUNGSBEFUGNISSE/ <i>Authorisations for substitution</i>			
3.3.	WER VERTRITT DEN ARBEITSPLATZINHABER/ <i>Who acts as substitute for the job holder</i>			

4.	Welchen Arbeitsplätzen ist der beschriebene Arbeitsplatz unmittelbar/ <i>Jobs that the described employment is directly</i>		
4.1.	ÜBERGEORDNET hinsichtlich der/ <i>superordinated to</i>	Fachaufsicht/ <i>Supervisory control</i>	Dienstaufsicht/ <i>Supervision</i>
	-		
4.2.	UNTERGEORDNET hinsichtlich der/ <i>subordinated to</i>	Fachaufsicht/ <i>Supervisory control</i>	Dienstaufsicht/ <i>Supervision</i>
5.	AUFGABEN DES ARBEITSPLATZES/ <i>Scope of work</i>		
	Provides high-quality facilitation services to the various needs of objects the organisation relates with. Considers the wider concerns of objects within the organisation, both in the context of the organisation itself, and the context of wider collectives and concerns. Facilitates and fosters the interaction of objects within the organisation, and context of wider collectives and concerns. Provides engaged reflection on the relationships between the objects within the organisation. Makes key decisions relating to the facilitative outcomes of objects across a range of traditional value ranges. Engages with the notion of excess across a wide spectrum of processes within the organisation. Forms new inter-organisational links in order to improve object facilitation capabilities. Creates detailed records of objects and their relationships, and manages the collection of these records. Interacts equally with all objects of the organisation, through verbal, written, visual, and physical liaisons. Conducts research activities related to the sociological and technical relationships of objects within the organisation.		

6.1.	ZIELE DES ARBEITSPLATZES/ <i>Objectives of work</i>	
	Translate objects perceived as excess to contexts of value. Exchange objects equally across members of the museum. Open new channels of facilitation with appropriate external organisations. Preserve the integrity of the museum as an object based institution. Provide object engagement opportunities between the museum and the wider community. Represent the museum as one engaged with the various concerns of objects.	
7.	KATALOG der Tätigkeiten, die zur Erfüllung der Aufgaben des Arbeitsplatzes notwendig sind, verbunden mit einer Quantifizierung des für diese Tätigkeiten erforderlichen Zeitaufwandes im Verhältnis zum Gesamtbeschäftigungsausmaß (= 100) <i>Catalogue of tasks, which are necessary to fulfil the requirements of the employment, linked to the quantified amount of time demanded for these activities, in relation to the total employment (=100)</i>	
	TÄTIGKEITEN/ <i>Tasks</i>	QUANTIFIZIERUNG/ <i>Quantification</i>
	1 - Make daily visual assessments of the collective excess bins in the central courtyards of the museum, with the following derived actions: - Extraction of objects deemed suitable for translation to a context of value. -Transfer of material from inappropriate excess categorisation (ie. paper transferred to appropriate recycling container), within appropriate bounds (refer further to task 7).	15
	2 - Offer services of object facilitation to all members of the museum, through the overtaking of facilitation tasks of the members in all objects which fall outside of their respective duties and fields of influence within the institution. Precedents in this area include: -Presence during the clearing of spaces occupied by objects of past members of the museum, with the aim of gathering objects for facilitation that would otherwise become institutional excess,a and alleviating the time investment of other members of the museum into such an action. -Taking in objects offered to the museum that fall outside of value to all other established departments of institutional functions.	15

TÄTIGKEITEN/ <i>Tasks</i>	QUANTIFIZIERUNG/ <i>Quantification</i>
-Extending services to personal services of object facilitation that provide benefit to members of the museum 3 - Creating entries of all objects into, and maintenance of, the Department of Object Concern Facilitation Database. This is to be done in cooperation with the members of the museum concerned with the operation of databases. 4 - Facilitate the translation of these objects to contexts of values, through established means, and through the development of new facilitation routes. Precedent activities include: - Contacting original authors, and publishers, of documents to query the objects relevant value to their current situation. This task includes the physical facilitation of the objects to their respective new contexts, within reasonable means, and relevant to the object in question. - Ascertaining relevant institutions, such as, state archives; private museums; and libraries, within which objects could find themselves a context of value. This task includes the physical facilitation of the objects to their respective new contexts, within reasonable means, and relevant to the object in question. - Offering objects freely to all museum staff, currently through a notice-board system, operating near the staff entrance to the museum. This task includes the physical facilitation of the objects to their respective new contexts, within reasonable means, and relevant to the object in question. - Offering all objects not desired by staff on an appropriate vending platform, such as ebay.at; willhaben.at; amazon.de; and other platforms deemed suitable to each particular object and associated potential future facilitators. These objects will either be offered for a nominal sum to heighten their facilitation potential, or, if included in the museum asset inventory, use the current estimated value as a base point. This task includes the physical facilitation of the objects to their respective new contexts, within reasonable means, and relevant to the object in question. - Offering all objects not claimed through the above processes to a suitable, local charity, transferring the action of facilitation to their control, and offering the proceeds freely to the work they contribute to the community. The established relationship in this area is with Caritas Vienna, however, all suitable organisations are free to be considered on a case-by-case basis.	10 35

