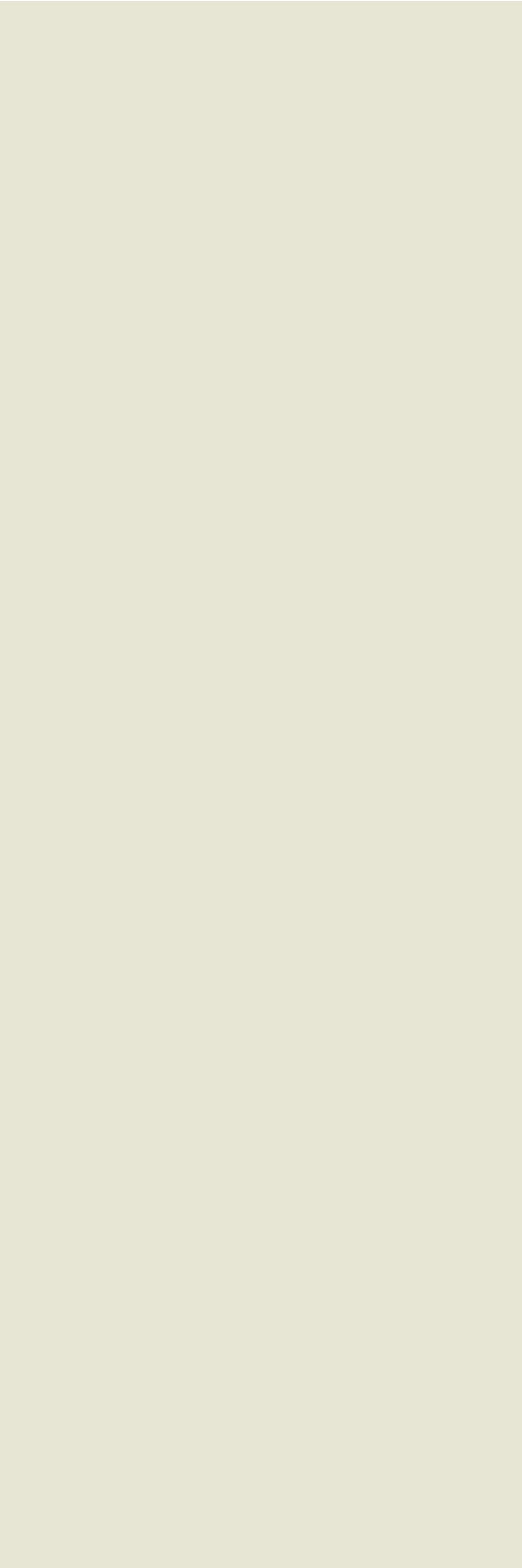




FIUWAC
Free International
University World
Art Collection







PATRICK HEALY | WALDO BIEN

JACOBUS KLOPPENBURG

THE ARTCHIVE FOR THE FUTURE



This publication was realised with the help of:



- 001 | Selfportrait, 1990
- 002 | K at work, 1984. Photo: WB
- 003a | K in bed. Photo: WB
- 003b | K with fez. Photo: WB
- 004 | K sleeping. Photo: WB





THE MENIL COLLECTION 1511 BRANARD HOUSTON TEXAS 77006

July 9, 1997

Re: Kloppenburg *Archive for the Future*

I write this letter in the summer of 1997 for the purpose of declaring my support for the preservation of the Kloppenburg *Archive for the Future*. Over the past several years, I have been informed of the developments regarding this important work by Houston artist, Virgil Grotfeldt, as well as Waldo Bien of Amsterdam on his frequent visits here since 1988.

Kloppenburg has been engaged for 35 years in the careful accumulation and assimilation of objects accruing a megasculpture of significant value. It must be understood as an Gesamtkunstwerk in which even the slightest change of order can destroy the artist's concept and cause great damage or even total destruction. The importance of the *Archive for the Future* can be regarded in the same light as Kurt Schwitters' Merz archive in Hanover or the the Yve Klein archive, both lost to humanity by war or lack of consciousness. Experiences of the past gives reason to be on the alert.

During my own career, I have been involved in archival works on several occasions. At the Smithsonian Institute, I served as collector/interviewing advisor to the Smithsonian Archive of the Arts where I was also able to establish the Joseph and Robert Cornell archive. Additionally, I presented the first Kurt Schwitters Retrospective in the United States including the Merz Archive which was reconstructed photographically to the best of our ability.

The *Archive for the Future* has its own significance as well as functions as backbone of the complete oeuvre of Kloppenburg: one enables the decoding of the drawings, (pastels, etc.) and vice a versa. The archive could be compared to the function of decoding Kloppenburg's work and thoughts in the manner of a Rosetta Stone.

This exceptional work of art should be protected and safely guarded into the future where it belongs — in the hands of the as yet unborn. I would urge all serious art scholars to research every aspect of his artistic activity as well as request the international art community to provide all possible support to preserve this important art work.

Sincerely,

Walter Hopps
Founding Director
& Consulting Curator

WH/dg

TELEPHONE (713) 525-9400 FAX (713) 525-9444

202425
WALDO BIEN
ARCHIEF VAN
9 OKT 1997
- 9 JULI 1997

1997, 9th of October:

TELEFAX, sent 10.58h by; *Stiftung Museum Schloss Moyland Sammlung van der Grinten*, Hans van der Grinten (Museum director) to; THE MAYOR (SCHELTO PATIJN, Red.) AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AMSTERDAM, to the attention of the ALDERMAN for CULTURAL AFFAIRS, Mr E.C. BAKKER, 0031 20 5522380 URGENT ... "Concerning threat of eviction of atelier Kloppenburg; ... Dear Council, dear Mr Bakker, It came to our attention that the city of Amsterdam plans to evict, because of a fire hazard, on very short notice the atelier of the artist Kloppenburg. We are aware that, on basis of a legal judgement, the lease contract between Mr Kloppenburg and the owner of the building that houses his atelier, will be terminated as of January the 1st of next year. For our museum, that was reason to search with the greatest speed for a possibility to house the most important part of the content of the atelier Kloppenburg somewhere else.

An Important consideration in this respect is that we are dealing with an artwork, the so called "Archive for the Future", which according to our positive conviction possesses an important art-historical value. The loss of this "Archive", unless carefully and expertly transported would be inevitable, and mean the loss of important valuable cultural heritage, a loss impossible to restore. In the meantime we have found a possibility to house the "Archive" of Kloppenburg. The organisational details and the co-ordination with current affairs of a large museum institute as ours do not allow us to carry out the packaging and transportation from one day to the next. We assume though, that we are capable of handling this before the date on which above-mentioned lease contract comes to an end, that is to say, before the end of this calendar year. WE STRONGLY REQUEST YOU TO AVOID THE WORK OF KLOPPENBURG BEING IRREPARABLY DESTROYED. THE FACT THAT ONLY A FEW MORE WEEKS SEPARATE US FROM A REGULAR AND PROFESSIONAL EVICTION MAY BE REASON FOR YOU TO ABANDON THE PLAN OF A DISASTROUS IMMEDIATE EVICTION."

With Regard, Hans van der Grinten, director.

◀ 005 | Around 1952, portrait by Ph. Mechanicus
006 | document: The Menil, Walter Hopps letter

▶ 007 | document: Moyland, Hans van der Grinten letter

Stiftung Museum Schloß Moyland
Sammlung van der Grinten
Joseph Beuys Archiv
des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen

901532

WALDO BIEN
ARCHIEF VAN
9 OKT 1997

Am Schloß 4
D-47554 Bedburg-Hein
Postfach 1299
D-47548 Doltberg-Hein
Telefon 04844/9510-0
Telefax 04844/9510-99

TELEFAX

An/To: Het College van Burgemeester en Wethouders der Gemeente Amsterdam
t.a.v. de Wethouder voor Culturele Zaken, dhr. E.C. Bakker
0031 20 5522380

Van/From: Stiftung Museum Schloß Moyland
- Sammlung van der Grinten -
Hans van der Grinten (Museumsdirecteur)

Betr./Re: dreigende ontruiming atelier Kloppenburg

- DRINGEND -

Datum/Date: 9. Oktober 1997

Seitenanzahl insg./Pages in total: 1

Zeer geacht College, zeer geachte heer Bakker,

Ons is ter ore gekomen, dat de Gemeente Amsterdam voornemens zou zijn, op korte termijn over te gaan tot ontruiming van het atelier van de kunstenaar Kloppenburg en wel om redenen van brandveiligheid.

Ons was bekend, dat via rechterlijke uitspraak de huurovereenkomst tussen de heer Kloppenburg en de eigenaar van het pand waarin zijn atelier zich bevindt met ingang van 1 Januari a.s. als beëindigd zal worden. Dat was voor ons museum aanleiding, met grote spoed te zoeken naar een mogelijkheid het belangrijkste deel van de inhoud van het atelier-Kloppenburg elders onder te brengen.

Belangrijke overweging daarbij is, dat het hierbij gaat om een kunstwerk, het zogenaamde "Archief voor de toekomst", dat naar onze stellige overtuiging een grote kunsthistorische waarde bezit. Het verloren gaan van dit "Archief", wat zonder een zorgvuldig en deskundig transport onafwendbaar zou zijn, zou een verlies van bijzonder waardevol cultuurgood betekenen, een verlies dat niet meer hersteld zou kunnen worden.

Wij hebben intussen een mogelijkheid gevonden het "Archief" van Kloppenburg onder te brengen. De organisatorische voorbereidingen en de coördinatie met de lopende zaken van een grote museale instelling als de onze laten het echter niet toe nu van de ene dag op de andere het verpakken en transporteren ter hand te nemen. Wij gaan er vanuit, dat wij daartoe echter zeker in staat zullen zijn voor de datum waarop het bovengenoemde huurcontract afloopt, dat wij zeggen, voor het einde van dit kalenderjaar.

Wij verzoeken U met klem, te voorkomen, dat het werk van Kloppenburg onherstelbaar wordt vernietigd. Het feit dat ons nog slechts weinige weken scheiden van een reguliere en vakkundige ontruiming moge voor U aanleiding zijn, af te zien van een desastreuze onmiddellijke ontruiming.

Met de meeste hoogachting,

Hans van der Grinten, directeur

99 OKT '97 10:58 504055 401408 +49-202-951099 2 31185

WAS REGELHAFT WÄCHST, MUSS SEINE REGELN VON VORNHEREIN IN SICH HABEN

Alle Kunst entsteht zwischen den Polen von Chaos und Ordnung. Der Drang nach Freiheit nähert sie dem Ersteren, der Trieb zur Form bewirkt eine Orientierung zum Letzteren hin. Indem heute das Vertrauen in die Tragfähigkeit und Reichweite vielleicht denn doch hypothetischer Regelfestlegungen erschüttert ist, wendet sich der suchende Blick dem, wie man glaubte, Regellosen zu. Ist es ja doch das Chaos, aus dem sich alles gebiert, und was regelhaft wächst, muss seine Regeln von vornherein in sich haben.

Jacobus Kloppenburgs Kunst basiert auf einer steten, beobachtenden und besonnenen Fantasie. Sie ist nicht exzessiv, man könnte sie nüchtern nennen. Keineswegs so aber, dass sie sich in eine einschränkende Zucht nähme; sie ist vielmehr geradezu überbordend fruchtbar. Konzentriert ist sie in sich, nicht in der Beschränkung auf's Wenige, das denn das Wesentliche sei. Alles vielmehr, das wahrhaft Viele, ist wesentlich. Die Fülle gibt ihm sein Gewicht, das Einzelne bietet die Gewähr für dieses. Alles ist in seinem Blickfeld, alles bietet ihm seine Stofflichkeit zur geistigen Besitznahme an. So ist es ein Unmaß von materiellen Dingen, die er sich aneignet: abgelebte, verzehrte, ausgeschiedene Gegenstände und Stücke, gezeichnet von ihren Schicksalen, dem Verschwinden entrissen, geborgen und zusammengebracht. In den Räumen eines großen Hauses inmitten einer großen Stadt sammeln sich Zeugnisse ihrer unterschwelligen, nie ernsthaft wahrgenommenen Geschichte. Eine eindringliche Zeugenschaft, ein Gegenprogramm zu dem, was die Stadt selbst im Sinne ihres Glanzes geschichtlich bezeugenswert findet. Hier dagegen ist es die wirkliche Lebensspur. Wenn sie von behördlicher Zerstörung bedroht ist, so vielleicht nicht nur, weil eine ordentliche Gesinnung dem, was sie als chaotisch erachtet, hilflos und feindselig gegenüber steht; auch Gesichtspunkte des Profits mögen nicht allein ausschlaggebend sein; es ist vielleicht auch im Spiel, dass man sich solcher Zeugnisse des eigenen Gewordenseins schämt. Alle Erhabenheit aber ist künstlich, letztlich ist sie leblos. Voller Leben dagegen ist

das, was Jacobus Kloppenburg angesammelt und gestapelt hat. Dass dies nicht wahllos geschah, macht sich aus den Zusammenhängen erkenntlich, in die er die Dinge gebracht hat. Unaufdringlich sind es in Form gebrachte Assoziationen, Analogien, Koppelungen, Schichtungen, Richtungsgegensätze. Ein Organisieren der von sich her ungerichteten Massen und der markant sich daraus hervortuenden Einzelheiten in Korrespondenz zueinander und in der Strukturierung der räumlichen Dimensionen. Ein eigener Kosmos in Wahrheit, das Chaos als tragende, zeugende Kraft. In dieser Konsequenz ist Jacobus Kloppenburgs Werk einmalig, es ist den geistigen Positionen unserer Zeit ganz angemessen und damit ein unvergleichliches Zeugnis unserer Geisteskultur.

Und wie alles Große bescheiden. Keine Paukenschläge, keine Fanfarenstöße, nichts von Anspruch erhebender Selbstdarstellung. Sondern die stete, stille Hingabe an das, was er zu seiner Aufgabe gemacht hat. Grundlage ist seine differenzierte Kenntnis von Gesetzen, Regeln, Ordnungen, wie sie sich formal errichten und ablesen lassen. Inwendig ist alles voller Figur, Dürer wusste es. Figur ist das in Zahl und Maß Nachweisbare. Jacobus Kloppenburg ist eine subtile Geometrie in allem zu Diensten. Ernsthaft und spielerisch zugleich wird sie angewendet. Die Schalen kugelförmiger Früchte etwa finden sich, durch Einschnitte gelöst, ins Flache gebreitet, das Sphärische wird ins Ebene überführt. Dass dies in, wie es scheint, unendlich vielen Variationen geschieht, erweist den Reichtum der dem Künstler verfügbaren Möglichkeiten. Jede der Ausformungen ist frisch und spannend. So im Kleinen wie im Großen. Zeichnerisch und dreidimensional hat er geometrische Gebilde von unbezweifelbarer Erlesenheit geschaffen. Ein reiches Werk jedem, der die Gabe hat, derartigen Reichtum wahrzunehmen.

Franz Joseph van der Grinten
Mala, 2. Oktober, 2005

FOREWORD

WHATEVER GROWS ACCORDING TO RULES, MUST EMBODY RULES OF ITS OWN FROM THE OUTSET

All art is created between the poles of chaos and order. The yearning for freedom draws it toward the former, while striving for form effects an orientation toward the latter. To the extent that our belief in the validity and the pertinence of rules, some of which may even have been hypothetically determined, has now been shaken, the searching eye now turns to what was considered to be without rules. It is, after all, chaos that gives rise to everything else, and whatever grows according to rules, must embody rules of its own from the outset.

Jacobus Kloppenburg's art is based on an unwavering, continually observant and deliberating fantasy. It is not excessive, it might even be described as detached. By no means inclined to place any constraints upon itself. Quite on the contrary, it is virtually overwhelming in its fertility. It is concentrated within itself, not as a means of limitation to the little that is ultimately the essential. It is the abundance that gives it its weight, the individual elements provide a guarantee of this. Everything is within his view. Everything offers up its materiality for him to take intellectual possession of it. Hence, it is the vast quantity of material goods that he accumulates: outlived, expended objects and fragments, marked by their fates, wrenched from obscurity, saved and brought together. In the rooms of a large building in the middle of a large city, objects have been gathered to bear witness to their underlying history, one that is never taken very seriously. Penetrating testimony, a selection that differs from what the city itself considers worthy of historical documentation in its own rite. Here, by contrast, are traces of real life. The fact that it is subject to the threat of destruction by city officials, may not only result from a sense of order's giving rise to helplessness and aggression in the face of what is considered chaotic, and considerations of profit may also not be as decisive here. What may play an important role is the embarrassment created by evidence of how one came to be what one is. Everything that is sublime is, however, artificial and ultimately lifeless. Full of life, by contrast, is what Jacobus Kloppen-

burg collected and hoarded. The fact that this was not undertaken arbitrarily is evident in the context, within which he brought these things together. They convey subtly formed associations, analogies, connections, layers and contrasts. A case of organizing masses that have no order in themselves, bringing the markedly emerging details into correspondence with each other and structuring the spatial dimensions. Within its own cosmos of truth with chaos as the driving creative force. In this stringency, Jacobus Kloppenburg's work is unique and, fully in keeping with the intellectual positions of our time, it provides incomparable testimony to our intellectual and spiritual culture.

And like everything great, humble. No beating of the drum, no fanfares, no attempt to put itself on show. But rather consistent, quiet dedication to the task he has taken upon himself. The basis of his sophisticated knowledge of laws, rules, order and how they can be formally established and recognized. At the very heart of everything is a figure; Dürer knew that. The figure is what can be determined in number and size. Jacobus Kloppenburg makes use of a subtle geometry in everything he does; applying it in both a serious and playful manner. For example, he takes the peels off of round pieces of fruit, makes incisions in them and then flattens them out; the spherical is transformed into a plane. The fact that he repeats this in what seems to be endless variations is proof of the breadth of the possibilities at the artist's disposal. Every one of the new forms is fresh and exciting. Both the large and the small. He has created geometrical works of unquestionable sublimity in both graphic and three-dimensional form. A rich work for those who have the gift of fathoming such richness.

Franz Joseph van der Grinten
Mala, October 2nd, 2005

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to dedicate this book to the memory of Hans van der Grinten and Walter Hopps and thank the following: The Kloppenburg family, Dolf Rueb, Ron Manheim, Luk and Barbara Darras, Ferdinand Ullrich, Tijmen van Grootheest, Deborah Grotfeldt. A special word of thanks to Douwe Former for his long and patient work on scanning and photographing in preparation for this book. Oeke Hogendijk, José Berkhof, Geert Jan Berkhof, Hilarius Hofstede, Babeth Mondini VanLoo, Eliane Gomperts, Peter Blom, Frans de Clerck, Pierre Aeby, Thomas Steiner, Alfons Alt, Michiel Damen, Carl Giskes, Mayke Jongasma, Ton Maas, Immanuel Klein, Gijs Frieling, Liesbeth van Abbe Keyser, Peter van Engelen, Gerard Gussenhoven, all FIUWAC artists, Franz Joseph van der Grinten, Leon Riekwel, Adrian Dannatt, Michael Wienand, Jason McCoy and Steven Cadwalader, Michael Bowen, Ronald van Bakel, Lex Lases, Cathy Hemmer, Karien ter Meulen Proost, Marja and Jan Willem Groenendaal, René Block, Johannes Stüttgen, Christian Holland, Chris Dercon, Saskia Bos, Frank Lubbers, Lothar Baumgarten, Katharina Sieverding, Michael Rutkowsky, Laurent Jacob , Johan Muyle, Eric Amouroux, Virgil Grotfeldt, Jan Hoet, Bert Janmaat, Sjarel Ex, Edy de Wilde, Evert van Straaten, Catherine David, Ian McKeever, Klaus Staeck, Jan Willem Schrofer, Klaus Bussmann, Uwe Rueth, Anna Neervoort. Henk van Engelen and Gijs van Koningsveld for their translation of the Kloppenburg biography. Also to Arti and Amicitiae in Amsterdam, where, during the opening of a Kloppenburg Artchive for the Future exhibition, on January 6th 2006, this book will come to light. Finally, to all those at F.I.U.Amsterdam and Wienand for their courteous efficiency and expert solicitude, without which this book would not have come to press.

CONTENTS



| | |
|-----|---|
| 24 | ARTCHIVE FOR THE FUTURE |
| 75 | VISIBLE LANGUAGE OF A CULTURE |
| 188 | THE PASTEL DECADE |
| 252 | GESAMTKUNSTWERK |
| 309 | ALLINONE: BIO-BIBLIO-EXHIBIT-GUIDE-NOTES-LECTURE |
| 414 | INDEX |

AMSTERDAM



008 | Lauriergracht, Amsterdam, around 1950.
No. 109: Storehouse De Pelikaan, built in the seventeenth century to store coffee. From march 1907–1962 it was used as a warehouse for theatre decorations for the Wagner Society and from 1963–1997 Kloppenburg's studio was on the fifth, sixth and seventh floor, including *The Archive for the Future*.
No. 111: In the lower part of the house, the domicile of the Kloppenburg family.
No. 123: Since 1980, on the fourth and fifth floor, Waldo Bien's studio and Free International University Amsterdam office.





010 | The artist explaining his work, 1997, FIUWAC 138



011 | Pavilion design for *The Artchive for the Future*, 1996, Museum Schloss Moyland



012 | (The Artchive for the Future) Tumble Moment,
1990, FIUWAC 106
► 013 | Concept for the Gesamtkunstwerk, 1997,
composed as a sonnet

ARTCHIVE FOR THE FUTURE

TRASHETHICAL LITTERATURE

VISIBLE LANGUAGE OF A CULTURE (MM trashold MMM)

ARTICULATION : BIG-LOGOS-BANG SIGNATURE

ARTXPLAINS : FUNCTION, FORM/COUNTERFORM, STRUCTURE,
VOICE/FORCE OF BEAUTY/DUTY IN NATURE

REARTNIMATION ARTMERGENCY FIRST-AID RESCUE SERV. GESTURE

ARTSCIOUSNESS-QUOTIENT UP-GRADING CURE HU-, WO- & MANKIND

SOFT- & ARTWARE : ARTWARENESS ARTPSITECTURE CREATURE

ARTCHECK LOGICAL ARTCORE SCULPTURE

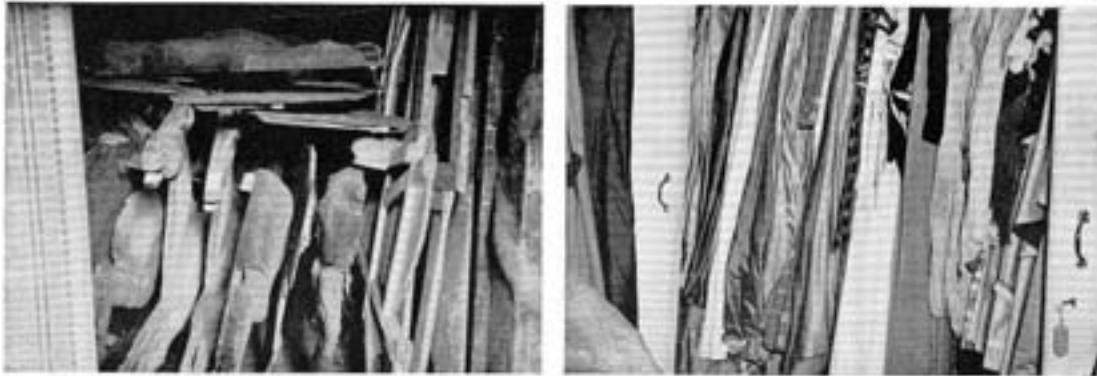
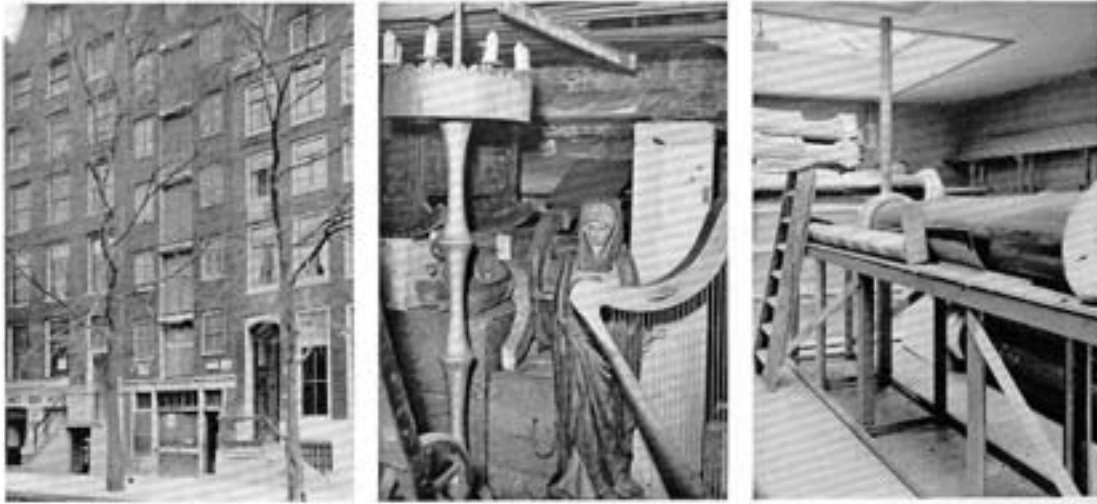
ARTXTENDED EYEDEAL DEAL : EYEDEA/ART/EYEDEAL CONTEXTURE

ARTCHETYPICAL LECTURE

ARTVENTION! : LIFE → ARTVENTURE!

ARTXPLORE : ARTVANTAGEOUS ARTMANUFACTURE





ARTCHIVE FOR THE FUTURE

Anyone intending to make a comprehensive study of the work of Jacobus Kloppenburg faces an extraordinary and nearly impossible task. His most significant work, *The Artchive for the Future*, has been destroyed, and the destruction of the remaining parts still continues. Almost all of his artistic activity can be seen as leading up to this work, and now, since its removal and depredation, away from it again. He has effectively abandoned living in Amsterdam in the years since the careless removal of the contents of his studio; contents which he had made into a unified work, and to which he gave the conceptual designation: Trashthetical Litterarture; the Visible Language of a Culture.¹ To grasp the significance of this oeuvre, it is necessary to highlight how, in the very last days of its intact existence, he worked ceaselessly to leave this record of his thinking. Since he is intensely shy and was rarely given, in the preceding years, to any overt statements, this document is of enormous significance; indeed it is the only true passport allowing us to cross the borders of both the wilful ignorance and misapprehension that have been drawn around him. Some of this publicly stated misapprehension was due to what had been taken to be his remote and solitary nature. The myth that he was an “outsider”, which later turned out to be untrue, consigned him to a kind of respectable oblivion. As someone who infrequently appears in an art market driven by commercial demands, he was left bereft of the kind of critical attention that would have made the destruction unthinkable. And we are

¹ This clearance took place in 1997, and in an official letter from the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science (*Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap*), dated May 3rd, 2005, they acknowledge, on the basis of their commission of investigation report, the “total loss” of the archive. The letter is registered DCE/05/20344. The consequence of this for the Amsterdam City Council and its liability still awaits being tested in the appropriate juridical forum.

015 | De Pelikaan building with a view of the interior, showing stored theatre props and workshops. During the war, the thirteen-year-old Jacobus entered the building through an open window and explored the interior, an adventure he then often repeated. The impressions this made on

him were later a crucial factor in his creation of the sculpture *The Artchive for the Future*. Documentation drawn from the publication *50 jaar Wagner Vereeniging*, 1934. Photos: WB

► 016 | 1996, Normandy (K on church floor). Photos: WB



24 | 25



017



018

- 017 | The Netherlands at war with Germany
- 018 | With sisters Agaat and Ada, 1942
- 019 | Newspaper from the same date as the fig drawing at right, with German order: No light should be visible between 19.00 and 9.31 hours.
- 020 | Page from a 1941/2 school sketchbook

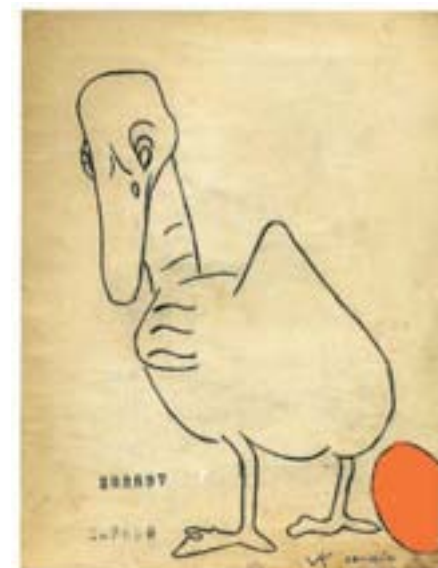
reminded of Rilke’s famous comment on Rodin, to the effect that fame is the sum of misunderstanding that surrounds a great name. The work has even been variously designated. Primarily, however, it was his colleague and friend Waldo Bien who referred to it as “The Archive of the Future” or also “The Artchive for the Future”.

Until the impending threat of the removal of the contents of his studio, Kloppenburg had rarely spoken at length on his work, although he was the subject of two documentaries in the making, with which he co-operated, and both of which contain important footage concerning the archive, in one instance over a period of ten years, and in the other even shooting the physical destruction wrought by the removers when measures were taken to act on the claim by the house owner, supported in turn by the authorities, that *The Artchive for the Future* constituted a fire hazard and therefore had to be removed. Literally during the last hours of its undisturbed existence, Kloppenburg placed rubber bicycle tubes throughout the space with a text written on them in white, which represents the most complete statement of his intentions that he ever made.²

² Copies of the film footage and of Waldo Bien’s recording are kept in the archive of the F.I.U. Amsterdam.



020



022



023

- 021 | Page from a 1941/2 school sketchbook
- 022 | Page from a 1941/2 school sketchbook
- 023 | Page from a 1941/2 school sketchbook
- 024 | So-called WA, Dutch fascists, marching through the Jordaen, 1941

A close examination of the text reveals much in the way of his concerns, and as a text it also points to the physical grasp that has given his work such a tangible effect over the long years. Kloppenburg designed the lettering in which the text was written, thus reverting to work he had done over fifty years earlier, when he was employed by his father’s advertising concern, just two doors away, designing the lettering and logos for the businesses they were supplying. Some early examples of this work still survive.³ This new lettering represents a “reduced” alphabet, and it was designed and used for the dissemination of his concept-text. The version on which he ultimately settled was the product of months of drawing and verbalisation, which can be followed through surviving notebooks. Indeed, it is almost a signature of this artist that almost all of his work can be traced through minutely detailed sketchbooks outlining how some of his projects evolved, in some cases, through years of careful elaboration and a whirlpool of visual sensation and registration, from which his momentarily arrested image was then derived.

³ For this see: illustrations 031, 033, 034, 035.



024

019





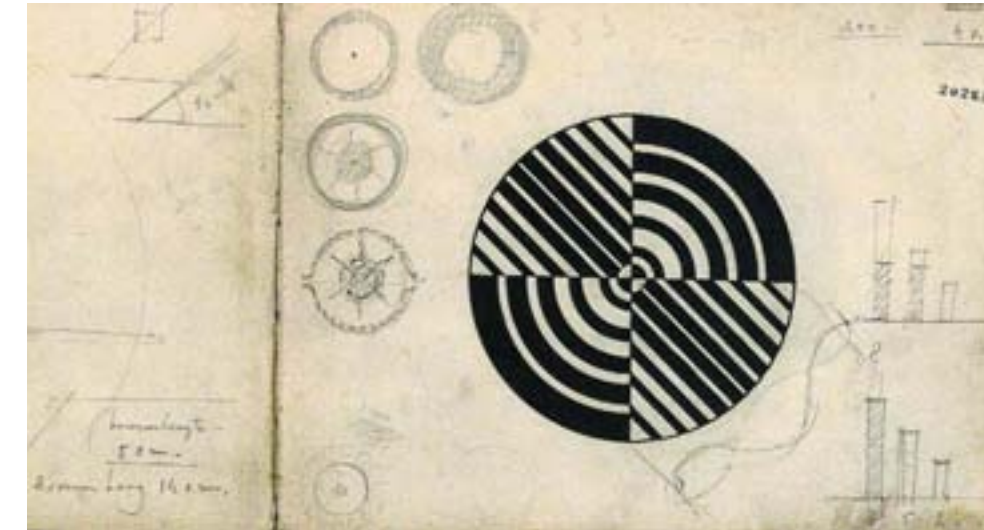
030

030 | Corner Hazenstraat / Elandstraat (Hare Street / Elk Street) around 1960. Photo: D. Toussaint
031 | Ink on paper, 21,5 x 34 cm, undated

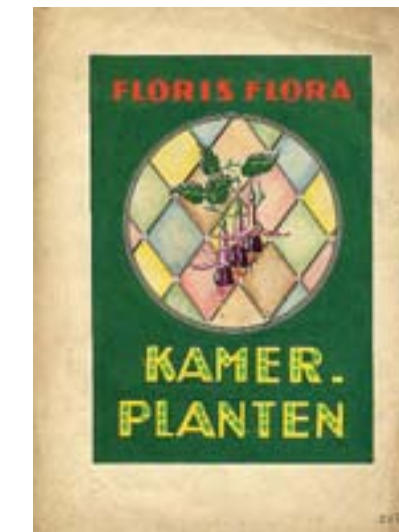
A number of observations can be made on the basis of this. The first observation to be made is that this text gives us the artist's own name for the work, "The Artchive for the Future", and this title will be the designation adopted in the rest of this study. Secondly, the punning language is intimately connected with his visual practices, which, as will be seen, often move in a direction of tectonic hallucination and overtly surrealist displacement of the object world. Thirdly, that he signals the relation of the Artchive to its own materials, which for the most part, but not exclusively, was a constant relation to the garbage, rubbish, and discarded items of the everyday; and fourthly, and specifically in the case of the text in its earliest physical form with his own alphabet invention, that the text was written on rubber bicycle tyres, which had been used over the years of his assembling as his main means of transport, a theme which his son recently captured in a seventy-fifth birthday film, where he shows his father as a literal "flying Dutchman" who exhibits the autonomy of mechanical transport energised by bodily motion in the independence of his cycling, and something of a cavalier indifference to obstacles and social conventions.



031



032



033

032 | Sketchbook page, 22,5 x 30 cm, undated
033 | Gouache on paper, 23,7 x 30,7 cm, undated
034 | Gouache on paper, 16 x 20 cm, 1947
035 | Gouache on paper, 21 x 29 cm, 1948

Cycling is to Kloppenburg what the walk was to Chaplin, a signature of his world. Hanging from a collection of rubber tubes in the studio was the inscribed text, which then could also be taken as emblematic of the end; the old tyres hanging there with no more collecting to be done, a strange *trophaeum* in which the objects collected, re-configured and assembled, are returned to a new unity and belonging. This also functioned as a kind of funeral epitaph; the whole shrouded in a language of his own invention, where each part of the phrase also serves to conceptually illuminate the Artchive itself, both as intention and achievement.

There are extremely poignant photos and video footage of the artist standing in the emptied space that once harboured his living mega-sculpture, looking at bits and pieces of things left scattered on the ground after its clearance. One can hardly imagine what passed through his mind, standing there, still within a stone's throw of his childhood home, in the quarter in which he had worked and lived for so long. Nearby, he had made his first drawings as a schoolboy, a goose laying an egg, and the crisp outlining of a plant. This school copybook has survived.⁴ It is a fragile document not only in its survival, but also in the evidence it gives of his awakening interest as a young artist. Returning to it, it seems like the last leaf on a tree in winter, something life-affirming and defiant.

⁴ See illustrations 020, 021, 022, 023, 495. The earliest calligraphic exercises can be seen at 622, 623, 624.



034



035



036



037

Its survival is partly due to the serendipity, through which documents and papers from his studio often went to Waldo Bien's for study and discussion. It is largely this tiny surviving fragment of sketchbooks, photos and miscellaneous documents that has made this study possible. The full contents of the shipping containers into which the entire archive was loaded and dumped, also include his personal papers and an incalculable number of photographs and works by the artist. Literally all the reconstructions now attempted come from the fugitive pieces that were on deposit in the Lauriergracht archives of Waldo Bien. This early sketchbook already points to the artist's strong interest in nature. It also points to the time of his growing up in Amsterdam; a surviving school photograph with his sisters Ada and Agaat shows them in the school where the notebook was made, and during a time when the children sensed a mixture of intense fear and curiosity.⁵

Once again, all these years later, an attitude of passivity, similar to what the city, according to Geert Mak, displayed towards the deported population during the Second World War, was again in evidence. Mak makes the point impressively in the ninth chapter of his "short history of Amsterdam":

⁵ See illustration 018.



038



039

- 036 | Double gouache on paper, 16 x 23 cm, around 1949
- 037 | Double gouache on paper, 16 x 23 cm, around 1949
- 038 | Moon temple and phases, mixed media on paper, 17,5 x 22,5 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland
- 039 | Moon temple and phases, mixed media on paper, 17,5 x 22,5 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland



040

- 040 | Mixed media on board, 24 x 39 cm, undated
- 041 | Gouache on paper, 13,5 x 21 cm, undated
- 042 | Gouache on paper, 13,5 x 21 cm, undated

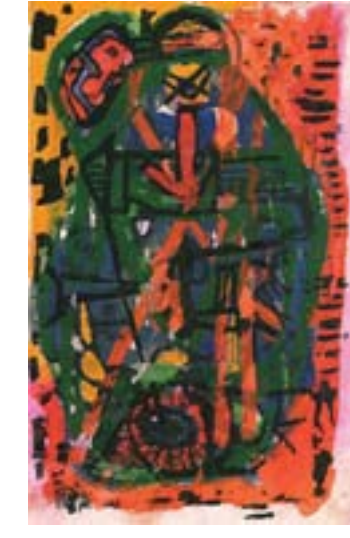
The motto Amsterdam has been allowed to carry on its coat of arms since the war – "Heroic, Determined, Compassionate" – is more a source of embarrassment than a reason for joy, because it was precisely these three qualities that the city so often lacked in those years.

It is this passive guilt, this guilt of having allowed it to happen ... and it is this same guilt – that of the passive onlooker – that would hang over the city like a trauma for years to come.⁶

The final week of the Artchive had all the dimensions of a brutal and traumatising event. The demolition company employed to remove the fire hazard on the city's orders, had undertaken to treat the archive with the greatest possible respect. The city had been put on notice by a letter from the art historian and adjunct director of Museum Schloss Moyland, Ron Manheim, who asked if the city had ensured that the task would be completed with the necessary expertise. Born in Amsterdam, Manheim had probably sensed the possibility of bureaucratic mishandling, and he was also fully aware of the wartime situation and the *schuld* of which Mak writes.⁷ The senior curator of the

⁶ Mak's book has been translated into English, see: *Amsterdam: a brief life of the city*, transl. Ph. Blomm, London: Harvill Press, 2001.

⁷ The text of the letter is given at 716.



041



042



043



044

043 | Gouache on paper, 17 x 22,5 cm, 1949
 044 | Gouache on paper, 16 x 22,5 cm, undated
 045 | Gouache on paper, 13,2 x 21 cm, undated

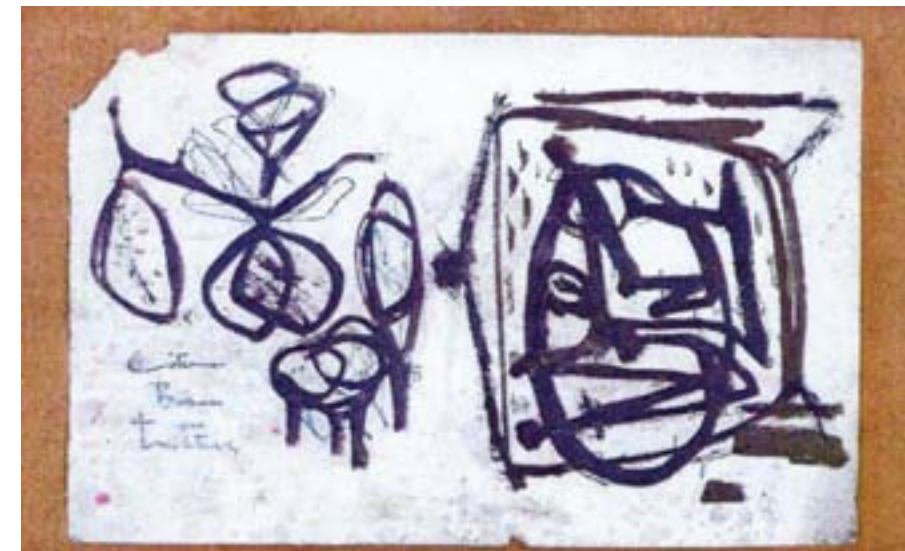
Guggenheim for twentieth century art, the late Walter Hopps, had likewise declared the Artchive to be of immense cultural significance.⁸ To his last days Hopps had asked to be kept informed of developments concerning the Artchive and the FIU Amsterdam's activities in searching for a solution, within the public domain, for the Artchive and Kloppenburg's life's work. Hans van der Grinten had also become involved in moves to stay the threatened destruction, and late in the day – and largely due to intensive lobbying by Bien – there was a list of named and prominent people from the world of art and museums, among them many curators and critics, asking for a breather and that the city take time to reconsider its proposed intentions.⁹

In the first instance the recorded and stated intention of the city towards *The Artchive for the Future* was complete destruction, expressed by the Dutch word carrying that precise connotation, *vernietiging*.¹⁰ It should be added, however, that the precise method of destruction was never specified. The option, as it were, that the City of Amsterdam exercised in resiling from its initially declared intention, was to employ a removal firm specialising in demolition as well as laying cables and pipes. They were charged with removing it into containers and then bills were later sent to the artist for the cost of storage and removal. The city, through its agent, made a deposition to a judge that

8 The full text is cited below, sub datum, July 9th, 1997, in the Bien-Bio. For Walter Hopps, see the article profile in the *New Yorker*, July 29, 1991, by Calvin Tomkins, pp.33–57.
 9 See illustrations 003, 715. See also 481, 840, for the lists of named supporters.
 10 This threat can be found in the letter 01/28, dated January 30, 2001. A further letter was sent on February 8, 01-825, suggesting that the last period of waiting had been reached and the destruction would take place after March 15.



045



046



047

046 | Mixed media on paper, 22 x 34,5 cm, undated
 047 | Gouache on board, 24,2 x 39 cm, undated
 048 | Gouache on paper, 21,5 x 25,5 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland

this removal would be done with the “utmost care”. In what turned out to be a mockery of their undertaking, and of due process, the Artchive was cleared, and during a later inspection, when the doors of the containers were opened, the meaning of careful handling became all too evident. These images of the containers were broadcast on regional news that evening.¹¹ The first threat of total destruction was replaced by the promise of careful removal and storage, the second position resulting in what everyone could then see with their own eyes. In his comment to the media at that time, Bien made the telling observation that the city was now using the destroyed Artchive as proof of their argument that it was not worth saving, a view further reinforced by a report from the body responsible for cultural patrimony, I.C.N.,

which suggested that since the cost of restoration could not be calculated, and certain institutions already had works by the artist, their advice was also to destroy the containers and their contents, unless terms that they suggested for reaching a solution were met. Among these was the absurd proposal that the artist make a public sculpture out of the destroyed remains.¹²

As if the “non-destruction” that had destroyed the Artchive was not bad enough, this very destruction had to be still further destroyed. It was as if another part of Amsterdam's past had emerged from under the veneer of its polished surface; the iconophobia and destruction



048

11 The transmission took place on November 19, 2001, see illustration 794.
 12 The sculpture was to be made in exchange as payment of the bill for the destruction. The ICN report, to the City of Amsterdam, reference, 02.3073/RV-sv/fb. A summary of the report can be found in the Bien-Bio sub datum February 14, 2002. The report was requested by the City.



049

049 | Gouache on board, 24 x 39 cm, undated
 050 | Gouache on board, 24 x 39 cm, undated
 051 | Gouache on board, 24 x 39 cm, undated



050



051



052



053

052 | Gouache on board, 24 x 39 cm, undated
 053 | Gouache on board, 24 x 39 cm, undated
 054 | Gouache on paper, 16 x 22,5 cm, undated,
 Collection Museum Schloss Moyland

of imagery that had taken place down at the Westerkerk, to extirpate superstition and idolatry by replacing the windows with transparent panes of glass. It should be noted that the city presided over this destruction with the minimum of compunction, at the very time when its tourist and marketing office was advertising that Amsterdam was the “city of inspiration”.

It was during the initial research for a book planned in 1996, and partly funded by the Triodos bank, that the circumstances leading to the destruction unfolded. Initial indexing immediately revealed the magnitude of the task. The placing of index cards had begun in the cross-section of the archive, leading from the west door towards the east, in the winter of 1996. As the threat of removal and destruction became more imminent in the following year, and the defence of the archive more complicated by the need for legal correspondence and varied court applications, the ongoing study was severely hampered, as it seemed then that it could at best only detail the surface of the Artchive. Almost single-handedly, Waldo Bien alerted as many people as possible, and undertook to defray the costs of the legal expenses connected with appealing the claims of the foundation that represented the house-owner. Legal action had been sought for the express purpose of removing the “entire” contents of the studio, and then ending Kloppenburg’s tenancy in order to convert the property into luxury apartments, Kloppenburg was still paying rent on the scale of the contract signed in 1962; by 1996 it had only risen to five hundred guilders, a figure to be multiplied by ten for the newly renovated space.



054



o55

o55 | Gouache on board, 31,7 x 46,7 cm, undated

One of the initial research questions was when the accumulation of this “mega-sculpture”, as the legendary American curator Walter Hopps called it, actually began; was it with its naming during an exhibition at the Rotterdam Art Space, or could it be traced back to the earliest period of Kloppenburg’s work, or did it begin with the renting of the studio space at Lauriergracht 109. Secondly, what, in Kloppenburg’s thinking, was the relation of the whole to its parts, and how, in light of his own continuing research, did he conceive of this? It is possible to think of the Artchive as a cohesive morphic unit, it was itself made up of parts which were themselves the whole of other parts, as for example in sugar crystals, entities whose parts are sugar molecules, which are wholes made up of carbon and hydrogen.

The most obvious and startling sense in speaking to the artist was that this whole archive was alive, and that the tensor of the future was made possible through the vital memory of material itself; and, secondly, that the problem of part/whole was badly stated, since in his work all the additions and shifts in the sculpture took place in an active environment. The concept of accumulation needed reviving. One can see the intense order of the archive internally in the photographic re-constructions made by Bien for this publication, which are themselves inspired by a series of photographs mounted on ply board for exhibition at the Loerakker Gallery in 1990, where Kloppenburg arranged shots of views within the studio.¹³ What looks at first chaotic is made up of smaller and smaller units of larger and larger dispositions which together gain their actual

¹³ See 393 for the Loerakker Gallery montage. Bien suggests that the negatives are presented as a kind of vivisection, an anatomical display. Kloppenburg’s original photographic material has been re-assembled by Bien.



o56

o56 | Gouache on paper, 17 x 22 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland
o57 | Mixed media on paper, 17 x 22 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland
o58 | Sketchbook page, 27 x 37 cm, around 1950



o57

forms, and at the same time because of their interrelations are more than what they are as individual works. It is this ceaseless cross-connectivity and the interrelationality which make the archive belong to the vital order itself, the orders of life, and not the result of some antecedent fixed program.

Thus two of the main tenets of traditional sculpture had been by-passed in favour of creating fields of attraction and repulsion such as one can see in magnets and iron filings, yet allowing that the field is not some overall pattern or blueprint, but literally morphogenetic; that is to say, Kloppenburg has placed each and every information concerning the object as itself in its own field and the interactivity of the fields constitutes the morphic unity of the archive. Speaking of the work of K, a.k.a. Kloppenburg, Bien made the point that one has to understand the relation of positive and negative, or mass and counter-mass, and that the material he is using is the counter-form of society, the extracted and the discarded; here one has a vital negative map of the social.



o58



o60

- ◀ o59 | Gouache on board, 24,5 x 38 cm, undated (1948).
Photo: WB
Depicted is the little room facing the garden, where K slept and worked, his bed placed at the window on the right. Most of the works produced during the 1940s and 1950s were executed in this room.
- o60 | Gouache on board, 24,5 x 38 cm, undated
- o61 | Gouache on board, 24,5 x 38 cm, undated
- o62 | K made the works on the left on an air-wick master advertisement board.

Thinking of the script in his writing as an outline, Kloppenburg then starts to add mass by shading, creating a shift in the sheets of lines, and then creates mass through the placement of forms. He is engaged in a real dynamic of the relation of the convex and the concave; the trash then is the counter-form, what one sees in the streets and advertisements. He sees himself as a medium for a switchover, and he mobilises the relation of form and counter-form as a material object. In other words, one can see from the wide-angle compositions of the archive, made up of individual photographs and arrayed like a jigsaw puzzle, with the important exception being that it is the putting of the pieces together that creates the picture and that it is capable of releasing multiple arrangements that are as diverse and "infinite" as language itself. From the individual marks of the letters, the archive assembles words that assemble sentences, which create not a visual grammar, but literally a speech of objects. Everything then is in its contextual field and each field has different spreads, so that, in theory, one could continue to create an endless number of images from within the extant photographic images, some of which survive as photos, such as a succession of Polaroid shots focusing on individualised items, and others reconstructions from negatives that have been burned and re-assembled and then photographed again in order to produce another negative.



o62



o61



o63



o64

Bien has worked on animating this photographic record, in which the issue of what is called original placement and condition is not the same one as at an archaeological site, with strata to be reconfigured, but a matter of creative exchange with the principle of the archive itself. Magnetic fields are capable of being sub-divided and creating other complete fields, when a magnet is broken, and this is a kind of visual regeneration that creates another virtual and visual existence for the Artchive itself. Thus one can say that on that basis of the complete destruction of the Artchive as threatened by the City of Amsterdam, the express wish on the part of the INC that the sculpture should not be anywhere in the city because there was no place for it, could never be realised. Even in the no-place of the virtual, it will always be a part of that city which was once referred to as Mokum, or “the place”.



o65

- o63 | *The Artchive for the Future*, 1990
- o64 | The fire brigade boat *van der Heyden* in the Lauriergracht, coloured photograph, 17,6 x 23,9 cm, 1977.
- o65 | Gouache on paper, showing a hastily unpacked suitcase, 20,7 x 26,6 cm, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland



o66



o67

- o66 | Trash at the canal side, Lauriergracht, 1959
- o67 | Mixed media on paper, 21,5 x 27,5 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland
- o68 | Mixed media on board, 21,5 x 34 cm, undated

What seems to be true of Kloppenburg is that the artist is himself the medium and his resultant works are consistently a bridge between the spiritual and the physical that he records in highly sensitive registration. From some of his first independent works in gouache or using poster paint, one can see direct references to his physical environment.¹⁴ It would be a pardonable exaggeration to say that all his life's work has been about his native city, Amsterdam. Some of the works from the 1950s refer to scenes which were directly observed in the city. In his work the city becomes a poem of time and *topos*. One can also see a more abstract response in the patterns and designs, where the view from across the canals is translated as a double mimetic play, each side of the canal mirrored in the built structure of the other, while in the waters of the canal the sky and streets are further mirrored and literally jumbled in this virtual realm of watery reflection. In several instances Kloppenburg builds direct analogues to the double mirroring and the hallucinative effects of these transparencies and overlaps into mirror symmetry works, and even a play of repetition in pattern which, when laid out, looks like a bird's-eye view of an imaginary and growing topos that is shielded in the spider web of the urban plan of the old city itself.¹⁵



o68

¹⁴ For this see illustrations o36, o37, o40, o41, o42, o43, o44, o45, o46, o47, o48, o49, o50, o51, o52, o53, o54, o55, o56, o57, o59, o60, o61, o66, o67, o68.
¹⁵ See illustration 112. This research leads to the works known as the Mirror Palace, see 430, 433, 435, 436, 437, 449, 450.



069



070

069 | Mixed media on paper, 21,5 x 34 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland
070 | Mixed media on paper, 21 x 25,5 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland

This generation of constant difference in the apparent sameness belongs to the mysterious flatness of the country, that the greatest dimension of mass and scale is in the urban scapes, where the remote long view of horizon gives way to a *horror vacui*, a fear of empty space, and thus a strange relation to objects and their space-filling function. It is not uncommon to see a propensity for the serial repetition of objects along the ledges of the windowsills of private dwellings, a precise idiom of interior decoration, which standardises the space of dwelling in the city. Part of the psychological effect of the constant play of mirrors is that of being enclosed in the infinite, a provoking of vertigo, so that within the urban envelope, with its circular canal system, its opening and closure each day, its mirroring of structure, virtual displacements, and kaleidoscopic mixtures, there can be a drunken and swooning quality provoked in a viewer. This is also emphasised by the constant contrast between the solid, if irregular, facades and the void of the canals, which again can easily provoke vertigo, claustrophobia or even agoraphobia, if not simply delirium as in the case of Narcissus. During the war years this became an intense physical fact, as the windows were covered with blackened paper, material he would later use for some of his works. With small prick holes they transformed the interior into a *camera obscura* through which light filtered and a double image sometimes melded onto the screen on which the light fell, a back wall.¹⁶

¹⁶ These can be seen from illustrations 091, 111, 124, 125.



071



072

071 | Mixed media on paper, 21,5 x 34 cm, undated (1952), Collection Museum Schloss Moyland
072 | Mixed media on paper, 21,5 x 34 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland
073 | Mixed media on paper, 21,5 x 34 cm, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland

Given the more ostentatiously displayed wealth now more common in the spectacle of city life, with much of the traditional reserve towards conspicuous consumption and waste no longer in evidence, it is difficult to imagine the immense poverty and suffering in Amsterdam, especially in 1944 – 5. This is also the period from which one can trace Kloppenburg’s emerging artistic life. In his *Een Kleine Geschiedenis van Amsterdam*, Geert Mak outlines some stark details that give one a sense of the catastrophic effect of the German occupation of the city, as well as a sense of how the inhabitants were forced to survive by living on the edge. He reports that by the end of 1944 the occupation, which Amsterdammers had expected to be lifted after a short time, had continued on all through the winter. These months at the end of 1944 – 5 were gruesome. Supplies of coal from the South, the area around Limburg, were needed by the allied troops; transport was almost at a standstill. Gas and electricity supplies had already faltered, and the city was “een koude, donkere stad, waar geen tram meer reed,” a cold dark city, in which the trams no longer rode. Furthermore, the harbour and Schiphol airport were rendered useless by the Germans, and there was neither telephone nor postal service. Rubbish gathered in large piles and spilt over on the streets. Most Amsterdammers had no work, or at most a day or two a week, and schools were closed. Between late October and early December of 1944, the city had fallen into a state of ghostly paralysis. By the end of December frost set in, giving rise to what amounted to famine conditions. When the Amstel froze over at the beginning of February, it meant that the last route for supplying food was closed off. The lack of fuel and comestibles forced inhabitants to desperate expedients.



073



074

074 | Mixed media on paper, 21,5 x 27,3 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland

075 | Tube drawing with gouache on paper, 21,3 x 34 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland. The gouache is from a series of so-called tube drawings produced in the early 1950s: One takes the steel point of an old fashioned Bic ballpoint and removes the ball. It is then screwed into the gouache tube. A light pressure on the tube causes the paint to come out and this is used to draw. The result is a sculptural effect of the drawing line, caused by the viscosity of the medium. Those substantial drawing lines, like brail, create variable shades and give an additional dimension to the works.

076 | Ink on paper, 21,3 x 34 cm, undated (1952), Collection Museum Schloss Moyland



075

Trees were uprooted, the wooden sleepers along train tracks plundered, and the houses of the deported Jewish population ransacked; floors, doors, balconies and fixtures were removed, leaving houses in ruins, an example being Jodenbreestraat where a great number of trees were felled and houses ransacked. At the same time a black market developed – especially in the Jordaan, the Zeedijk, and Nieuwmarkt – with bread on sale from twenty-five guilders, a sack of potatoes for eight hundred guilders, and a packet of cigarettes for eighty guilders. Mak suggests that these figures should be multiplied by fourteen to make a comparison with 2004 prices. Thousands of people tramped out of the city in search of potatoes and cabbage. Everything was exchanged for food, even “seksuele diensten”, sexual services. The mortality figures for the months of January, February and March indicate that 1200, 1400 and 1600 people, respectively, died of hunger and cold. In his bio-bibliography Bien has drawn attention to the plight of the Kloppenburg’s at this time, with the mother of three children taking on the responsibility of foraging for food, and the children searching for fuel, on almost a daily basis. Many of the places to which Kloppenburg went during this time are recorded in works from the 1950s.¹⁷

¹⁷ See 083, 084, 085, 086, 087, 089, 090.



076



077

077 | Mixed media on paper, 21,3 x 34 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland

078 | Tube drawing, gouache on paper, 21,3 x 34 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland

079 | Ink on paper, 21,3 x 34 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland.



078

The psychological effects of the occupation are hard to grasp. For some years Kloppenburg exhibited symptoms of the intense anxiety associated with the occupation. It became evident in a loss of control over certain bodily functions, and the later intense relationship to food, which even became a subject of his art. One can also trace, in the small, often irregularly sized paintings on discarded cardboard and printers’ remnants, many scenes recording his trips to the harbour to collect wood shavings and whatever else could be gleaned for fuel.¹⁸ Most of these pictures can be taken as part of his growing awareness of his own artistic gifts and ambitions, and also display his response to the contemporary post-war modernism that was to make Amsterdam – especially through the almost evangelical efforts of the Stedelijk Museum – one of the main centres for the reception of American art in post-war Europe. Heine’s sally that he would go, when the world ended, to Holland, because everything happens fifty years later there, is an apt comment on the Dutch reception of the work of the modernists, and the intense schedule of the Stedelijk, especially under the directorship of Willem Sandberg, which contributed to the modernisation of Amsterdam after the war.

Part of Kloppenburg’s development is also very much away from the normal requirements of Dutch artistic education. He never had any formal training, receiving only those lessons at school, as are reflected in the surviving copybook of 1941, which is so important. Due to the economic circumstances of the family, and his father’s need of assistance in the family business, Kloppenburg went to work immediately after completing his secondary school education. His main academic interests had been in art and natural science; subjects his father believed could be applied to the family business. It should be stated

¹⁸ For this see 029, 030, and illustration 504 of people collecting wood on the streets.



079



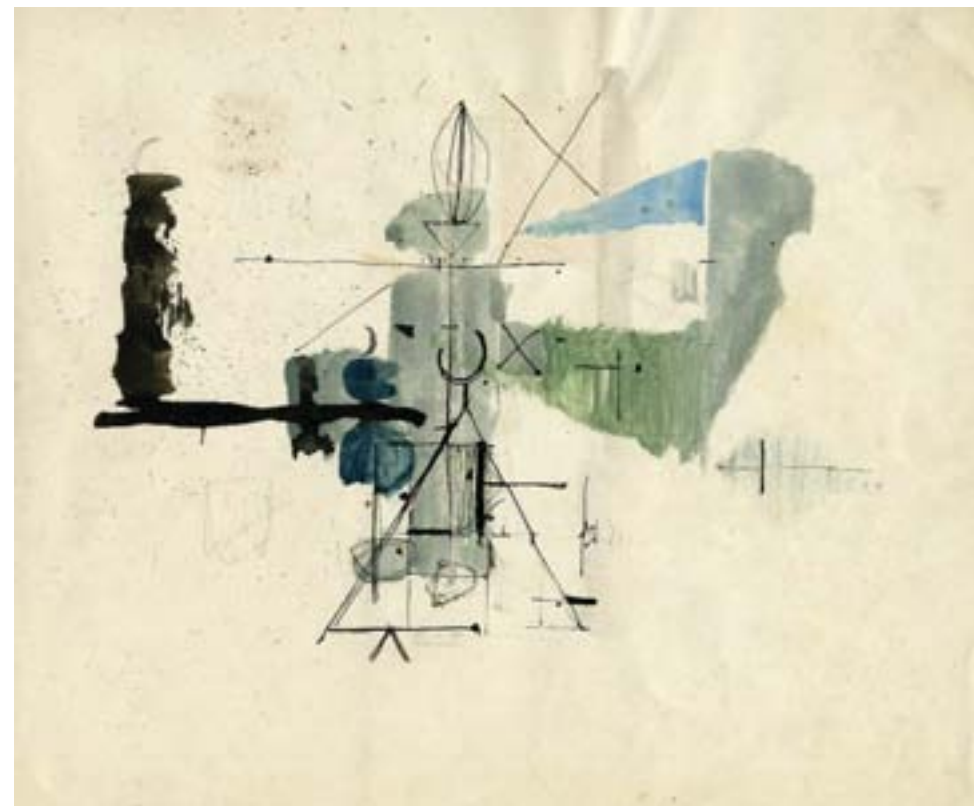
080

080 | Mixed media on paper, 21,3 x 34 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland

directly that Kloppenburg was forced by economic circumstances and relatively meagre resources to continue to work by day, and to develop his life as an artist in private. It is really not until his mid-twenties that a breakthrough took place. It can be recognized in a series of highly expressionist treatments of the movement of water that contain, in their spiralling energy, something of the pent-up emotions of a young man forced literally to work at night – something that would become a lifelong habit – and his earliest attempts to free himself from the constraints of a highly pragmatic father, and what turned out to be a very close if not over-protective relationship with his mother, who secretly, as it were, encouraged his private pursuits.¹⁹

Three points can be made here. One is that the tendency to night-time work, and his autodidact mastering of graphic design, posters, advertising lettering, publicity images, fashion, fabrics and dress designs, initiated his daily practice of drawing, and thinking out all of his ideas on paper, often with long periods of sketching and drawing before settling on any particular expression.²⁰ Secondly, it explains, at least partly, why a full explosion of his pictorial imagination does not take place until he spends time in Friesland, on a farm with his children, and abandons the work habits acquired as a young man. And thirdly, his complete lack of a

¹⁹ The study can be seen in 116, 122, 123.
²⁰ See illustration 126.



081

081 | Mixed media on paper, 21,3 x 25 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland
 082 | Ink and gouache on paper, 21,3 x 25 cm, undated, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland

business sense, given the dominance of his father, and the way in which some of his early ventures floundered, with designs having been taken over and used without any royalties to him, and in another instance the quality of his work having been doubted and accused of being an effort to pass off superior artisan work as his own. What is remarkable throughout the early sketchbooks is the constant metamorphosis of his own signature and name. This becomes both a persistent exercise in calligraphy, as well as a way of imagining himself in various situations and cultures. In one early block of sketches the name is written out over hundreds of sheets, with variations in letter types and shapes being practised. It is also the way in which he tries to find an appropriate speed for drawing itself in the fluency of the writing of the signature. This quickness, even flightiness, belongs very much to his natural love of movement, fast cycling, and physical energy, supplemented by the detailed investigation of foodstuffs and careful eating.

The hand is itself his signature, in the handling of the signature he retunes himself, and throughout the greater part of his working life he has avoided using slow or heavy media, such as oil paints, in favour of fluent media such as ink or pastels. During one period, chalk replaced both pencil and ink as his favourite material, and sheets of brown wrapping paper became his favourite



082



o83

medium. The fascination with cardboard continues with his use of milk cartons and chocolate boxes, which he flattens into sheets and often works with a felt marker producing bold outlines and rapid strokes, with his doodle and squiggle even extending to the surface of plastic shopping bags. Throughout his life he has literally seized on every surface that could carry marks, scratching drawings into the flaked paint of doors, incising drawings into discarded car doors, and using record covers, papers, dried leaves. He marked photographs in newspapers, telephone books, the bindings of books, cigar boxes, pieces of lead, as if attempting to mark the whole object world. He has always been fascinated by the resistance of surfaces, and the different speeds and rhythms that can be made. On some occasions he has drawn directly on the wall with chalk, and directly into the chalk with leads and flints, and then used chalk again on the coalface of a mine.

- o83 | Gouache on paper, 50 x 65 cm, undated
- o84 | Gouache on paper, 23 x 47,5 cm, undated
- o85 | Gouache on paper, 23 x 47,5 cm, undated
- o86 | Gouache on paper, 23 x 47,5 cm, undated
- o87 | Gouache on paper, 23 x 47,5 cm, undated
- o88 | The depicted works, produced in the early 1950s, are based upon wartime impressions like Spitfires in battle, maps of developments on the front, light ammunition in the evening sky, etc., then released into abstract patterns or as mural, like the one that can be seen on the wall in the corridor of Lauriergracht 111.



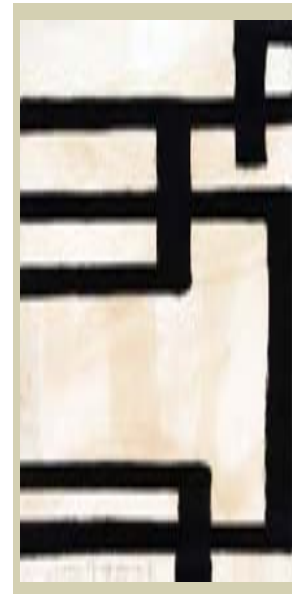
o84



o85



o86



o87



o88

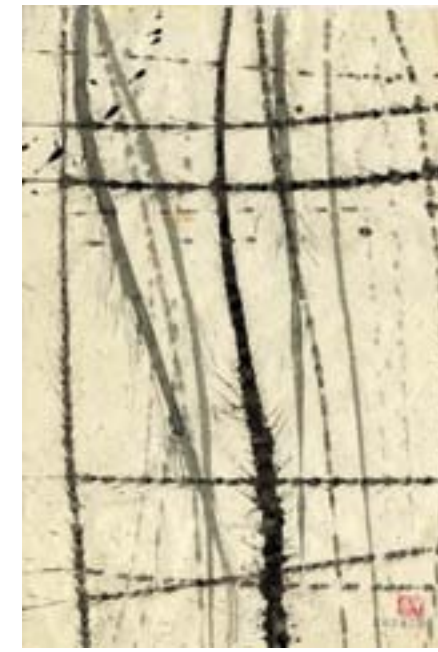


o89

The issue of material seems very tactile, there is no conception of sized papers, or the careful presentation of drawings that are then worked up and translated through medium. Even the remarkable series of pastels were, for the most part, done on brown wrapping paper and rarely fixed. The medium is always at the same moment an element of research. The pen itself is a tool, its availability becomes a form of disclosure. He is interested in exploring the character of the pen, trying everything that is on the market. The mark is a connection between what Rudolph Steiner refers to as the 'aetheric' and 'Ich-Prozesse'. It is a realisation of the living dynamic of nature, and constitutes Kloppenburg's most intimate and intellectual expression. The movement of script can be viewed both as a natural motoric activity and as the individual marker, and indeed it is this double aspect which gives the signature its power of identity, and at the same time its rhythmic characteristic, for even in the computer age a signature is accepted as a mark of individuality. For Kloppenburg this is not an obvious equation. The personal signature, like the shape of things, may be much more multiple and diverse, thus the long series of experiments with the signature is not a wish to stabilise himself, instead it reflects the desire, through repetition, to release the experiment of the self into multiple



o92

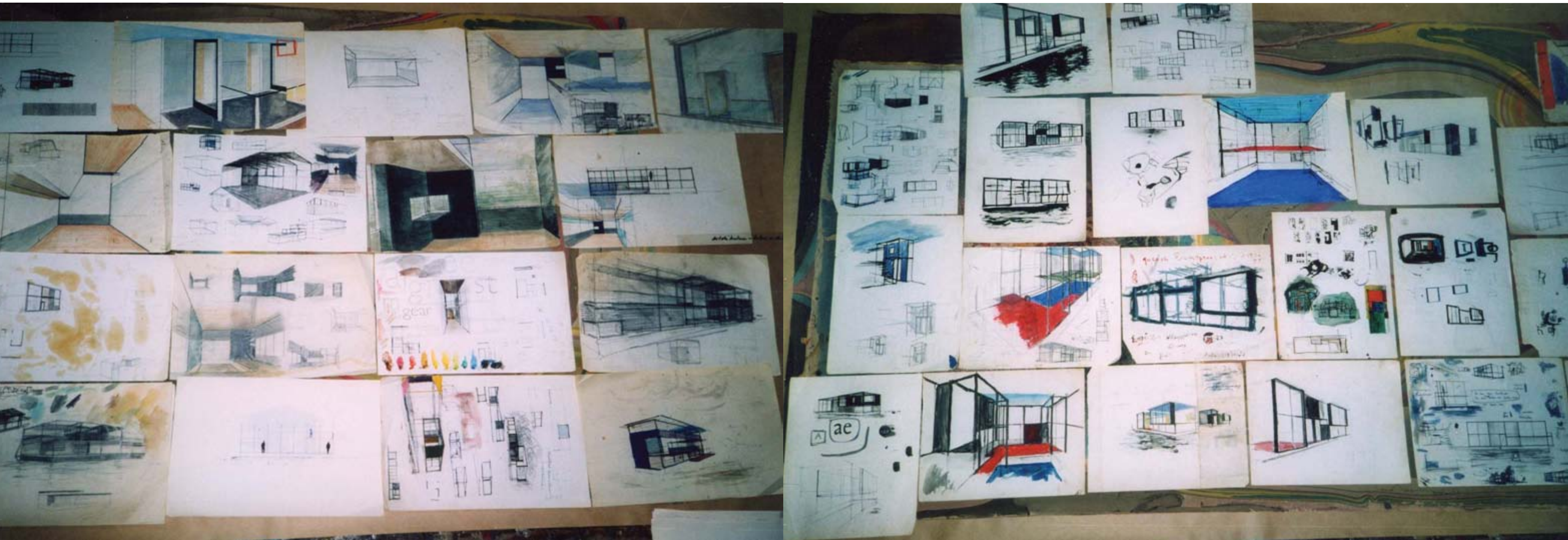


o90

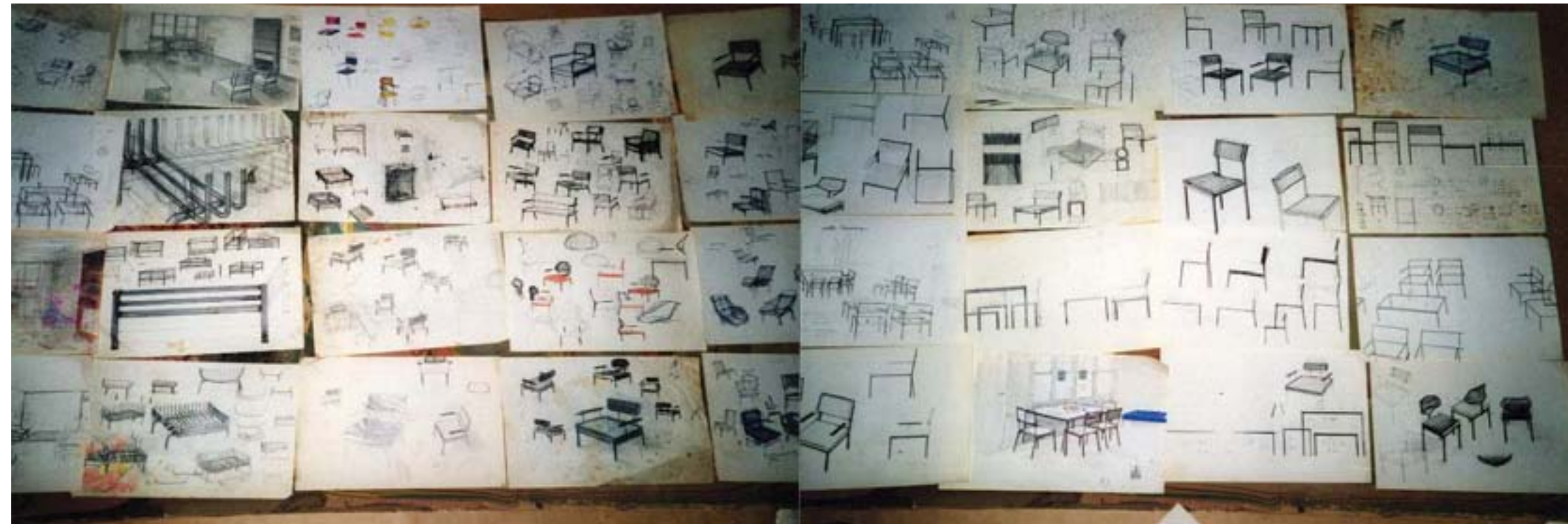
- o89 | Gouache on paper, 21,5 x 35 cm, F.I.U.ture 387
- o90 | Gouache on paper, 21,3 x 35 cm, Collection MuseumSchloss Moyland
- o91 | Silkscreen on wartime black-out paper, 33,5 x 45 cm, F.I.U.ture 321
- o92 | Evening sky with Spitfires



o91



093 | The earlier interior design studies resulted in a growing interest in the interplay between space and counter-space and the exploration of the golden section, a system of proportion. This leads to a long series of architectural and furniture designs. In 1953 K is approached with a commission to design a houseboat for a berth in Nieuwkoop.



094

094 | Space and furniture studies. Several models were built as prototypes and realised.



095

095 | Mixed media on board, 21,3 x 34 cm, undated



096

096 | Gouache and pencil on paper, 21,5 x 33,5 cm, 1952



097

097 | Mixed media on paper, 21,3 x 34 cm, undated

encounters. This aligns itself well with his systematic *non-finito*, his insistence on the process and not the result.

The Artchive for the Future has been put out of the reach of scholarship, sealed in over thirteen shipping containers, and now kept at the city's expense, which is to say that the one response of the city to the mounting attention given to the case of Kloppenburg was to stop sending him bills for the storage of the damaged works in the containers. This was done without any further indication of responsibility or liability on the part of the city, and without any consultation with Kloppenburg or his representatives. A highly significant

source of information remains, namely, the hundreds of surviving notebooks and sketchbooks, which cover extended periods beginning in the mid-1960s. They parallel his work on the great sequence of pastels, through the exhibition of which he gained his first brush with public fame, as well as his ongoing labours on *The Artchive for the Future*.²¹

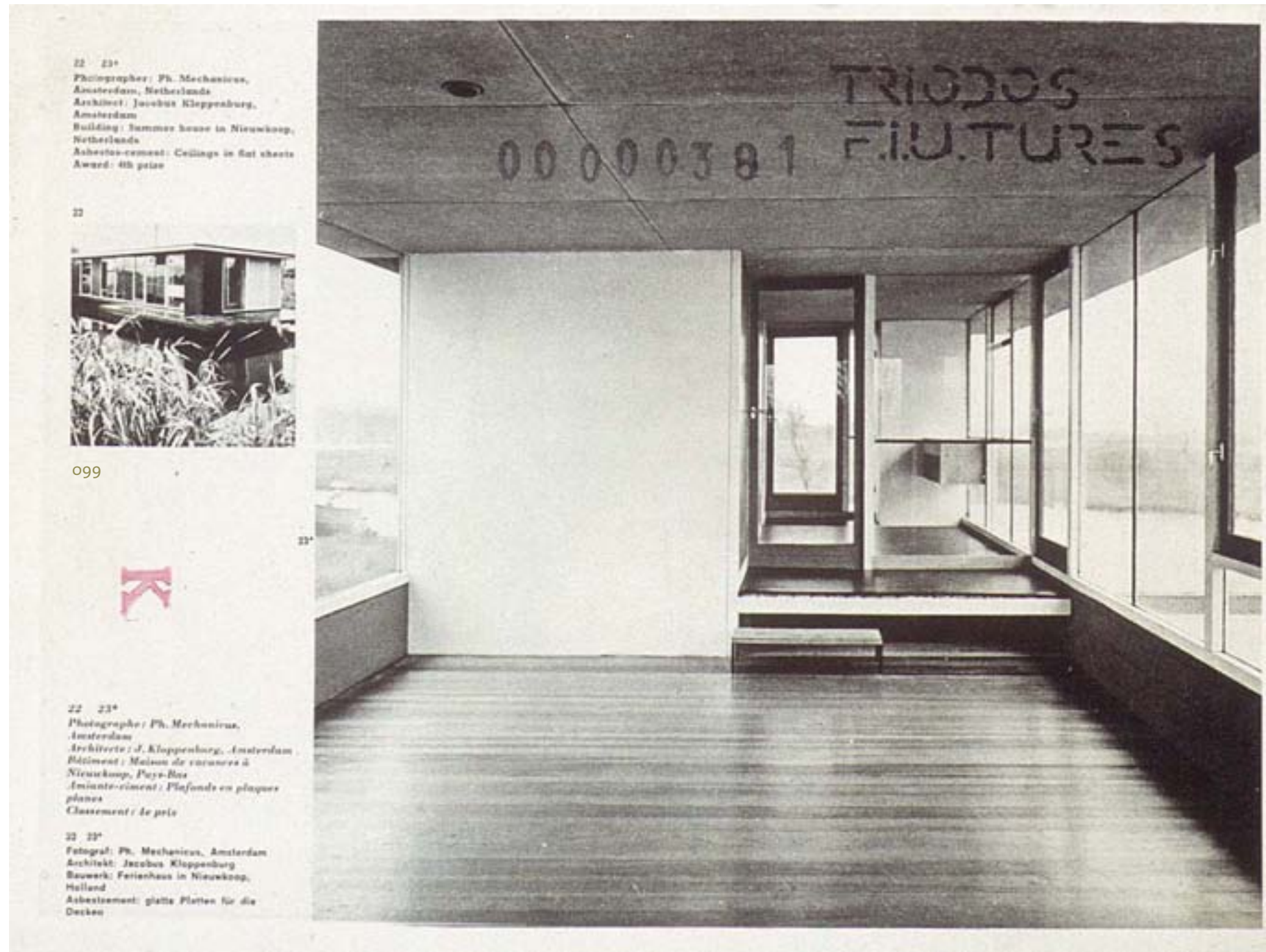
These notebooks are a graphic diary of his drawing and thinking for over sixty years, there are at least ten thousand complete sheets in existence. They indicate the importance of drawing

²¹ These notebooks are now housed at the F.I.U. archive in Amsterdam. They are still in the process of being registered and under investigation.



098

098 | Mixed media on board, 17 x 18,5 cm, undated



22 23*
 Photograph: Ph. Mechanicus,
 Amsterdam, Netherlands
 Architect: Jacobus Kloppenburg,
 Amsterdam
 Building: Summer house in Nieuwkoop,
 Netherlands
 Asbestos-remont: Ceilings in flat sheets
 Award: 4th prize



099

22 23*
 Photograph: Ph. Mechanicus,
 Amsterdam
 Architect: J. Kloppenburg, Amsterdam
 Bâtiment: Maison de vacances à
 Nieuwkoop, Pays-Bas
 Amiante-ciment: Plafonds en plaques
 planes
 Classement: de prix

22 23*
 Fotograf: Ph. Mechanicus, Amsterdam
 Architect: Jacobus Kloppenburg
 Bouwerk: Ferienhaus in Nieuwkoop,
 Holland
 Asbestcement: glatte Platten für die
 Decken

100



101

101 | Untitled, 1985. Note: several original scale models were later flattened, fixed with glue, and so forced into a new pictorial dimension. The single constructivist elements in this composition have a logical scale and space reference to one and another.

102 | Trashthetical object with *Wall Street Journal* pages and a banana peel, 1983/93

103 | Malevich, desk and room, 1913, Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (in dispute)

for his whole development as an artist. The most minute developments can be shown, in many cases changing from minute to minute. One senses what he was thinking and how he was responding. They allow us to monitor the almost endless series of permutations and combinations taking place in his world, literally stretched out between fantasy and the most precise geometrical designs. From the very early 1950s one can see the sketches for dress designs, the work on architecture, the development of scripts, and the work on geometry.

An analysis of one sequence of sheets within a notebook will help demonstrate both their significance and value for the interpretation of Kloppenburg's work. The notebooks also show the same *horror vacui*, with sheets often being filled literally brimful, so that various ideas are found on one sheet and continued on others. In some cases he has even used the transparency of the paper to continue the sequence from one page to the next by copying through the page and developing shapes out of previous drawings. For the most part the drawings are imaginary, in the sense that there is very little descriptive drawing from direct observation; this is even the case in the small pencil portraits of heads, which he made from memory. He also often included self-portraits in the sheets over the years, placing himself among imagined objects, his elaborated bestiary and the beings which he created in as much angelic as human form, stretched and elongated like the creations of a Giacometti or Modigliani.



102



103



104

104 | Explosion, CIBAchrome on silk, 90 x 145 cm, around 1959

Kloppenburg's only reworked drawings are for his architectural sketches and his various geometrical constructions, which in some instances are sketches for sculptures or imagined installations.²² Among these sheets one also discovers how he worked out the distributions of visibility that made sense of the spatial arrangements in the Artchive. In some instances he makes drawings on the basis of a completely accidental moment and medium; a bleeding finger is used to make a sequence of sketches, a smoking cigar is placed behind sheets and the resulting effect is left on the page. Later he will use the skins of vegetables and flatten them into ornamental shapes, literally reducing the volumes to their graphic counterparts. This activity of translation from cubic, 3-D reality is pressed into the plane, and a flatness is activated to create an ornamental script of shapes.

Good examples of this are the hundreds of avocado sheets laid out in a long sequence on a large piece of cardboard and assembled as cut-out shapes that take on an internal homology and seem like the exploration of every theme and variation of which the skins are capable, releasing from the flattened shapes through his graphic tailoring a variety of suggestive images. As a graphic diary, the punctuality of the day enters into the sheets, and often one finds words and lists noted on the drawings, some of them coming from radio programmes to which he has been listening, and the drawing continues as he nods off to sleep and literally wakes up again on another sheet, so that one can regroup sheets on a strictly chronological, or more precisely temporal, basis, following his complete absorption over a period of days.²³

²² Some of this can be seen from illustrations 093, 094, 095, 096, 098, 100, 101. In 101, the work is forced from the second dimension in which the relational logic is mediated through the third, it delivers a constructivist image but is not dealt with pictorially, having an explicit spatial reference from the third dimension.

²³ This process can be seen in 451.



105

105 | Implosion, CIBAchrome on silk, 67 x 72 cm, undated
106 | Groente Primeur Diepvries, 49,5 x 57 cm, 1952/2002

In a folder containing sheets from 1968, some loose and others on very light airmail paper, there is a sequence of drawings in sharp outline with a calligraphic pen and black ink, which are the antecedents of the pastels of fifteen years later. On one sheet an outlined figure, with the shape of a laughing Buddha, is resting on one arm and cradling a dolphin-like fish. From the head of the figure emerges a kite-like profile of Kloppenburg, and to the left a quickly delineated horse on a different scale. The main figure has projecting tubular legs that join up to the flattened shapes of book pages and along the edges there is a triple profile of a face with what looks like Aladdin's lamp above it, linked to a miniaturised horseshoe with elements of a mosque and suggested buildings.²⁴ These surreal pictorial creations, which join Dali with Edward Lear as if intended for a child's surreal comic, already indicate the jumble and connection of things, which are guided not only by an abstract decision, but generated out of his response to the shapes he makes. The drawing is linked up by dotted lines and extrusions from one figure to another, so that the composition is held by the continuity of line, and not by any specific directionality.

On another adjoining sheet the opposite process is at work; a briefly outlined bull's head is set against a fence, over which it looms, and the rest of the

**FORM RESEARCH CENTRE
FREE FORM FORMULA**

sheet has disconnected objects such as machine parts, an oil jar, or a candle-holder, which are separated out and deconstructed in parts where only looking creates the unity of the objects. Another sheet shows the leaf of a lily opened

²⁴ See 144, 147, 148, 150 and 152.



106



107

out and, by the side a roller-skate, the roots of an onion, a pot with a maiden-hair fern. To the right there is a small jar of aspirin tablets with the cover off, along with a coat hanger and an egg, balanced and strapped, and interconnected to the rest of the sheet. Individual items are drawn in perspective, but there is no specific viewpoint, and the distribution is a helter-skelter. This prepares one for later sheets that crowd onto the page like a pond full of perch that suddenly come to the surface.

On another sheet one can see the way one shape generates others; a fish skeleton and a piece of rope with a dice becomes an elaborate capital *J* moved into a crooked pipe and treated as a bone that turns into a bent spanner, into a flexed arm, with lists of words written in pencil and ink, “room”, “ceiling”, “floor”, and so on. The *J* will also be a handle of an umbrella, and one sees through his playing with the shape of the letter how his study of the alphabet and letters becomes a fundamental visual grammar, in the sense that the spatial shapes are linked to the whole object world.²⁵

The outline of shape and the use of contour are not dissimilar to the work of Picasso and Miro at this date. Oriental teapots and the combs of hens on spiralled spider webs, linked by a line to grotesque ornament heads that fold out into kite figures of hands and standing birds with the shape of the letter *A* orchestrating the flow of shapes. In a direct sense the treatment of objects in a floating world is a release from the weight of things, which Kloppenburg effects by using unexpected linear joins. He also insists on weaving and interweaving shapes and deriving out of the chaos another arrangement. This also

²⁵ See 148.

- 107 | Untitled, CIBAchrome on silk, 58,5 x 62 cm, undated, FIUWAC 010
- 108 | Flowform, CIBAchrome on silk, 73 x 73 cm, 1959, FIUWAC 91. Note: The works from this period are the result of experiments with chemicals and paint, floating in a water basin, the alchemical kitchen. K develops a technique based on two principles; organic flow form and crystallisation. If a thinning medium is added, the floating paint explodes, creating organic flow forms. By adding an overdose of quick drying medium, the paint shrinks and freezes into a mineral pattern, like drifting ice floes. Then it is transferred onto silk.



108



109

- 109 | CIBAchrome on silk, 46 x 74 cm, 1959, FIUWAC 090
- 110 | Mixed media on silk, 48 x 92 cm, 1958
- 111 | Enamel and gold leaf on paper, 15 x 17,5 cm

leads to the kind of imaginative pictorialising, and there is an intense pictorial scene on which a lamb with bound front hooves is hanging from a line that is attached to a pole. Running behind the legs of the sheep are two scythes, secured and bound with twine on the blade of one a watch, and below the



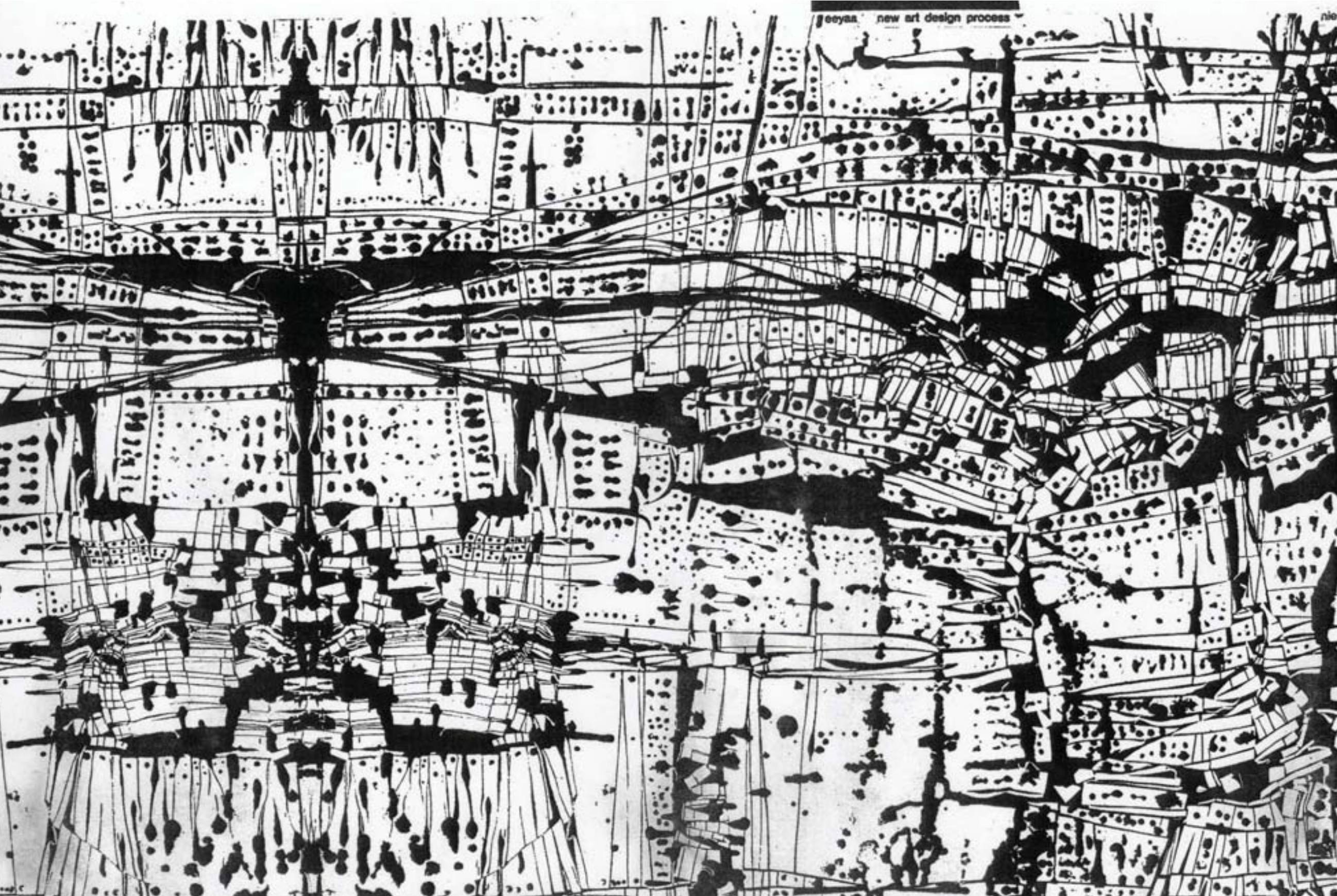
110

hinds of the sheep what looks like a fire. Below, there are garden shears, and to the left of the scene two figures in outline are interlaced topsy-turvy on top of each other in the manner of Hindu sculpture.²⁶

²⁶ The line in these drawings is not far removed from the work of Steinberg for the *New Yorker* magazine in the late 1950's, with their witty gestures.



111



◀ 112 | Urban architecture, eeyaa dessin, silkscreen on paper, 1961
113 | Portraits by P. Mechanicus, around 1951

There are doubtless traditional *paschal* and *memento mori* themes here, the instruments of the grim reaper, and the sacrificial lamb. The convulsed figures may suggest a complex erotic theme here both flamboyant and guilty, a motif that will return in varying degrees of intensity throughout his life. The bodies are imbricated in the style of German interlace ornament, or in the manner of convoluted figures on the pages of the *Book of Kells*, of Frankish-Germanic provenance. A sequence of four sheets contains the deconstruction of his own name, taking the sequence of letters within the name and creating a variety of nonsense words from it. We also see the “reduction alphabet” on this sheet with the *E* rendered as three horizontal lines, the *P* having its shape turned into elongated question marks, the rounded top being open and two hook forms, the *K* losing its descender and rendered as an *L* with a thicker calligraphic mark. He feels the ability to see the sheets from the other side, as a release of spatial options, like the movement of play on a hockey field; animals he draws from the inside: “you can draw it as observed outside or you can draw the rabbit from the inside”.²⁷

²⁷ This comment was supplied by the artist in conversation.



113





This is his mobilisation of the spatial, and looking at the sheet from the other side lets him also imagine seeing the object from another viewpoint. There is a specific relation to his own body in all of this, the toning of the body, which he works out every day, taking cold showers, applying oils and eating healthy foods in order to preserve it as an instrument. The pencil is itself an extension of his body, and the key encounter with the paper is an “evergreen toning” of his spatial and dimensional seeing.

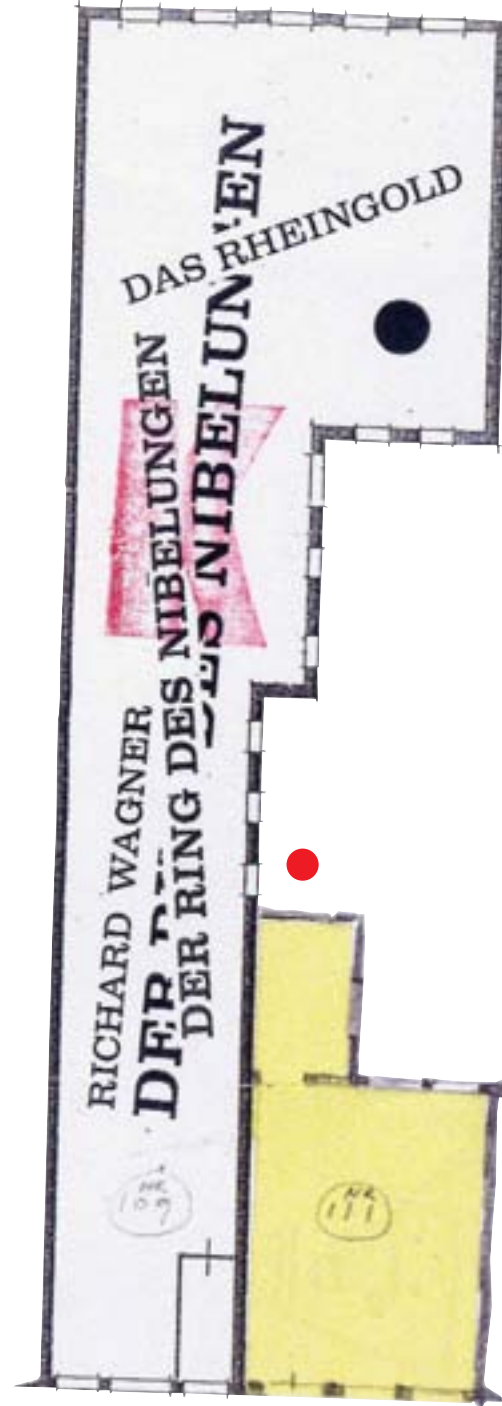
Kloppenburg has kept himself fit and trim throughout his life, and even at seventy-five remains brisk and vigorous, climbing stairs and lifting weights that a much younger man might consider an achievement. What is to be noted, however, is that for Kloppenburg the physical sense of space is already seen in the paper, and this is not diminished by the transparency. On the contrary, his view, which has also been highly dimensionalised by his study of geometry, is constantly motile. There is a vivid scanning from close up, but drawing is also a way of recording what he sees in the depths. Visiting an art supply store, he would often spend hours selecting a plank, since he sees a map of the nerves of life in the grain and rings of the trees, and constantly observes such patterning as an individual and singular revelation.



114 | Kloppenburg Express, ink on paper, 21 x 34 cm, undated
115 | Trashthetical sculpture, 1996
116 | eeyaa dessin, CIBAchrome on paper, undated.



117



118

- 117 | Jacobus Kloppenburg in his studio, 1986. Photo: O. van Alphen.
- 118 | Floor plan of De Pelikaan, until 1963 serving as a depot for theatre props and workshops. When the Wagner Society leaves the building, K rents the fifth floor as studio space, later also the sixth and seventh floor. The black dot in the floor plan marks the spot from whence the photo (left) was taken. The red dot marks the window in the garden that gave the young Jacobus access to the depot (the initiation hut). The now empty space was a shock. What remained were the opera names on the heavy ceiling beams. In the coming years this Dutch emptiness had to be refilled with real sculptural substance: *The Artchive for the Future*.
- 119 | Anselm Kiefer, *Deutschlands Geisteshelden*, 1973

Examining the surviving drawings and books according to decades, one can make broad observations as to his themes and subjects, and also note that in the 1950s, a time of enormous experimentation, there is a much closer relationship between his graphic work on lettering, drawing, sketching and designing than in later periods. Much of the drawings of the 1950s were specifically commissions. Some aspects of his lifelong working method are established early. Accepting a proposed commission, for example, leads to a process of thinking out on paper, which may run, in some cases, to hundreds of small sketches on sheet after sheet, until an arrival occurs. He then starts on other topics, or motifs, to which, later, he may very well return.

During the 1950s we can also see the mastering of the problem of pattern repetition and the acute awareness of spatial interval for different kinds of marks and gestures. There is a sense that the exploration of his own touch across the surface of the paper – for which the lead of the pencil serves as an extended filter and instrument – is his first and primary concern. There is a way in which he surrenders to the process and allows himself to be guided by the motoric of the body, and then responds with a visual and decorative seeing to the projection of the lines. One could imagine a movement where the breath is



119



120



121

held, and it is rare to see where lines begin and end, or any abrupt movement on the surface. The calligraphic fluency gives a lightness and elegance to his line, which he can thicken and thin with the most delicate touch. One drawing sheet in India ink from 1950 gives us an entry point for this decade.