	This task includes the physical facilitation of the objects to their respective new contexts, within reasonable means, and relevant to the object in question.	
	5 - Maintain relationships with the objects post-facilitation, with the objectives of enriching the resource potential of the knowledge contained within the objects, and resulting records, facilitated by the Department of Object Concern Facilitation.	5
	6 - Forming tangible extensions of the object networks within the museum through variously developing practices. Precedents include: - Hosting of social events through an algorithm of excess assimilation and previous-acquaintance identification, previously enacted through 'A Dinner with Objects,' though open to range of appropriate formats. - Curating of an exhibition space in a highly visible area of the museum showcasing objects otherwise unseen outside of direct acquaintances within the institution, with personal stories and/or descriptions written by these direct acquaintances.	10
	7 - Provide analysis of the relationships between members of the museum perceived as excess and those not perceived as excess, and the effectiveness of the relationships to all related parties. The application of this has proceeded so far to simple visual assessment of excess amounts in to the appropriate excess categories, and visual documentation for referral to supervisory control and other appropriate members. There is scope for this to extend to empirically formalised analysis of the institutional excess, and the formation of a prominent feedback loops of the results influencing the effectiveness of the relationships in question.	10

8.	APPROBATIONSBEFUGNISSE in folgenden Angelegenheiten/ <i>Authorisation for appropriation in the following matters</i>	
	Authorisation has been granted, by the role supervisor (Univ.-Prof. Dr. Christian Koeberl), to access, and extract from, the Natural History Museum Vienna's perceived excess, within reasonable bounds of appropriation, and following procedures of cleanliness associated with the action. Authorisation has been granted, by the role supervisor (Univ.-Prof. Dr. Christian Koeberl), to offer to organisations, and individuals, within, and outside of, the Natural History Museum Vienna's membership, the extracted objects perceived of as excess. Authorisation has been granted, by the role supervisor (Univ.-Prof. Dr. Christian Koeberl), to contact external parties, under the title of 'Object Concern Facilitator / Vermittler für Dingangelegenheiten,' in representing the Natural History Museum Vienna, subject to appropriate standards of communication.	
9.	SONSTIGE BEFUGNISSE/Other authorisations	
	ZUGETEILTES UND UNTERSTELLTES PERSONAL/Assigned and subordinated staff	
10.	ANZAHL/ <i>Quantity</i>	GLIEDERUNG NACH VERWENDUNGS- UND ENTLOHNUNGSGRUPPEN/ <i>Structured in occupation and remuneration groups</i>

11.	
	ANFORDERUNG DES ARBEITSPLATZES/ <i>Job specification</i>
	The Natural History Museum, Vienna, is an organisation deeply involved with objects in the traditional sense. Our history and continued operations are linked closely to the over 20 million objects contained within our collections. A vast majority of these objects form the collections that allow the museum to provide the educational, research and entertainment capabilities the museum is vested in, however, through the development of specific interventions within the museum relations, it has come to our attention that not all of these objects are appropriately facilitated within our current structure. Many of the objects within the institution which are not formally dealt with in relation to the specific scientific, education and entertainment competencies of the museum, are left to relate directly to poorly mediated external forces. In the creation of this role, we, as a technically and socially responsible institution, are acknowledging object processes traditionally outside of our control or attention, and in valuing their contribution, both to ourselves and to the wider world, are internalising them as a practice within our organisation. The Department for Object Concern Facilitation will operate as a largely autonomous department within the institution, however, it is intended that the enacting of the role will see relationships fostered across all the departments of the museum, and with all museum staff, freelancers, volunteers, and contractors. It will be the function of the role to provide services of re-location, re-forming, re-contextualising, and re-appropriation for all objects within the museum upon which there concern falls outside of the competencies of existing positions.
12.	SONSTIGE FÜR DIE BEWERTUNG MASSGEBLICHE ASPEKTE/ <i>Other significant factors for the assessment</i>
13.	Besondere Aufgaben des derzeitigen Arbeitsplatzinhabers (Kommissionsmitglied, Nebentätigkeiten, u. a.)/ <i>Special tasks of current job holder (commission membership, secondary employments, and others)</i>

Work

Christian Koeberl <christian.koeberl@univie.ac.at>

Mon, Jun 4, 2012 at 2:19 PM

To: ash holwell <ash.holwell@gmail.com>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Hi

Hopefully you were able to successfully complete your project and submission of your thesis in late May? I assume you will soon be able to remove the various objects and pictures from the driveway, where we need a clearer entrance image again.

At any rate, hopefully all went well -

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

=====

[REDACTED]

Director General, Natural History Museum Vienna

Burgring 7, A-1010 Vienna, AUSTRIA

and

Head, Department of Lithospheric Research

University of Vienna, Althanstrasse 14, A-1090 Vienna, AUSTRIA

Tel. Museum: [REDACTED]

Tel. University: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

pers.web: [REDACTED]

dept. web: <<http://lithosphere.univie.ac.at/>>lithosphere.univie.ac.at

museum web: www.nhm-wien.ac.at

41: Letter from the director of the Natural History Museum Vienna to Ashley Holwell. June 4th, 2012.

As it can be seen in 41, the work is also as it is as it wants to be, an attempt. An active, reflexive attempt at being in the world.

In this object, the work is an act situated inside its own boundaries, allowed into the institution for some time, borders remaining uncrossed. If we draw posit with what is in 41, and the letter (30), where the work verges on invisibility and invites its own ruptures - perhaps we begin to see the work.

When we engage in the resolve found in the four dinner attendees, and 40, perhaps it is the work itself.

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There are many people and objects that are deeply engaged in my work, providing valuable influence, translating my contexts, facilitating objects, information, behaviour, who will be thanked for this, however, I will not name them in this text, and rely on established mechanisms of feedback to induce the thanks upon them. Those who will be thanked will be thanked.