The school notebook from 1941 shows his depiction of a fig and goose. The outline drawing of the goose with an egg, which was coloured in later, after the demolition, is one of the very earliest examples of a signed work by Klop-penburg. By the mid-1950s he has grown enough in confidence to make up a work which he signs with another name and gives the age of the pseudony-mous Jan Peters as 13. This may indicate his own self-criticism of his develop-ment, or a robust and ironic comment on contemporary Cobra work, of which he seems to be directly aware, especially the complex sound experiments in *vers libre* by Lucebert and the brash and confident free work of Karel Appel.

Given his involvement in fashion design and the study of contemporary typography, it is likely that he was well informed about the developing scene in Amsterdam. One can only guess at what survives from this time. In the main it is lettering for advertisements, and the most public example of this work can be found in the photograph used as the frontispiece of this book, one of the Lauriergracht from 1950, with the signage for Looman & Zon, which can also be coupled with the texts for the work *Joseph in Egypt*. It is from the practice of designing letter shapes, beginning with outlines, that his preference for out-line drawing stems, and one can see how, over the years, the control and stan-dardisation that is so much a part of writing is something from which he

- 120 | Original text on the beams, 1997. Photo: WB
- 121 | Note on the Artchive wall: *REALTIJD* = Real time, 1980. Photo: WB
- 122 | EEYAA dessin, CIBAchrome on silk, 1963



122



123

wants to break loose, into a much freer expression. He had a day job after which he worked on his own material at night. The results can be traced throughout the 1950s. In terms of stylistics, Kloppenburg can be aligned with the expressionist and surrealist tendencies that emerged in post-war Dutch art, and which in turn can be seen to be a direct response to Picasso at the same period.

His own development is very much a private matter, as the artistic play of his free imagination, away from the demands of day labour, taking on a hermetic and personal symbolic sense. Although always enormously generous in his appreciation of others, he stood slightly aslant of all group belonging, and in this sense his oeuvre began as an affair of the night, and largely with a restricted audience, namely his mother and sisters, who were supportive of this hermetic search. In one gouache on board from 1949,²⁸ wooden impostes, or pylon poles are shown. An undated pastel depicts a crane and what is clearly a scene from the harbour, again with felled trees. Much of this may go back to his wartime memories, with the destruction of vast numbers of trees to supply fuel for the inhabitants of the city. These small-scale works are abbreviated and compact responses to the cityscape, which is so much part of his early work. We also can see in this period a development to a more fluid and experimental style, allowing the accidents of the moment to emerge in the work. This clearly departs from the rigors of letter design and measurement required in his main graphic work during those years.

²⁸ See 029.



124

124 | WEB, silkscreen on wartime black-out paper, 90 x 130 cm, 1960. Photo: WB

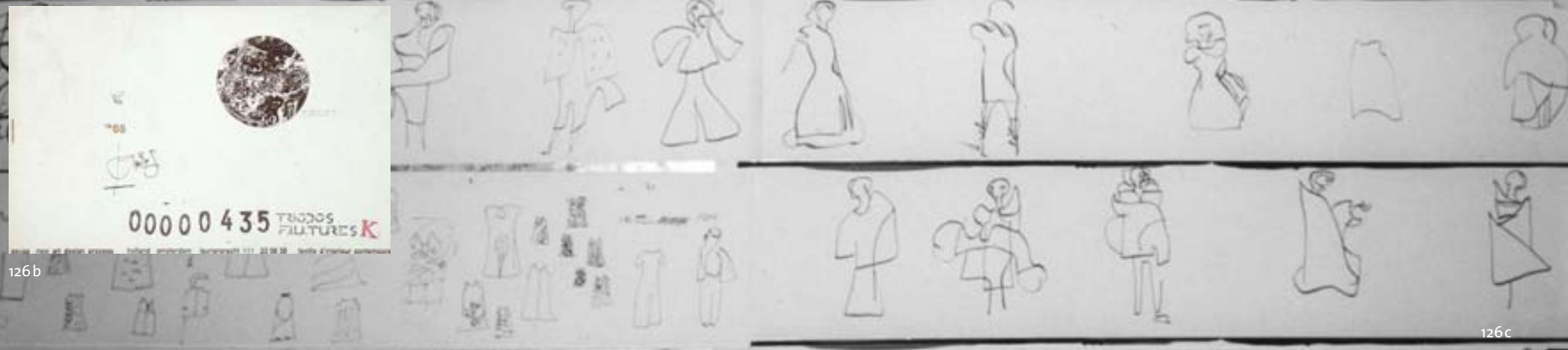
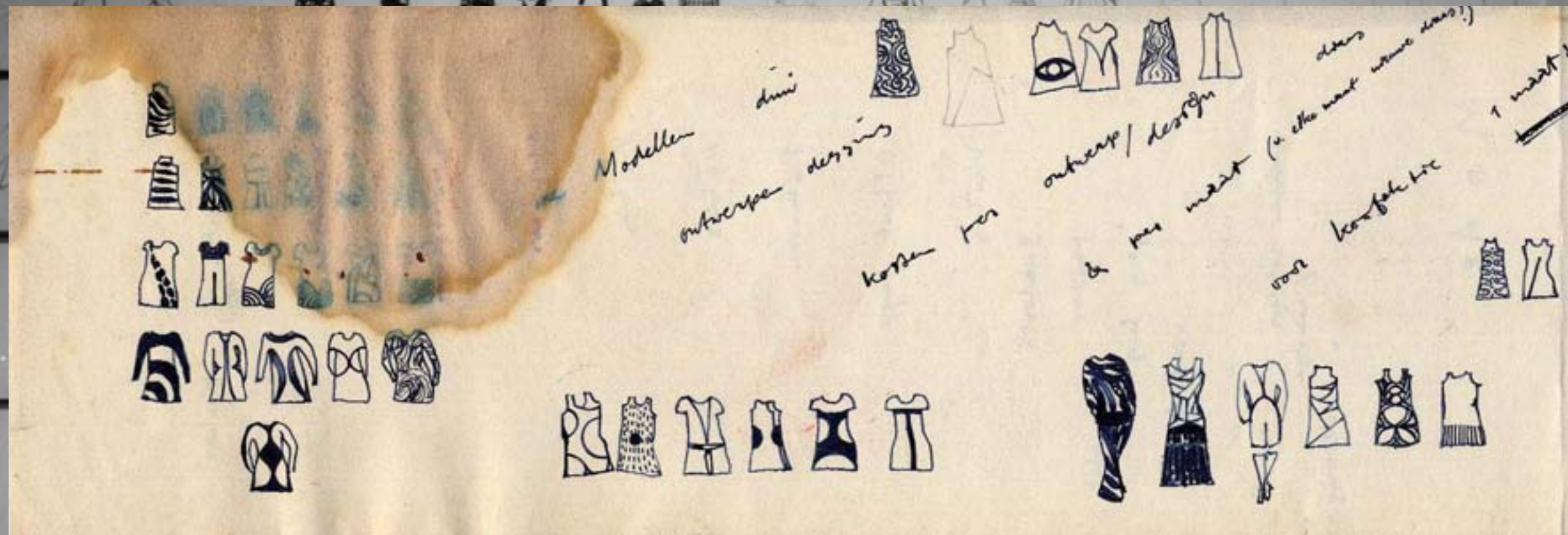
125 | Rose garden, silkscreen on black-out paper, 100 x 128 cm, 1959. Photo: WB
Note: The work as shown here is built up from eight sheets. Other variations with the same sheets create other web works with other titles.

This is most evident in the works from 1956. What can be seen is the emergence of different properties in his visual concerns, and a much greater confidence in handling the unexpected forms that come from his own elaborating

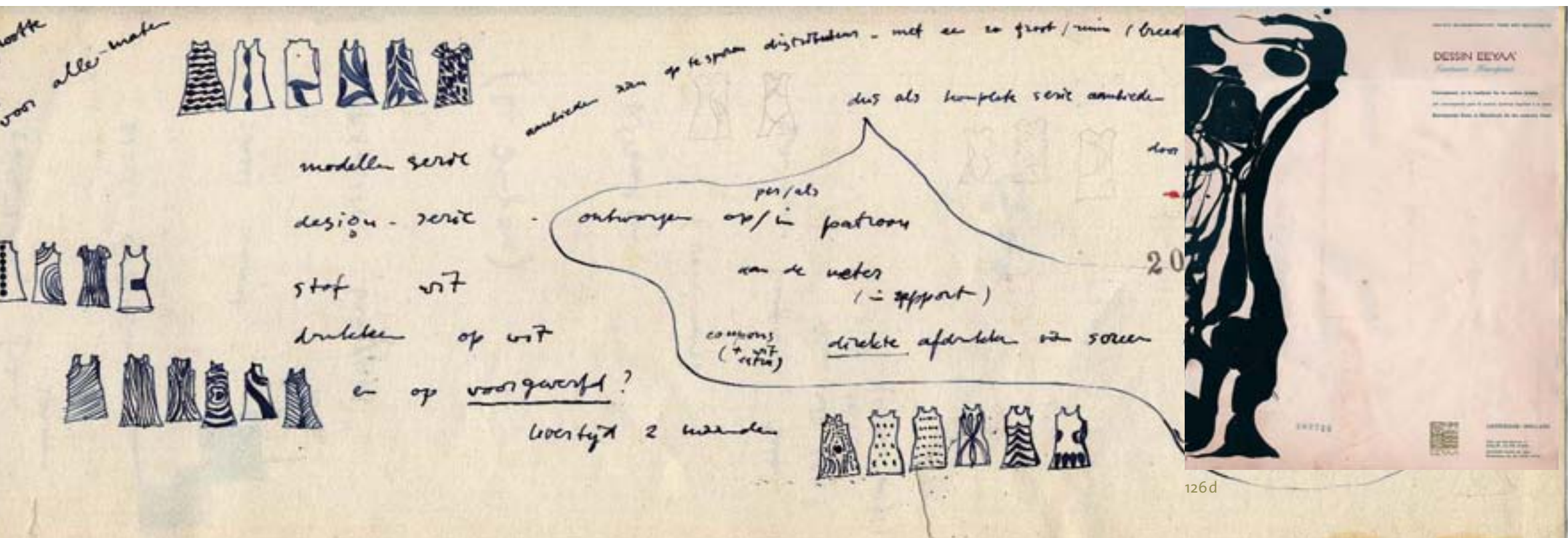


125

vision. There is, for example, a sequence of very accomplished works at this date that mark the speed of his development as an artist, and the skills that he was rapidly in the process of acquiring. Dating is sometimes uncertain, since there was no major discernible shift in idiom until the late 1960s, and he had,



FORM RESEARCH CENTRE
 FREE FORM FORMULA
 TEXTILE DESIGN PROCESS
 ORIGINAL EXACT HANDPRINT
 NEW STYLE TEXTILE FOR
 LIGHTING, FASHION & INTERIOR
 MODERN LIGHTING DESIGN
 EEYAA LAMP DESIGN COLLECT
 INSTANT FASHION EE-LOOK



FORM RESEARCH CENTRE
 FREE FORM FORMULA
 TEXTILE DESIGN PROCESS
 ORIGINAL EXACT HANDPRINT
 NEW STYLE TEXTILE FOR
 LIGHTING, FASHION & INTERIOR
 MODERN LIGHTING DESIGN
 EEYAA LAMP DESIGN COLLECT
 INSTANT FASHION EE-LOOK

NEW
 nouveau
 NEU

DESSIN EEYAA

126 | (a-g) In 1963 Kloppenburg starts setting up his own mass production haute couture line: INSTANT FASHION EE-LOOK. He has discovered an American textile glue, which renders the sewing machine redundant; one can choose one of his haute couture designs together with the preferred eeyaa fabric. After indicating the needed size, one receives the pre-cut fashion product in a special envelope and one can glue it together at home. INSTANT FASHION EE-LOOK, elegantly dressed women, freed from the burden of the sewing machine. Eventually he abandons the idea due to a lack of financing.

126b

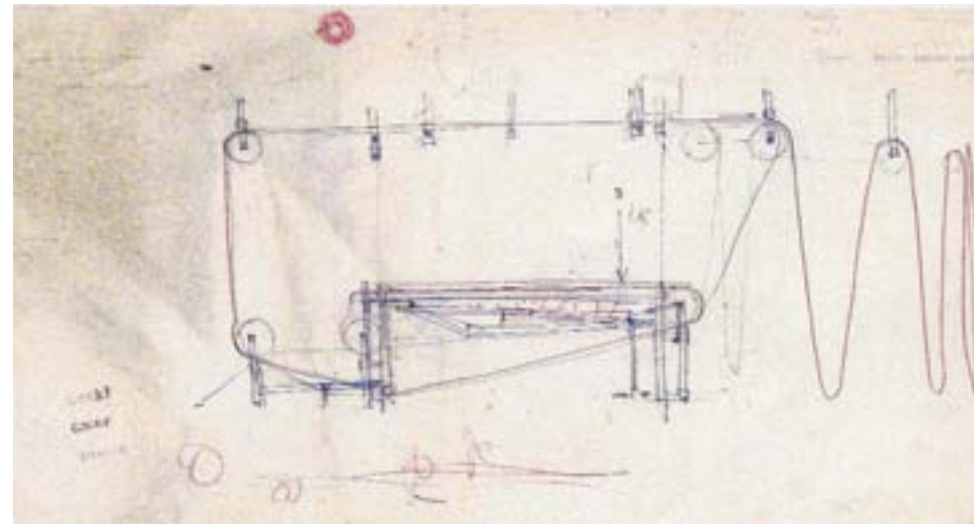
126c

126e

126f

126g

126d



127

127 | Study for a production machine, pencil and ballpoint on paper, 23 x 48 cm, 1963
128 | Print proof on newspaper, 1959



128

by and large, not yet chosen a subject or a topic. It is still a period of continuing and open experimentation, where the basic pre-occupations of the artist can be seen in his design work for lettering and fashion, secondly, in the involvement with architectural drawing in relation to a renovation of the house, and a commission from some relatives for a houseboat, and, thirdly and more consequently, in his paintings on board, often not measuring more than 18 cm x 21 cm.

Many of these works are free exercises, and none have any direct reference, being an abstract play of shape and counter-shape. In the boards from 1949, i.e., material securely dated; there are realistic references, for example tree trunks and a harbour scene. The double-sided work is more of an abstract play of shape and colour, and is a rudimentary search for pictorial expression. Many of the stick figures are then expanded to create more legible shapes, thus in a sequence of five undated works²⁹, which should be placed at the beginning of the 1950s, we can read more specific situations. In the work called Black Cobra, we see a cluster of ladder shapes and a large oval. In (44) a stick figure with plant terminals is placed under the incline of another plant shape, with the inclusion of a moon disc on the left. Another sheet from this time also shows the phases of the moon, set out in rows of scattered ink that depict the waxing and waning, and again there is no effort to make any very precise rendering. This can be contrasted with the roundel drawing of a sewing machine and one of his geometrical studies, thereby laying out, if one will, the continuum of his interests, free imaginative exercises in shape and colour, precise “mechanical drawing”, usually of machines or architectural features, and the fantasy of the gouaches which become a play of energetic motion on the surface.

²⁹ See 049, 050, 051, 052, 053.



VISIBLE LANGUAGE OF A CULTURE

The earliest reference in the public domain to the “Artchive for the Future” or “Archive of the Future”, occurs in the course of the exhibition *The Writing Type Flyer*, which took place at the Rotterdam Art Space in March 1987, where an advance press release announced it in its Dutch version the “Archief Voor de Toekomst”, which can literally be translated as the Archive for the Future. The press release statement was written by Waldo Bien, and is the first public description of the work. Bien draws attention to the chronology of the archive as something that had already been in existence for 25 years. Hence, the date of its initial formation would have been in 1962. Bien makes the point that the archive would, as a collection of goods and objects, leave an overview of the progress of the twentieth century. This has been the accepted chronology in subsequent publications, such as the brief mention in *PPP*, no. 9,³⁰ and the 1997 text by Walter Hopps drawing attention to the fact that Kloppenburg had been working on the careful accumulation and assimilation of objects “accruing a mega-sculpture of significant value. It must be understood as a *Gesamtkunstwerk* in which even the slightest change of order can destroy the artist’s concept and cause great damage or even total destruction”. In July of the same year, Hopps elaborated further in a recorded interview with Waldo

³⁰ See 049, 050, 051, 052, 053.

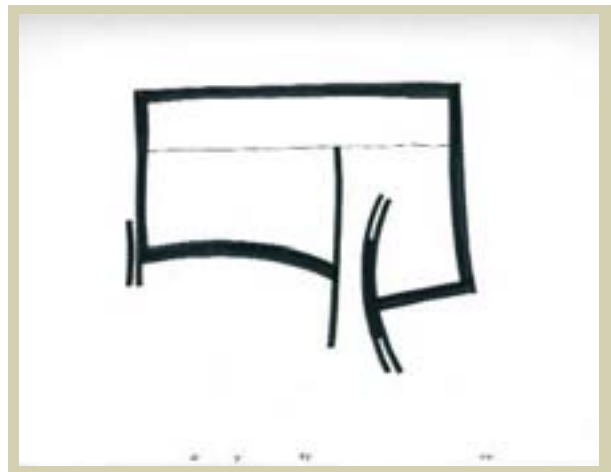
³¹ 129 | FORM RESEARCH CENTER. Kloppenburg’s alchemical kitchen; view of the water basin with floating paint, 1963. Note: in March 2005 Kloppenburg explains “I wasn’t searching for attractive designs. That was more or less a by-product of my research. What I was really after was to understand, or be able to confirm, Rudolf Steiner’s theory that the moon derives from the earth, in an early state of planetary evolution, and that the moon substance originates from what’s today the Pacific Ocean.”

¹³⁰ | eeyaa notebook, 1963/4

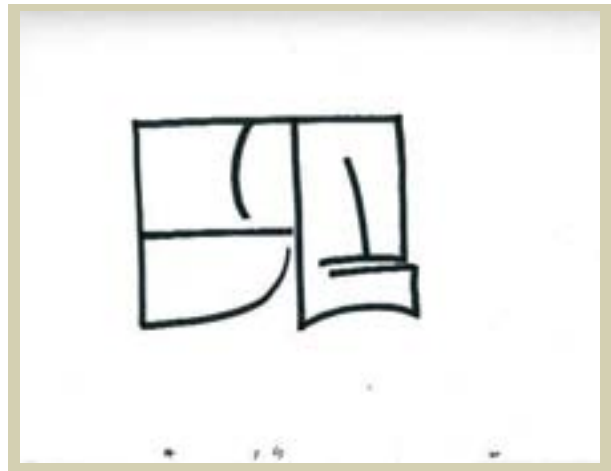
74 | 75



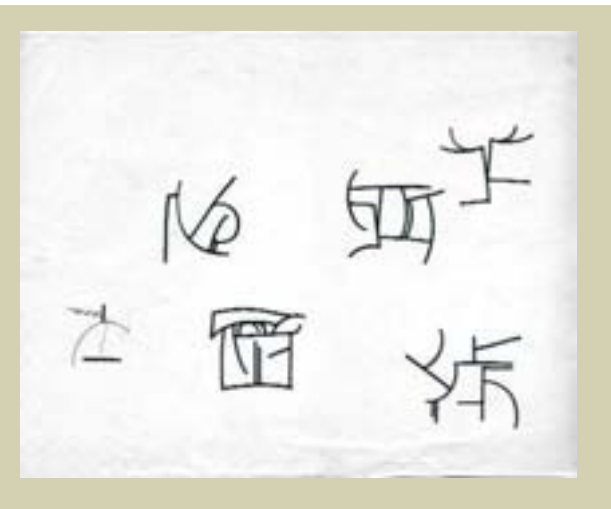
130



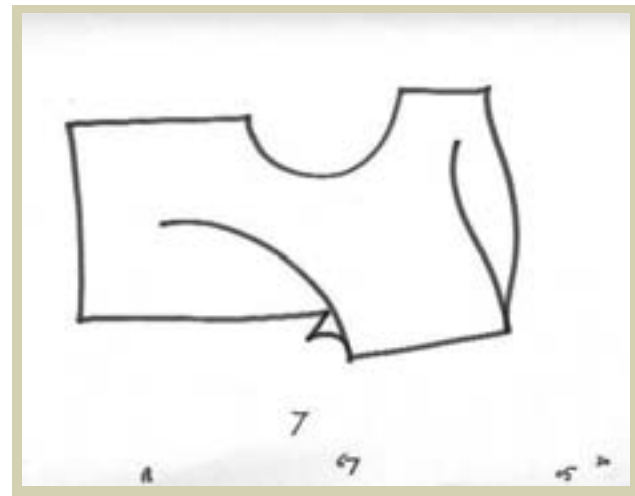
131



132



133



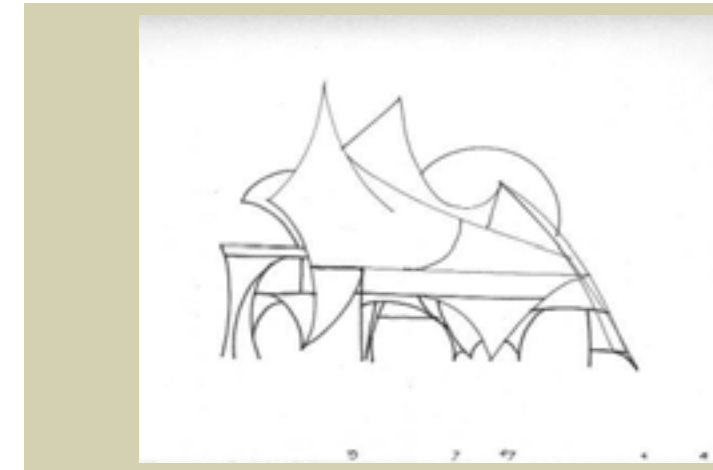
134

Bien and Virgil Grotfeldt, part of which is published here for the first time. Hopps was the single most powerful external voice drawing the City of Amsterdam's attention to the work, which it had already begun to threaten with destruction even as he wrote. In the course of the conversation Hopps discussed archives in general and then turned to his own views of the American examples that helped him understand Kloppenburg's work. The participants were searching for a better grasp of the "Archief Voor de Toekomst". Walter Hopps made the point repeatedly that he was reminded of the work of Joseph Cornell, whose archive he had helped save for the Smithsonian, and expressed surprise that a place as rich in material and visual culture as Holland, could not do the same for the Kloppenburg archive. The document allows one to overhear a conversation taking place about the archive even as the threatened destruction loomed. The extracts are from the tape-recording made of the meeting between Virgil Grotfeldt, Waldo Bien and Walter Hopps:

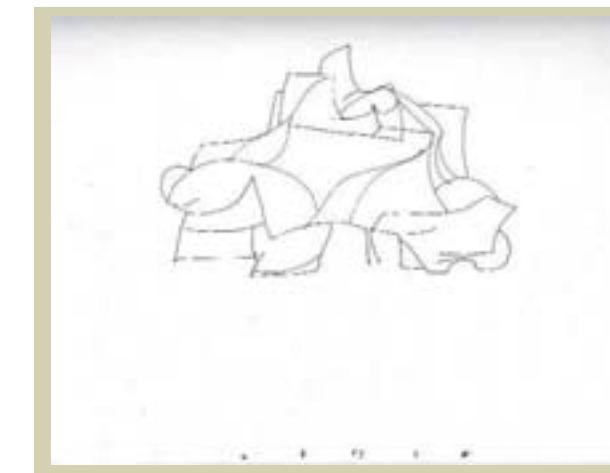
Walter Hopps: For him it's been a kind of growing, living thing no?

Waldo Bien: It really is the backbone of his oeuvre. You see the building in which the archive is, he knew it already when he was a child of six, it is a six storey canal warehouse, and at the time he first entered it, it was the storehouse for the Wagner Society, so that all the props were lined up.

131-134 | From the Free Form Formula and architecture series. Ink on paper, 25 x 35,4 cm, 1967



135



136

135 | From the Free Form Formula and architecture series. Ink on paper, 25 x 35,4 cm, 1967
 136 | From the Free Form Formula and architecture series. Ink on paper, 25 x 35,4 cm, 1967
 137 | *The Artchive for the Future*. Photo: T. Maas

Walter Hopps: So he just came in like a gypsy.

Waldo Bien: All the props were lined up, and on the ceiling was written to which play the material belonged, just like in the paintings of Kiefer. I guess when he was able to rent two floors later, he must have had something different in his memory. On the one hand there was the reconstruction, and on the other hand the assimilation of goods in which he composed still lifes all the time. In certain light you see something that reminds you of Malevich, he has all that in his mind. Everything. For him it is a kind of lexicon.

Walter Hopps: How old is he, Waldo?

Waldo Bien: 67.

Walter Hopps: He's okay. Did he go into the building legally, illegally, squat?

Waldo Bien: As a child yes. That was in reference to *Alice in Wonderland*. He names Lewis Carroll as someone very important to him as a young man.

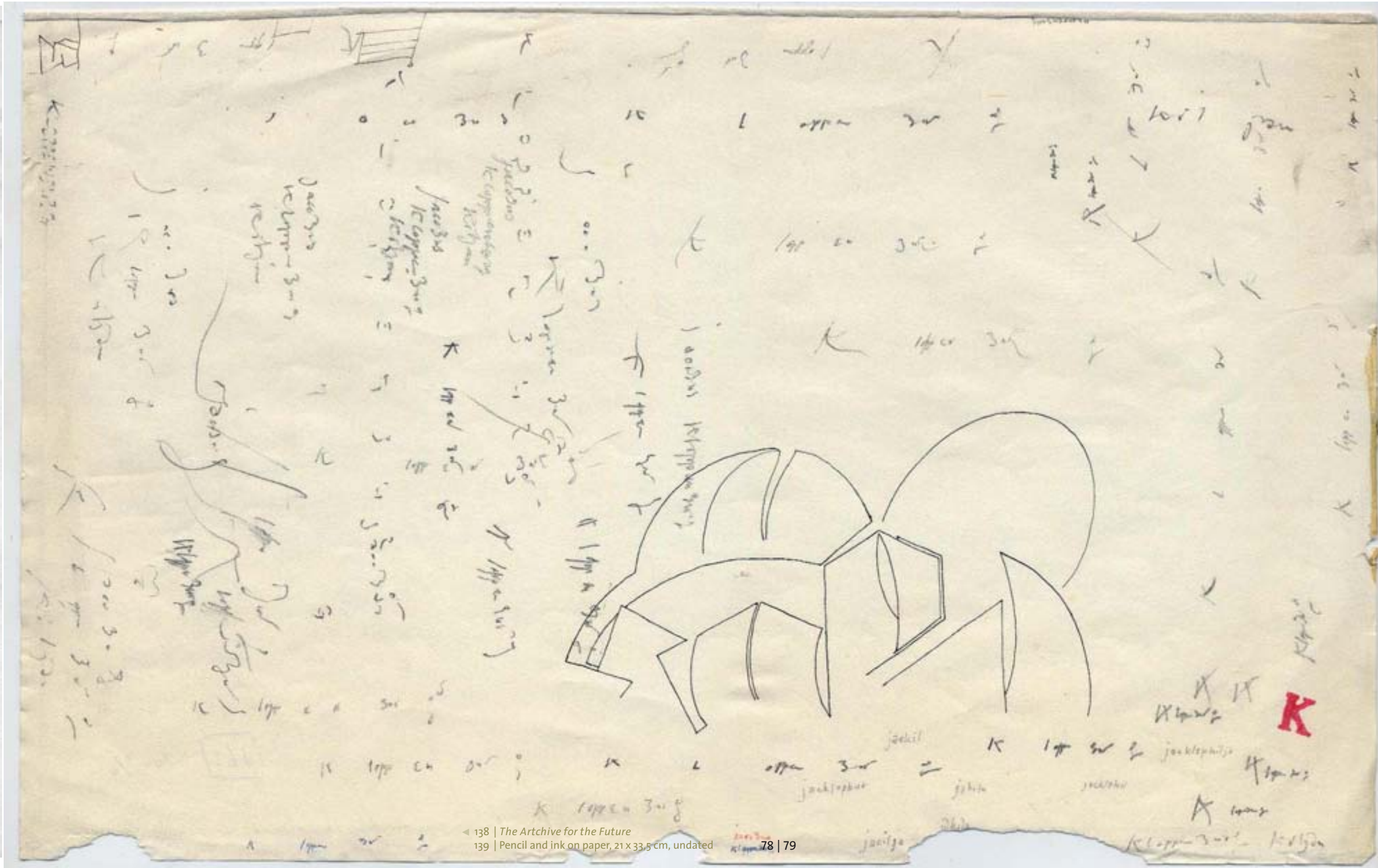
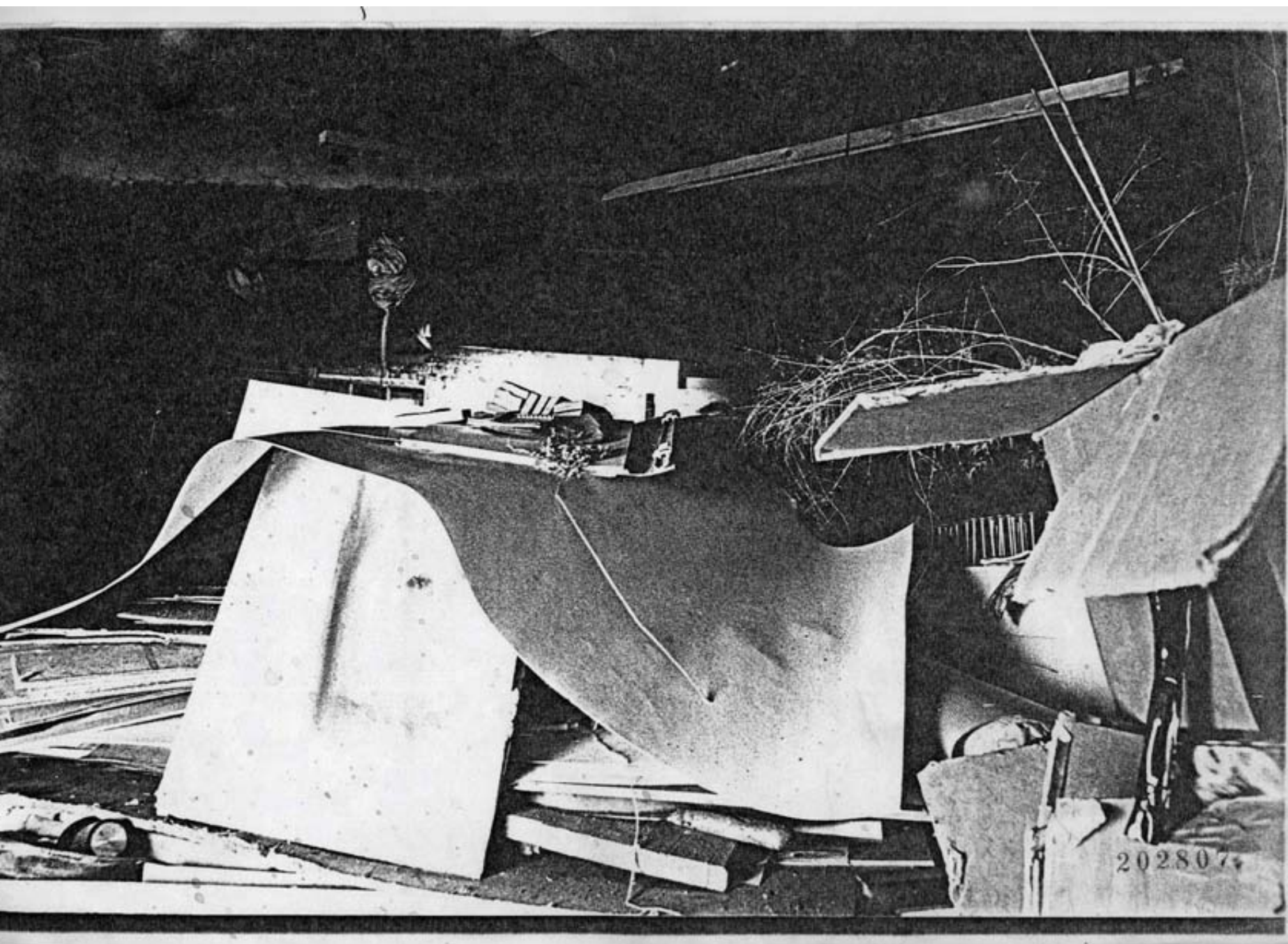
Walter Hopps: Lewis Carroll, yes there are two writers in English ...

Waldo Bien: The idea of membrane is very important.

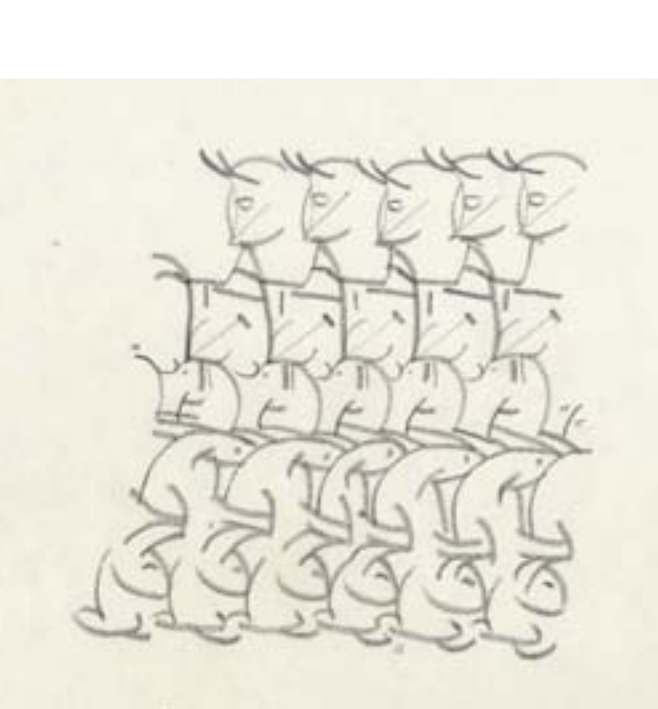
Walter Hopps: Two writers lie behind the mystery of archive, Lewis Carroll, yes, strange, romantic, symbolist, everything, English Anglican, Dodgson, a.k.a. Lewis Carroll, and in America, Poe, brought into the vanguard of European culture before he was recognised in America. Big chunks of the American Imagination entered Europe. One day I want to do an exhibition dedicated to him. Within his stories there are suggestions about knowledge and lore, beyond the grasp of the everyday. He wasn't doing it in a theosophic way, but in a human way, knowing there was the mystery of knowledge within things. That idea is very important in terms of things other than language. I am describing what is in Poe's thoughts.



137





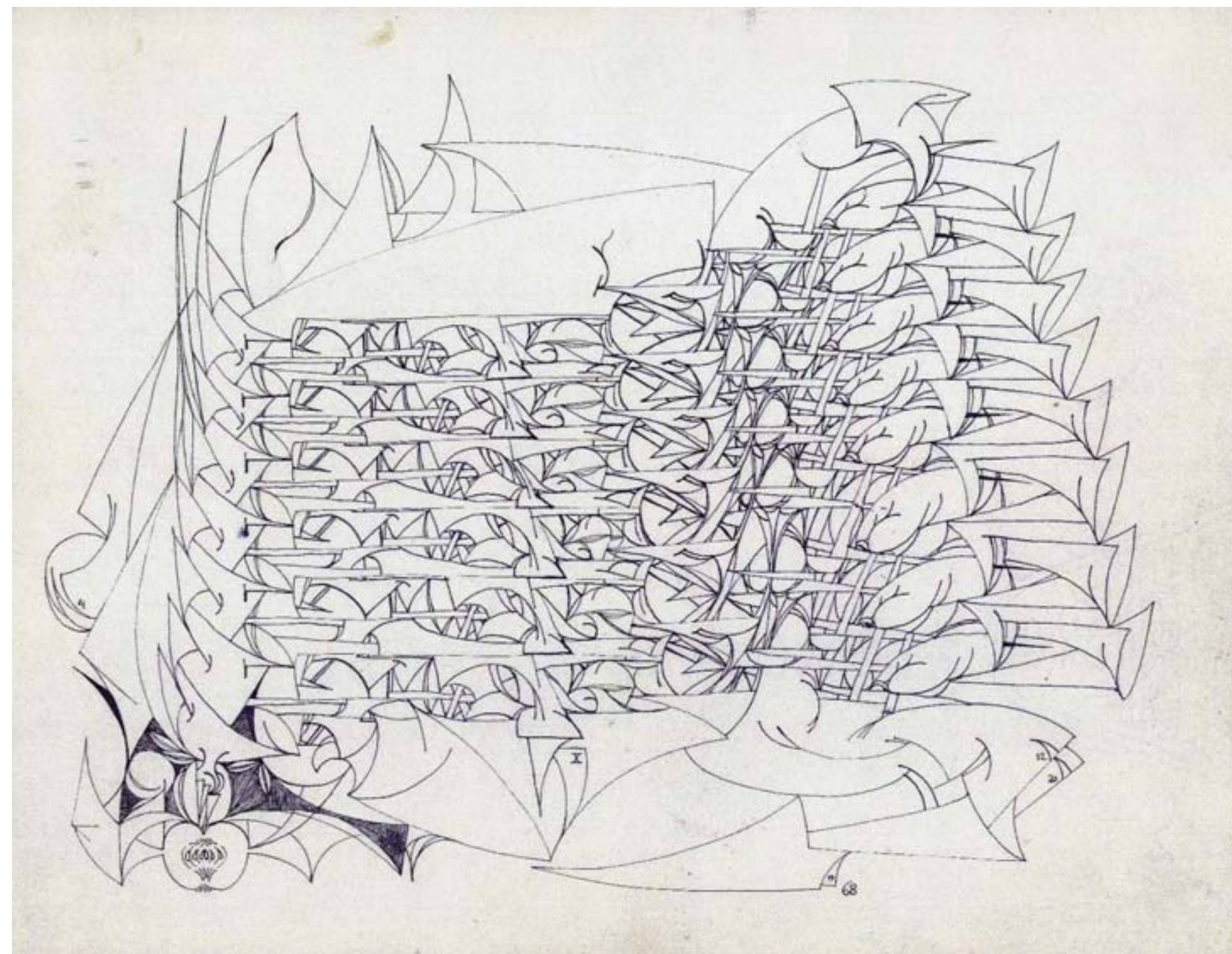


141



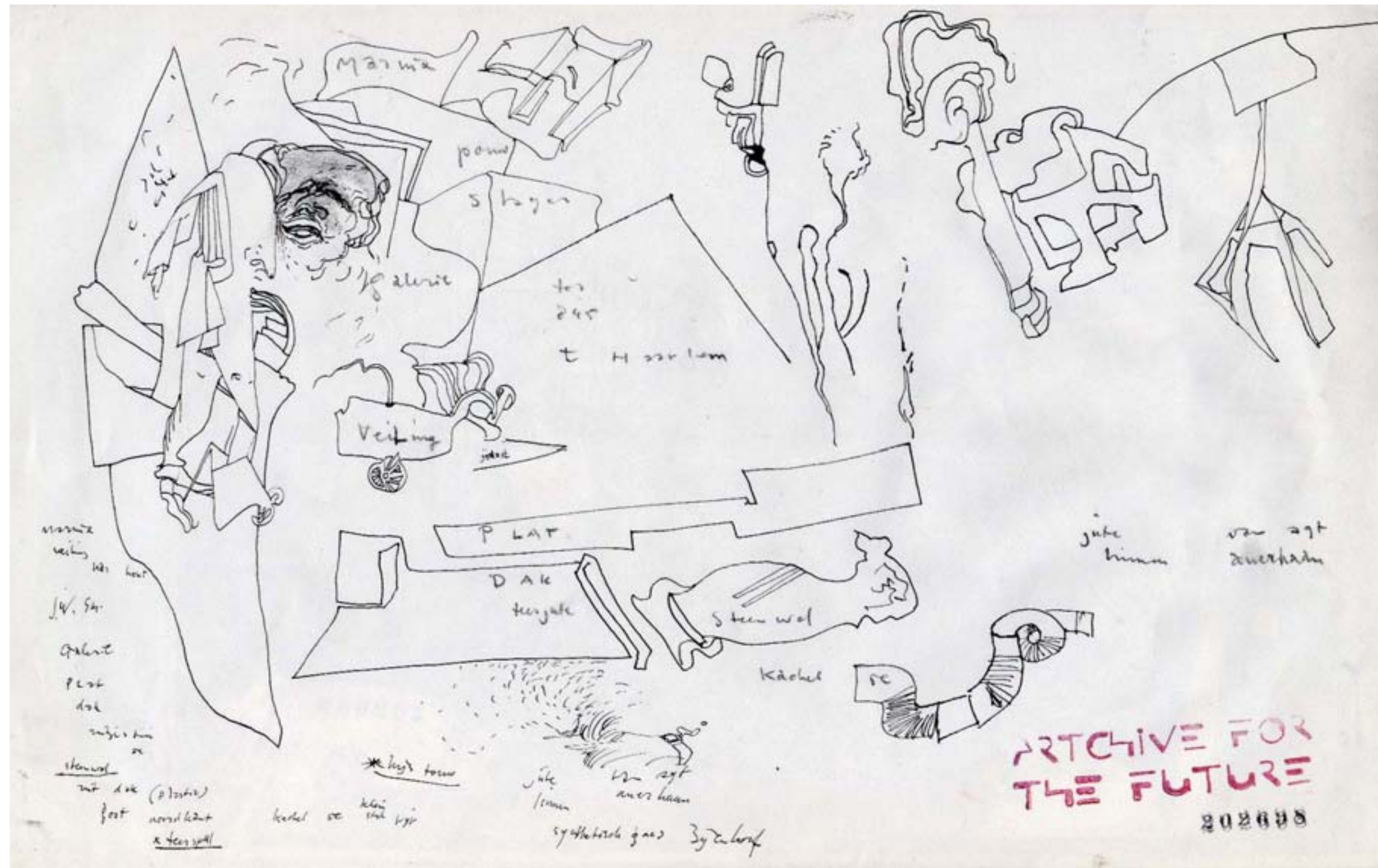
142

141 | Pencil on paper, 21,5 x 27,5 cm, 1968
142 | 1985 (on roof with fox). Photo: WB

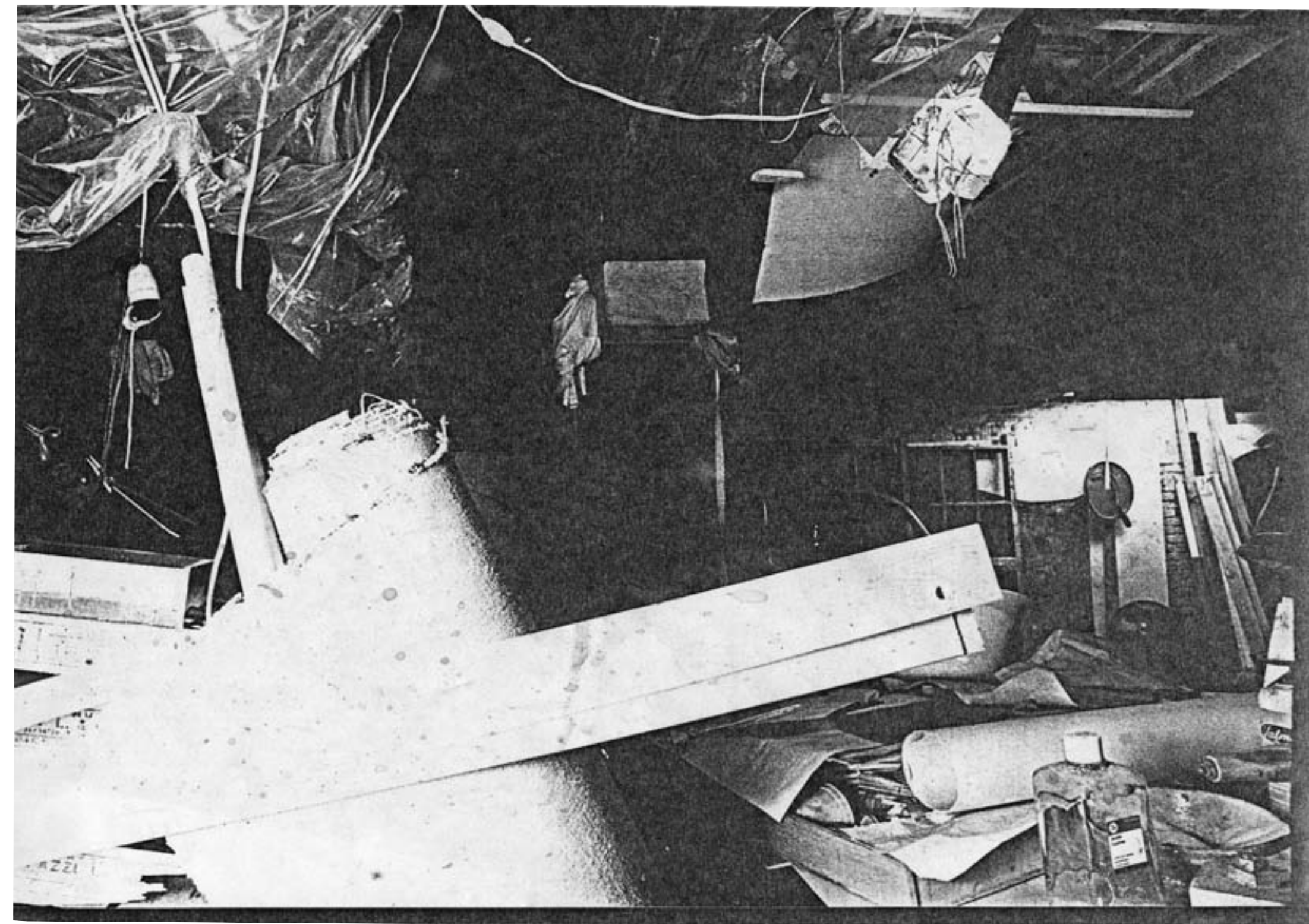


143 | Ink on paper, 21,5 x 27,5 cm, 1968

82 | 83



144 | Study for The Archive for the Future, 21,5 x 33,5 cm, 1968



145 | Ceiling arrangement



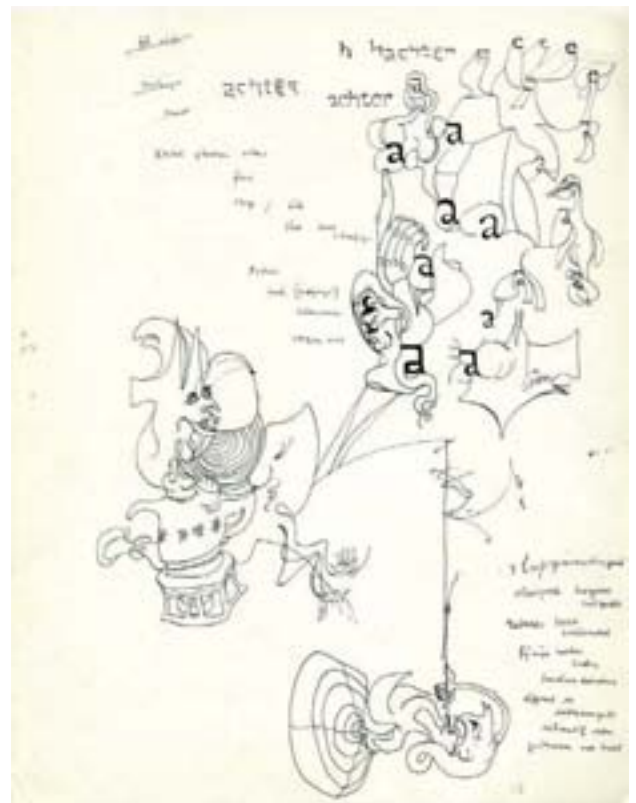
146

Waldo Bien: But he has an escape route too, because Jacobus, in one part of his brain, he has complete attachment to the rational, mathematics, so every time it gets too scary, he pulls back and this mathematics flows through the works. It's on both edges. He is a real walk-about.

Walter Hopps: That's fascinating, because that kind of phenomenon is very much in American culture too. Exactly what Jack Kerouac meant, when he wrote his novel *On the Road*. On the road, although they are doing it mostly by car, hitch-hiking, railroads, it is an American walk-about.

Waldo Bien: I tell you what the situation is now. Van der Grinten might take a part of it, he is not going to be able to take the whole thing, so we have to make a selection, and we don't know yet what we are going to do with the rest, but they are threatening that he has to leave the building...

Walter Hopps: Okay, back to my role at the Smithsonian, the two things I worked on there are relevant. One was a very conventional archive, which is called Archives, plural, of American Art, where the papers, etc. are saved by important American artists. I thought it should go beyond just papers, save things too, absolutely, save photographs, things that were part of the personal life. For example the papers of Klein the painter, his papers were there. ...



147



148

146 | On the Artchive roof, the Western Church tower in the back, Polaroid photo, 1970

147 | Pencil and ink on paper, 21,5 x 27,4 cm, 1968

148 | Pencil and ink on paper, 21,5 x 27,4 cm, 1968



149



150

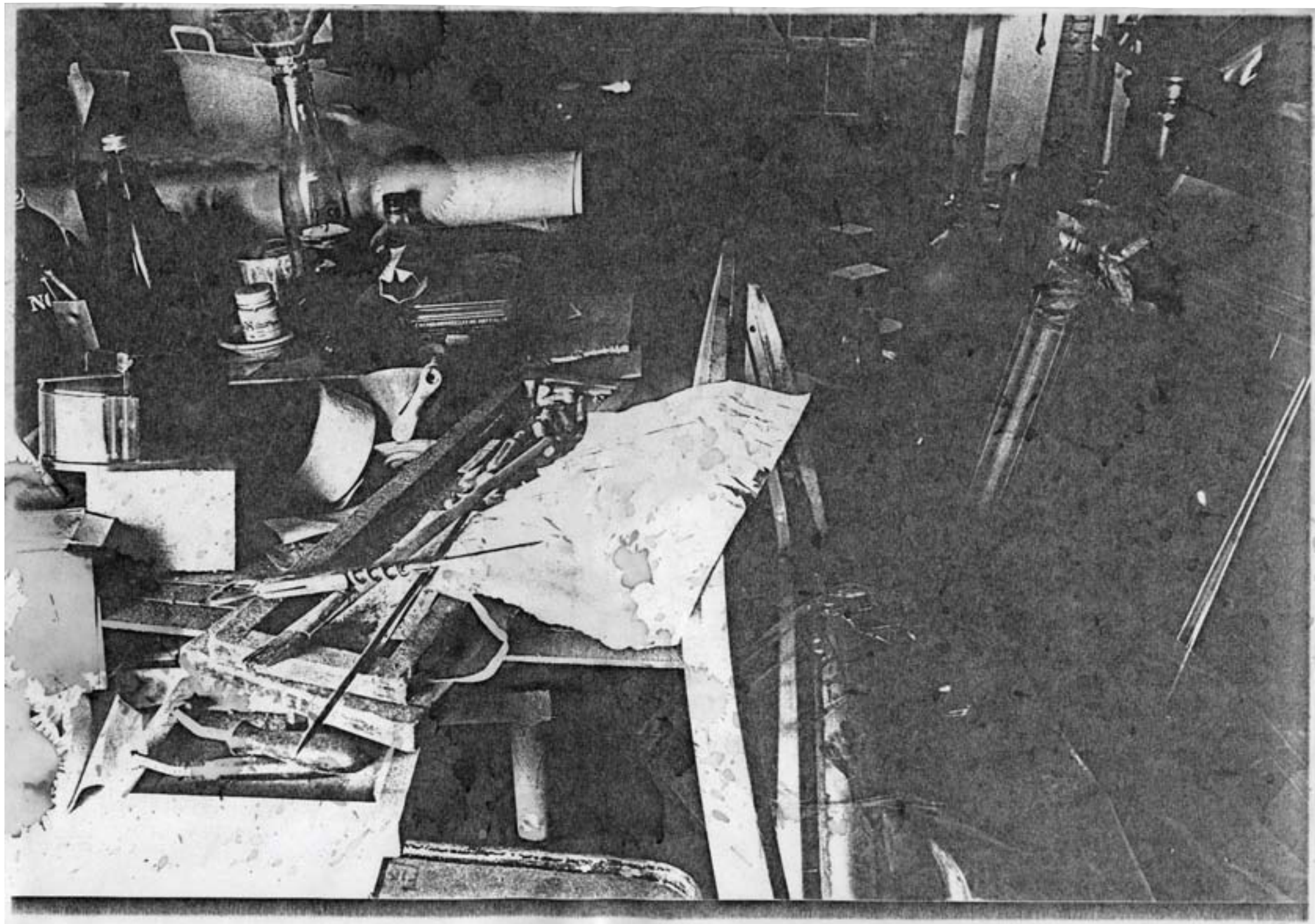
Waldo Bien: We are talking about trainloads here.

Walter Hopps: I know, I know. Now let me get closer to the trainloads, the American artist, who beyond all others, who left the most wide and broad and inclusive archive, his term was "my Polytania", because there were so many things, he made up a word; there were endless things, we are not just talking about books and papers, but sets of old newspapers, keeping them whole, toys, objects, knick-knacks, kitsch, bits of wood, he used all of this material to make his art, all those Cornell boxes and so on, came from his own archive of stuff, and certain stuff was never to be used, precious as it is, and designated as stuff, like plastic things from the five-and-dime.

86 | 87

149 | Animal-Plant-WoMan, installation on rooftop, 1985

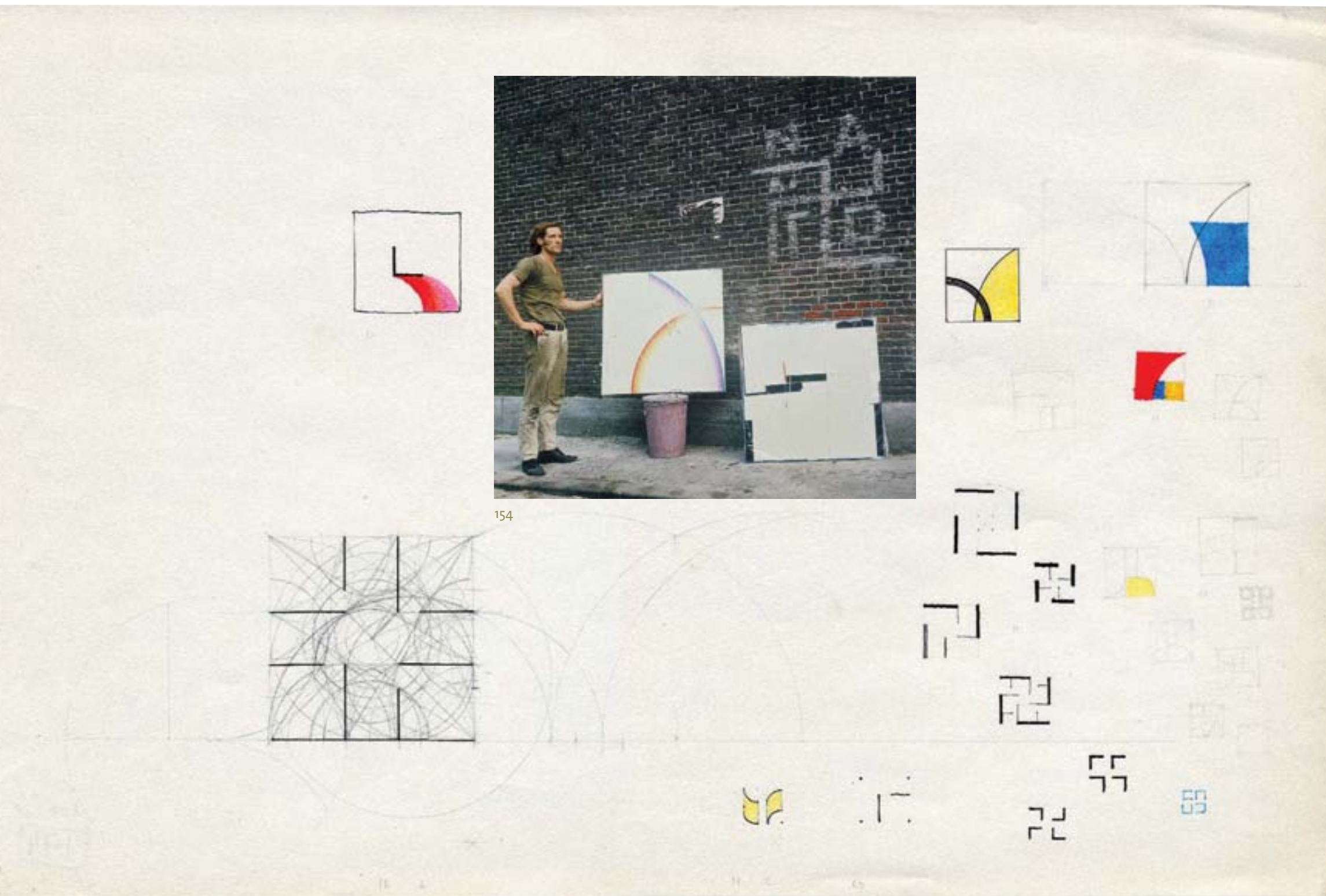
150 | Ink on paper, 21,5 x 27,5 cm, 1969



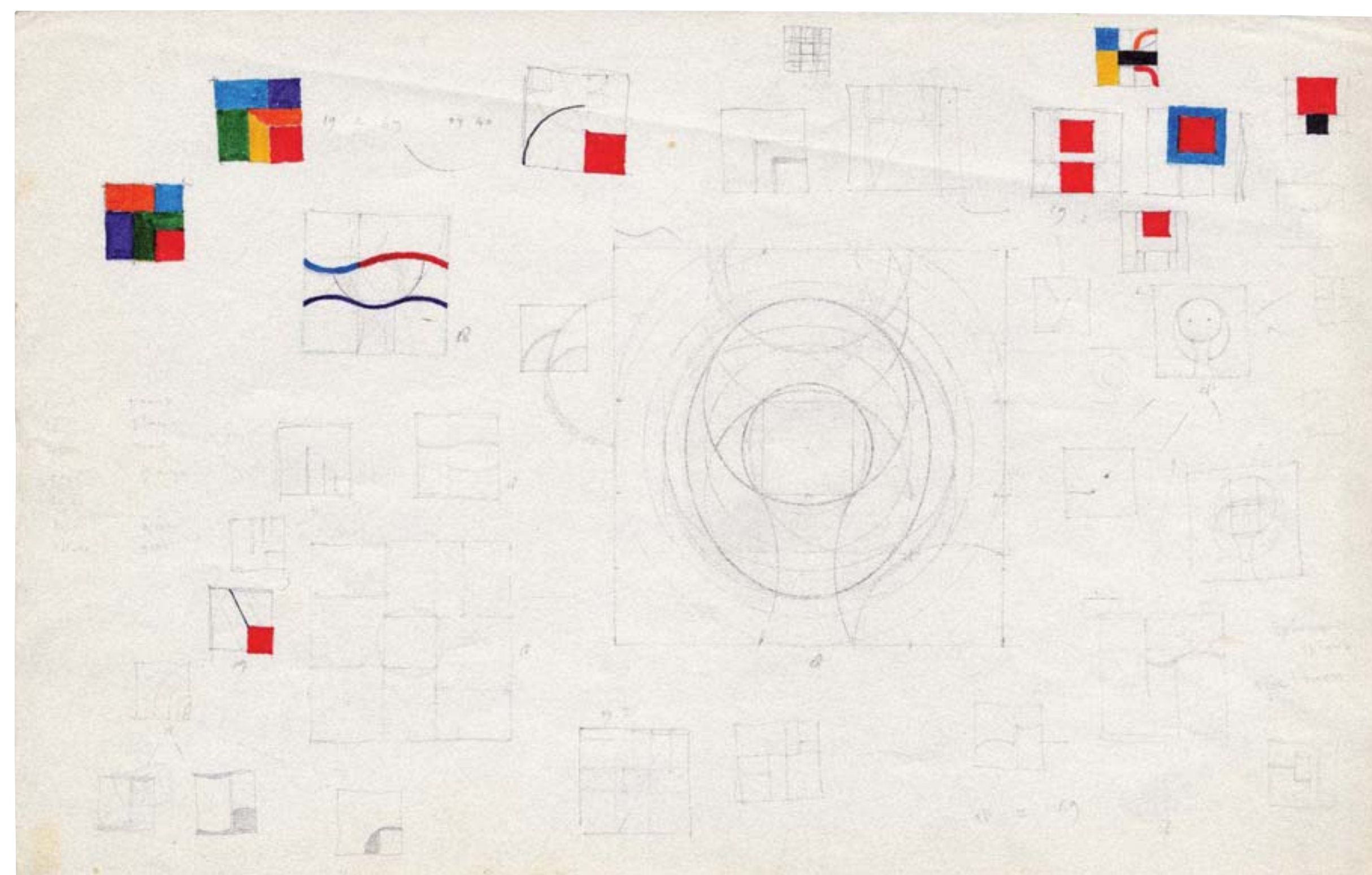
151 | *The Archive for the Future*



152 | Ink on paper, 21,4 x 33,8 cm, 1969



153 | Mixed media on paper A4, 1969
 154 | Showing works on the Lauriergracht, 1970



155 | Mixed media on paper A4, 1969
 90 | 91



156

156 | *Le jardin d'univers*, double exposure in the garden of Lauriergracht 111, 1958
 157 | Drawing with double lines, pencil and ink on paper, 21,5 x 34 cm, 1970

That is part of the man's ... I had to fight hard. I became the advisor of the Estate, so that the executors, the lawyers, would not throw the stuff out ... bits and pieces had been stolen and drifted out of the world ... but there was so much at the time of his death, that it was essentially intact. He had a box – that is yet to be shown – of little ready-mades by Marcel Duchamp. Schwarz doesn't even know they exist.

Waldo Bien: What is this reference to Cornell and his archive?

Walter Hopps: All right. Cornell collected everything. Everything that could be of interest to him in his thoughts and his work. It is a fabulous archive, the most mixed, and I got that saved for the Smithsonian, boxes and more stuff and more ... that's the most lasting thing I left in Washington. That's why this project you are asking me about really means something, I have been down that road. I had to convince my boss, that these truckloads of stuff, you know, we began to make a preliminary inventory ... I am asked two questions, on budget for packing, they had to store it in a warehouse in New York, pending it's being given to us. Not on the scale of Jacobus, it would take up this room Waldo.

Waldo Bien: I think we have three times this room to go.

Walter Hopps: Yeah? Anyway, Taylor said, do you believe it is really important? And I said that its importance would be way beyond our lifetime. Beyond our lifetime Dr. Taylor, people long after us would be looking through this and learning and discovering things. He said okay. For the world junk, absolute junk.



157

158 | Dirt drawing on countertop, 56,5 x 77 cm, 1993, FIUWAC 124



158

Waldo Bien: But you were convinced?

Walter Hopps: Absolutely convinced.

Waldo Bien: You were convinced. But I have to find somebody who is convinced, besides myself and my artist friends, I have to find somebody who is convinced.



159



161

- 159 | Double exposure, Lauriergracht 111, 1958
- 160 | Double exposure, *The Artchive for the Future*, 1990
- 161 | Double exposure, undated



160

Walter Hopps: Genius?
 Waldo Bien: Convinced.
 Walter Hopps: Next he said, if we don't do this it is in danger of going into the furnace. I'm sitting there wondering what does he mean, then he said, Walter, always think of that in terms of choices you have to make about things, could we save them, or do they go to the furnace. I said, I see what you mean. Orson Welles, Xanadu, going into the furnace, powerful image.



162

- 162 | Double exposure, studio Düsseldorf, 1990 (The room is here in preparation for the *RHEINGOLD* series).
- 163 | Double exposure with staircase and canal side, Lauriergracht, 1990
- 164 | Joseph Beuys, *Blitzschlag*, 1962/3, Collection Museum Schloss Moyland.

Waldo Bien: This is my nightmare.
 Hopps, I am busy with this almost twenty years.
 Walter Hopps: What I am saying is what can we accomplish here, right now today. I am your devoted ally to help, never having met the man, I think I understand what it is about.

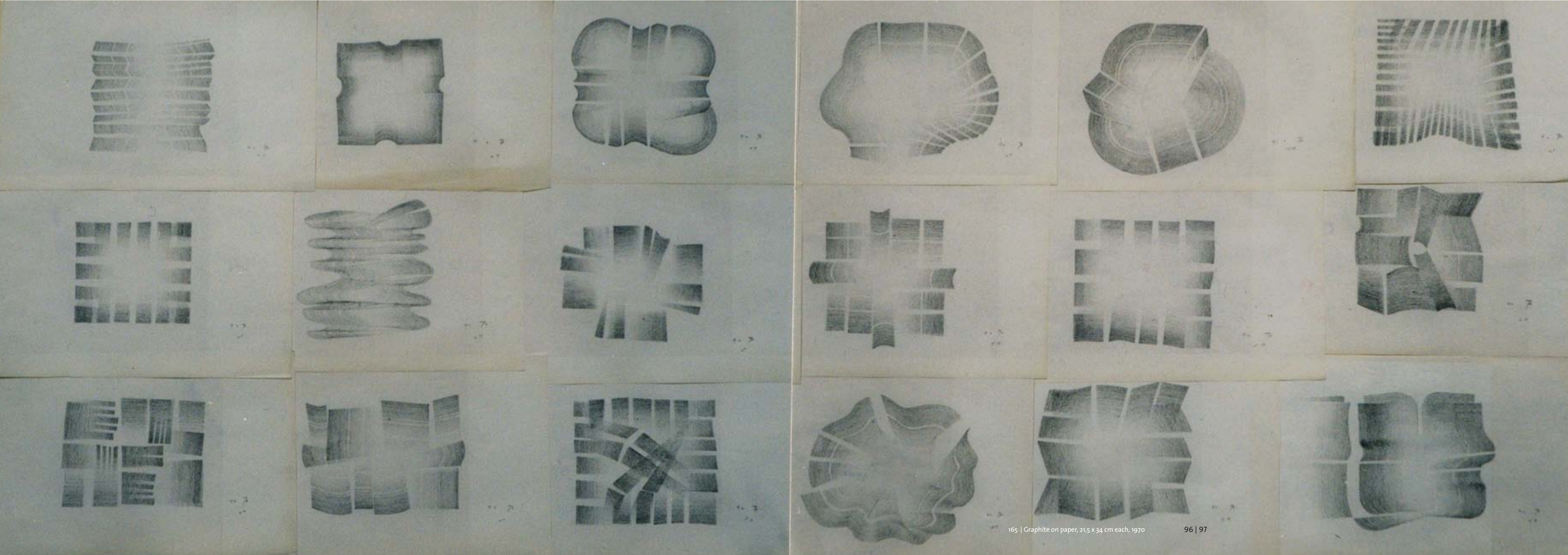
In the second recorded session of their dialogue Hopps returned to the comparison with the Cornell archive, and tried to discover where the Kloppenburg archive might most suitably be located. This also resulted in some key disclosures from Bien, who acted as the main source of information with the express purpose of soliciting support from Hopps.

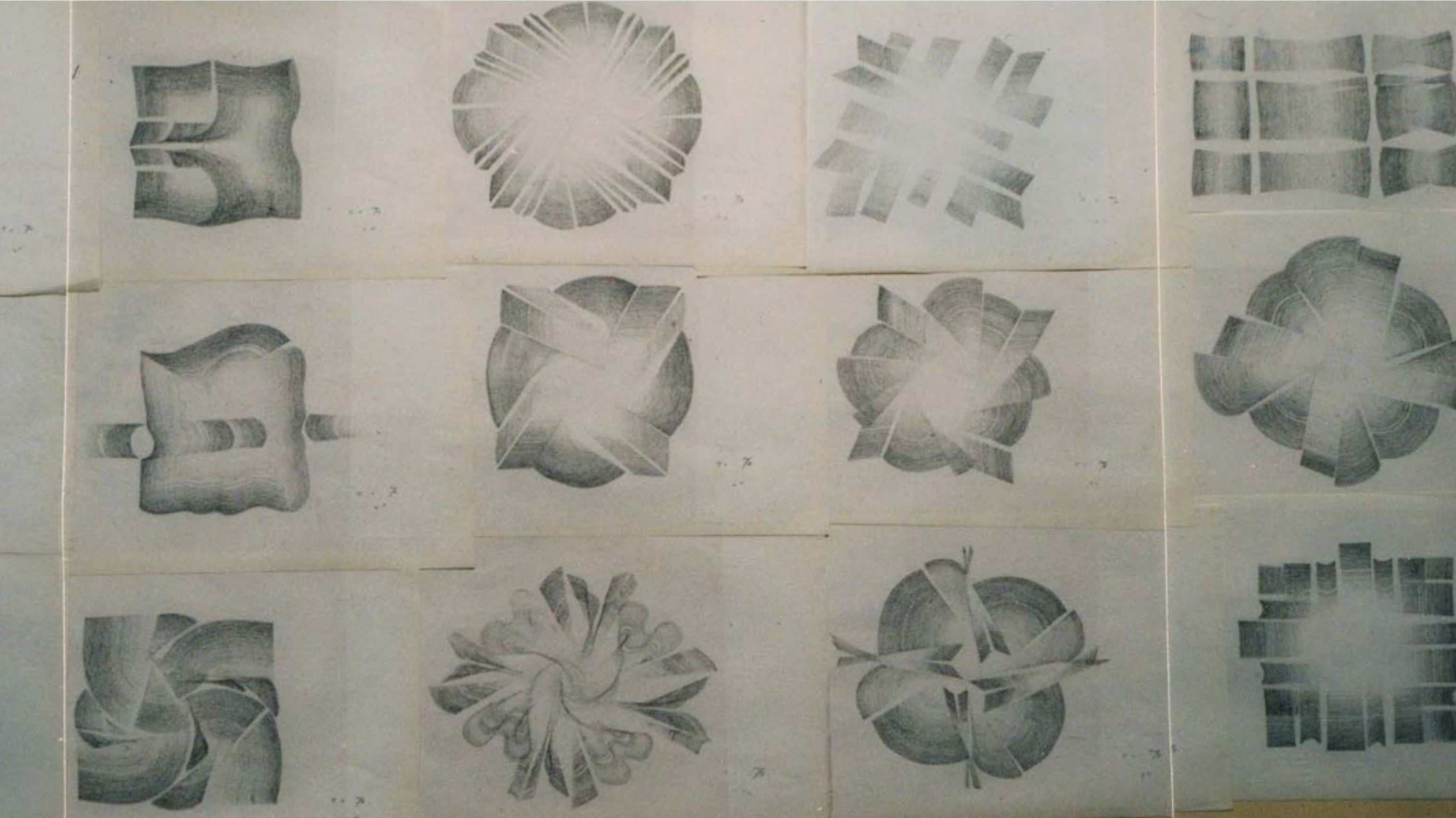


163



164





166 | Graphite on paper, 21,5 x 34 cm each, 1970
 167 | *The Artchive for the Future*

Walter Hopps: Evans began to save things himself, especially handmade signs in the places where he went. Luggage signs, etc. Not only was it interesting to take photographs of some of them, but also having it meant something traditional. The Evans archive eventually headed to Yale University. I had to be on the committee to help explain. I got to know Evans and loved him very much. His family came from the part of the South where my fathers came from long ago. I had to rationalise that things should not be thrown out, along with all the negatives and actual photographs. Some of these were Coca-Cola signs. He was sensitive to how they changed over the years, and he saved these things. He saved it all and that's at Yale University. This isn't going to happen immediately, a bit down the road, but I'll be there Waldo, arguing the archive situation, its analogous to the Jacobus work.³¹

³¹ This is a shortened version of the exchange which was recorded, the transcript of the entire conversation is housed in the archive of F.I.U., Amsterdam.





168

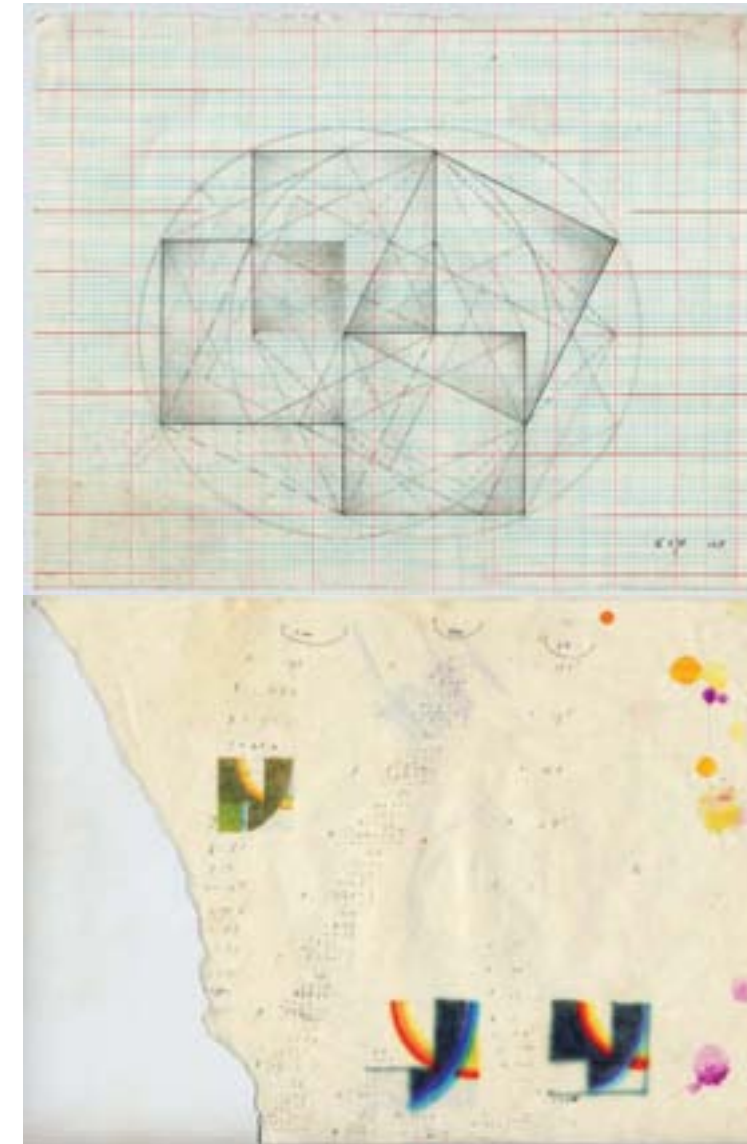
168 | Mixed media on paper, 21,5 x 33,7 cm, 1971
 Note: One circle section is cut out.
 169 | Ink on paper, 10 x 17,5 cm, 1971

Two initial aspects of the Artchive need some explanation: one, the artist's own text which he delivered in the very last days of its existence at 109 Lauriergracht; and, two, the analysis offered by Bien, and the significance of the concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk* and the issue of its unity. There are various contextual comments that will also help with understanding this work. One is clearly



169

the tradition of the *Wunderkammer* and the tradition of accumulation in Northern Europe, and the collapse of the distinctions of different arts, which had been such an important issue in the art-historical discussion before the Second World War. However, something that should be placed before all of these considerations is the concept that the entire archive was a form of ritualised incubation site.



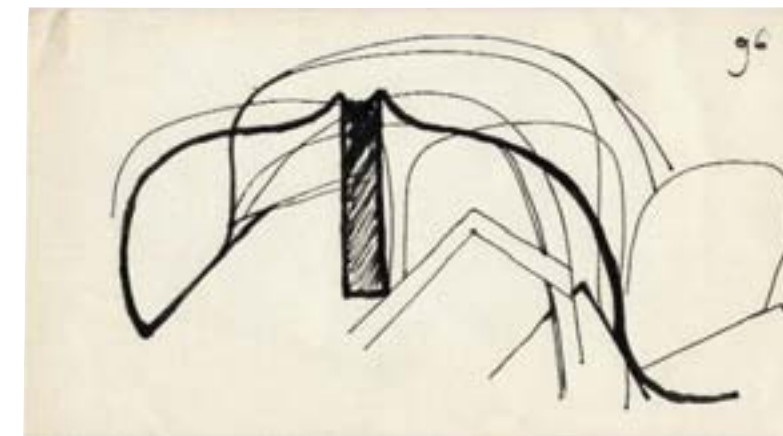
170 + 171

170 | Pencil on paper, 19 x 24 cm, 1973
 171 | Mixed media on paper, 21,5 x 28 cm, 1971
 172 | Explaining the double exposure to L&L Dejente, Normandy, 1996. Photo: WB
 173 | Ink on paper, 6 x 10,5 cm, 1970



172

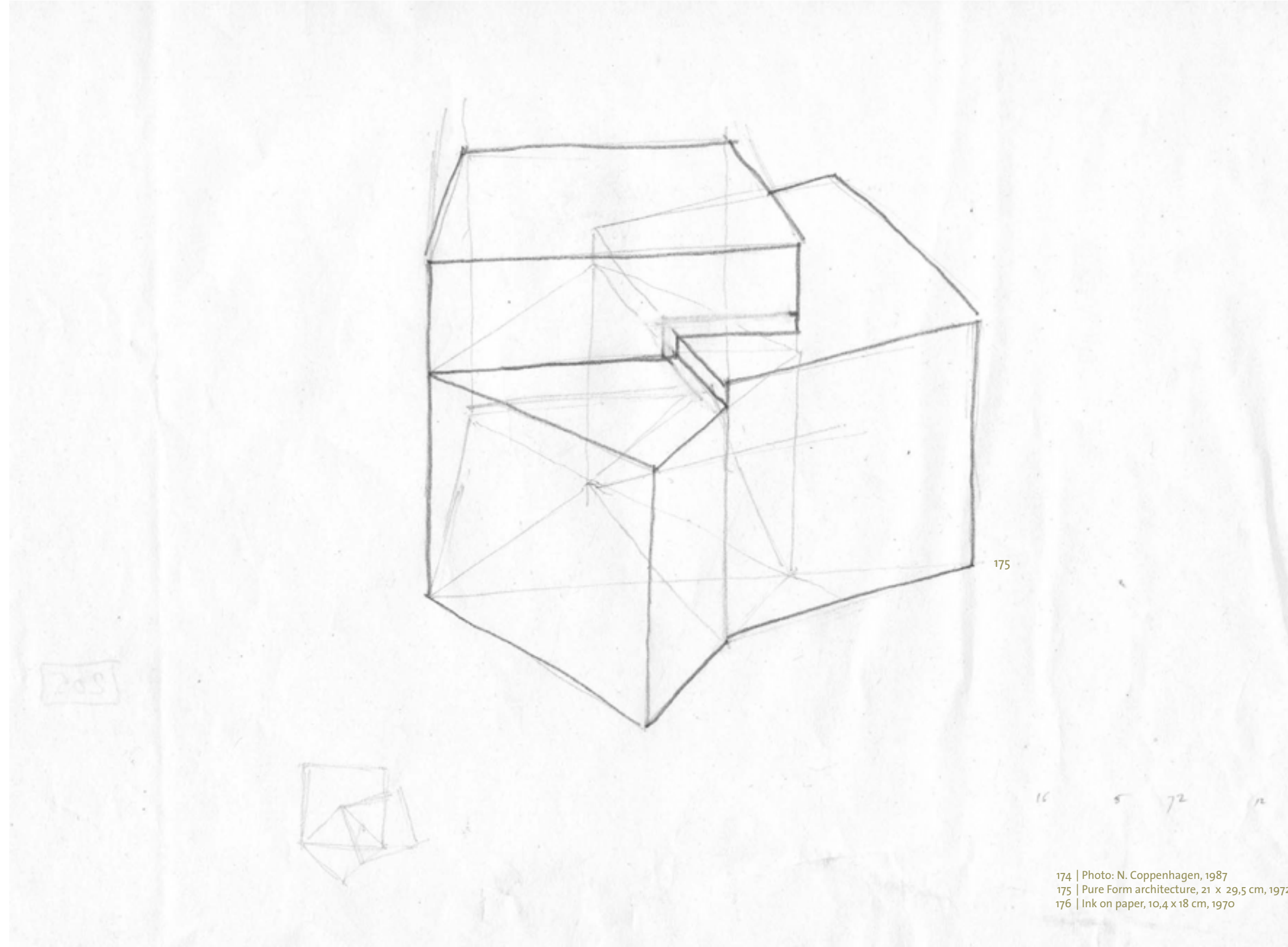
Gustaf Sobin in his work *Luminous Debris* provides a valuable clue to this aspect of antiquity, the sleeping in a temple or sacred place for oracular purposes, known under the designation *incubatio*. Sobin makes a startling and compelling claim about this practice, and points out its richness in terms of historical antecedents; one can think of Jacob in the desert, a stone for his pillow, dreaming the dream of the ladder, and the choosing of a good place on the earth to listen for



173



174



174 | Photo: N. Copenhagen, 1987
 175 | Pure Form architecture, 21 x 29,5 cm, 1972
 176 | Ink on paper, 10,4 x 18 cm, 1970

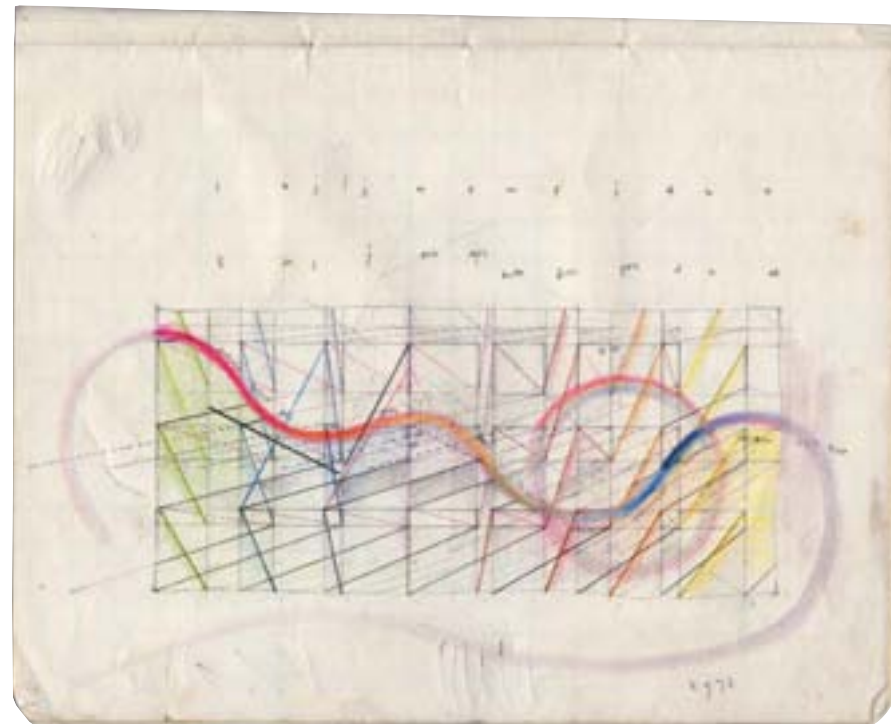
oracular or other portents. The lying on the earth was associated with the Mother of Dream (Euripides), namely Gaea, and a naked person often dressed in black ram's skin with an ear to the ground awaiting her divine instruction. In the temple of Riez many elements of the incubation come together, and the deities Somnus and Hypnos, whose statuettes were found near the favoured site with its source of mineral water and dedicated to the god of medicine, the son of Apollo, indicate it is they who are the dispensing agents of incubation itself, and Sobin remarks:



176

Indeed what might surprise us today in studying oneiromancy in antiquity (as well as comparable practices in tribal societies throughout the world as revealed by modern ethnology) is the virtually exclusive emphasis their practitioners placed upon the future. Dreams, visions, induced hallucinations were all interpreted in terms of their eventual application in everyday life. As harbingers of the real, they anticipated reality, preceded event. One comes to realise that these antique societies were oriented – in their psychic disposition – towards their own evolution. They faced forward. Under rigorous sacerdotal supervision, the god-given vision that they experienced in temple sleep announced their forthcoming.³²

³² Gustaf Sobin, *Luminous Debris*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.



177

We, on the other hand, tend to face backwards in our dream interpretation. In these ancient sites, closing one's eyes could mean facing the world directly ahead. Every sleep was an archive of the future. Bien's photographic montage of the sleeping room of Kloppenburg, lying shrouded in a scarlet red sheet and surrounded by his works, probably captured, away from the myth of the work ethic, the most compelling of all the images that exist of Kloppenburg, in whom the movement from waking to sleeping has been the place of his most visionary feelings, a life rich in experiences of the threshold and the crossing of borders.

The earliest existence of the archive is to be dated to the mid-1960s, references to it in the public domain occur during the 1980s. The question that needs to be considered is, what did the artist have in mind, and what clues are suggested from the different responses and reactions to the archive in the intervening years? Later it will be necessary to enquire whether it can be meaningfully said to exist in any real sense, or whether in its present form, dispersed in fifteen shipping containers, it can in any way be restored or brought into a public realm which would be true to its intentions. It is necessary to read the last text provided by Kloppenburg, in which the hermetic philosophy of his main life's work is concealed in a complex linguistic document, written largely in English. It is also the only direct statement



179

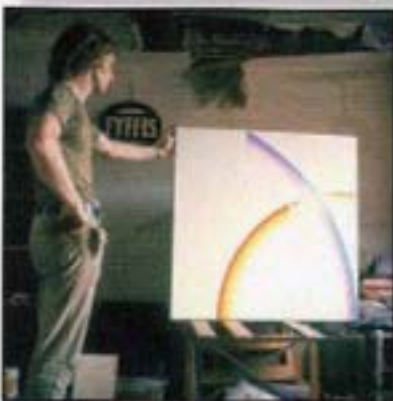


178

177 | Sketchbook, 16 x 21, 1973
178 | *Fold Unfold*, 1974 (real size)



179 | 1973 (bed)
180 | Mixed media on wood, 175 x 375 cm, 1972. Photo: J.W. Groenendaal, courtesy Gallery de Zaal, Delft



written by the artist giving direct insight into his working life, and was written during the period when the whole future of the archive was under threat, the details of which can be found, under the relevant dates, in Bien's bio-bibliography, included in this publication.

There are different versions of the text, one of the earliest of which appeared in the publication for the Ruhrfestspiele exhibition of Waldo Bien's work, which included works by Virgil Grotfeldt, in 2000. The latest version was delivered as an installation in the archive itself, shortly before the clearing by the demolition company employed by the City of Amsterdam. The whole text was written out on rubber bicycle tyres in the alphabet designed by Kloppenburg, the Reduced Alphabet, and hung throughout the archive. The text was also transferred to a carpet, circulated in publications, and distributed as a flyer. The final form can be given thus:

181

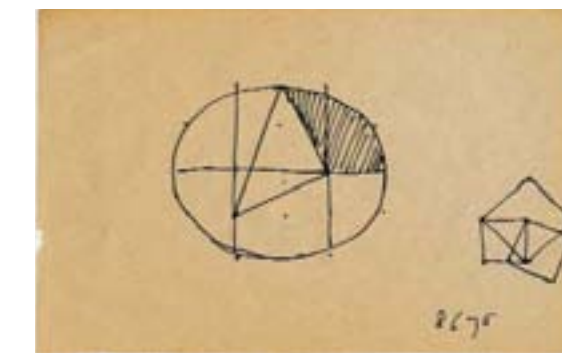


182

182 | Mixed media on plywood, size unknown, 1976
183 | Ink on paper, 12 x 18,5 cm, 1976

ARTCHIVE FOR THE FUTURE
 TRASHTHEETHICAL LITTERARTURE
 VISIBLE LANGUAGE OF A CULTURE (MM trashold MMM)
 ARTICULATION: BIG-LOGOS-BANG SIGNATURE
 ARTXPLAINS: FUNCTION, FORM/COUNTERFORM, STRUCTURE
 VOICE/FORCE OF BEAUTY/DUTY IN NATURE
 REARTNIMATION ARTMERGENCY FIRST-AID RESCUE SERV.GESTURE
 ARTCONSCIOUSNESS-QUOTIENT UP-GRADING CURE HU-WO-& MANKIND
 CREATURE
 SOFT- & ARTWARE: ARTWARENESS ARTPSITECTURE
 ARTCHAEO LOGICAL ARTCORE SCULPTURE
 ARTXTENDED EYEDEALDEAL: EYEDEA/ART/EYEDEAL CONTEXTURE
 ARTCHETYPICAL LECTURE
 ARTVENTION!: LIFE > ARTVENTURE!
 ARTXPLORE: ARTVANTAGEOUS ARTMANUFACTURE

The text secures the name by which the artist wishes the work to be designated, Artchive for the Future. It also indicates that the work is viewed as the visible language of a culture, and adds the time-zone in Roman numerals, which can be read as: 2000 Trashold 3000.



183



184



185

In the third line of this statement, which has been laid out as a Petrarchan sonnet, the articulation of the visible language of a culture at the threshold of the millennium is characterised as the signature of a cosmic energy, the reference to the *logos* here is also word, reason, creative first saying, primal sound, which is then figured, not necessarily represented. Writing in this sense covers the individual moment of the signature of energy that is zoned by the artist. What follows is the issue of the relationship to function in the world of art, the sculptural problem of form and counter-form, and the issue of structure. The wider context, which he introduces, is that art is also a necessity for social transformation, and for raising spiritual consciousness which effects the whole anthropological event in the world, a transformation that takes place in pictures and images. This point relies very much on the thinking of Rudolph Steiner, and can briefly be said to indicate Kloppeburg's commitment to his reading of the work of Steiner, and the power of the image for spiritual advance in what Steiner calls the fifth Atlantean age. Briefly, the argument is that with Goethe and his search for the plant, the issue of rational morphology, the current period is one in which there is a need for deeper communication in the image for the advance of spiritual awareness.

As it is of such significance for the work of Kloppeburg, it is worth spelling out in some detail, the importance of his grasp of these fundamental principles of anthroposophy. A central concept for anthroposophy is that of metamorphosis, namely the process of how forms change. Rudolph Steiner's

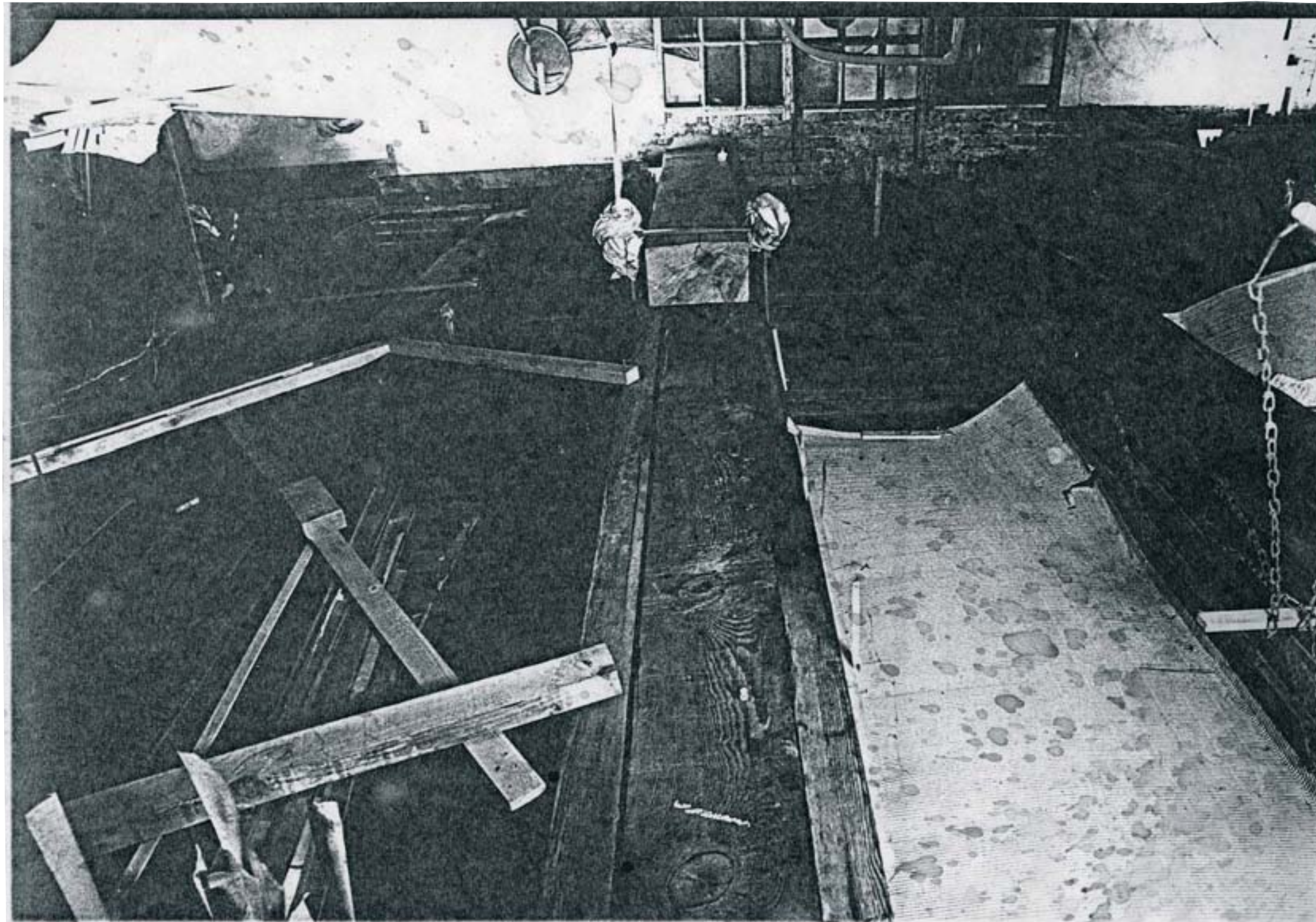


186

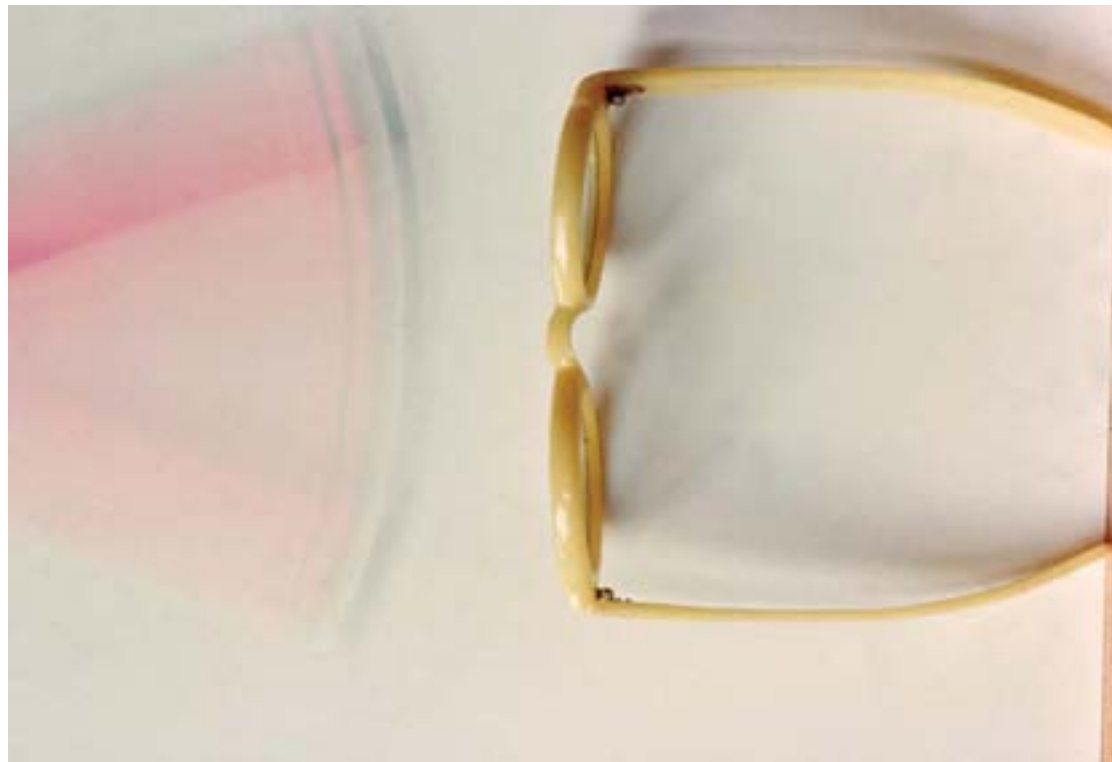
184 | *The Writing Type Flyer*, Rotterdam Art Space, 1986
 185 | Typewriter drawing, 20,2 x 28,5 cm, 1976
 186 | Pastel on paper, 21,5 x 27,5 cm, 1977



187 | Typewriter drawing, 27-4-(19) 76, 0.15 am - 0.33 am



188 | *The Artchive for the Future*, Reworked photocopy A4, 1991 110 | 111



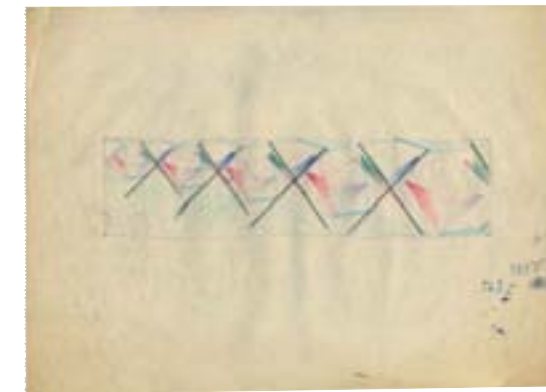
189 | Undated photo (around 1975)
190 | Undated photo (around 1975)

study of Goethe's scientific writing helped advance his claim for spiritual science being on a par with natural history. Goethe demands living concepts, man does not search for something hidden; it is the language of things spoken in the inner man that must be listened to in a respectful and largely non-intellectual attuning, and this certainty comes from a new orientation of perception. For Steiner the issue of perception is of deep import, with his emphasis on clairvoyance and a gaining of access to the cosmos of which the sublunar world is merely a veiled image. This is the request of Steiner for the initiate to be oriented in higher worlds. For this orientation it is necessary to know that feelings and thoughts are realities that act upon one another. The laws that are valid in the physical realm are also valid in the world of feeling and thought. In human awareness there is the stream of dying and becoming, and this is what watching nature means, it is an active co-participation of man in evolution and a direct influence.

This also means, for Steiner, that the world of sensation is replete with the idea. This can be grasped through self-perception, our perception of our own perception. The cultivation of this kind of voyance eliminates the dualism between subject and object. The urgent need is to think in tangible images, a point made by Steiner in his *Riddles of Philosophy* and re-enforced in his lectures at the building of the Goetheanum in Dornach; there he returned in his talk to this crucial conquest of the concrete for the world out of the awareness



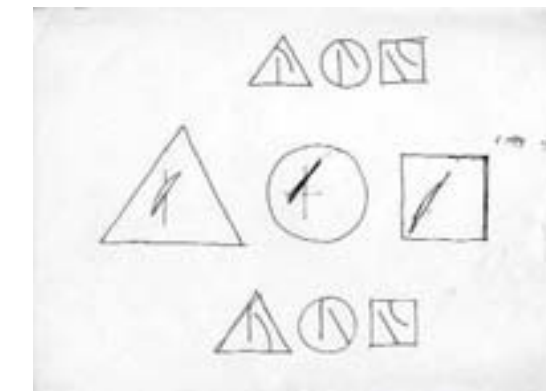
191



193



192



194

191 | Mixed media on wood, size unknown, 1976. Note: In front of the work one can see the mobile octave: clasps, hanging on elastic strings, slightly moving in the draught.

192 | 3 x 2 m², plywood, 1980. Note: The wood grain pattern, a natural grow/flow form, is an important ingredient of the work, creating an assimilation of nature and geometry. The surface is sanded, and then polished with titanium white pigment to establish a transparent white. A second, geometrical assimilation is demonstrated by transplanting the construction lines from one form onto another. Lines are then turned into cuts to open up of the surface. They are contrary to the impulsive Luigi Fontana cuts.

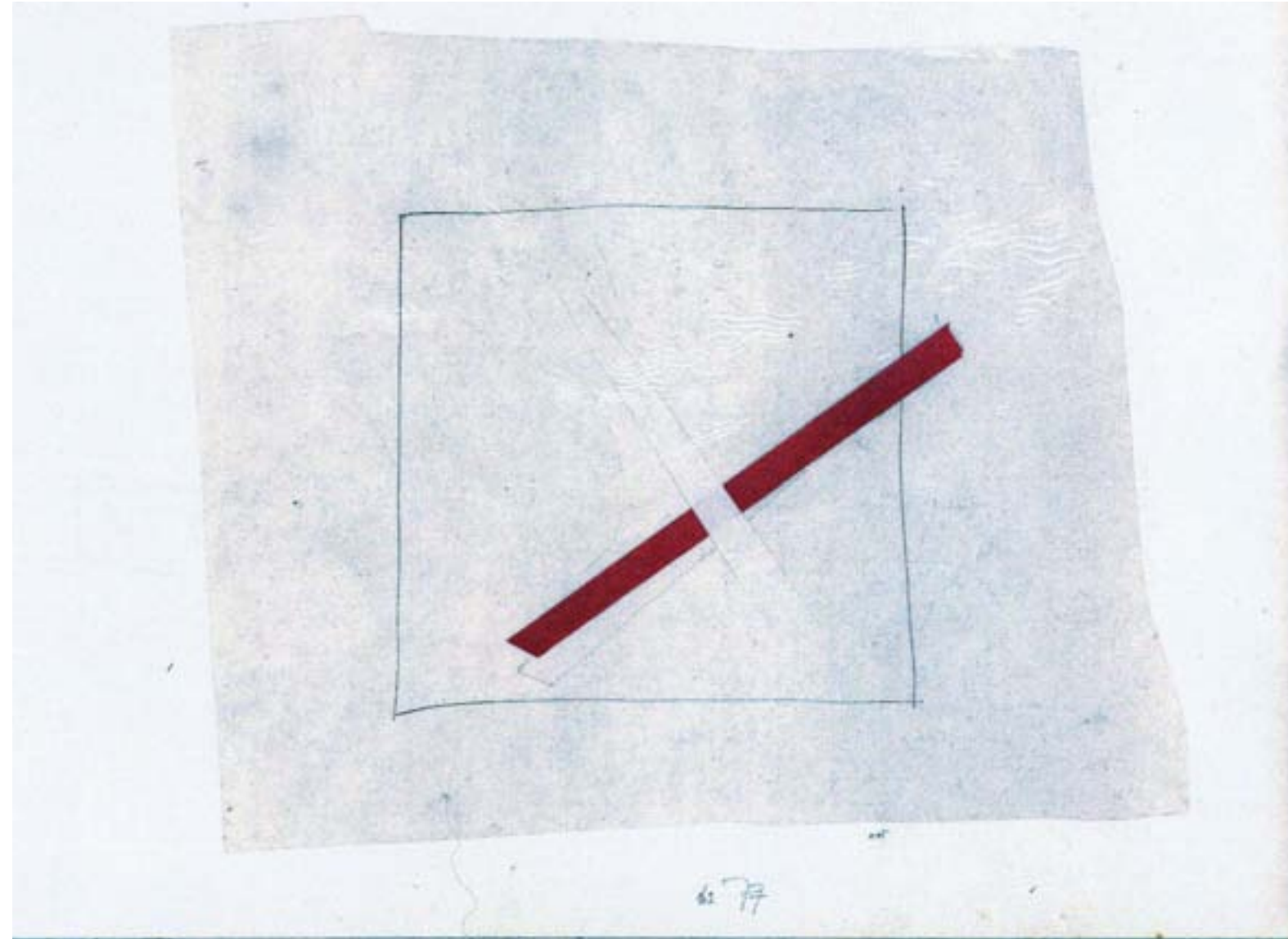
193 | Mixed media on paper, 21 x 28 cm, 1975

194 | Ink on paper, 21 x 29,7 cm, 1979

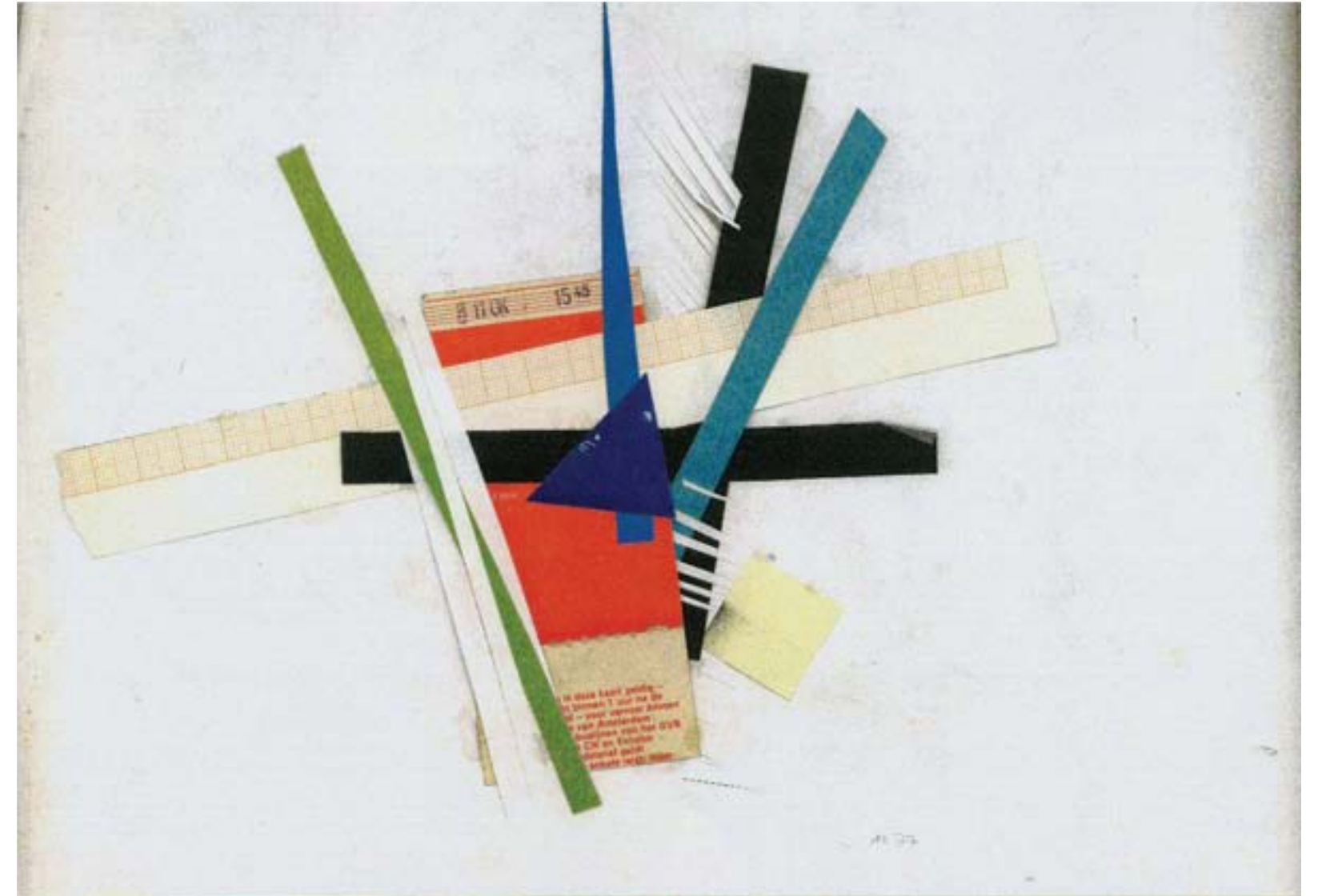


195

195 | October 1992
196 | Dutch sculpture, 21 x 29,5 cm, 1977

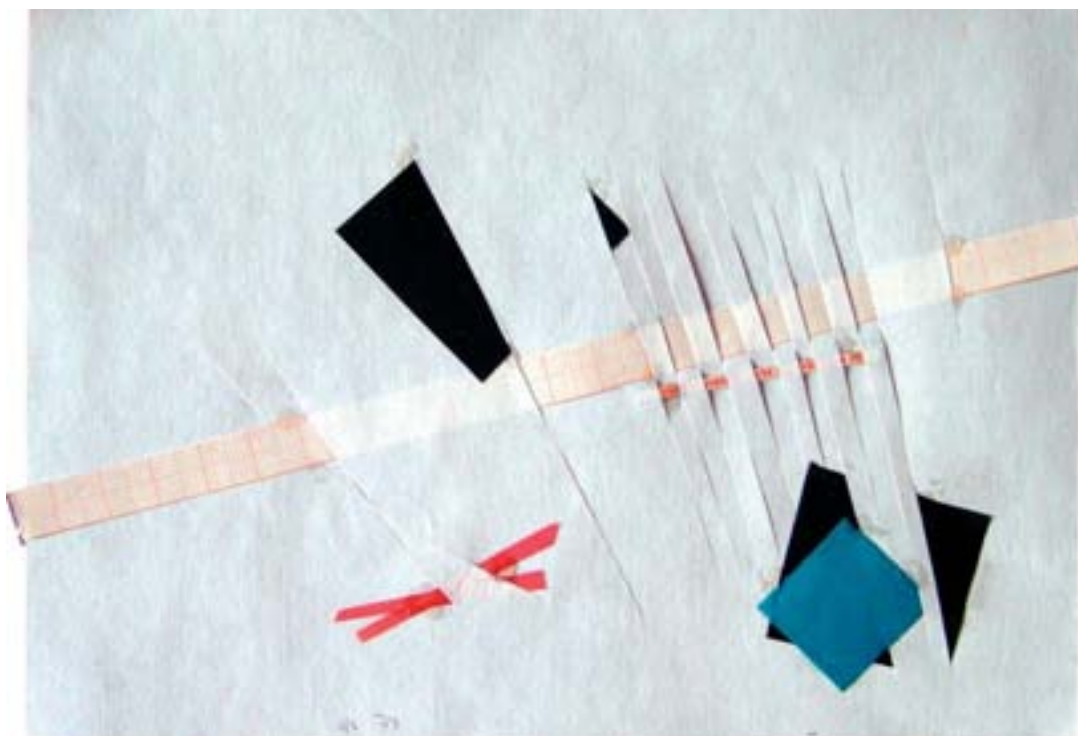


196



197

197 | Dutch sculpture, 21 x 29,5 cm, 1977



198

of the principle which unites the whole cosmos. It is this knowledge which illuminates, because “inner man is a microcosm, an imprint of the macrocosm”. When an initiate connects with the celestial bodies, there are indeed emanations of energy from, or transmission of effects from, the beings there.³³

This clairvoyance is a key to understanding Steiner and the primacy he accords the image. There is a need for veneration of truth and knowledge that requires an attuning to the image and a development of a new listening and seeing to the spiritual messages of the cosmos. This developed knowledge could be shared among groups of people, and they would make up a loose spiritual confederacy. It is worth quoting from the original principles of the Statutes of the Anthroposophical Society, promulgated at the end of 1923: “The Society shall be a union of people who, on the basis of a true knowledge of the spiritual world, want to take care of the spiritual life in the single man as well as in human society. They are thoroughly of the opinion that today a real science of the spiritual world exists, established over long years and already published in large part”.³⁴ But again, for Steiner, it is to the importance of the image that one must return; after all, in the spiritual world everything is in permanent flux, always creative, because primal images are creative entities that point to the cosmic love which is the ultimate force of nature and cosmos. How this comes about could be expressed in the term used by Sheldrake, as “cosmic resonance”, which is how forms are consistently produced. Spiritual

³³ One of the best orientations in the dispersed work of Steiner can be found in the notes released as *The Threefold Order of the Body Social*, a collection of addresses and articles by Dr. Rudolf Steiner, translated into English by E. Bowen-Wedgwood, and distributed as a manuscript to the members of the Anthroposophical Society, by permission of Mme. Marie Steiner, in three volumes. Steiner suggests that what is being expressed is not just his private opinion, but the voicing of the actual unconscious will of the European people, vol. 3, p. 2. Also for the *Riddles of Philosophy*, see: *Die Rätzel der Philosophie in ihrer Geschichte als Umriss dargestellt*, 1914. Also Steiner's, *Die okkulte Bewegung im 19. Jahrhundert und ihre Beziehung zur Weltkultur*, Dornach, 1969.

³⁴ For this see: The Principles of the Anthroposophical Society, <http://www.Goetheanum.ch/aq5.htm>.



199

growth too is a state of metamorphosis, and one day even this evolution will come to an end when the development of mankind enters a completely spiritual existence. Art is what we create as part of this searching transformation, it is not found in the non-sensorial ideal of thought which gives us science, nor in the non-ideal sensorial, the physical reality we see when we look around. It is art, which reveals the “higher laws of nature”. In Steiner's view, true art has as its signature an opening up of the spiritual: “whenever he transforms reality, pursuing the track of reason, his art gives us a deep satisfaction, because things that come from his hands are set before us as if they flow immediately from the primal principle itself ...”³⁵

While the true artist will gain insight into what may be called the creation of the counter-image of an unfinished vision, and concentrate instead on the creation of the subjective counter-image by what lies charmed inside nature, genuine art goes back to the secrets of initiation. This art infuses the spiritual into the physical life. Like the clairvoyant, there are insights between,

on the one hand impulses that come from the unconscious hidden layers of the soul and intertwine with the creation and experience of art; on the other hand, that which is born from supersensorial clairvoyance i.e. from the pure spiritual world, into the form of immediate impressions ... Art offers something; it is congenial to clairvoyant perception. Art in its work

³⁵ For this see: Steiner, *The Spiritual Sources of Art*, and his *Echte Kunst geht zurück auf die Geheimnisse der Initiation*, Dornach, a talk first delivered January 30, 1915.



200



201 | Instant triptych, 30 x 40,5 cm 1977.
 Note: Commissioned by the city to make works for the topographic atlas of Amsterdam, K manipulates a series of photographs of the Lauriergracht and direct environment. Some are taken from the rooftop of *The Archive for the Future* building. The Instant triptych is a remarkable example of his game of optical illusion and spiritual unification. The first impression is that of a Dutch cityscape during the winter. A man in a blue shirt bends over standing on the ice. On closer inspection the image turns out to be a photographic negative, transformed very subtly into a positive by means of colour accents. The ice turns out to be water. The bending man is someone bailing out a sunken rowing boat. Through this transformation of photographic negative into a positive, on one and the same paper, both opposites are blended together in an artistic alchemical re-action. When such an "instant triptych" is brought into being, three different worlds merge into a single image, a trinity.

202 | Piet Mondriaan, *Evolution*, 1910/11

118 | 119

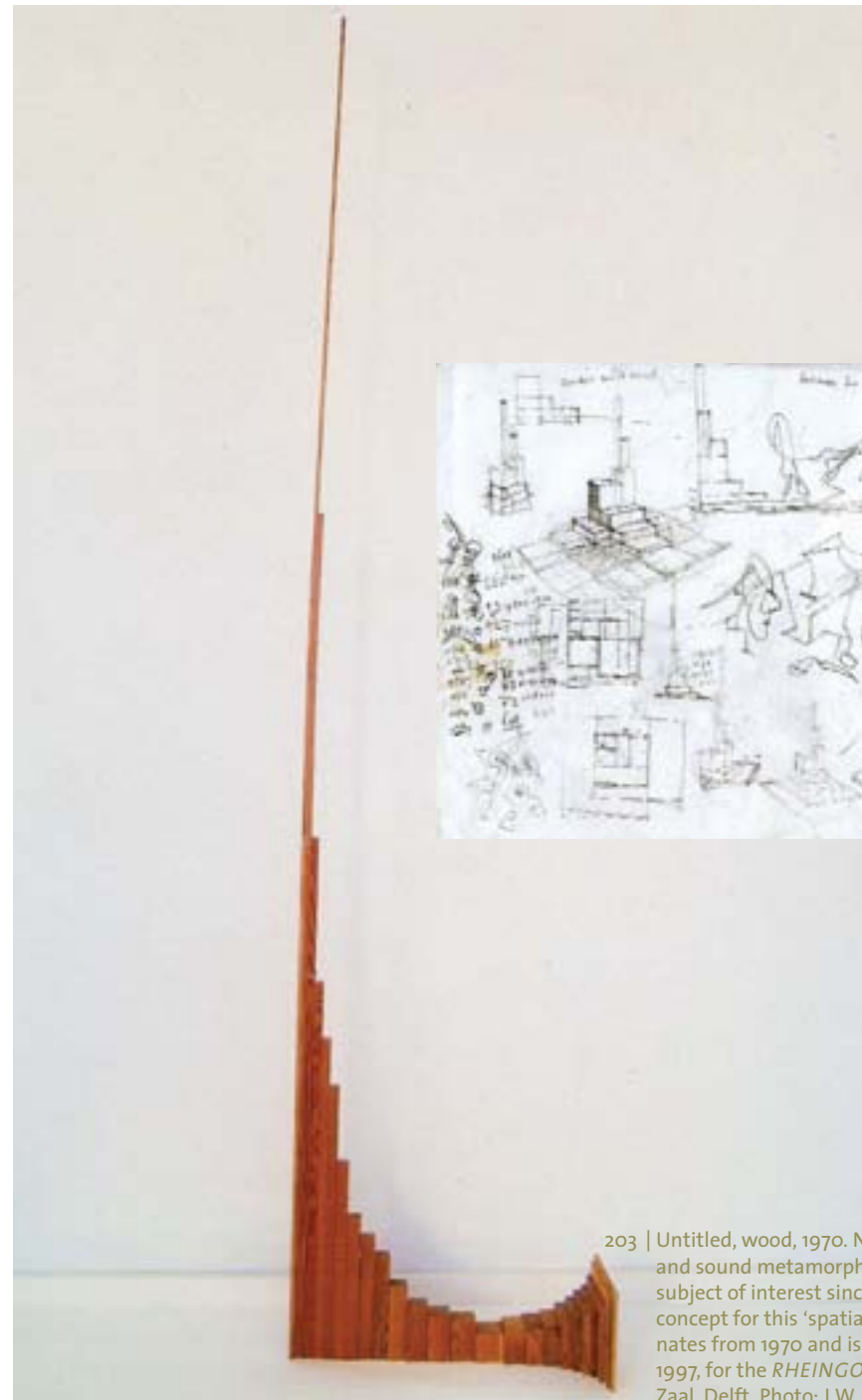
could also express the general laws of sympathy, antipathy and metamorphosis. All nature's sounds whisper her secrets to man. What for the soul were merely incomprehensible sounds now becomes the meaningful language of nature. It is the language of the gods, from all sides of the universe speaking to us. The organs of the spirit are all around me; I must only acquire the capacity to understand the language as it is spoken by these forms; once understood in my heart, however, I must not interpret them.³⁶

Later, in Beuys, one finds the search again for the radiant energy of these propositions, and artworks are conceived as energy fields within which the "human being becomes an artist". In the social sculpture Beuys aims to produce the creative person who resolves the antithesis between crystalline Apollonian and fluid Dionysian forces, the constant passage from fluid to solid state, and vice versa, is the express energy of the metabolism. This is key for the text of Kloppenburg: "Big-Logos Bang", etc.

³⁶ This is taken *passim* from *Sources*. I am grateful to Dr. Sierksma who has made his unpublished *Authoritarian Architecture* available, and who treats this material in critical detail, especially in part 11, "The Myth of Architecture".

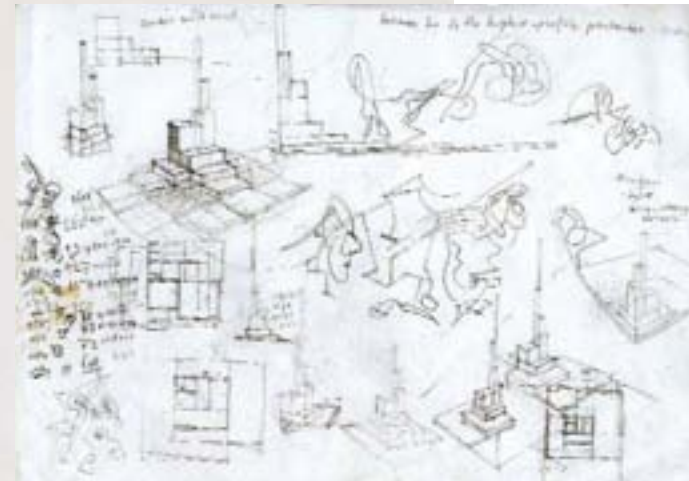


202



203

203 | Untitled, wood, 1970. Note: Volume and rhythm and sound metamorphosis has been an ongoing subject of interest since the early 1950s. The concept for this 'spatial golden section' work originates from 1970 and is executed in cedarwood, 1997, for the *RHEINGOLD* exhibition, Gallery De Zaal, Delft. Photo: J.W. Groenendaal



204

204 | Volume studies, A4, undated

205 | Dike in Ternaard, Friesland, winter 1979. The photo was taken from the dike, right in front of the studio farmhouse.

It should be noted that at the time this text was written, Kloppenburg was engaged with the development of the FIUWAC,³⁷ with its social ideals inspired by the reception of Steiner via Joseph Beuys in the concept of the social sculpture, and secondly that he was creating a long series of works based on his cutting of avocado skins into what he called Artvocado Runen, as a platform, that is the dimensional reduction to flatness of the skins of the avocado and then patterned into various shapes, which he describes as a flat-form study. Within his text he also signals that the form of the world is itself modified by information, which is set against the ideal of art, and the relation to life. This is the need to realise risk as the adventure of art, and the ultimate social benefit of the productions of human making in the creative realm. In one sense the text highlights the various tensions in the Western art tradition, between direct realism and intensification of experience, or the detachment of an ideal of beauty. What the "trashthetical" adds directly is the social responsibility for the practice of freedom for the artist, and the importance of this for the shaping of the future. It has in its detail the same consideration that one can find in the Beuysian view of the social sculpture. This view will be modified when examining the concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* later.

What stands out immediately is that the work has in it a full elaboration of Kloppenburg's own search during the long creation of the Artchive. It is a unitary study around the issue of what is socially rejected, or the counter-form of

³⁷ More details can be found at: www.fiuwac.com.

205



120 | 121



206

206 | Drawing 6.3.81, 10,7 x 13 cm
207 | Photo: G. Gussenhoven



207

society, rubbish, waste, garbage, junk, detritus, of what is thrown out, discarded. In one sense there has been a vast work of metamorphosis. Much of the early inclusions in the Artchive were made up of found objects, but with the proviso that almost everything has been re-appropriated, and transformed.



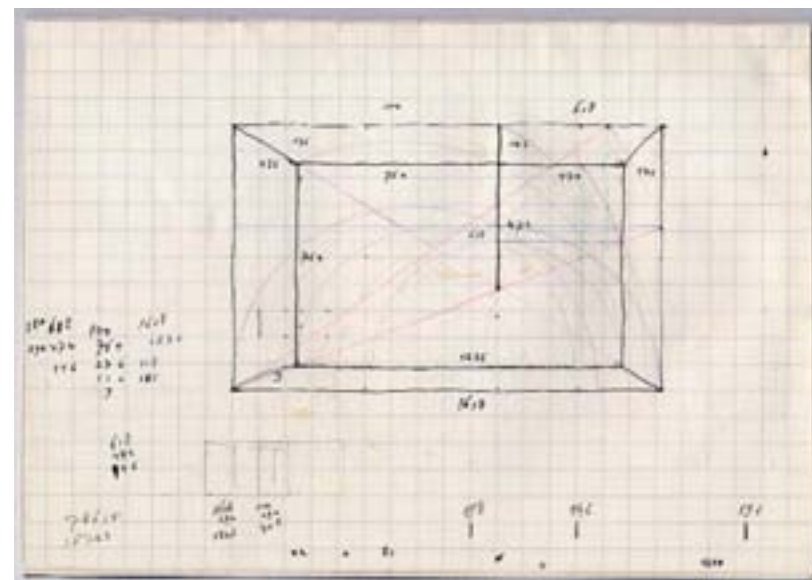
208

208 | Wall installation, Lauriergracht 111, around 1990.
Photo: G. Gussenhoven



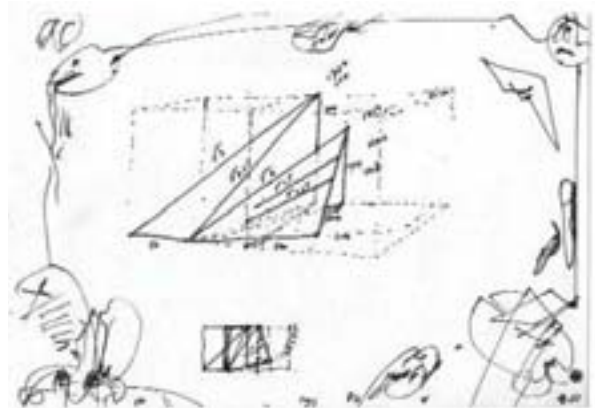
209

209 | *Golden Section*, mixed media on gilded wood, 1981
210 | Pencil on paper, 14,5 x 20 cm, 1981.



210

Note: The framework is executed as well according to the law of the golden section. The profile of the lower part of the frame is half a circle, the systematic continuation follows counter-clockwise.



211



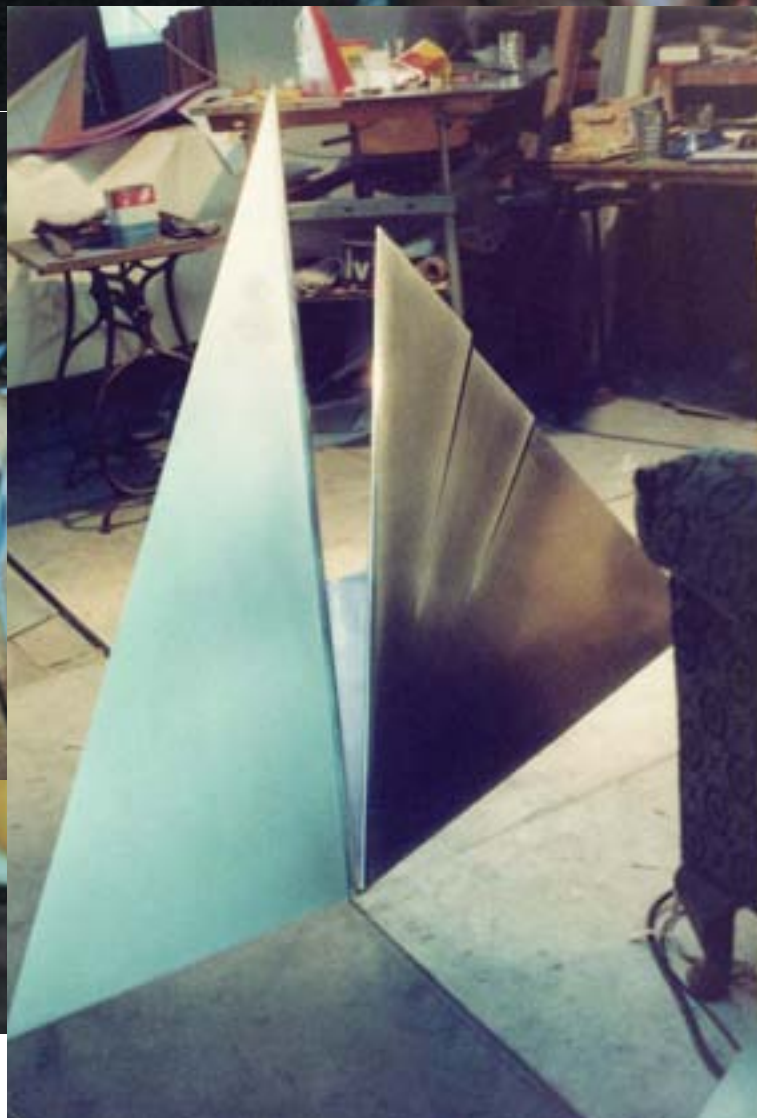
214



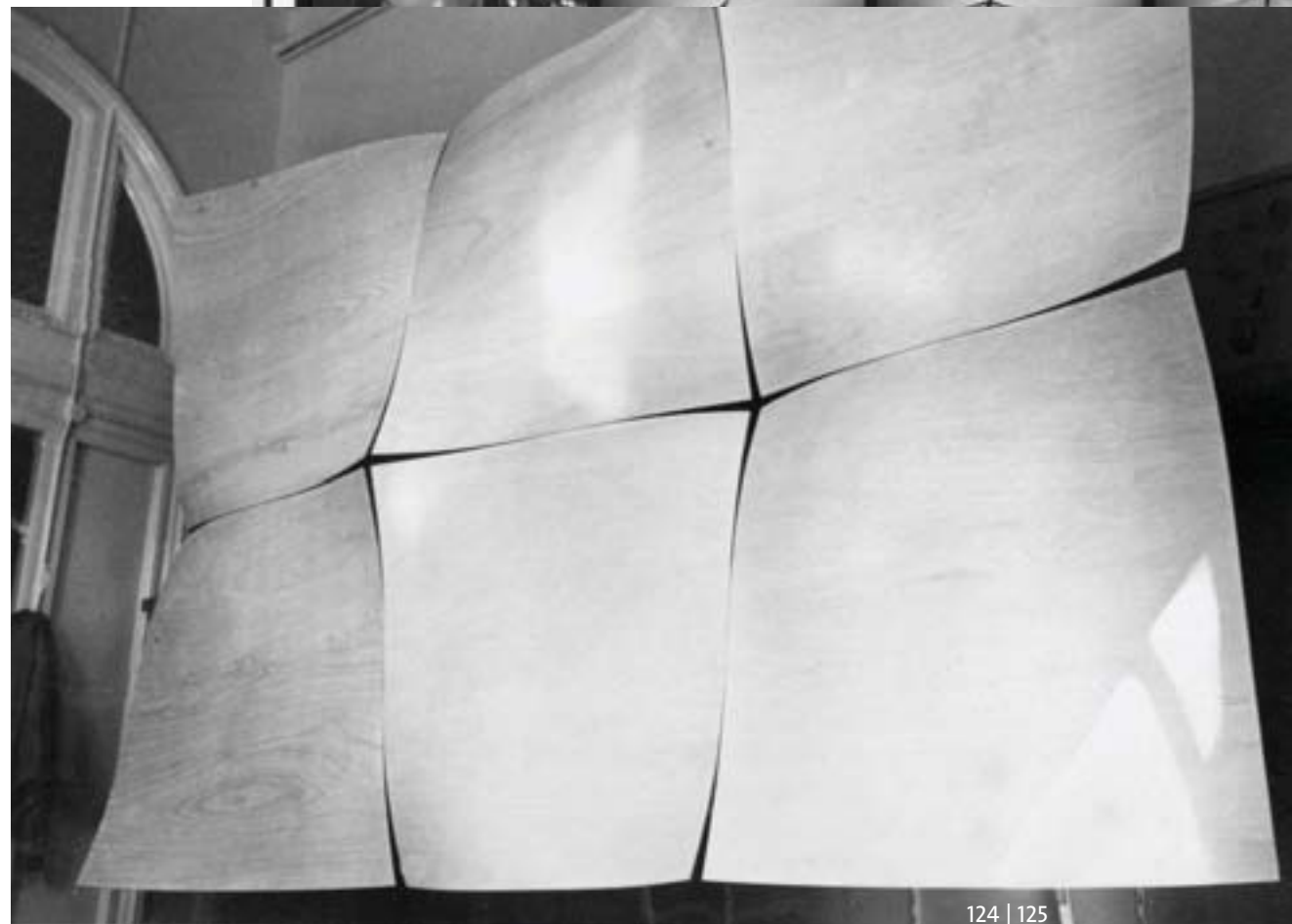
212



213



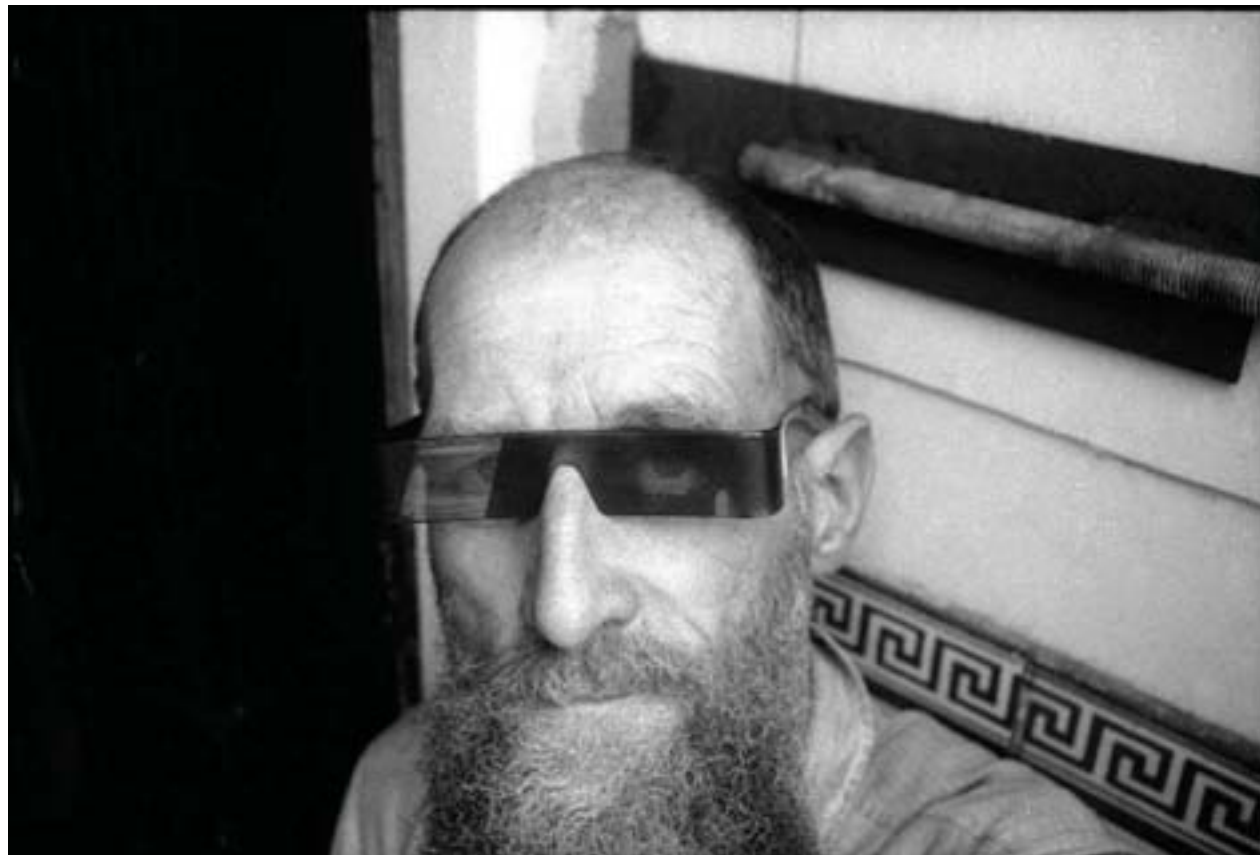
211 | Sketch for steel sculpture, 10,5 x 15,5 cm, 1982
212 | Photo: K
213 | *Kitchen* sequence, 1992
214 | Sculpture, stainless steel, 10,5 x 15,5 cm, 1982



124 | 125



215 | Six square meters, laminated plywood, 1980/81



216



217

202765



218

202769



219

202768



220

202770



221

202771



222

202766



223

202767



224

202768

216 | Autoportrait, 1987 (with sunglasses)



225

202769



226

202773



227

126 | 127

202774



228

217-228 | Polaroid documentation of objects, The Artchive for the Future, around 1980.



229

202804



230

202801



231

202800



232

202797



233

202789



234

202799



235

202792



236

202803



237

202802



238

202805



239

202796



240



241

202794



242

202798



243 202784



244 202781



245 202787



246 202790



247 202788



248 202800



249 202785



250 202788



251 202789



252 202764

The singular influence of Steiner should not be understated. It is a constant companion to his thoughts, and remains crucial for understanding the strangeness and distance that is so much part of the work, which is the result of an artist in whom a profound spiritual search has bypassed much of the conventional expectation around his work and life. There has been nothing capricious about this, only the integrity of a search and process, much of whose details are perforce very private and highly subjective, indeed hardly open to any form of rational enquiry. It can be added that this is very much in line with particular aspects of anthroposophical communitarian expectation, Steiner expressed an opinion and commented on this at various points. Again scattered throughout the writings of Steiner, one can find various references to the relation between clairvoyance and the access to higher worlds. Steiner remarking: "everyone is clairvoyant; this has been denied theoretically, even though in practice it cannot be denied. Identification with these truths is not all that difficult; when communicated to you, they will be their own force and arouse inspiration in your soul. However, you must not try to receive such insights in a sober minded intellectual way."

In anthroposophy there is, and I follow the account of R.J. Sierksma here, a cosmic history that is stored in the spiritual archive of a higher world – an archive of the history of all mankind. This so-called Akashic Chronicle accumulates everything that through all of time has been performed by conscious beings, and in *Occult Science* Steiner notes that this archive requires the intuitive side of clairvoyance in order to be read. It is like a library of pictures that can be seen, but they nevertheless require interpretation:



253

202776



254

202781



255

202789



256

202778



261



257

202782



258

202777



259

202730



260

202770

Spiritual science knows that our experiences in the spiritual world are clothed in images. We should first interpret them; they should not fool us. This requires an inner listening to the colours and tones that make up the higher worlds, and it is only the visit of an actual clairvoyant to the spiritual archive who can bring it alive and give "an absolutely correct image".³⁸

What does art and the work of the artist require, according to Steiner? True art leads to works that make us experience "a secret, expressed in its forms; such an experience shifts our souls into enthusiasm, makes our heart beat faster; it gives the joyful feeling of being raised above one's self". For Steiner the spiritual sensitivity of the artist, when directed towards material, also liberates in the material a particular affordance:

when the artist assigns to wood its appropriate strains, the materials oblige him. It should not be delivered according to some abstract understanding of the artist, the artist transforms reality, and pursuing the track of reason, his art gives a deeper satisfaction, because things that come from his hands are set before us as if they flow immediately from the primal principle itself.

³⁸ It can be noted that Steiner had a definition of exact clairvoyance within his occult researches in which it is that capacity to make observations in the invisible world and to do research, as exact as the natural scientist in the material world.



262

253–260 | Polaroid documentation of objects, *The Artchive for the Future*, around 1980.

261 | Object, 1997

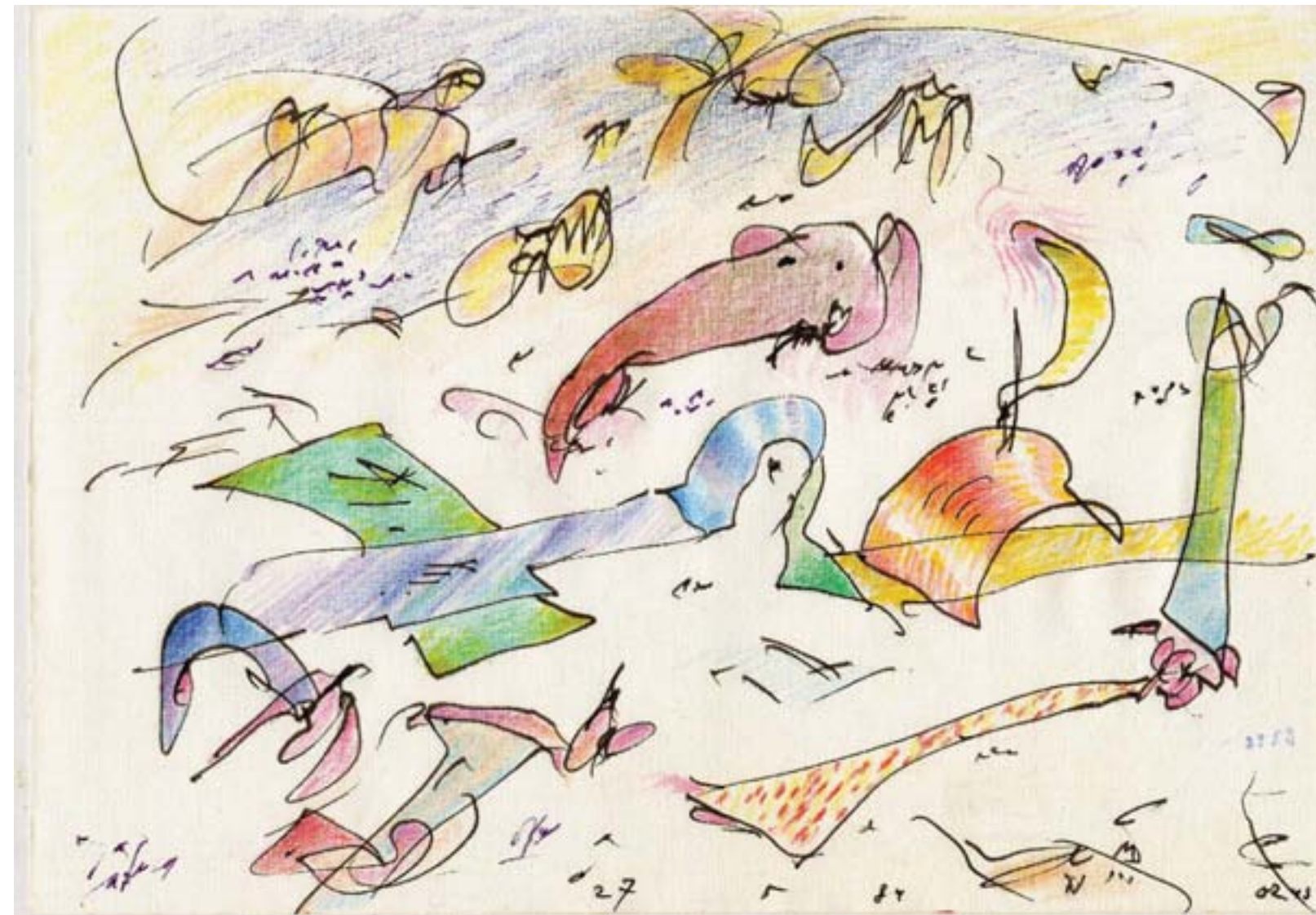
262 | Object, 1970/1999, FIUWAC.

Note: The initial basis is a window cleaner toolkit; documentation photos show the object in *The Artchive for the Future* as early as 1980. After their trip to South America, 1993, Bien added the three white stones. The object was then signed by both artists and prepared for the FIUWAC presentation at Triodos Bank in Brussels.



263

263 | Mixed media on paper, 15 x 21 cm, 1984
 264 | Mixed media on paper, 15 x 21 cm, 1984



264

Then we have from Steiner a resonant example:

A clairvoyant tells a painter: "What lives in the depths of your soul, is what lives in things. Because you have gone through the things, you live with your soul in the spirit of these things. But in order to preserve your virtue of painting, in order to live consciously what you lived while you were going through the things of the external world, you must keep alive the impulses that produce your painter's art in your subconscious. It is all about the unconscious impulses ascending into consciousness."

Art is also congenial to clairvoyant perception. The function of art is not mere amusement, rather it gives the joyful feeling of being exalted, and it is the inner heavenly peace and perfection in the world of ideas which is so satisfying. Thus:

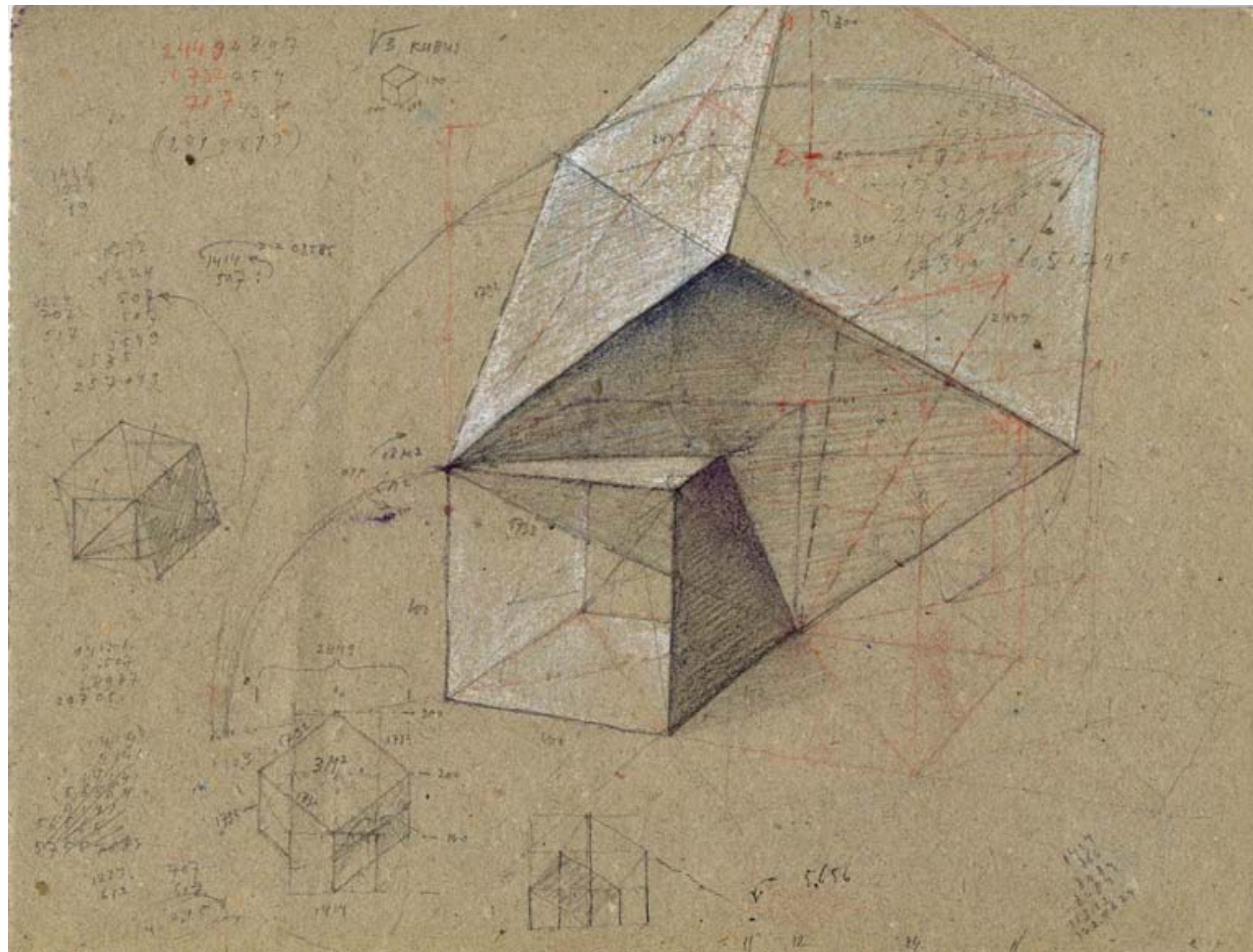
penetrating the external form of art, its colour and sound; using your imagination and feeling reaching into the spiritual background, thus, the impulse your Ego receives penetrates the ethereal body. This also needs to be understood in the other direction ... all colours, at least all colour proportions desire to be a total human being or part of him. You may have the feeling that red or yellow wants something; these colours desire to be transformed into something that belongs to you, ... what you encounter in red or yellow expresses itself by itself, of its own accord, it brings about the ideal of art. The elimination of all thought.



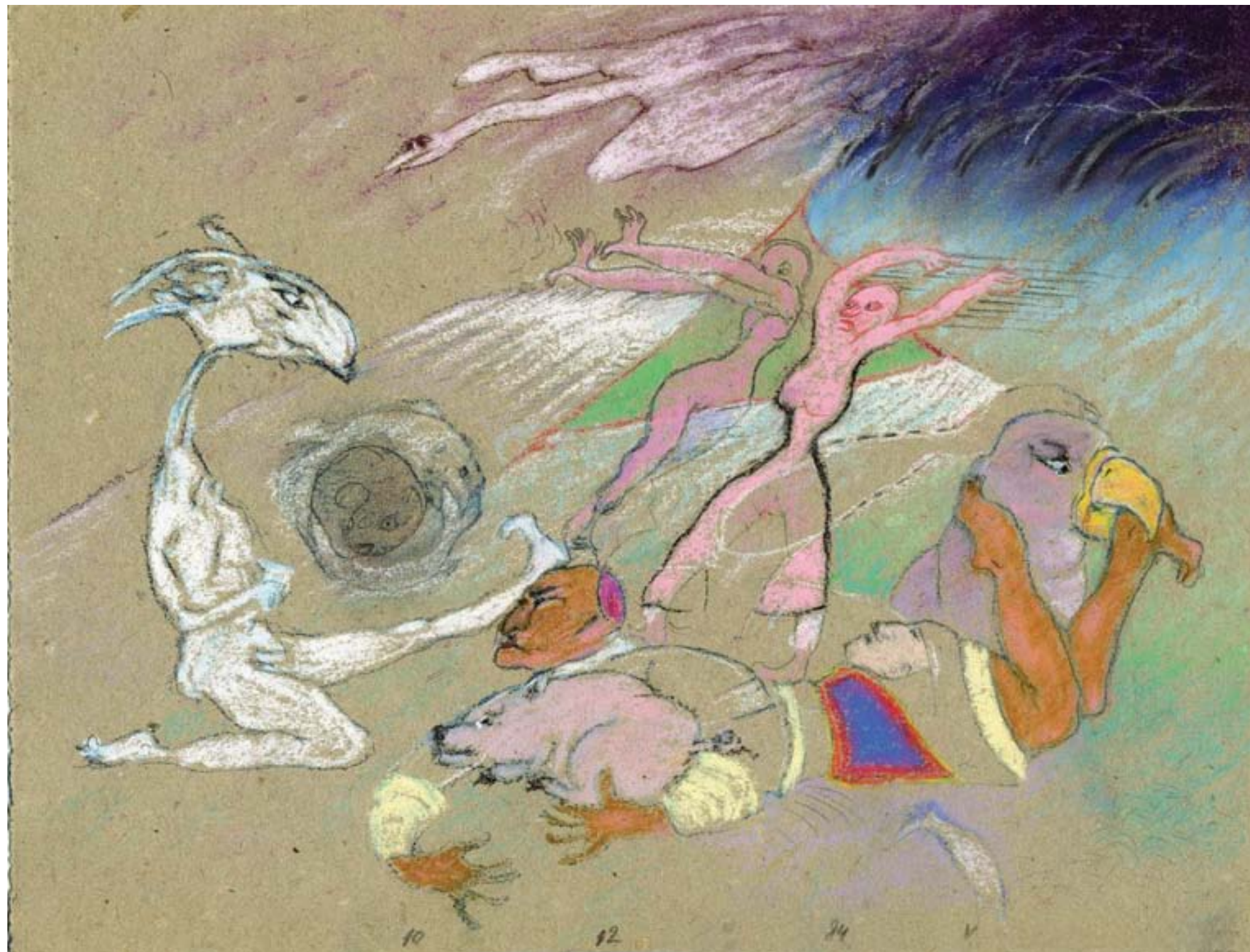
265

265 | Shade fixation with candle smoke, 1992

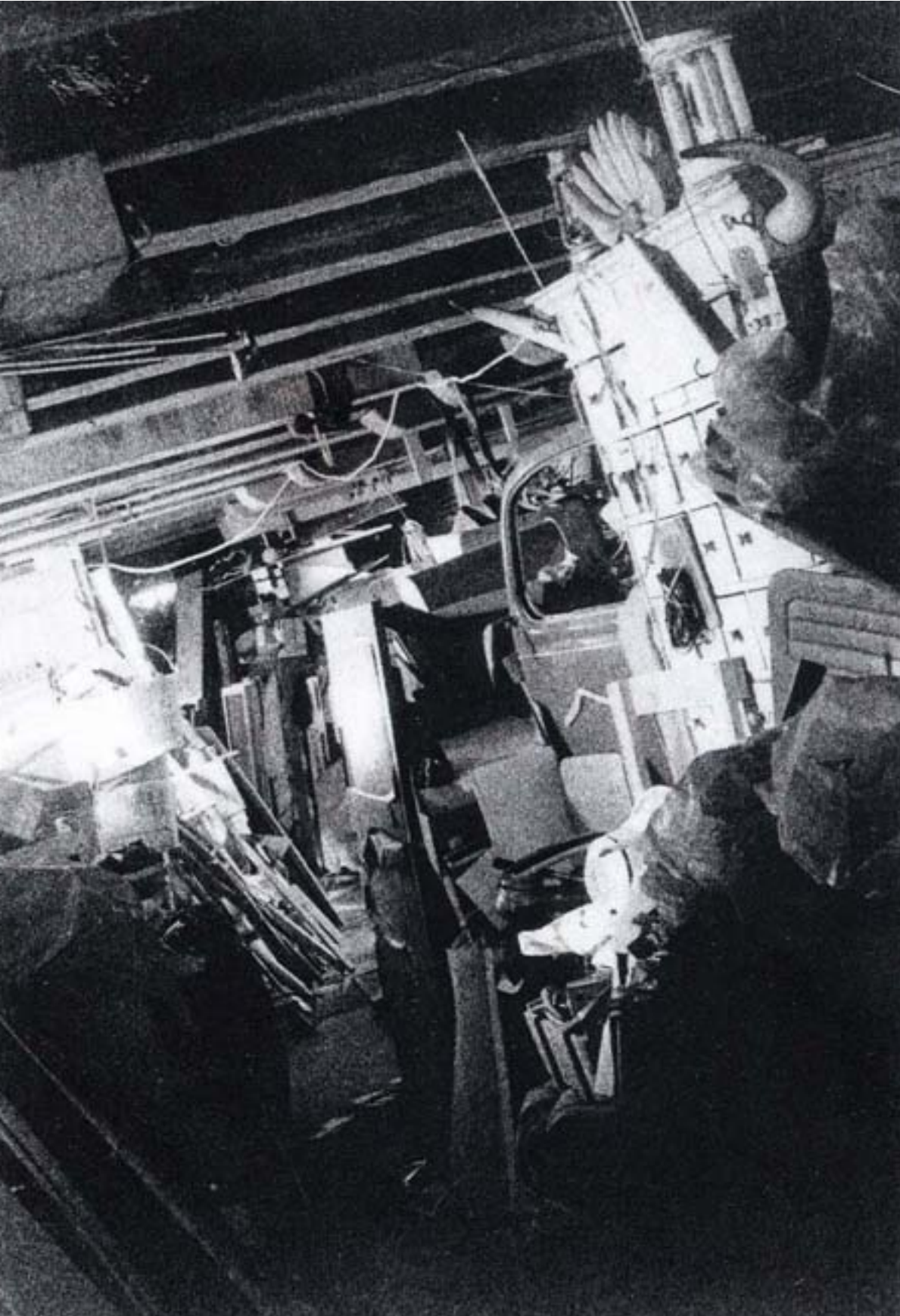
134 | 135



266 | Pencil and pastel on paper, 20,5 x 27 cm, 1984



267 | Pastel and pencil on paper, 20,5 x 27 cm, 1984

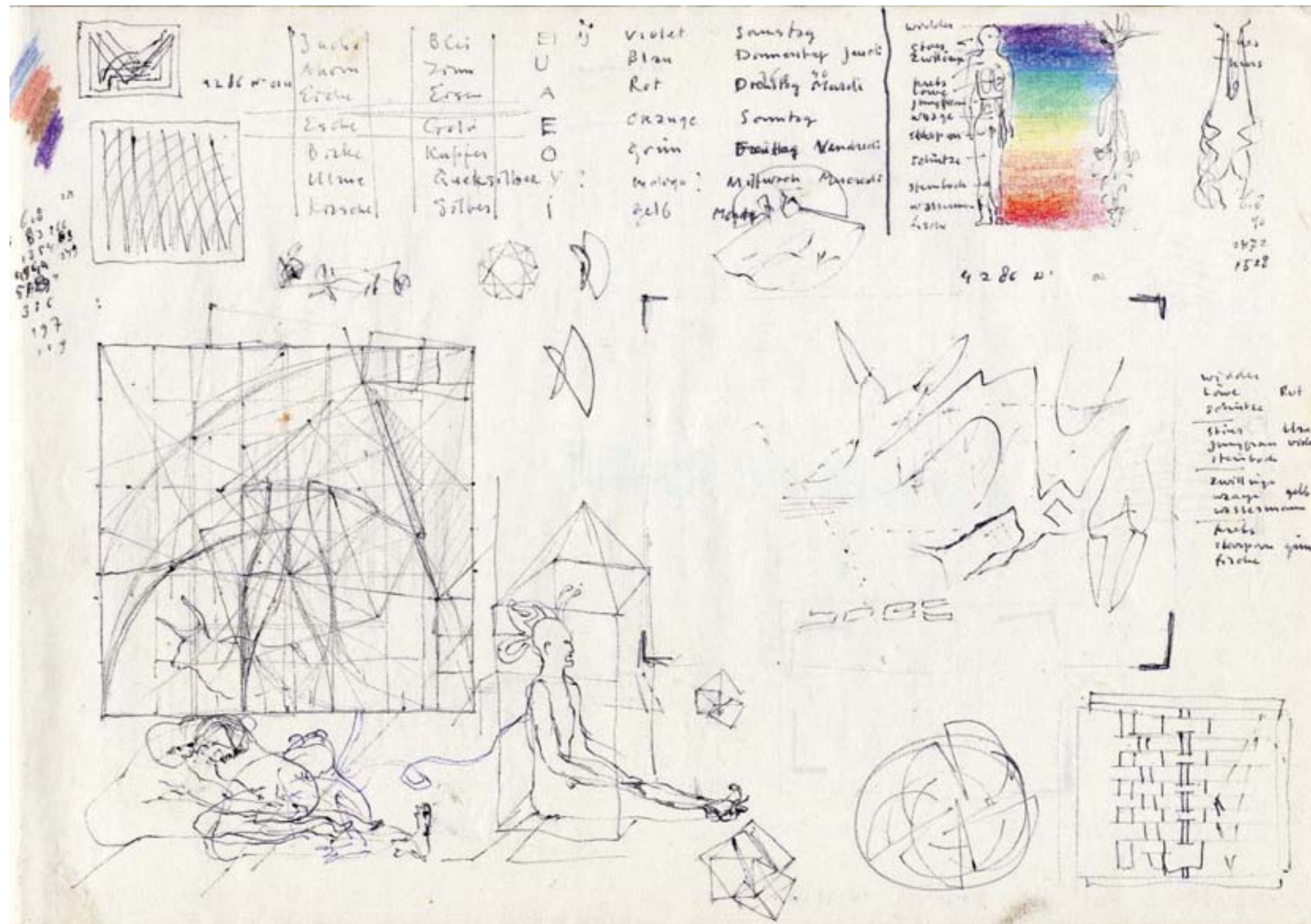


Kloppenborg's exploration of the medium of pastel and the rendering of his vision on sheets numbering nearly a thousand, many of which are still in the shipping containers, is clearly informed by spiritual mentor's thinking; on one sheet he has placed the various correspondences between colours, planets, metals and the body, and this is a map of the world of the pastels and their resonance with what for Steiner is the *Gesamtkunstwerk* of the cosmos.

In his text on the Dornach building, Steiner gives a fascinating account of what is demanded of the initiate towards colour, which he regards as essentially alive, and the response to which eliminates the need for a higher spiritual being to read or write:

While giving oneself up to the essence of colours as they reveal figures, the soulful creation of the figural gets stronger. In those moments of creative painting, you feel as if only moving living colours exist in this world; colours that are creative themselves and that produce something essential. When as a painter you truly paint from inside the colour, you will experience what that colour demands. You say to yourself: 'Now I have dipped my brush in green paint, now I must become a little bit bourgeois and paint the green, with sharp, rough little hairs'. Or: 'Now I paint with yellow, I must make it radiate, mentally I need to transport myself in the spirit, in the shining spirit'. When he paints with blue the artist thinks: 'I withdraw in myself, in my own inner self, in a way I produce a crust around myself,





270 | Sketchbook page, 1986



271

FIUWAC
Free International
University World
Art Collection

271 | *The Seven Graces*, pastel on plywood, 152 x 152 cm, 1983, FIUWAC

and that is the way I paint, because I bestow the exterior of the blue with a kind of crust'. Only then does the painter live in the colours themselves, only in the moment does he convey something to the canvas that the soul truly desires. Thus he gives himself to the essence of colour.³⁹

It is through colour that we really know things. As we can see in the Kloppenburg pastels, he has also followed the advice of Goethe that colours in nature, just as in prisms, only come alive when mixed. There is then a direct link between colour and feeling, the aliveness is the moment of exaltation and joy that the artist expresses in the work, a form of ecstatic vitality, and an expanse which is a genuine transport. Colours take on life, move and recede, reveal spiritual secrets. As the pastel of *The Seven Graces* shows, and the accompanying list of inter-connections, they echo the seven stages of man's life, expressed by the seven columns of the Goetheanum, which show themselves in different colours.

There is a correspondence between tones and colours.

Solid matter begets colour or can become colourful as a result of the fact that the earth has been liberated from the forces that were still inside her when she was bound up with the other planets. Subsequently these forces become effective from outside, i.e. from the cosmos; in this way they summon the inner colour-force of coloured minerals. In fact what once left the

³⁹ For this see the publication, *Der Dornacher Bau als Wahrzeichen geschichtlichen Werdens unkünstlerischer Umwandlungsimpulse*, Dornach, 1985, and further discussion and bibliography.



272 | Photo sequence Ternaard, Friesland, July 1974



273

273 | *Crucifixion*, mixed media on paper A4, July 1986
 274 | View from the dike to the east towards Wierum, 1974
 275 | Studio Ternaard with large canvas in progress, 1987
 276 | With Rahel Neeltje, Ternaard, 1985. Photo: T. Maas



274



275

earth, now affects it from the cosmos. Thus, in minerals, we observe that the secret lies hidden much deeper than is the case with the origin of the green colour of plants. Because all this is so much hidden, it touches the essence more deeply, it does not merely penetrate the living world of plants, but even the mineral realm.⁴⁰

This is what helps us to understand, as Sierksma has pointed out in his work on the Goetheanum, why Steiner searched for transparent mixes of ephemeral pastels to decorate his cupola. Steiner will speak of colours expressing different attitudes as demanded by their character. For Steiner black and white are not colours, and no white is used in the building. Steiner has drawn attention to the subtle bodies of all existent beings, and opened up the area of the limitation of the senses; he has also renewed the older cosmological principle of

⁴⁰ For a further discussion see: R. van Bemmelen, *Rudolf Steiners farbige Gestaltung des Goetheaneums*, Stuttgart, 1973.



276



the *anima mundi*. This may well be traced into one of the oldest cosmological principles of which we have awareness in the Western tradition, that of the breathing of the cosmos and the whole of creation as a living being, characterised by inhalation and exhalation.

Returning then to the statement, “Trashthetical Litterarture”, we see the first indication of the artist’s summary of his life’s work. It belongs to “trashtetics” to “litterarture”, the pun again being on trash and litter. While it is entirely possible, within a biographical context, to trace the way in which the devastation of the war in Holland changed the relation of consumption to the object world, it should also be added that there is also in the artistic tradition a rage for order, which in Mondriaan reaches its culmination in the effort literally to abolish space. This powerful gesture of Mondriaan’s is of some significance in trying to capture part of the inheritance of the contemporary art scene against which willy-nilly Kloppenburg sets himself. Rudolf Arnheim, in his *The Dynamics of Architectural Form*, makes an interesting reference to this aspect of Mondriaan, and one can situate it in a more complex inheritance in which the fear of space has literally forced the artist to treat the intersection of lines as a primary phenomenon, that is to say to visualise the grid of Holland in a form of potent abstraction which does not simply delineate but enforces through a form of monomaniac insistence, and what amounts to a rigid and highly inflexible doctrine.



Arnheim quotes from a letter from Mondriaan to James Johnson Sweeney of 1943:

You know that the intention of cubism – in any case at the beginning – was to express volume ... This was opposed to my conception of abstraction, which is that this space just has to be destroyed. In consequence I came to destroy the volume by using the plane, then the problem was to destroy the plane also. I did this by means of lines cutting the planes. But still the plane remained too much intact. So I came only to lines and brought the colour to those.⁴¹

In Arnheim’s analysis Mondriaan dissolved the closure of his rectangles by transforming the contours into what Arnheim calls “object lines”. He made the corners into crossings aided by the tendency of straight lines to continue in their own direction rather than to break around a corner. Mondriaan wants to eliminate the difference between the “realistic” description of

⁴¹ Rudolf Arnheim, *The Dynamics of Architectural Form*, University of California Press, 1977.



278

277

277 | Scale enlargement, 1987. Note: After being at the 1988 exhibition *Borderline*, Comune di Monteciccardo Pesaro, Italy, the work was not returned to the artist and remains untraced: WANTED. (Information please to: F.I.U.Amsterdam.)

278 | Study for Scale enlargement, pencil on paper, DIN A4, 1987

279 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1984, private collection. Note: Pastels are framed with a grey board mat, a neutral colour zone, and frames are preferably produced from old boards, nail holes, glued joints or old repairs are integrated as ornaments in such cases. Photo taken in front of Lauriergracht 109, *The Artchive for the Future*.



solid objects and empty space. This is one strategy to overcome the *horror vacui*. Even given the precision of his trajectory, Mondrian nevertheless did not follow his logic and cease creating works, or art-objects. The canvas for the easel or the wall still belongs to the latent fear of the *vacui* or void, and the effort to bring the flatness to itself, away from any suggestion of volume or dimensionality was also a gesture to shore up the optical sensation of a flat image and close off the issue of depth and movement for things, on the basis that, and this is an aspect of his hermetic belief, the abstract was more real than the merely "real". The deeper problem of the misology of the cubic, or the fear of the third dimension, which Worringer outlined in his *Abstraction and Empathy*, did not disappear by these increasingly strident claims for minimalism. Part of the reason, one may say, was just the weight within the Dutch tradition itself, of the relation to the



281

280

280 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1987, FIUWAC
 281 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1984
 282 | Object, wood and dried fungus, 1990

282



283

283 | Pastel on plywood, 152 x 152 cm, 1985
 284 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 10 x 145 cm, 1984, FIUWAC

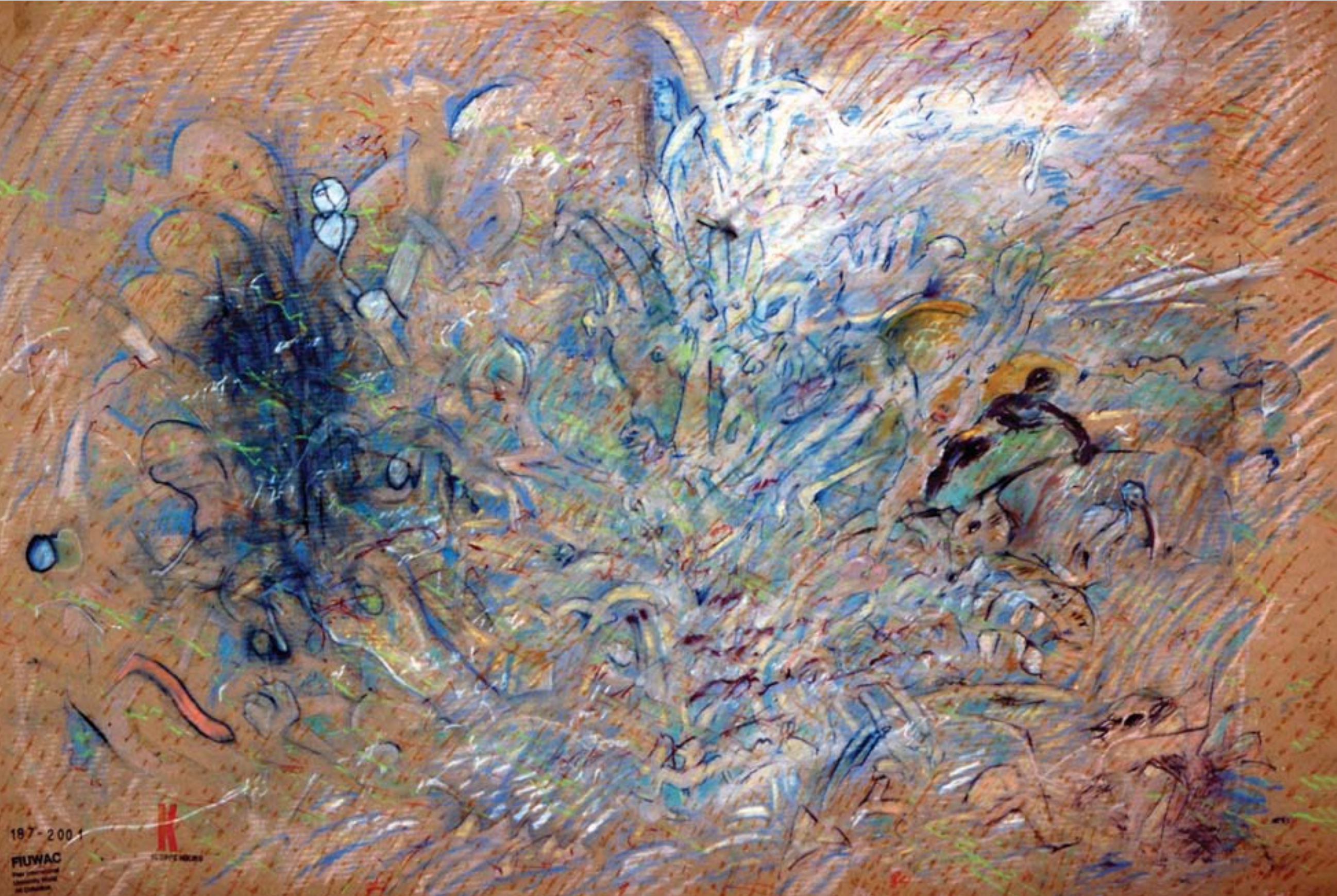
object world. This relation to order and objects and the fear of space is central to the issue of urbanism in the Netherlands, the development of capitalism, and the dominant ideology of materialism as sanctification. The long material consequence of Amsterdam as the warehouse of the world, caught well in the tympanum on the west side of the Dam, to which the goods and cargo of the earth are ferried and then relayed outwards again, left the city as a personified middle man, a broker between everything that can be dealt, a distributor who takes profit from both sides of the deal. This highly opportunistic situation of merchants with their promissory notes and chattels, and accompanying relativising of all principles, is part of the deeper urban ethos, and it is fully gathered in the tradition of display which relates to the ordering of the world that, one can say, culminates in the fantasy of Mondriaan's eliminations, which is nothing more than a fantasy of control by elimination. Mondriaan too belongs to the tradition of still lifes, except they are no longer of discrete things, but of the nature of objectness itself, in a context where even nature is an artificial construct. This allows for an intellectual, detached and punctual version of Utopia to be constructed as the realm of order and ordering, and explains some of the deep hostility of the official art establishment to the continued existence of artists with different aesthetic and spiritual aims.⁴²

⁴² A survey of the exemplum of Dutch capital organisation can be found in: Paul Fren-trop, *A History of Corporate Governance*, 1602–2002, Brussels: Deminor, 2003.



284

148 | 149



285

Even in the semi-official history of Dutch art there is a slight reference to the relation of the orchestration of the genre of the still life and of the object world in respect of order. In varying studies Michael Muller has shown that the European city is a place of both the accumulation and collection of materials that reflect the value hierarchy of a structured world. He further argues that the identity of a place is dependent on the various grades of objectifying or the process of reification in the production of objects, utensils, buildings, clothing etc., and that this is the precondition for spatialisation and the dispersal of objects in space. From the time of the accumulation of objects in the *Wunderkammer* tradition, the state of



286

- 285 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1984, FIUWAC
- 286 | Virgil Grotfeldt; from the series *Winter Flowers*, coal dust on ledger, 1994. Collection NOG SNS REAAL Fonds (the legal status of ownership is in dispute)
- 287 | Grotfeldt's first visit to *The Artchive for the Future*, February 1987. Photo: WB



287



288

288 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1985

affairs which emerged was that possession of place connects with the ability to see, or the ability to imagine the variety of objects of accumulation in space as being coherent, which entails a further phenomenon, namely a compulsion to place things together, and to link this with tradition, the very capacity which museums abstract in a precise way.⁴³

By the middle of the nineteenth century – a point made emphatically by Peter Gay and Walter Benjamin – the bourgeois interior became a place of retreat and an index for the self-worth and understanding of the middle classes, a frenzy of collecting that could be interpreted as emblematic of the emergence of triumphant individualism, and this had also the strange consequence that the intention of the city, according to Lewis Mumford, was that the museum was not a consequence of the city, but became a goal of the city; as the gymnasium was for the ancient Greeks, so the museum is for the metropolis.

⁴³ For further discussion see: *Natural Born History*, Aarhus Naturhistorisk Museum and Hifenate Kunstproduktioner, 2005, to accompany exhibition Natural Born History of Hilarius Hofstede, pp. 59–84, and the exhibition catalogue of *Wunderkammer des Abendlandes*, Bonn, November 1994–February 1995, and bibliography pp. 206–222.



289

289 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1985
290 | Untitled object, cow bone and sponge, 1980, FIUWAC

On the explosive growth of museums in Europe in the early nineteenth century, Muller has made the telling observation that the viewing of things not conditioned by “art history” was directed towards those things displayed in the museum as “expensive objects, goods of extraordinary value, yes, but still goods”. The whole process of identity was thus encapsulated in these new property relations, and, negatively, at least in the case of most of the objects displayed in museums, as that which could not be privately owned. Hence, the material world becomes the limit for the structure of subjectivity, and identity is a “kingdom” of objects, knowledge, memories and experience. Subject and consumption belong to each other, being is usurped by the realm of acquisition, willing, and having: “I own therefore I am”. The full implication of such solipsism can be seen in the writing of Max Stirner, which goes some way towards explaining Marx’s trenchant polemics against his writing in *The German Ideology*.

A further point made by Muller is worth bearing in mind, namely that the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, installed in 1851, exemplified that the European city was the place or site for the upholding of the strategy of possessive individualism, and of culture and authenticity, and that the World Exhibition was decisive for how things, and the object world, were viewed, seen and understood at that time, and it is also what drives an aesthetic as a spectacle, or as collective event.

FIUWAC
Free International
University World
Art Collection



290



To this day art-history inherits the disciplined and distinguishing regard first manifested in the exhibition incubated in the Crystal Palace. Only the phenomenon of Fordism and the assembly line will have a similar impact in the discipline of distributing objects and subjects in an ordered space, of which domesticating traces remain today in museums and department store windows. In such a world, the museum, in George Bataille's phrase, became "the lung of the metropolis".⁴⁴

Something of the process is intuited in the tradition of the Dutch still life. In his overview of Dutch art, Fuchs draws attention to this occasionally, to the world of order being engendered, something equally visible in the Teyler's Museum in Haarlem. The commitment is to a rational and clear arrangement of things, which also corresponded to the ideological requirement of "religious" materialism, or at least a state of grace as indicated by material wellbeing. Equally, everything could be exposed, and this transparency also indicated a state of grace, a miming of equality, and a constant reminder of the relative position of everything and everybody, since the world of things and persons became increasingly the same, and the person nothing more than the sum of attributes within the broader order of things. The eventual reality of which abstraction is nothing other than the *tertium quid* of money itself, which will be the truth in Mondriaan's view. The medium becomes the real.

⁴⁴ I am grateful to Professor Muller for allowing me to see his unpublished paper from which this is taken.





In proposing “trashthethics”, or “trashthetical literature”, Kloppenburg points to the engagement with the collapsed symbolic order of values in rubbish, the things that get excluded, thrown away, treated as valueless, what does not belong to the dominant system of value. It is in its first insistence a refusal, a refuse-all, of the dominant world of logic and organisation and the laying out of the object world that carries so much cultural weight and significance. What is of significance is the realm of value that is created and the realm of valuelessness that is its counterpoint; the things that get consigned to the bin, thrown away, considered useless. One can only read this as a profound act of dissent on Kloppenburg’s part, dissent from the inheritance of his Reform upbringing with its insistence on the control of nature and the perfecting of the world.

Essential to the modern project was that everything could be measured, used, and, when not of value, was to be excluded, treated as waste, garbage, or rubbish. The *memento mori* and the still life give a clue to the rehabilitation of the object world as the bearer of order and value. Rubbish is something which can contaminate and pol-

◀ 293 | Untitled, scratched Volkswagen door, 1988, FIUWAC

▶ 294 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 105 x 145 cm, 1984, FIUWAC



187-200
FIUWAC
Friedrich-Schiller-Universität
Erfurt



295



296



297

158 | 159

lute, it is the order of exclusion, or what John Scanlan in his book *On Garbage*, calls “a shadow history of modern life”, and can indeed even be viewed as the “uncanny”. Given that this is the fullest discussion of the subject, it is worth detailing Scanlan’s arguments. Contemporary artistic interest in garbage and detritus can be found in the work of Damien Hirst, one of whose installations was cleared away, the Chapman brothers’ work *Hell*, recently destroyed in a warehouse fire, and the consigning of the valueless into new relations by other artists, which is not merely to affirm the realm of value, but to question how this occurs and especially in the revaluation of values of the artistic work, a gesture that has its most profound ancestry in the Duchamp *urinoir*. The domain of ordering is concerned with exclusion, it also concerns itself with hygiene, and the elimination of what can pollute. At the fag end of this is the dream of a disease-free prolongation of life in a well-branded world, in which the ravages of time are offset by the speed at which fashion moves. Therefore one can speak of an internal paradox.

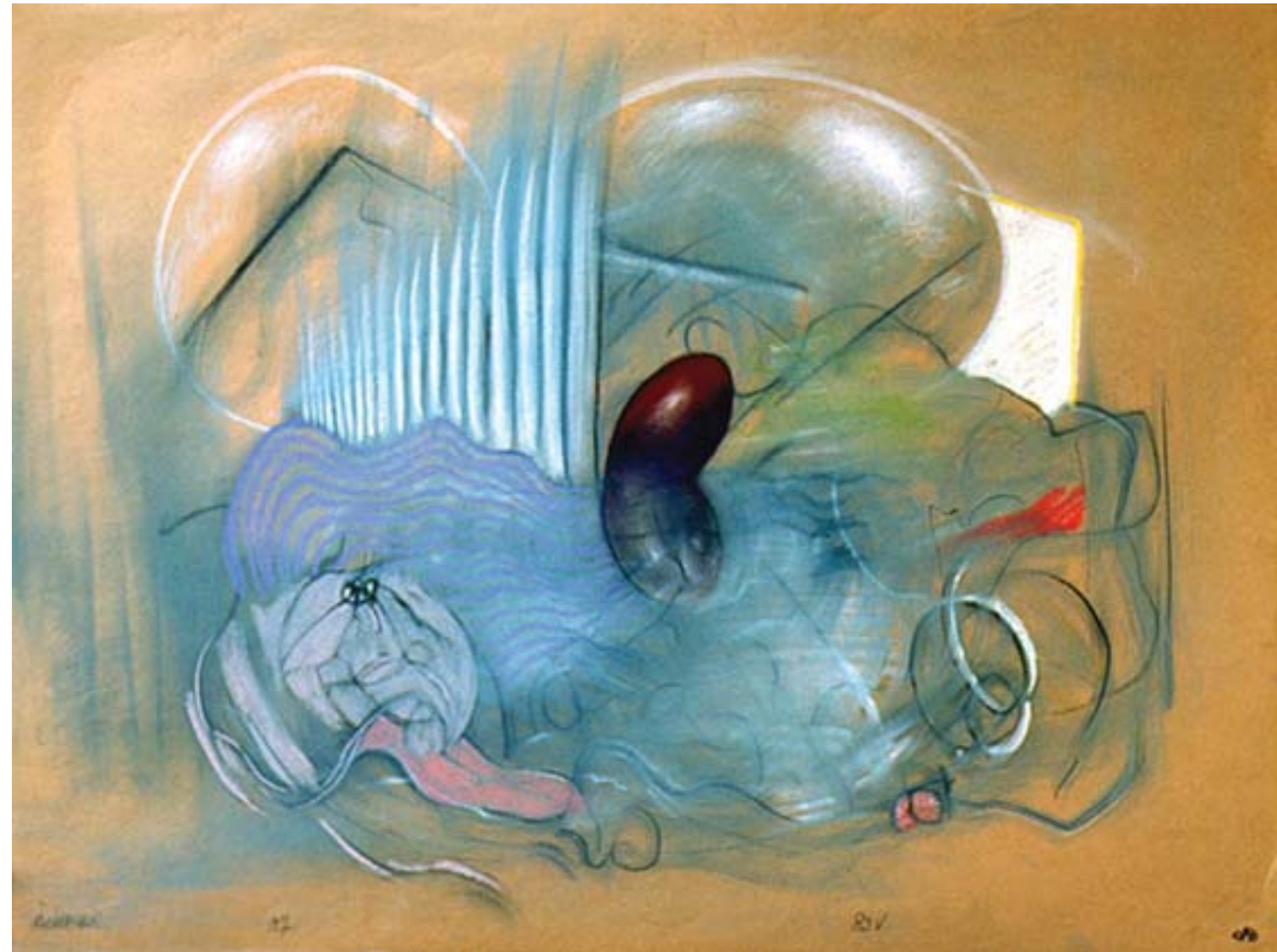
- 295 | Oil paint on Volkswagen door, 1988, Collection Luk and Barbara Darras, Belgium. Photo: J. W. Groenendaal
- 296 | Traffic jam, *The Artchive for the Future*, around 1988. Photo: WB
- 297 | Coming home early (6.59 am), 1986. Photo: WB



298



299



300



301

298 | Ink on board, 10 x 15 cm, 1985
 299 | On the other side of the above
 300 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1983
 301 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1983

There is little doubt that Kloppenburg's "trashthetical litterarture" points to this important process of the social assignment of value, and the deep relation to the control of nature. When Walter Hopps drew the attention of Waldo Bien to the archive of Joseph Cornell, what could be argued about Cornell holds *pari passu* for Kloppenburg. Looking at the snapshot Hans Namuth made of Cornell's boxes in 1969, there is a mixture of objects and boxes with descriptions that remind one of the *Wunderkammer* of Frederik III, engravings of which were published in the early eighteenth century. Besides shells, there are love-letters to Jennifer Johnson etc. Scanlan emphasises that the vast storehouse of the banal and kitsch contains precisely:

items that were connected only in the imaginary world occupied by the artist's life. The interesting aspect of these uncanny creations is that they actually did consist of the everyday, often the crushingly banal objects that form the small and over-looked aspects of, one suspects, a distant childhood where the past can be understood as the debris of a life that somehow continues as a ghost of the present.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ John Scanlan, *On Garbage*, London: Reaktion, 2005.



302

302 | Trashthetical object, nylon stocking and fabrics, undated. Photo: WB



What is different in Duchamp, and in the tradition of the *Wunderkammer*, is that in the former the relationship of the object to the art public creates a genuine hole, in which only imaginary activity is possible. The gap cannot be filled with meaning. In the *Wunderkammer* there is a bridge constantly built between the natural order and that of the "encyclopaedia", and it displays the world in miniature, a point that reaches its logical conclusion in Walter Benjamin's *Arcades Project*, where the passage is itself a miniaturised site of the development of capitalism and also the place where it imagines itself for the future. Cornell's boxes do not depend on any irruption in the object world, these discarded things remain as a presence, a remainder, which are like triggers for the memory, memory of the material past, material that is itself memory. There is no cutting out from some ordered whole the meaning of order, or even in the banality of insisting on a version of realism as the neglected, the discarded, a re-channelling of the perspicuous



305

305 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1985

306 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1985

307 | Untitled sculpture, around 1985.

Note: The work was exhibited at the legendary Museum Fodor exhibition 1985/6. The drawer came from a hardware store around the corner, Elandsgracht. As a young boy K stood almost daily in front of it, at the counter, getting bits and pieces for their business. An example of its contents was nailed onto each drawer. To him it formed a mysterious manuscript, torturing his imagination. Then, thirty years later, it was for sale at the auction house De Eland and became a landmark in *The Artchive for the Future*. The hare skeleton on top, *Lepus timidus* Linné, originates from the Natural History Museum in Leiden. The skeleton was dated from the find in Noordwijk aan Zee, 1886, where the young K had spent summer vacations. The hare would now celebrate its 100th anniversary during his Museum Fodor exhibit. The scientific description "timide" (timidus) is also part of Kloppenburg's own character. In 1996, during the illegal building activities of Stichting de Pelikaan, the sculpture was seriously damaged; the builders stole the clockwork on top and the work was bombarded with cement stains. During the forced evacuation by the City of Amsterdam, in October 1997, it was still further damaged and is one of the thousands of Kloppenburg artworks that are kept hostage by the City of Amsterdam and are now, in 2005, rotting away in containers.



306



164 | 165

307



308

308 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm
309 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 100 x 145 cm, 1985



309

310 | Three black items

view to the domain of the incidental, to act as a critique. This is part indeed of the intense paradox of such an artist's life, that immediate and private things are available for others. This is also the issue of where the memory is located; and secondly it is the question of how things are related. Cornell rarely makes the surrealist gesture which transforms the banal, by the direct action of the artist, into imaginative and conceptual concerns. The things gathered have their resonance from the way in which they are displayed, from the precision of the gathering itself. Things are contained and placed, they are not given special markings, and their settled belonging arranged by the artist is what motivates their perdurance.

One can grasp something personal and private in Cornell, without boundaries, which also adds another dimension, the element of surprise. Unexpected relations are created, and affinities, rather than precise gestures towards the object directly. In some sense we can speak of the deep singularity which these relations open up. Whilst placed together in the context of the artist's choosing, and this is a very fundamental aspect of the interpretation of these works, namely the intention, which often has to be inferred from the scenario of objects, the relational occupations open up domains of suggestion and take one to a private and solitary domain. There is, in this work of Cornell, something of the mystery of inter-subjective communication itself, which the imagination of the artist also primes from his highly personal signature world, something that extends to everything he touches or chooses, keeps and conserves.



310



311

Like Cornell, one can speak of Kloppenburg as a magician of the everyday, a magus of the banal. Unlike Cornell, he has gone one step further in refusing to box or frame the contents within the overall whole of the archive; everything jostles for its own place, eventually gaining a form of sedimentation that belongs to the relation of time and matter, the settling of decay on the long march to transformation. There is sometimes a jolting intention to remove the object, through the tactic of shock and deformation, into a winged hybrid.

An anonymous murmur of things is sounded in the archive as a vast organism which resonates from all its contents. With Cornell, Kloppenburg shares an intense curiosity towards the things of the world, the things that attract attention and to which the gaze is directed. Here it might be mentioned that sometimes these objects were of actual commercial value, in that Kloppenburg frequently went to an art auction house around the corner on Elandsgracht, and would buy items at auction which then entered the archive, sometimes put together with others, and thus launched himself into a surreal, fantasy world, the full expression of which is most clearly seen in his detailed drawings from the mid-1960s which signal the beginning of the archive, or the long series of pastels which showed a fantasy akin to Chagall's, but more ethereal and less rooted in a specific picturing of the life of a community or illustration of particular traditions. In one sense, the intellectual grasp of objects and their



312



313



314

structure, his continuing study of the geometry of things, the nature of solids, is an homage he pays to the body of objects, which he then relates to through an understanding of shape and form. This is part of the tension that Kloppenburg finds most fruitful, derived directly from Goethe's rational morphology; it becomes, in his hands not a seeking of primal forms, but rather a continual setting up of a resonance in the shape of things, which becomes a search for their emergent properties.



- 311 | Neubrückestraße, 2001. Photo: WB
- 312 | Design for Russian Federation flag. F.I.U.ture Collection
- 313 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 100 x 124,5 cm, 1984, FIUWAC
- 314 | *Lenin Observing It from Above*, pastel on wood panel with sickle, 40,5 x 48 cm, FIUWAC

168 | 169



315



316



317



318



319



320

318 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1985
319 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1984
320 | Working in bed

172 | 173



321

321 | Mixed media on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1985
 322 | Mixed media on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1985

There is in some sense a delirious democracy of things, no particular value is assigned to what is placed in the archive, and anything could be so placed, from his own drawings and carefully made pastels, composed at enormous speed, to aluminium buckets, stools, a bookbinder's press, faggots of sticks, discarded car doors, old apothecary boxes, stuffed animals, samples of cloth and materials chosen often for their colour, stucco statues, old bits of machinery, Chinese trays and prints, and one could continue the list fairly indefinitely.

Like Cornell's work, there is no mapping of the significance of the disruptions that bring everything together, always away from the natural order, and always towards the imaginative disorder that is the *fite fuaite* world of the artist's own longing, which one must enter to actually see.



322

174 | 175



323

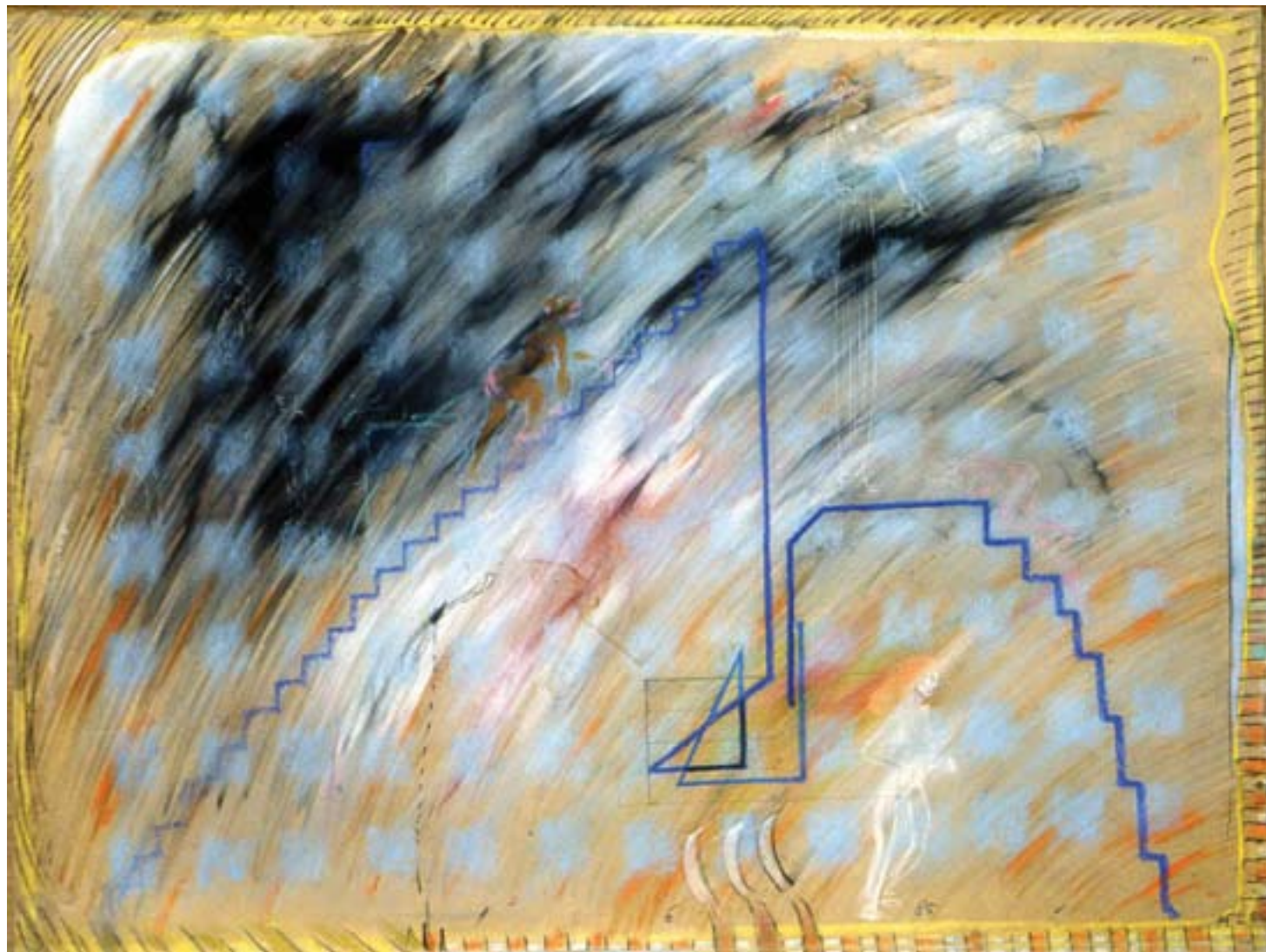


324

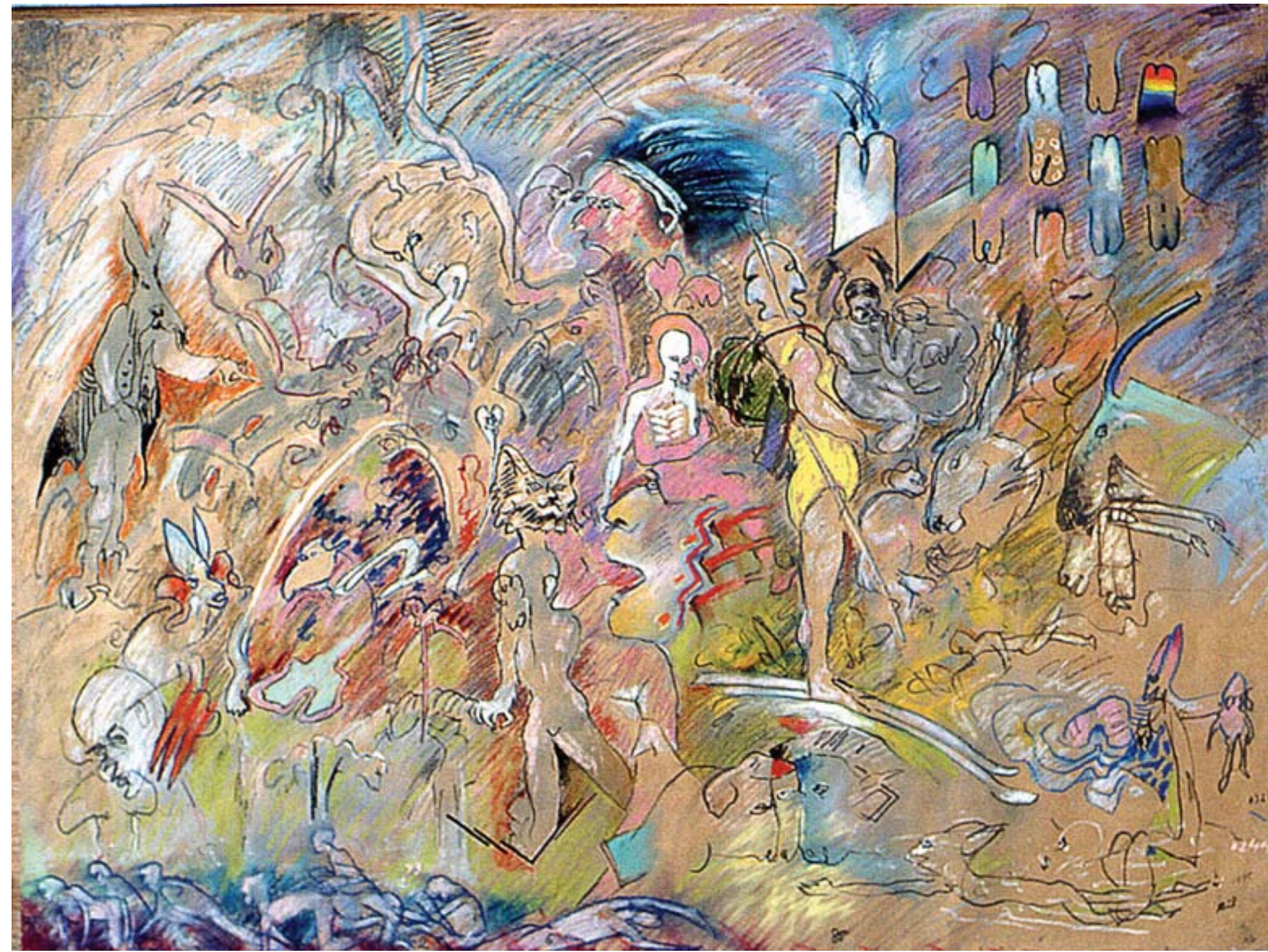


325

323 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1981
324 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1980,
FIUWAC
325 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1984



326



327



328

326 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1985
 327 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1985
 328 | With, from left, Elena and Rahel Neeltje, studio
 Ternaard, around 1988. Photo: WB

Kloppenburg's collecting is a kind of ancient hunting and gathering, his visits to auction houses, his awareness of the days when things of noted obsolescence were left out on the street in Amsterdam, a palliative for the loss of charity in the social domain where a hand-me-down functioned in place of direct giving. Trawls through the flea markets, and the everyday serendipity of bric-a-brac available from the world itself, constituted his larger workshop, the jumble of orders in the city itself, a vast repository and for him a playground in which he cherished the opportunity of detritus. Things could then be brought together away from their branded meanings, and given a whole new situation, renewal by context, and thus a re-animation. But things are also being destroyed in this act, and the relation between the artist and the stuff that is collected and the viewer, who has to try and understand what is then shown, is a complex play. In one sense the question mark placed over the object is the real sign, not what is represented, and certainly not what can be simply construed as image. But Kloppenburg was predominantly fascinated with cast-offs.



329

Again Kloppenburg differs from Cornell, and the more confrontational materials found by Robert Rauschenberg, whom Hopps described in a publication as having an ecumenical capacity for collecting. Rauschenberg wanted to confront the “art world” with these materials which he literally dragged in from the street. Kloppenburg wanted the materials to come together in a complex web and opera of his making, not to make the Duchampian point over and over to a bourgeois art public, nor to confront the white walls of the modern gallery. Rauschenberg drew attention to his difference from Cornell by claiming: “a big difference in our attitudes is that I dragged ordinary materials into the art world for direct confrontation, and I felt Cornell incorporated highly select materials to celebrate their rarification. I love his work but I think that we live in different worlds.”



330

329 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1987
 330 | Pastel on wrapping paper, 75 x 100 cm, 1986
 331–333 | The “flying” pastel strokes, like abstracted birds, have been practiced before while cleaning the sidewalk in front of the Artchive. During this sculptural process, the dirt has gone through a process of metamorphosis and research. When stopped, it was recorded and transferred onto the paper as a “minimal”, “simple” pictorial gesture.

The profane illumination Rauschenberg sought with his combines also contained a polemic against the abstraction and refinement of contemporary art theorising. In some works he openly celebrates junk and the power of combination itself, against the then pseudo-religious arguments around flatness and colour fields. Was there a way out of taste? This issue, which lies at the heart of the development of aesthetics from the first quarter of the eighteenth century, especially in the work of Hume and Burke, has become the “frame of determination” even in the radicalising of the modern. Nevertheless, neither Cornell nor Rauschenberg moved as far away from the problematic as they thought. They were still tied to forms of presenting that were assimilable to the conventions of display and art galleries, and both were still in the deeper “frame” of the picture itself. What is really remarkable about the whole undertaking of Kloppenburg, is his surrender to the destruction of time to open up a future, and his genuine distance and detachment from the commercial world of art through gallery representation and well-cultivated careerism, including the increasing sententiousness associated with the crossovers into the worlds of art from pop singers to drag artists, who rather wilfully took Beuys’s “everyone is an artist” as a licence for further exhibitionism and egoism. This also distinguishes Kloppenburg from the engagements of Arman, Tony Cragg or Cornelia Parker, although Scanlan’s considerations of their work in his *On Garbage* is of value for a broader understanding of the cultural historical context, and even the kind of animosity which greeted some of these artists.



331



332



333



It is homophonic in German with the name for the month of March and also rhymes with *Schmerz*, the German word for “pain”. It is worth noting that the conception became generalised by Schwitters to encompass all of his activities, and as a global concept came to represent his entire artistic ambition.

Throughout the work of Kloppenburg there is one consistent subject, and that is his visual responses to the city of Amsterdam. The city to which he responds is also at his doorstep. His daily rituals often involved going through the city and literally salvaging what it discarded. His earliest works refer directly to scenes at the harbour, and later through the 1950s many of the experimental works are a direct response to features of the built environment. This refers to the physical dimension of the street on which he lived. The houses which are mirrored across the canal, and the reflections of the houses and the sky in the canal, often lead to a kind of swooning hallucination, where the virtual replications deprive the senses of everything weighty or made up of physical resistance. Not only are the houses mirrored across the street, there is also a mirroring downwards in the waters of the canal. Furthermore, one can look through the houses, and this also confuses the issue of the private and the public, with the view into the dwellings of others often allowing a view of a tree or another building behind the house. This penetration of sight, and obscuring of the delineation between the private and public domain, makes the intimacy of the neighbourhood more intense. The small scale of the footpaths, and the intricate street furniture of lamps and advertising hoardings,



336

336 | Waldo Bien, *Death Room Interior*, 1985. Note: The sculpture DRI was carved from a layer of coal, named H5 and found at a depth of 800 meters, in the German coalmine Fürst Leopold Wulfen, Dorsten. The essential consideration in Bien's choice of carbon was the awareness that its blackness, the sublime darkness, originates in light, being a metamorphosis of the colourful plants of the ancient carbon period, and finally would be transformed into light again in the distant future. K accompanied Bien on his working visits to the coalmine. To indicate that later forms of life, like ourselves, were already present in this early period of evolution, as future destiny and potentiality, K drew their forms onto this carbon layers, between fossilised plants. The coal dust that remained from this sculptural process was handed to the American painter Virgil Grotfeldt who has been using it as his medium since, transforming what had been (for Bien) a primarily "sculptural" medium into a new, pictorial dimension, with the esoteric knowledge that its darkness is light. It also triggered a large series of collaborate works in an "open framework" between Bien and Grotfeldt and on one occasion, in Houston in 1997, also with Kloppenburg. The full description can be found in the books: *Waldo Bien* by Patrick Healy, 2000 and *Virgil Grotfeldt* by Patrick Healy, 2003, both published by Wienand Verlag Cologne.

337 | Virgil Grotfeldt, acrylic and coal dust on counter-top, 2000, FIUWAC



337



338

186 | 187

the fossilised blue stone of the kerbs, and the creeping gardens that move over the facades, with trained roses and miniaturised frontages with their small pots, giving the street a physical and cosy atmosphere that in the summer is extended by picnicking on balconies and sidewalks, emphasising the fluidity between street and interior, where the *fête champêtre* of the bourgeois Arcadia celebrates the quiet occupations of the citizens.

There are many works by Kloppenburg directly based on his view of the canal and across the city from his studio rooftop. In his various sketchbooks one has a day-by-day registration of his immediate environment. Sometimes it is the display of domestic items in his rooms, and the objects that were brought almost daily from the streets into the studio to be placed in *The Artchive of the Future*. These could be fetched from the flea-market on the Waterlooplein, or at the nearby auction house on the Elandsgracht where he often purchased items to be used in his sculptural projects. Throughout the sketchbooks the work of preparation is remote and sequences of sheets sometimes are used to explore a single word or object which is then studied through all the ringing of changes which Kloppenburg can make; then one finds a kind of qualitative shift and a whole sequence of pictorial or imaginative scenes unfold, the best example of that being the sequence of pastels, which roughly coincides with the birth of his children and his ferrying between Amsterdam and a farm in Friesland, at the Ternaard dike, and which then trails off after ten years of intense activity, leading to the production of perhaps 900 large pastels, initially on ply-board, and then on large sheets of brown paper.

338 | Drawing "future" life forms onto a carbon layer. Coalmine Fürst Leopold Wulfen, 1985. Photo: WB
339 | Lothar Baumgarten, *Carbon*, FIUWAC



339



THE PASTEL DECADE

Kloppenborg's production of pastels gave rise to a greater public awareness of his work in the course of the 1980s, especially in conjunction with the show at the Museum Fodor during the directorship of Tijmen van Grootheest in 1985. The reception of the show consisted of a mixture of awe and rave reviews, with the "wonderful world of Kloppenburg" being exposed for the first time, and the works read as the culmination of an artist of unusual fantasy and charm.

In an interview, Kloppenburg suggested that the work in pastels was an act of liberation, and that it coincided with the arrival of his children and his learning from them during their exploration of colours, part of the pedagogic practice of a Steinerian education, and that this learning process was a way of releasing him from the rigidity of his interests in the geometrical and the mathematical. This double inheritance can be traced through each of the sequences of surviving sketchbooks, with precise drawings based on geometrical research and what has been developed as cartoon-outline, freehand exercises, with the line of the doodle being explored in a semi-automatic way. There is the tension between the line that is constantly controlled and directed, and the line that is described in its own unfolding. One aspect of Kloppenburg research is the issue of elimination within the constraints presented by the training of written script, the example being the writing of the signature.

- 340 | Cave walking, Zonneberg, Maastricht, 1986
- 341 | Carving the Atlantis relief in the cave wall. Eliane Gomperts assisting with light. Photo: WB
- 342 | Robert Garcet's flintstone tower, nearby in Eben Ezer, Belgium. Photo: WB
- 343 | Zonneberg, 1986. The marl and flintstone pits and remaining corridors. Photo: WB



In one of the important early pastels on board, one can see the line running along the bottom as an example of this elimination. In this work, which he named *The Seven Graces* (271), several interesting aspects of his work come together, especially the esoteric dimension of the colour scales, and secondly the way in which the contours of the figures and the movement of elimination in the line, more correctly a kind of vivid deconstruction, posits his search again as a wayfarer, someone who travels through his own work.

Kloppenborg's personal iconography opened up to the bird and animal life of the Friesian landscape, and through his cultivation of a biodynamic garden he explored the life of colours and of plants.⁴⁶ This interest in the plant parallels Steiner's interpretation of the contemporary age, in which he saw a long cosmogenesis and spiritual evolution resulting in the age of the plant. In this fifth Atlantean age, as he called it, the relation of image and plant becomes the most significant spiritual achievement of human beings in their evolution. Sheets survive where Kloppenburg has stained pages with chlorophyll and haemoglobin, and in which he has experimented with vegetal dyes. There is also a surviving sheet indicating the colour scale and its relation to the human body and to astrological phenomena, and one sees the deployment of these values in the pastel sheets.

⁴⁶ See 272.





344

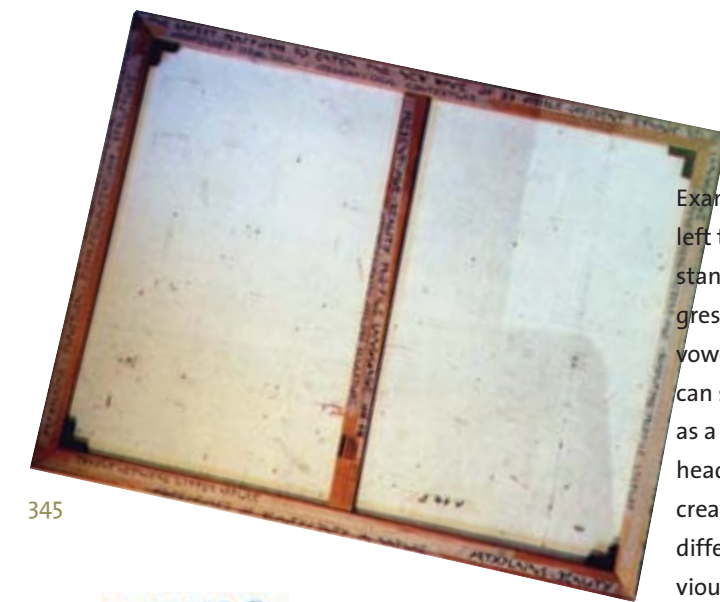
344 | Untitled, photograph, around 1987.
 Note: The mummified body of a cat and the hare skeleton from the Museum Fodor exhibit, here brought in composition with two sculptural forms with the text ROSE and DANDELION. The plants were grown in his biologically dynamic garden in Ternaard, Friesland. Their juice was used as a medium in a series of chlorophyll drawings, the remaining pulp hand-pressed into a human form that represents the skeleton of the plant as well.

345 | Kloppenburg/Bien: Textual Skeleton, 110 x 140 cm, 2001, FIUWAC

346 | Dover, England, flintstone research with WB, 1994. Photo: WB

345

FIUWAC
 Free International
 University World
 Art Collection



Examining the top left of one of these sheets (see 007), and reading it from left to right, we find parallel columns with lists of words, and the outline of a standing figure on a colour scale that begins with purple at the top and progresses down to orange-red. The columns of words indicate lists of minerals, vowels, colours, days and, finally, parts of the body. In *The Seven Graces* one can see the esoteric colour scheme at work, with the various figures gathered as a kind of chorus line, their outlined limbs ending in some cases in bestial heads, as much bird-beaked as human, and the splayed legs often overlapping, creating transparency in the pictorial plane. The *pudenda* are aligned and have different colour distributions, consistent with the scheme outlined in the previous sheet.



346

190 | 191



347

347 | *Three Black Items*, 1986
 Note: As Rudolf Steiner's thinking suggests, cosmology demands for Kloppenburg a constant awareness of the four elements, earth, fire, water and air, and their spiritual translation. The old alchemical symbols used to describe these elements are square, triangle and circle. Fire and air are both triangles, "fire" a triangle standing on its base and "air" a triangle with the point down. Kloppenburg's geometrical artworks should be seen also within the spiritual symbolism of universal characters, of rhythms, energies, sound and silence and of a complementary spatial understanding. Photo: Galerie de Zaal, Delft

348 | Photomontage (using a portrait by Philip Mechanicus, 1952), 15,5 x 17 cm, 1952/2002

This pastel on board is one of the largest ever created by Kloppenburg, and indicates his preference for the rapid medium over slower oils or acrylics, which in part precipitated his decision against painting. The brilliance of the technique is in part related to its speed, but another dimension is also significant; given his commitment to speed and flows, there is a vectoral demand for the colours, it is always his intention that the colour scale remains fluid, and that colours are not set off against each other in blocks. The main consideration is the scale, what one might call the pitch and warmth of the tones, and this Kloppenburg achieves by shooting the colours into each other and combining and creating different hues and tonal values by running and rubbing colours into each other. This requires very intricate and precise manipulation of the chalk, and knowing where to apply the pressure of touch when rubbing colours into each other. His visual sensitivity is so intense, and his own registration of effects so subtle, that he disliked, in principle, fixing the colours, allowing only the effect of the west wind over the sheets, which he would hold outside his studio door, to get rid of excessive pastel dust, and in this manner he hoped to preserve the brilliance of the effects. *The Graces* correspond with the days of the week, the number of fixed planets, the various metals and minerals ruled by these planets, and the microcosm of energy that is further held in the body. The holistic search, which is taking place in the garden, is also at work in his figural transpositions, which here move between the mythological and suggestive to the mysterious and hybrid creations that he favours (see 271).



348



349

349 | *Homage to Marcel Duchamp*, 1986.
 Note: The work was produced in Amsterdam especially for the *Homage to Marcel Duchamp* exhibit in Philadelphia. The skull in K's hand luggage caused some trouble at US customs, as usual. A Duchampian pedestal was found in the Becker Building and used, but later got lost. In 2005 it was replaced with a more archaic one that came from Africa.

350 | Philadelphia, 1987. Photo: WB
 351 | Invitation for Marcel Duchamp homage, 1987

With respect to the elimination of the signature, one finds it running along the bottom of *The Seven Graces*, and fully exploded as a pictorial and active motif in explosive pastel (269), this too echoes his interest in the energy of the surface with which one finds him experimenting in the silk works of the 1950s. Here there is the acceptance of the 'chaosmos', where the order of drawing is released into the free movement of the hand, and the movement terminates at times in recognisable shapes which have been pulled out of the hand's rhythmic exercise. This is like an improvisation, where the hand becomes both a conductor and a performer in one, and the splaying movement which is released from the control of the signature eventuates in suggestive forms and a dense surface of marks, where it seems like small rabbit heads, or hare's ears, start to pop up, and one's visual confusion is a little like seeing shapes in the bole of a tree during twilight, which at once resemble faces and other figures.

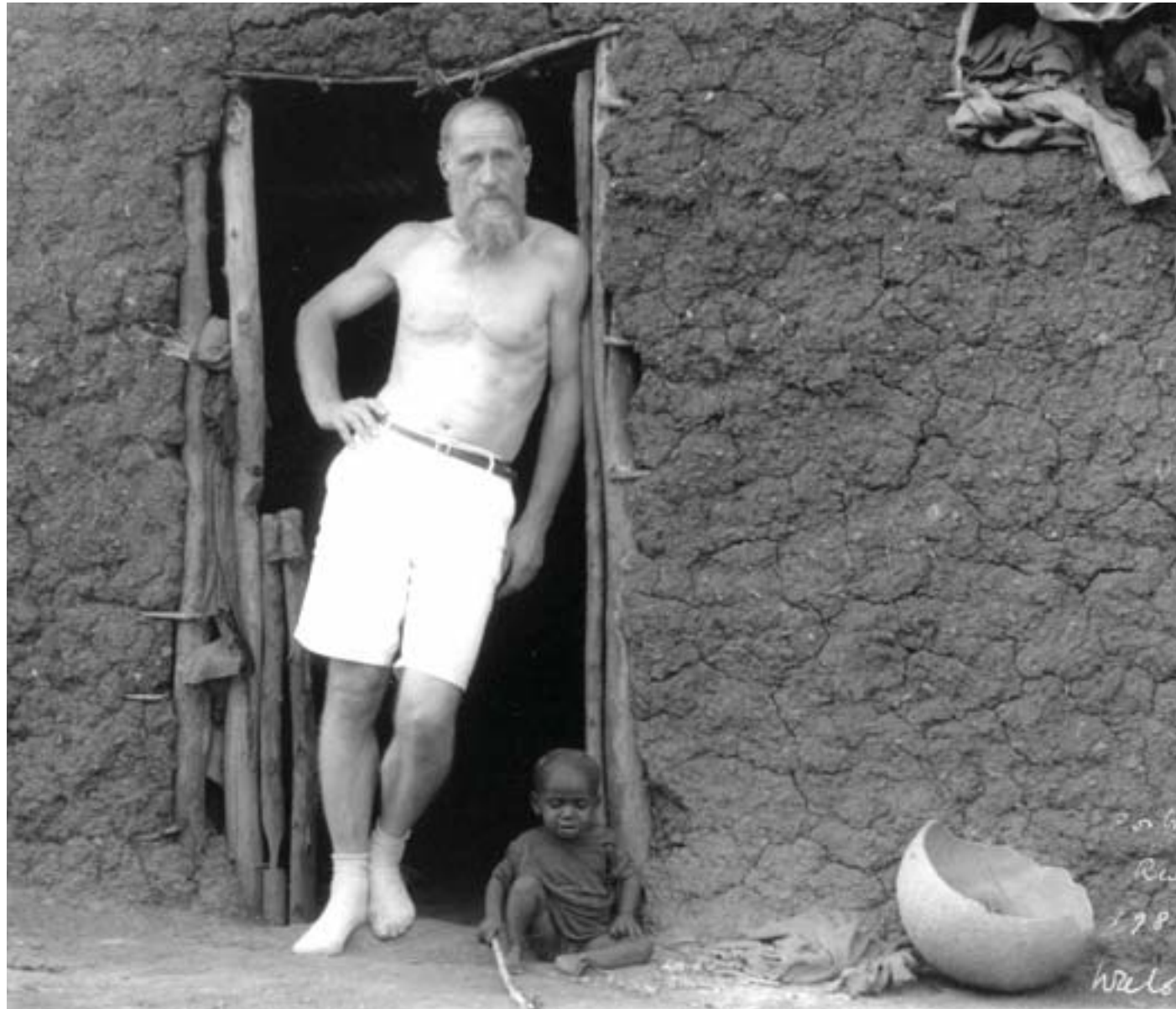
Here there is no particular narrative element. With the movement of the handwriting there is always a temptation to read it as text. Kloppenburg has reversed the work of his earlier years, where whatever he was writing had a destined meaning, for placards, billboard hoardings, advertising material. In the pastel he releases himself to the motoric movement of the hand, and this feels for him, according to Bien's report, like the wind blowing over grass and that he wants the lightness of air to enter the sheets in the speed of the moving line. There is a language in



350



351



352

the motoric, a kind of direct physiology, and the lines resonate with health and wellbeing, as he opens himself to the horizon. The openness here is involved in thousands of exercises in pen and paper, and later there is a state in which he adds shades, and this begins to force him into a situation where he has to decide on what side of the line should one place the shade, how does one deal with the concave, convex shape, mass and counter-mass?

Tackling this problem is a permanent feature of Kloppenburg's sculptural work, so that the pictorial element is not the dominant one; it is as important for him to see the weight and gravity of the lines on paper, and their resilience and capacity for movement. Throughout (269) one sees the play of the mass and counter-mass, and that the figures appear and become substantial; literally they represent an upsurge in the movement, something that manifests itself, out of the ceaseless and restless line. This becoming of the sheet advances no



353

353 | Untitled photo montage, 1989/2005
 Note: The 1989 photo, taken by Bien in Rwanda, was laid, by K, on the floor at Lauriergracht 123, where a specially made little window in the west wall of the building was set with several prisms, and spread changing prismatic dots and rainbows with the hourly progression of the late afternoon; the light oracle. K photo-recorded it happening and this ultimately led to this work.

354 | Trashthetical lecture, Rwanda, 1989

cosa mentale in advance, it rather submits to a process, which – while trained in the strict sense of repetition and notation – improvises from the accepted responsibility of limit in its own freedom as exercise. This also explains why Kloppenburg, throughout his life, has insisted that he is only beginning, and has a horror of the finished and the master plan that is projected towards things. For his imagination there is the enveloping of the forces and activities which are released into the material world, and in which his own responses open out into the unexpected, a movement away from the directed line as having meaning, or the orchestration of directional forces, requiring that he surrender to the experiment of what manifests, and become himself part of the manifestation.

However much the animal life of Ternaard influenced his newly awakened responses to nature, away from the obsessive world of objects which occupied the making of *The Artchive for the Future*, one sees that the release is not towards descriptive realism, which even in the tradition of the Dutch was always mitigated by an undercurrent of symbolic and other meanings. Kloppenburg develops a bestiary. In (279) the circus animals are gathered, but not in any systematic way. He does not gather a particular animal to himself as an image of power or a totem identification. Rather there is a definite play in the imagination, with one of the few realistic portrayals of animals being an ink drawing of two butting goats illustrated in *PPP*, no.13.⁴⁷ In (279) the various animals are both recognisable and not.

47 *PPP*, no.13, Amsterdam, July 2001.



354

at the bottom of the Rhine

Woglinde, Wellgunde, Flosshilde, Alberich

WOGGLINDE

Woglinde! Waga! Waft your waves, ye waters!
Carry your crests to the cradle! Wagalaweia!
Allala weiala weia!

WELLGUNDE

Woglinde, are you watching alone?

WOGGLINDE

With Wellgunde there'd be two of us.

WELLGUNDE

Let's see how you watch.

WOGGLINDE

Life from you.

WOSSHILDE

Woglinde, swim! Woglinde's escaping!

WELLGUNDE

Woglinde, swim! Woglinde's escaping!
Help me capture the truant!

WOSSHILDE

Woglinde, guard the sleeping gold;
Watch better o'er the slumberer's bed
You'll both repent your sport!

ALBERICH

Woglinde, hey, you nymphs!
Now inviting you look, enviable creatures!
From Nibelheim's night I'd gladly draw near
You'd but come down to me.

WOGGLINDE

Who is there?

WOSSHILDE

Someone called from the darkness.

WELLGUNDE

Who's spying on us!

WOGGLINDE, WELLGUNDE

How frightful!

WOSSHILDE

Ward the gold!
Woglinde warned us of such a foe.

ALBERICH

Up there!

THE THREE RHINEMAIDENS

What do you want, down there?

ALBERICH

Woglinde, I spoil your sport
Standing still here, staring?
You'd dive down, the Nibelung
Would freely frisk and frolic with you.



355



356

355 | Self-portrait with candle smoke, on paper DIN A4

356 | Burned sofa, 1990

357 | RHEINGOLD

One of the strangest features of human life is that, when presented with a chart of dinosaurs and other animals, many of them extinct, children have little difficulty, even from the limited range of their experience of dogs, cats, horses, cows and geese, often first introduced in alphabet books, in identifying the range of pre-historic animals, and, as Walter Benjamin once remarked, have no difficulty in their being displayed and assorted in the most improbable landscapes. Something of that jumble can be seen in (279), and this may take one back to the wall hanging illustrated in the school photograph where he is sitting with his sister. On that wall one finds a linograph of an assortment of Australian animals in an idealised landscape from a late nineteenth century Meyer's encyclopaedia. Again this distant memory may be influential in Kloppenburg's way of displaying his animals, rarely singly, and usually in improbable clusters, such as here, mixing antlered and marsupial, a flying fish skeleton, a reposing sheep, and a dancing figure in pink that has human and large hare ears, dancing like the shaman from the caves at Lascaux; the large beaked animal and the marsupial also suggest memories from the early school wall hanging.

The antlered giraffe, and the large bovine creature with a beaked head, point to the redistribution throughout his work; features of the human are shared by the animal and vice versa, and features of one animal are given to another. This hybridity is a fluid continuum in his work, with the shifting of



358

358 | In 1990, K undertakes, after long preparations, new light adjustments and compositional corrections, multiple photo sequences of *The Artchive for the Future*. Stefan Hoderlein, a student of N. J. Paik and Hilla and Bernd Becher, Düsseldorf Academy, is his assistant. The films are professionally developed in Amsterdam, then taken to Düsseldorf where standard prints are made at Photo Koch, several also being printed as their mirror images, for the upcoming work on the *Mirror Palace* series. All photo material is spread out at the studio on Neubrückstraße in Düsseldorf. A sofa caught fire and a substantial part of negatives and photographs were lost, leaving behind a complicated puzzle without a visual record since no contact sheets had been made. In 2002 Bien, almost fully depending on his memory, started to organize the material and to put the puzzle back together, a job that is still ongoing in 2005. The photomontages that can be seen in *The Artchive for the Future* section are the first result. After the "sofa fire" in December 1990 the studio room had to be cleaned and fixed again, a creative process all the way. It would lead to the *RHEINGOLD* work; a full sequence of light registrations in a (re) prepared room. The wall and ceiling were prepared with the ashes from the fire or, one might say, the forced transformation of *The Artchive for the Future* itself into a pictorial medium, where the memory of the old Wagner depot and his own *The Artchive for the Future* are physically present in a homeopathic sense. The painterly gesture is an assimilation of writing, flow form and crystallization intentions. We see Kloppenburg in scholarly conversation with Rembrandt, Turner, Wagner, and jazz...and when light (and shades) come in through the window (Düsseldorf is a city on the River Rhine), Malevich appears on stage in the light oracle.

359–361 | Preparations for *RHEINGOLD*



359



360



361



362

362 | RHEINGOLD sequence, 1990, FIUWAC
363 | Photo: K

shape and mobility, making it impossible to pin down fixed meaning. Again in his work on the Artchive similar visual intelligence is informing many of the objects brought there, and one has to think of a complex poetry of association where the assonance and full rhymes of shape release affinities and create *portmanteau* assemblages that let the words of language function independently of linguistic meaning.

In (280) one sees the coming together of what has been described for (269) and (279), and one finds both the de-constructed signature and the creation of a hybrid display of animals, in this instance. In (280), the *Camel Driver*, one sees on the top right the large protruding head which, when looked at from slightly below, with a blinking eye, shows also the second appearance of a simian head, literally overlapping skulls, and the figure of a harnessed camel being held by a lightly indicated driver. The teeming graphs of the surface – there is no figure/ground separation, the whole having the unity of a stained glass window – plays over the camel and the heads, and is a riot of *sgraffito*, with outlines of the type one finds in the work of pop artists of the day, like Basquiat and Haring. The pinks and yellows of the sheet communicate a desert, and in this instance the swirling graphism of the released motoric is subjugated to the intense pictorial motif, although it is like a mirage constantly in danger of disappearing into the highly kinetic surface.

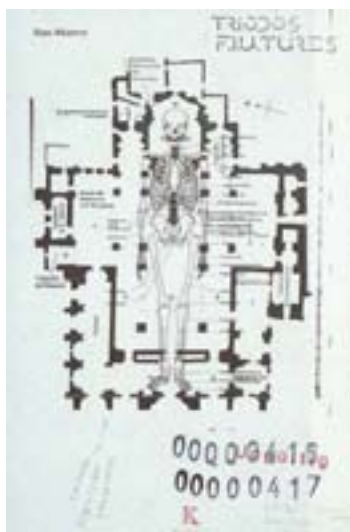


363

198 | 199



367



368



369

367 | Conference room, architectonic commission for Oibio, 1993. Photo: E. Hanfstingel

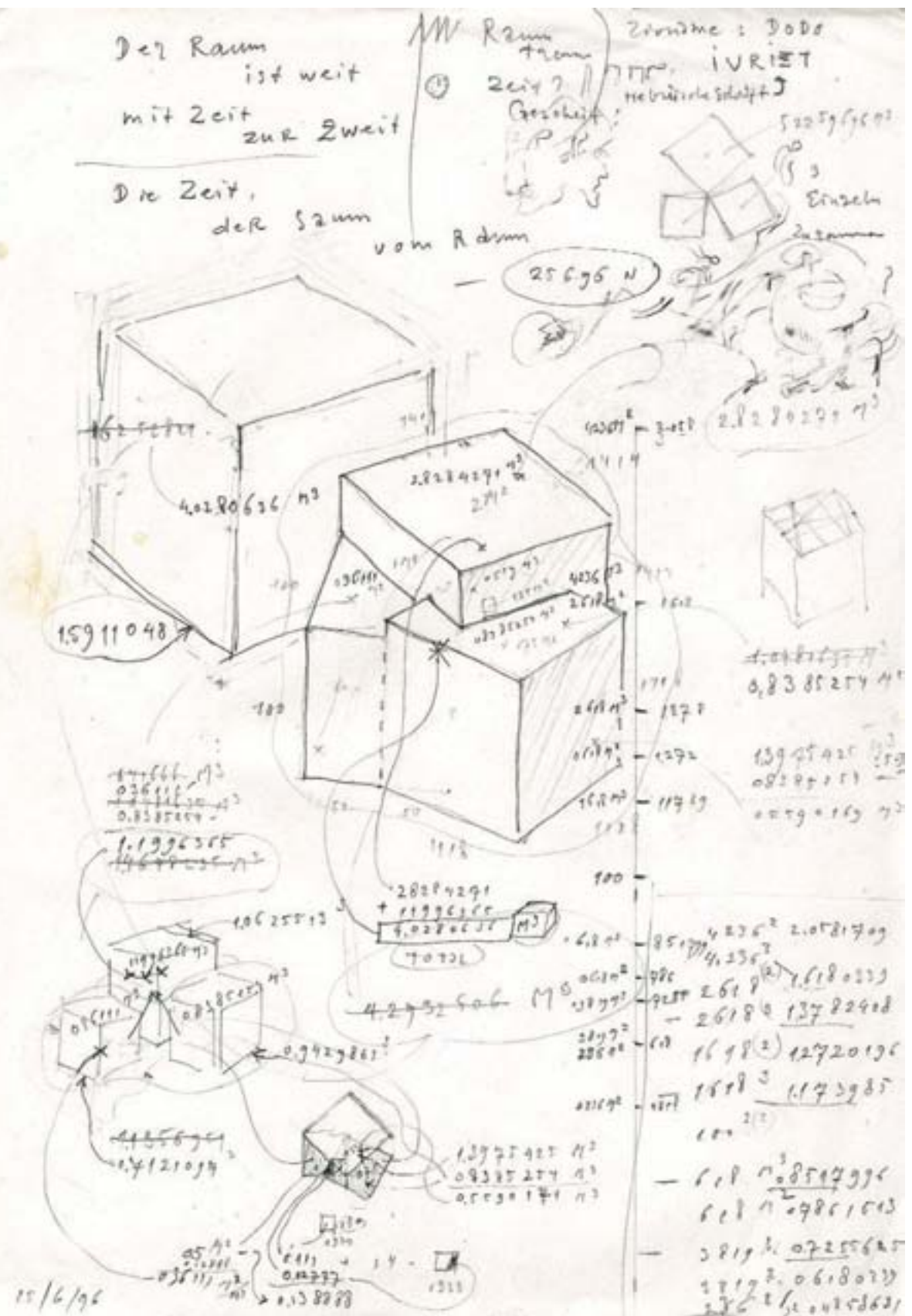
368 | Note: The trigger for this conference room design was a problem, which several architects had worked on but couldn't solve. An iron construction beam of respectable proportions, before hidden in a wall that had been removed to create the required space, caused headaches. Running lengthwise through the centre, and down to two meters from the floor, it would hang like a giant guillotine above the conference table and, psychologically seen, split at forehead any party into two. Instead of an architectural compromise or design solution, an anthropological sculptural solution had to be found, found in the simple manual gesture with both hands, "waving" the dominant construction beam simply away. The light sources were placed into pockets made by simple horizontal cuts into the wall, minimal, like the cuts in Fontana paintings. The wiring of the ceiling lights stayed visible like veins. Two Easter Island sculptures were commissioned, one by a sculptor from Zambia, the other by two young Dutch artists who worked together. The subject Easter Island was foreign to all. The interesting question was: How different would the two sculptural translations be? Indeed, the two Dutch artists made more or less a replica as expected, and the sculptor from Zambia, who had tried very hard to make a replica, had made, as expected, an African Island sculpture. The essence (and difficulty) of real conference understanding, language, transmission and translation, was fully expressed in those two opposite Easter Island sculptures that were, according to plan, meant to "support" not only the ceiling but, as much the spirit of the conference as well. That's what is meant when speaking of ARCHITECTURE. Photo: E. Hanfstingel

369 | Floor plan of San Marco Venice, F.I.U. tures collection. The design for the lectern (far right) is based on a part of the San Marco floor plan.

370 | Lectern for conference room, 1993



370



371

ARTCHIVE FOR THE FUTURE
 TRANSMETHICAL LITERATURE
 VISIBLE LANGUAGE OF A CULTURE (MM threshold MMM)
 ARTICULATION: BIG-LOGOS-BANG SIGNATURE
 ARTXPLAINS: FUNCTION, FORM/COUNTERFORM, STRUCTURE,
 VOICE/FORCE OF BEAUTY/DUTY IN NATURE
 REARTNIMATION ARTMERGENCY FIRST-AID RESCUE SERV. GESTURE
 ARTSCIOUSNESS-QUOTIENT UP-GRADING CURE 4U-,WO-& MANKING
 SOFT-& ARTWARE: ARTWARENESS ARTPSITECTURE CREATURE
 ARTCH4EO LOGICAL ARTCORE SCULPTURE
 ARTXTENDED EYEDEAL DEAL: EYEDEA/ART/EYEDEAL CONTEXTURE
 ARTCHETYPICAL LECTURE
 ARTVENTION!: LIFE → ARTVENTURE!
 ARTXPLORE: ARTVANTAGEOUS ARTMANUFACTURE

372

371 | Volume study for *The Artchive for the Future* pavilion, 1996
 372 | Textual concept for *The Artchive for the Future*, 1997
 Note: Here shown after its restoration. For details: see under 2002, 21st August, Biogr. Section

This return to childhood was perhaps the most satisfying escape, and allowed the most delicate inflections of his own imagination to thrive, away from the demands of creating works for the official annual subsidy, which were usually of a highly constructivist and geometrical character and took him into the retreat of his own fantasy life, which ranged from the abstract of the motoric of movement, to what in some cases are highly complicated, even paranoid creations, at once child-like and fearful. This becomes apparent when, in some of the later pastels, his own erotic longings are brought into the pictorial domain, and this often as an emblem of unresolved tensions.

In another sheet one can see how the intensification of these features also leads to a crowded and highly dense scene. To say "scene" is to make an overly pictorial suggestion, instead one has a sheet that is bursting out like a ripe pod ready to seed the surrounding air and grounds. This sheet seems to have a cluster towards its centre, from which vortex there is a radiating explosion that feels like the birth of something. This exploding from some undefined point, or somewhere so tightly compressed that it can hardly be said to exist, is often a feature of the pastels, in some cases this seems highly generative. In the case of (285), it almost collapses into becoming a Rorschach test, you can spot as much as you can at any moment, and the figure suggests



373



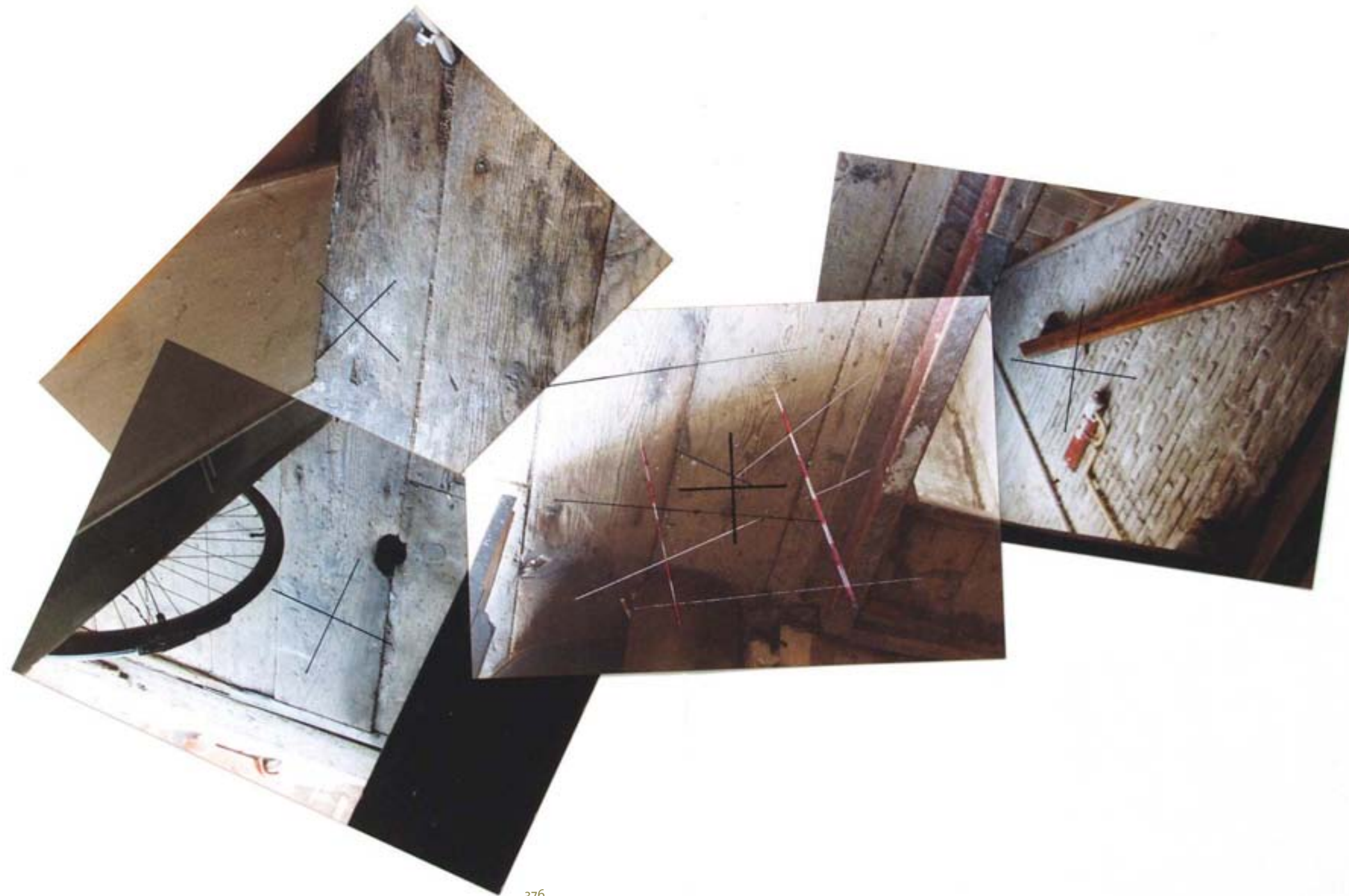
374

373 | Pavilion model, 1996, FIUWAC
 374 | Caspar David Friedrich, *The Sea of Ice*, 1824, Kunsthalle Hamburg



375 | View from the Artchive's rooftop towards the northeast, overlooking the Jordaan, 1990.
Note: At left is the tower of the Westerkerk (Western Church), a landmark within the Jordaan. The Anne Frank house can be found twenty steps to the left.





376 | Sluice One and Two, fifth floor, 1990.
 Note: Sluice One is the entrance/exit via the stairway and Two, the loading/unloading doors at the canal side.

377 | The wheel of the seventeenth century hoisting crane at the sixth floor. All goods for the Artchive were hauled by hand, often deep in the night, undisturbed. Hauling goods was experienced as a sportive action and a bodybuilding treat. Goods would be bundled to extreme weights. The bundling is an art in itself, since the ingredients are of all possible forms, sizes and materials and have to be brought up safely. Photo: G. Gussenhoven

what looks like a Kalahari bush man, hiding in the grass and holding onto a stick, or skulls, birds and rabbits in a riot and thicket of tufts with the fretting of the downward lines pouring into the scene like brimstone, and have something of the complexity of a plasma explosion. The closer one looks, the more there is to see, and again this dense compression is also characteristic of some of his drawing sheets, in the tiny corners of which one finds imagined scenes and events, which are not narrated according to any particular script, but jumbled and placed together without emphasis or directing consequence. You are free to see what you want.

Looking to the top left, one sees what looks like the heads of three chicks, overlapping each other from behind a thicket of blue, which has tadpole shapes swimming in and around it. Slightly below the outline of a human head, directed towards the centre, rabbits with angelic wings seem to be in concert. Further away from them, other figures and heads, including the hunter, appear. All of this is co-positing on a ship's-hull shape below, and it seems that the razzia of shapes is carried in some strange bark that has emerged from the intermingling and the range of colours themselves. This mobility is intensified by the use of short accents of white pastel stick, giving a swinging-hammock lilt to the whole composition. It is as if the artist has dreamed up a strange net,



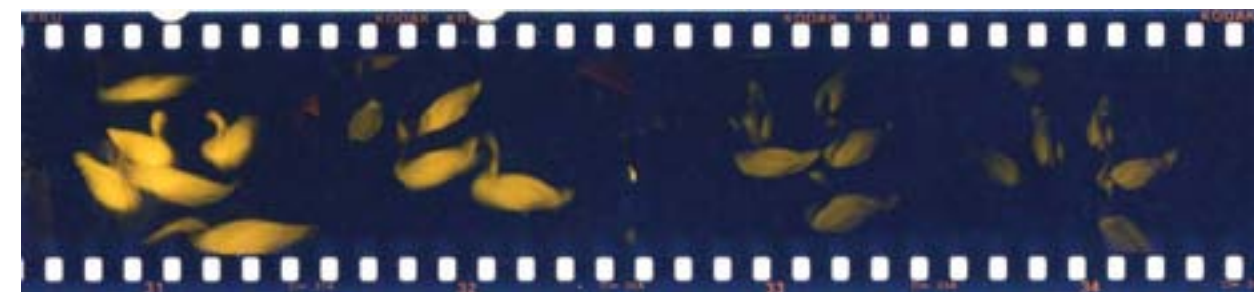
377

378 | *The Archive for the Future*, fifth floor, with a view to the Lauriergracht, 1990. Note: Collected goods were either carried up over the staircase or hoisted up by hand.





379



380

379 | *The Archive for the Future*, Volume 1, fifth floor, 1990

380 | *Swan Ballet*, 1985. Note: In the lower left of the opposite page one can see a round hole in the floor, an old passage for a rope. If one would stand in front and look through, one could see the canal far below and the Swan Ballet, especially beautiful on clear winter nights and during the full moon. Photo: WB

381 | Giuseppe Arcimboldo, *L'hiver*, 1573, Louvre

382 | Marcel Duchamp, *Nude descending a staircase 2*, 1912, Philadelphia Museum of Art

212 | 213

in which everything is being captured and released at the same time. Once again the energy is one of the line exploding, a kind of unfettered *jouissance*, which splays out like the spilling of all the chalk and lines, and results in this riot of suggestion and shape. These are among the most intricate of the pastels, and require detailed study, before one becomes fully aware of the world within worlds that the slightest suggestion of line opens up. It reflects in part the freedom that Kloppenburg himself says he derived from his relationship to his children's lives.

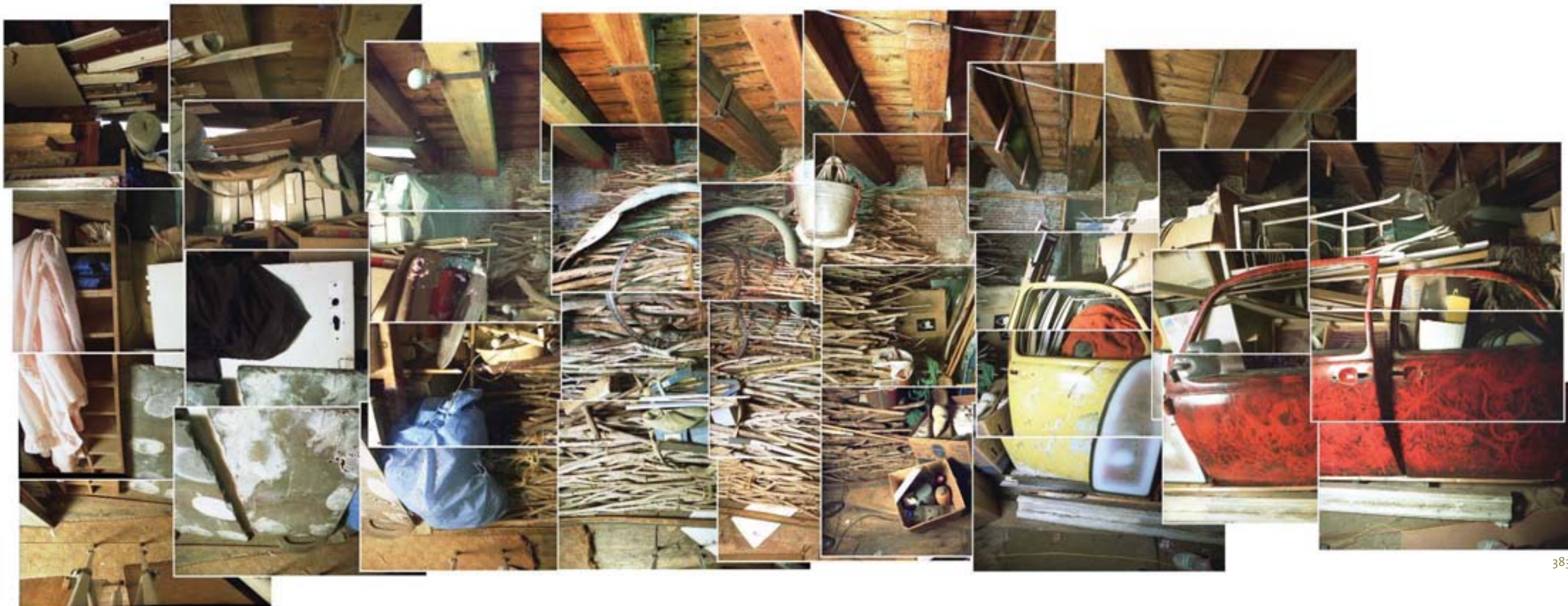
In other pastels we find other concerns and indeed very different atmospheres. There we can point to what can be described as a "missing" story. There are clearly narrative elements; in two examples, (288) and (289), this concerns a family group, and a wider host of characters, human and non-human. In (288), what looks like an adult couple with a child nearby are engaged in conversation, while in the foreground there is a figure which has been killed by a single arrow, parallel to the edge of the area in which the family group is placed. In an ellipsis around this group, various animals, a cat pushed against a group of falling figures, tooth-shaped figures with animal and human features, the hanging mask of a hound, dog, cats and a parrot figure. Above this, in the upper zone, there is a large rabbit, on whose spine a human figure is stretched out, and above and inverted, a long line of figures, which seem to occupy a processional space in a cave.



381



382



383

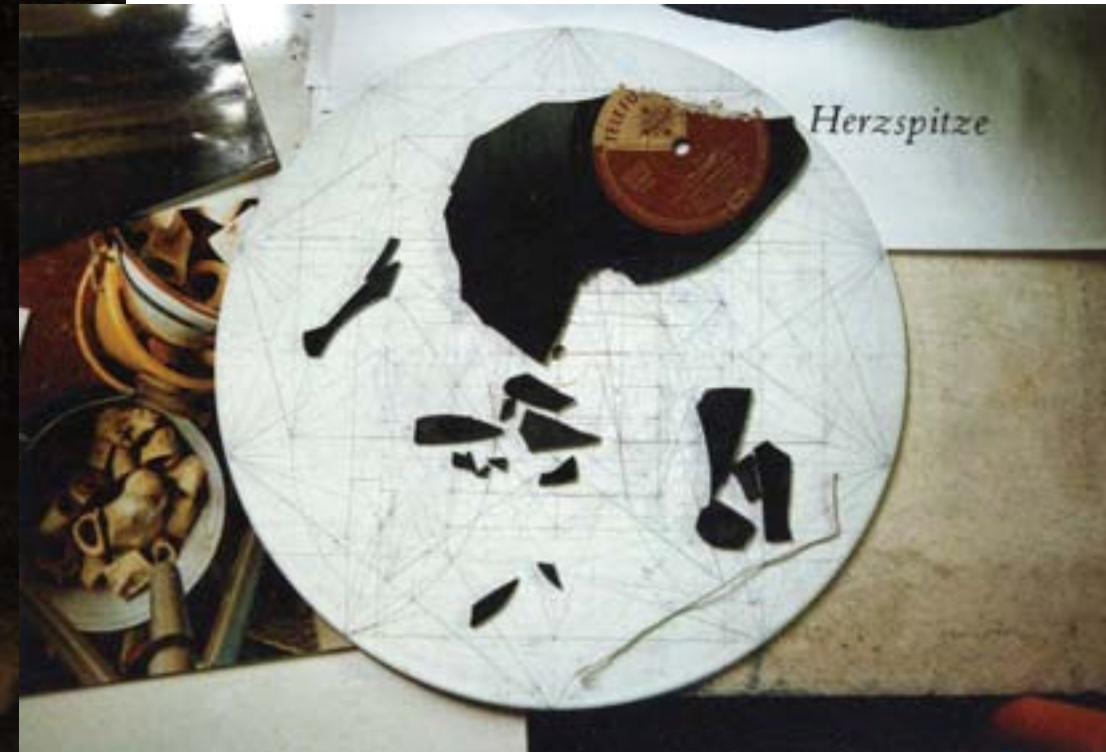
383 | *The Artchive for the Future*, Grand Corridor, fifth floor, 1990

384 | *The Artchive for the Future*, Sky Light Installation, fifth floor, 1990



384

The whole thing seems to suggest a primal scene, in which human and animal, the family group, and the domesticated and wild animals are all brought together. The human as the quarry of hunting, without any specific indication of a marksman, and the inverted procession, suggest ritual sacrifice and primeval conditions. What is also suggested and echoed in (289) is the danger in which the family is placed, and in the latter pastel the edenic moment is recapitulated, except that the winding serpent seems to represent a direct menace to the female figure. The gestures and expressions on the faces of the figures show horror at the coiling danger, and this seems to be an interruption to the paradisaical scene, in which elements are shown, still undisturbed,



385–387 | Grand Corridor, 1990.
 Photo 386: WB, Photo 387: D. Toussaint
 Note: A chain of independent artworks is hidden in this section. After Kloppenburg, in 1972, acquired the studio farmhouse at the dike in Ter-naard, the presence of the sea resulted in several artworks. One of them (see 387) can be seen on the right: a cube open at both ends made of metal plates measuring one square meter, hidden under a triangle of branches covered with tiny salt crystals, like a roof. Those branches came drifting ashore at high tide, especially at full moon, when the harvest was done (see 386, 1985, K in the centre) and they were carried over the sea dike to the house. Later, after having been dried in the wind, they were carefully transported to Amsterdam where the work was installed in the Artchive (photo on the left). The numbers on the photo are orientation marks for the index description that was started in 1996 with the author, Patrick Healy, in preparation for the upcoming transfer of *The Artchive for the Future* into the Collection of Museum Schloss Moyland in Germany.

with an amusing and witty scene, for example a hen on a miniature sleigh, and a goat carrying its kid, birds, rabbits and other animals engaged in preening, or simply placed as silent observers. The root of the tree from under which the dragon serpent is rattling, is being pulled by a small blue figure, and above the tree where the shocked figure of the female is being absorbed in the bole, another human figure is floating on a sledge.

The elements of death and violence in the scene gain a certain edginess from their lack of narrative indication, placed there as ruptures in the fantasy, against which the fantasy is defending itself just as much as it is celebrating them. This element of fantasy is intensified by the floating figures and their lack of coherence in terms of ground or placement in the overlapping zones of the picture itself. It is the viewer's fantasy that is being provoked; Kloppenburg does not dot the i's and cross the t's.

Considering the pastel of *The Shepherd*, (295), there seems to be a bringing together of the keeping and holding of animals. A single upright figure holding onto a shepherd's crook is placed in a jungle of figures and beings. At the very bottom of the pastel a small black dog placed as an anecdote, barking towards the whole m \acute{e} l \acute{e} e of supernumerary beings, feathered bird masks, bulldogs, tooth-headed terminals on outlined trunks, zoomorphic meanders that result in legible shapes which quickly dispel the easy sense of recognition. Something like a spectral antelope runs through the scene, and the profiled heads are stark and not identifiable.





388 | *The Archive for the Future, Grand Corridor, seen from back to front, 1990.* In the late afternoon this assemblage would be the scene of a dramatic play of light, a ballet of twirling shadows and forms.



389



390



391

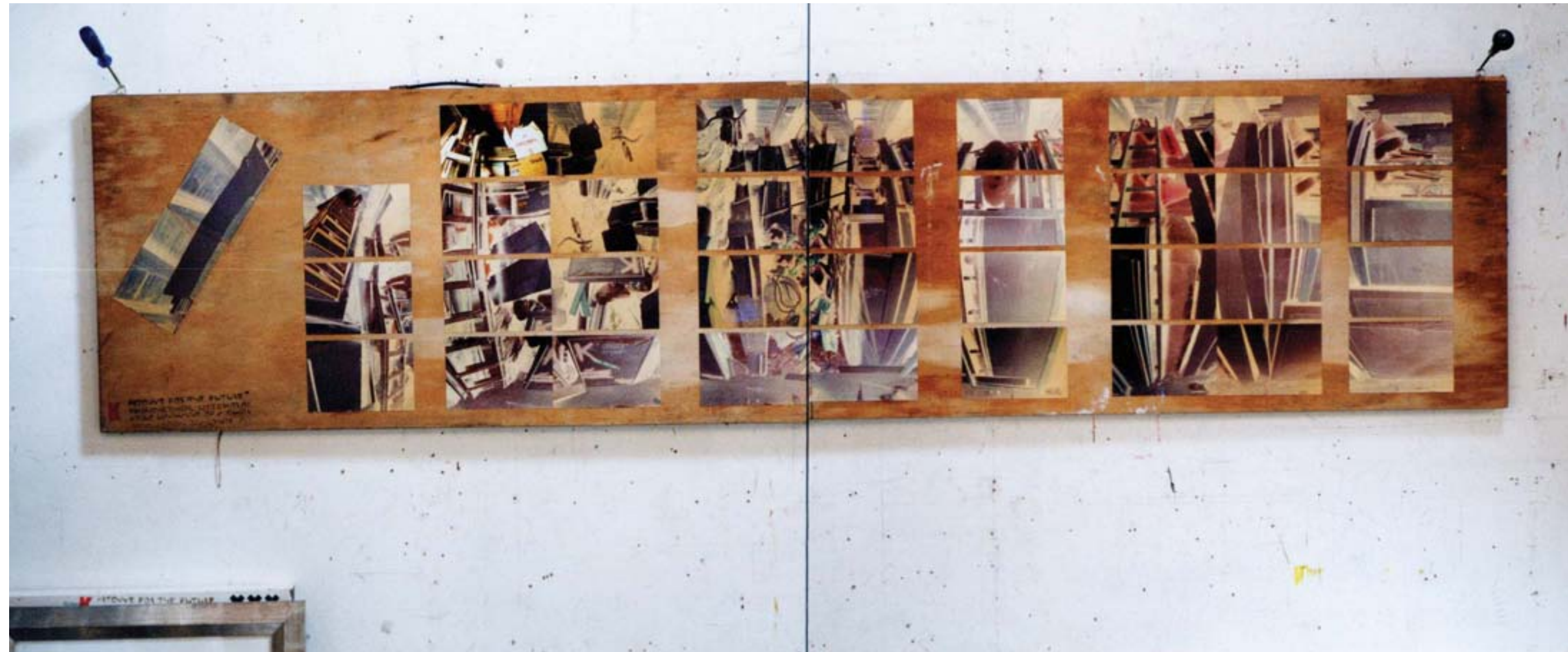
In some cases the hybrid and grotesques of the imagination are in an act of transformation, and it is as if one is catching the moment of metamorphosis. This is the process in the life of the plant that is also of greatest interest, how in each stage a previous stage is both cancelled and preserved, and how the form of the plant emerges from the beginning and the end in a constant dialectic tension. In other words, there is something interactive at every stage in the transformation, with the elements of the living pushing against and shaping what has already been given and this as a tension towards its own development.

In (301) this is clearly the case of a bird-human moving into another realm of air from which come falling beings, the stark white outlines are held under an umbrella shape in which the dominant beaked figure is adopting a posture of flight. Sometimes this transformation seems like a dissolution, and in a series of motions viewed from different points, the continuum is made to energise another figure into which one shape is morphing. In (339) this also involves a complex scene with a small figure, the image of the artist himself, who often obtrudes into the scenes, standing beside an easel, or blackboard, under which there is a garden chair and wrought-iron table; above there are radiating semi-circles of lines and below to the left what seems like a goat leading a procession of human figures that may be seen as dissolving into the goat shape, a satyr image which is enforced by the vampire creature to the lower left in dark, Prussian blue chalk.

389 | Untitled, 1994, courtesy Gallery De Zaal, Delft, NL
390 | *Coca Cola*, Trashthetical object, 2002
391 | Untitled, 1988, FIUWAC
392 | *ARTificial gravitation*, 1990



392



393

393 | *The Artchive for the Future*, Photo negatives on pasting table, 60 x 244 cm, 1990.
 Note: In this work the Artchive section on the fifth floor is presented in “Real Time” Zones. Kloppenburg’s definition of “Real Time” is in itself more the expression of his doubt about our common definition of so called physical “reality”, than the answer to such a question. Within the esoteric understanding, the physical world is a manifestation of the spiritual, the “other” world.

The slight indication of a posted structure and the wave band notation in white, like a radio sender, suggests communication and transformation, and this is signalled by the visible word “bau”, which can be seen on the right corner of the easel structure. Eventually one has to surrender to the endless suggestions. Attempting to create a meaningful narrative almost always collapses because of the abundance of marks and suggestions, this complication is an essential part of these works, and even when they seem at their most naïf and engaging, even charming, there are always lurking and luring details which challenge any easy reading. In that sense they are not illustrations as in Chagall, with whom his work has been compared.

Even in the highly legible scene which seems to have been inspired by Kalahari bushmen pictographs, with a swarm of figures topsy-turvy and helter-skelter on the sheet (306), to the bottom right there is a small ledge, with what could be a pterodactyl and a small figure with a hat, and groups astride a rocky outcrop, which are like odd spectators on the scene of falling couples, animals and embracing figures and stealthy and striding warriors, all jumbled together through the sheet, giving an expectation as on a day of creation. Another group of figures in (305) are sitting by the waterside, a figure is in bondage below, and a swan and woman move off to the left; there are horse’s heads, and splayed figures, others crouching with zoomorphs as accompaniment. The whole scene seems like a *seraglio* of shapes in which intense erotic experiences – between the painful and the highly idealised – are rendered in comic book notation, where Disney meets the Marquis de Sade. In some of the pastels these erotic scenes are both more vivid and explicit. Fears circulate in the claustrophobia of flesh.



394



395

395 | Dutch woman, Amsterdam. Collection Dr. Zuckerk.
Note: K took this photo during an anthropological
exhibition in Philadelphia, 1987.
396 | Untitled, reworked photograph, 28,5 x 20 cm, 1991

From the time of the birth of his son in November 1974 to the opening of the Fodor exhibition in 1985, the rate at which the pastels are produced shows a tendency to increase. One can trace the use of pastel in conjunction with the teaching of his children on small A4 note-blocks from 1976, later using larger sheets of wrapping paper, 100 x 150 cm, and reaching the largest scale with large pieces of plywood sometimes reaching a size of 150 x 150 cm. The exhibition, which ran from December 1985 to January 1986, was enormously well received. Two examples of the reading of the work from reviews of the show are worth citing and analysing. Ben Haveman in his "The Wonderful World of Kloppenburg" also refers to *The Artchive for the Future*, but the precise relationship of both is never specified. He speaks of Kloppenburg conjuring up one wonderful representation after the other, and noting that you never knew what to expect. He cites one hand-written sticker that he saw: "You can remove yourself from the picture provided you can find yourself in the same incarnation again". Referring to the pastels, he suggests that they often represent allegories in which mythological creatures play a role, describing them as "magnificent pastel drawings on wrapping paper reminiscent of Chagall". He adds an important quotation by the artist, which can be further supplemented with comments in the reception by Pieter Heynen; Havemann quotes Kloppenburg as saying: "I aim to start working without preconceptions, without all those concepts we have in our heads, I want to switch on all the unconscious motives I've had simmering for so long ... that is how my hand is gradually directed. It is no plagiarism of optical reality though".



396



397 | *The Archive for the Future*,
fifth floor, back, left section, 1990





399

399 | Kloppeburg / Waldo Bien: Double Dutch, photomontage by K, in polder frame by WB, 79 x 82 cm, 1990 / 2000. Photo: D. Former
 Note: The work is a fine example of the artists' cooperation in an F.I.U. context. In principle, independent works assimilate in social contact without domination.

400 | *The Artchive for the Future*, fifth floor, back left, 1990

Here Kloppeburg does not simply transpose the conscious and the unconscious, in which there is a straightforward theory of mimesis for the artistic act. This is what his phrase "plagiarism of optical reality" means, he is not simply lifting things from another source, much in the way realists claim to be taking only what is given in reality as a subject.

All of Kloppeburg's activity was always rich in threshold experiences. This is also part of what he called "trashold" in his statement, that is, what is gathered and collected between the hours of sleeping and waking, the boundary areas and the very border that are between sleep and dreams and waking. Given his nocturnal habits of work, one could say that he is also very sensitive to the time before dawn, the slow shifting of the morning through the grey zones. Sometimes in Northern Europe the light is as thick as Cuban cigar ash, with its even rings of consistency slowly bringing illumination through a small window into the deep interior of his rooms in Amsterdam, and this in contrast with the five o'clock bright morning of June and July, where the dawn is often blood orange across the eastern sky, with brilliant light illuminating everything, or in the evening after spring, the light entering his room until 8 p.m. causing rainbows through prisms placed in various corners, to fall on disparate objects.



400

230 | 231



401

The concept of things simmering and growing also indicates the enormous attention of the artist, waiting and often returning to the same project over years, often developing an idea through innumerable sheets until he is able to give it a form that he finds satisfying. This research on form employed much of his waking day, and then through the process of drawing, sometimes lying in bed through the evening hours, the motoric of the hand would release the various shapes and visual details he remembered, and this would in turn result in moments of arrest and manifestation.

Part of the research inspired also by his daily “spiritual” reading was the search for reality. Initially, as Heynen observed in his article, he had been focusing on geometrical shapes. One can point to a number of surviving works that relate his research on the golden section, and the search for a satisfying system of proportion. To Heynen he described this work as “a traffic island for intellectuality, it was a kind of efficient immune system against absolute reality”.

Such a reality would be too unbearable, and he treated the work with geometry, making calculations as a kind of anaesthetic. These are the works that belong to the an-aesthetic, despite their rigor and precision, and it is in the free play of the imagination, committed to the sheets of brown wrapping paper and the plywood, that he surrenders his own spirit. This is often not without drollery, and some of the works share this with the *rincaux* of late medieval manuscript illumination, in which animals and birds often disport through vegetal and floral borders of richly ornamented scenes, or the highly



402

professional script of scribes, which are clearly unrelated to the content of the text, often sacred, of prayer books, or books of devotional hours, and represent the rich phenomenological terrain explored by Bachelard, in what he calls “reverie”, where during periods of intense concentration images literally slip out as if from nowhere, with a directness and simplicity that belongs to the ethereal manner of their manifestation. This is often called daydreaming. Kloppenburg also emphasised to Heynen that he very much admired the intelligence of animals, that he did not want his drawings of various animal forms to express either symbol or meaning, rather he wanted his work to incite the feeling of music, the fundamental rhythms and tones that are available to us in the immediacy of listening.

Bas Roodnat in the *NRC Handelsblad* made further telling comments on the threshold and hypnagogic element of the work: “A reality he perceives in a sort of trance, when dreams are dreamt and drawings are made during the silent nocturnal hours”. Roodnat also provides a short exphrasis of the exhibition, one of the few surviving direct accounts, and it is worth quoting in full, because it shows the relationship between the work on the pastels and *The Artchive for the Future*:

401 | *Lincolnshire*, Trashthetical Litterature object, 1995.

Photo: WB

402 | *Untitled*, photomontage, 75 x 49 cm, 1990, from the series *Mirror Palace*, 1990



403 | Mixed medium on paper on wood panel, 54 x 157 cm, 1996, FIUWAC.

Note: Panels like this are found on the street and their suitability to be worked on is tested on the spot; a first sketch is set up in short gestures, with a pencil or scratched in with a rusty nail and the panel then taken home, placed close to his bed to observe and work on. In this case it was worked on over a period of several months. Because the original surface was considered too white, it was prepared with a beaten raw egg. The frame originates from the visit to Rwanda in 1989; a transformation of old steel chemical barrels – circular – by hand-forging them on location into flatness – straight lines and angles. In this case, the geometric definitions request our tolerance; the local African understanding of precision is of another order than in the Western world.

404 | *The Artchive for the Future*, back, right section, fifth floor, 1990

Something of Kloppenburg's working environment takes shape in the hall of the Fodor, where some of his belongings are standing and lying on the floor. A cupboard with sixty drawers, out of which grow the horns of a cow. On top of the cupboard, an old clock, a bunch of bananas, a hatbox, the skeleton of what looks like a cat [hare, red]. On the wall some pastel sketches and a weathered school plate with animals from Australia. There is a worn out easy chair covered with the Dutch flag. Furthermore: cardboard boxes, a flannel blanket, trays with hundreds of pieces of crayon, a bunch of branches and lots more. ... At night over all this shines the light of a lantern or the moon which creates an ambience in which the fantasy creatures like to appear. It is magnificent work.

The declamatory and ringing endorsements were to be a shock for the artist, who was on Bien's account besieged in his home with offers to buy the pastels. This had the effect of bringing the pastel work almost to a halt. Thus the chronology of their production is effectively between 1976–1986. The volume of production can be calculated at somewhere under a thousand large sheets. Some of these have been sold, and some dispersed, others disappeared. Within the Artchive itself there were definitely folders full of pastel sheets, probably





405 | *The Archive for the Future*, back, right section, fifth floor, 1990



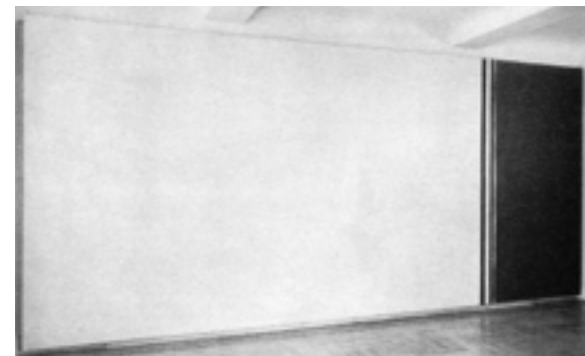
406 | *The Archive for the Future*, back, right section,
fifth floor, 1990



407

half of his total output; during a ruinous alteration of the upper floor of his studio by builders, in which severe damage was done by water-logging and falling debris, over 200 sheets were directly damaged. These are still the subject of an insurance claim. It was after the exhibition that he turned to the car doors, using the vocabulary of the pastels on another medium and with different techniques, and exploring other aspects of their dimensionality. Good examples of these are (296, 297).

In some instances one can speak of a straightforward pictorial scene, for example in *The Acrobat* (308), and *The Avenging Horseman* (309). The subject presents itself in a relatively straightforward way, legible and easy to grasp. The acrobat scene includes again his device of inverting direction in some part of the upper zone, where twelve small figures are engaged in a dance, expressing a eurhythmic movement, and underneath there is a distinct group set against a pyramid, with one figure crouched towards a dog, and to the right another group entangled in a ring. The principle accent is on a single figure in the centre doing a handstand with its legs scissored in the air. At the extreme right corner it is raining figures accompanied by what looks like a lynx. In the picture one also finds the head of a horse and an ox, there is a couple set against a wig-wam tent shape, and balls in the foreground piled in threes.



408

407 | Double exposure, 1990
408 | Barnett Newman, *Uriel*, 1955, private collection, London



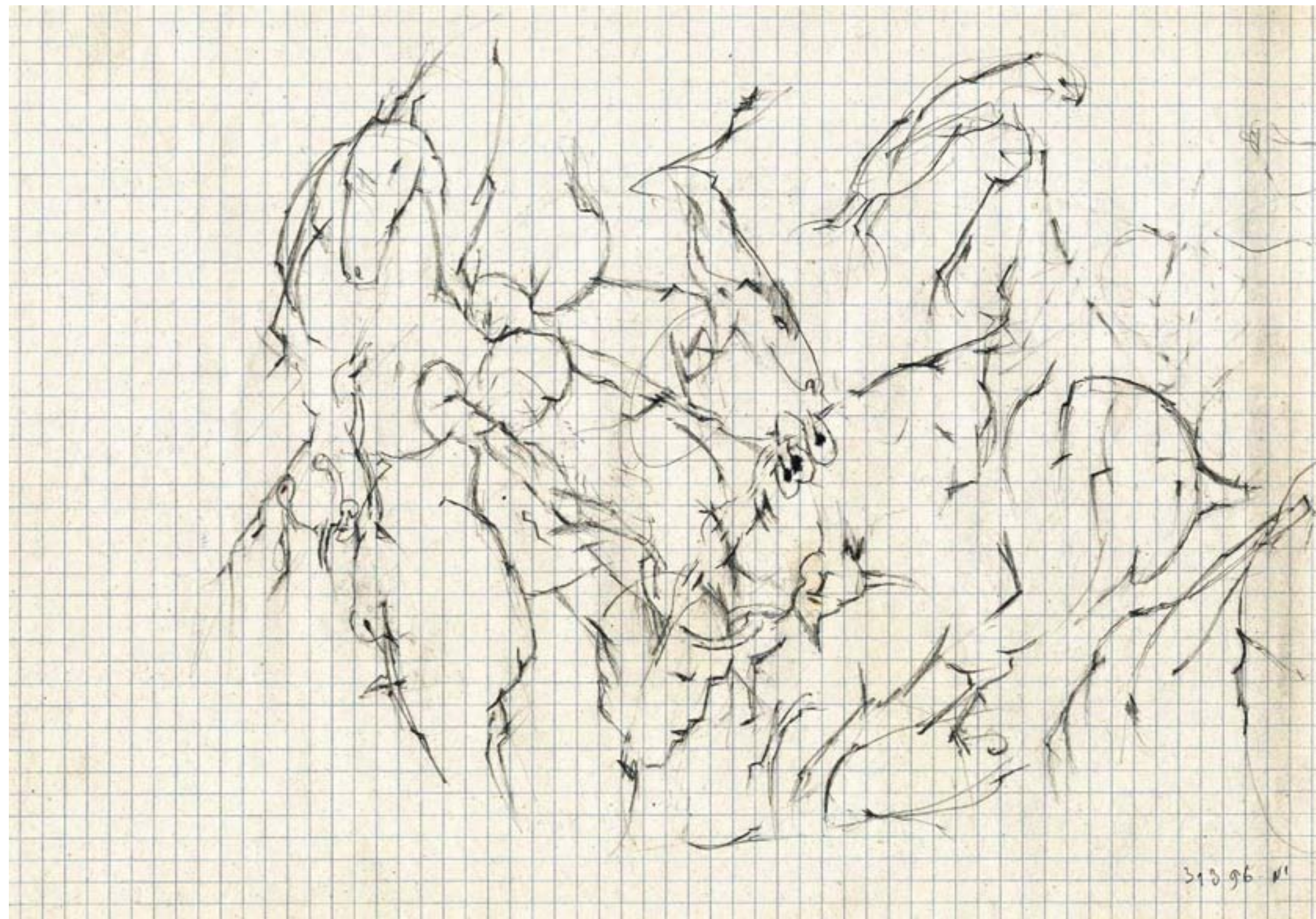
409

409 | *Archangel*, 1990

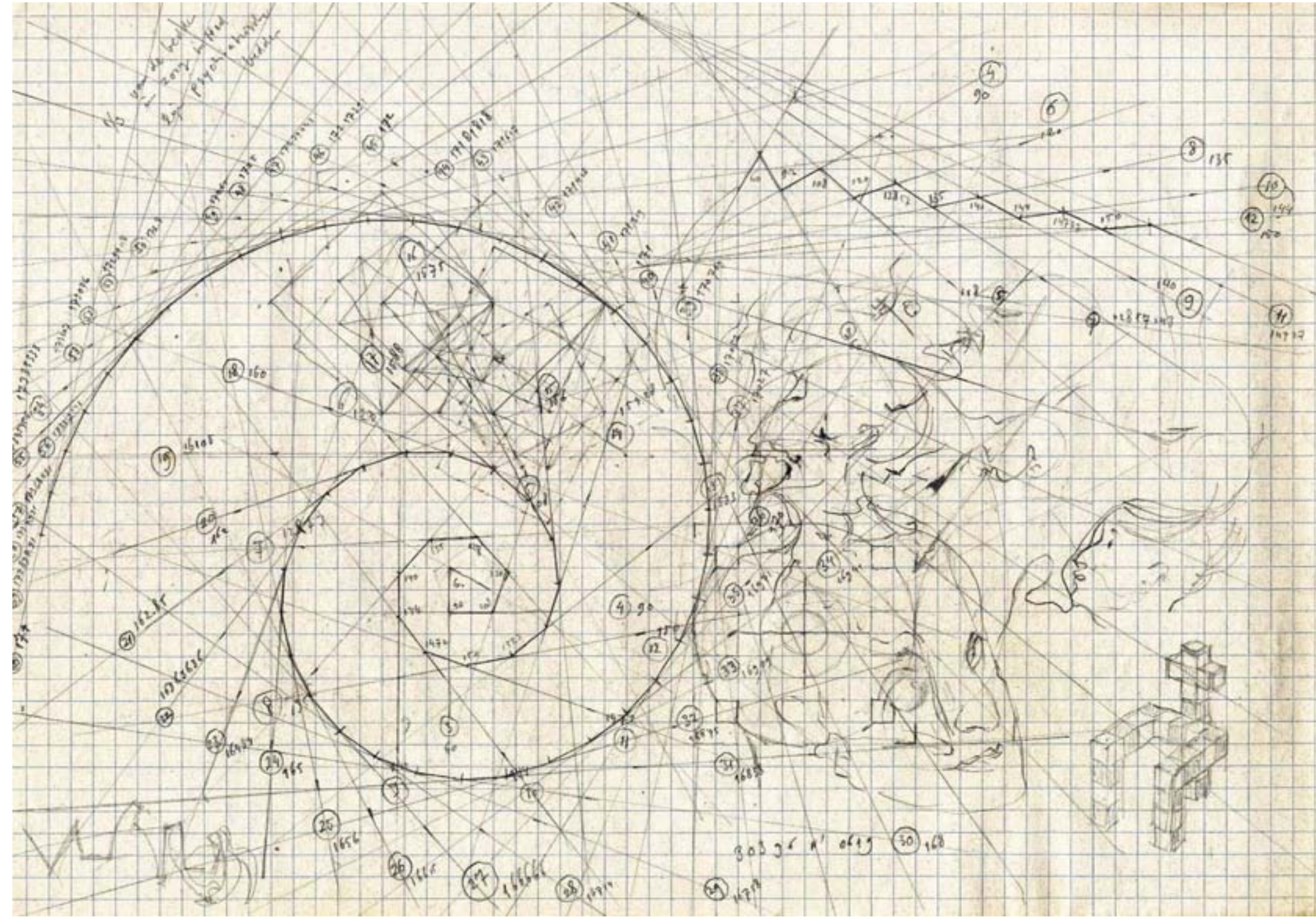
240 | 241



410 | *The Artchive for the Future*, back, right section, 1990. Note: The CLOPPENBURG poster (at left) was the announcement for the Modern Art Archive exhibit in Berlin, 1987. K spelled his name with a C, to give it a more cosmopolitan touch. Throughout K's oeuvre one can see that his own name is a constant subject of metamorphosis research; playful calligraphic changes can place a name in another cultural domain and language, but also express one of the four existing different temperaments; choleric, melancholic, phlegmatic or sanguine.



411 | Pencil on paper, DIN A4, March 31, 1996



412 | Pencil on paper, DIN A4, March 30, 1996



413

413 | Untitled Trashthetical object, 1988

414 | Table arrangement, 1993. Note: The large working table in the back, right section, was K's main laboratory during the 1980s. Table settings with sculptural arrangements were recorded and understood as independent works.

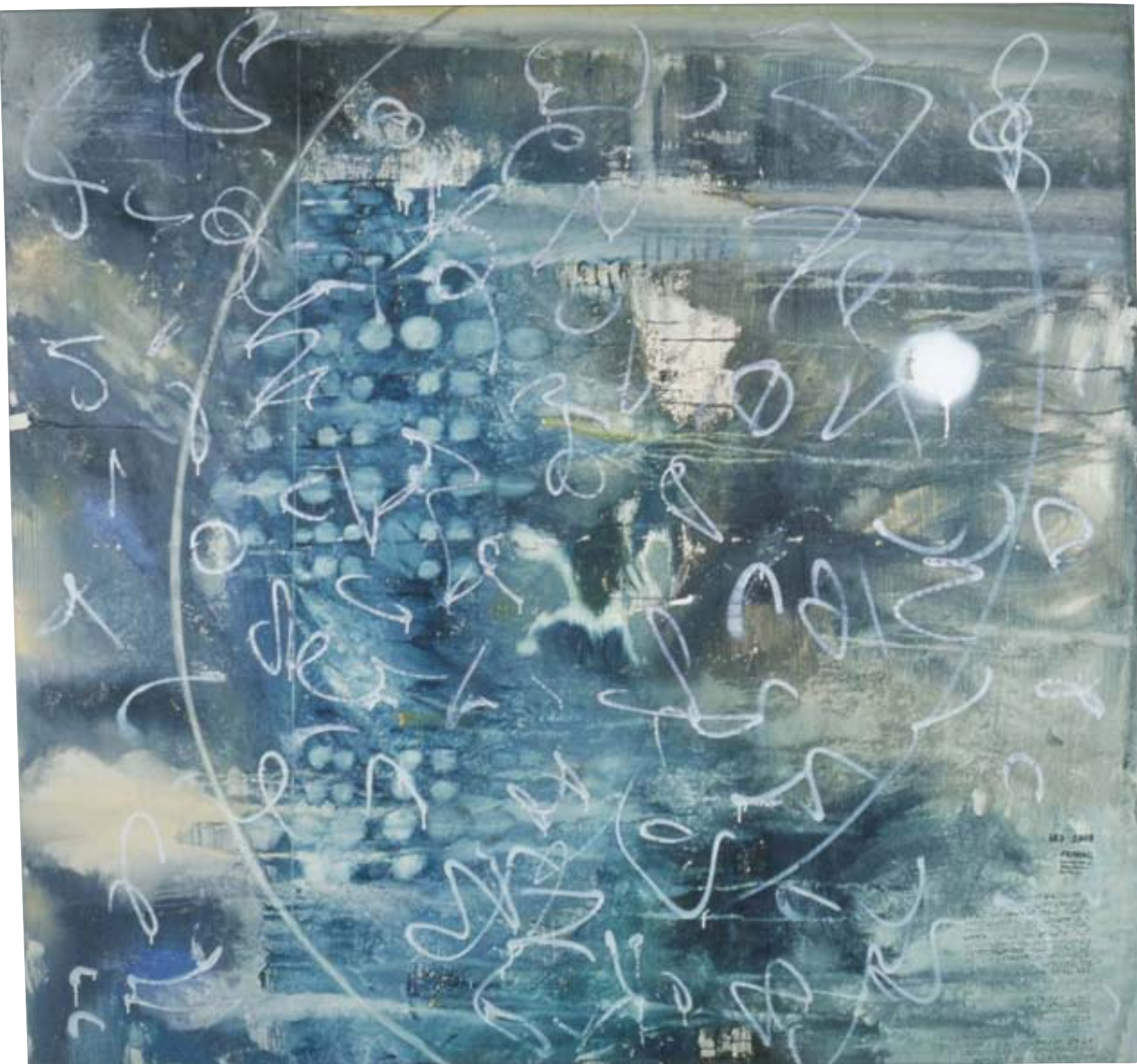
A mysterious figure in the lower right corner is emerging from, or dancing with, a hoola-hoop made up like the section of a watermelon. Where previously there had been scenes of horror, this is a definite ludic ensemble, a kind of primal circus, in which the different beings are at play, and the warm ground of a soft mustard yellow and brown gives the atmosphere an open and relaxed feeling. This is in sharp contrast to *The Avenging Horseman*, with figures heaped in despair on the ground, and the various vertical accents of spear-like shapes suggesting a violent incident. This seems to be a scene of punishment, and retribution.

One of the pastels makes explicit reference to an historical figure, namely Vladimir Illiyich Lenin, and takes the unusual step of incorporating in the work an actual sickle. Lenin is seen floating over a landscape, and Bien has provided commentary on this in his later text. We can further add that there are some pastels, of which the example that can be given here is (316), with what are also direct references to the landscape, in the widest sense of the term. Even given the unity of the surface, one can read different zones of foreground, horizon line, and sky. In the scumbled sky one finds in the clouds on the right the suggestion of figures, again brimming at the edges of the shape, waiting to transform into other creatures. These are just the most rudimentary sketches,



414

246 | 247



417

417 | Untitled, mixed medium on canvas, 180 x 190 cm, 1988, FIUWAC. Photo: P. Mechanicus

418 | Untitled, 1995. Photo: P. Mechanicus

419 | Full Moon Signature, 34 x 43 x 5,5 cm, undated, FIUWAC. Note: The title has a double reference; with the camera (lens fully opened) in his hands he writes his signature in the air, using the full moon as light source that will visualize his name on the photograph, "Kloppenburg" written with moonlight. The other reference is the notion that planets have a specific influence on all matters and this cosmic influence is also known as a "signature". (See: Rudolf Steiner's Planet Seals for the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland)

420 | Jacobus Kloppenburg/Waldo Bien *T time*, 29 x 68 cm, Peru, 1993, FIUWAC. Photo: P. Mechanicus



418



419

sponge throws shapes on the wall, or inspecting clouds moving across the sky, where the cinema of folding volumes and shifting light produces an enormous range of optical and other illusions. Kloppenburg is a master of a delineation that releases for the viewer the maximum ambiguity and richness of visual configuration, so that one feels one is creating what one is looking at. This is a constant feature of the enormous visual generosity of the work, and its genuine transversals and moving across boundaries, floating in the ambiguous world of dream, and the emergence of illusion itself.



250 | 251

420



421

GESAMTKUNSTWERK

One of the consistent observations towards the work of Kloppenburg has been the issue of *The Artchive of the Future* as a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. The term originates in the music-drama of Wagner, and corresponds with the romantic idea of many early nineteenth century German artists of expressing the unity of mood and atmosphere within all the arts working together. It was initially used for Wagner's music drama, and has less and less resonance in the contemporary art scene, where the concepts of multi-media and the interdisciplinary have taken on the role of suggesting the interaction of the arts, the increased collaboration and team-based approaches which mark the current situation. The association of the term with Wagner has added dimensions of misunderstanding that are related to his impact on cultural and political movements in Germany well after his time. It is possible to trace the situation of artists like Peter Greenaway in his *Rosas*, and especially in the area of opera and film, as a collaboration of all the arts, and very much in the spirit of what Wagner had in mind when describing Greek theatre. It was this unity of atmosphere and community that gave Wagner the key to his notion of an integrating power of art for the renewal of the spiritual life of the community, where the work would bring together philosophy, language, decor, music and act as a spiritual hub for the polis, which in the case of Wagner was to be Bayreuth.

- 421 | Light Sluice, *The Artchive for the Future*, 1990
- 422 | Directing daylight into the Artchive with the help of mirrors, 1986. Note: This would result into a subtly registered light opera, a sundial with amazing effects. The mirrors allow the illumination of impossible spots and sections at specific moments of the day, letting it all come to life. The shadow of a clothes hanger can, for a minute, become a portrait of Goethe in profile, then turn into a monster. Seconds later an elephant in a plastic bag comes to life in a burning fire. Rainbow colours rush over the trashthetical landscape towards a pyramid and die away at the foot of cola bottle. A ship-like shadow passes over the distant surface of a board, etc. The "script" of this play could/would constantly be manipulated, adjusted and conducted with mirrors and/or by the (re-) placement of objects.
- 423 | Rembrandt egg, gold paint on reproduction, undated, FIUWAC
- 424 | Ceiling installation
- 425 | Saenredam; interior of Buurkerk, 1644. Photo: L. Klein



422



423

Some contemporary critics have even suggested that the most coherent working of the notion of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* is to be found in the work and legacy of Joseph Beuys. Part of Beuys's work concerned itself with the Wagnerian aesthetic of the "Philosophy of the Future", a theme also sounded in Nietzsche's arguments for philology, where the past would not be some area for archaeological restoration, but instead vibrated as a future for philosophy and society.

Again it is possible to point to Schwitters and Beuys as exemplifying for the modern period the most direct sense of the amalgamation of various artistic activities into one that even integrates missionary sense, with strong obligations in the social and political realm. It is known that Beuys moved easily from his study of anthroposophy to his vision of the social sculpture, which included the founding of the Free International University. Beuys also insisted, in his work on direct democracy and with his multi-media performances and actions, on the public nature of his art, and its consequences for the shaping of the social and intellectual milieu of the re-conceptualised geography of the world, which he understood as moving away from the mapping of the dominant imperial histories of Europe.



425

424



252 | 253







428 | *The Artchive for the Future*,
seventh floor, 1990.
Photo: P. Mechanicus

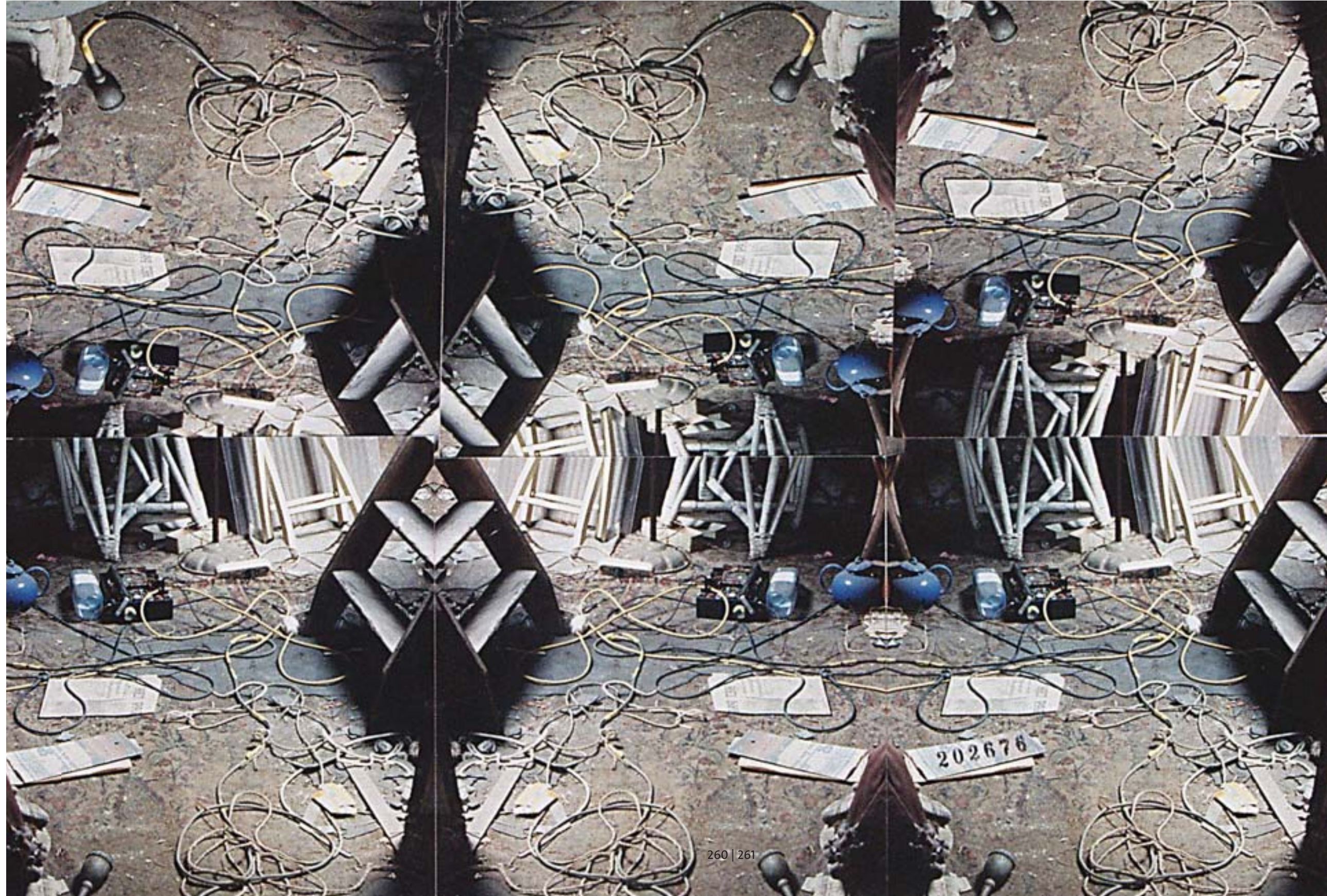
The issue with regard to Kloppenburg was directly raised in the letter from Walter Hopps; there the concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* was a means of appealing to the city authorities of Amsterdam not to destroy a work that had been conceived and created as a unity. Within the archive one can speak literally of the day-by-day diary of the artist being included and transformed. Over the years, this also included musical improvisations, some of which still survive in tape recordings, paintings, drawings, and the amassing of objects and items within the whole that was being created. Kloppenburg had also designed an architectural setting in which the Artchive could be eventually stored and housed and be available to the general public; that work exists as a model, and the full suite of drawings to accompany it also survive. In some senses he viewed the housing of the Artchive as a *mastaba*, and resorted to the simplest relations of cubes to create the imagined building.

It is difficult to pull the work of Kloppenburg over into the Beuysian programme in a strict sense, if only because there is no overt political engagement in the former artist's work, and, secondly, because his path had already been well trodden through his studies and readings of Steiner, before he had any direct awareness of the work of Beuys. This coincides more with his friendship with Waldo Bien, which really bloomed from the time Bien became a neighbour in August 1980. Kloppenburg's personal association with Düsseldorf also increased at that time, and his father-in-law, Professor Kurt Arnscheidt, was a contemporary of Beuys's at the academy and one of his early supporters.



429

429 | Lascaux, great hall of the bison
430 | Untitled photo montage, series *Mirror Palace*,
1990/2003



430

260 | 261



431

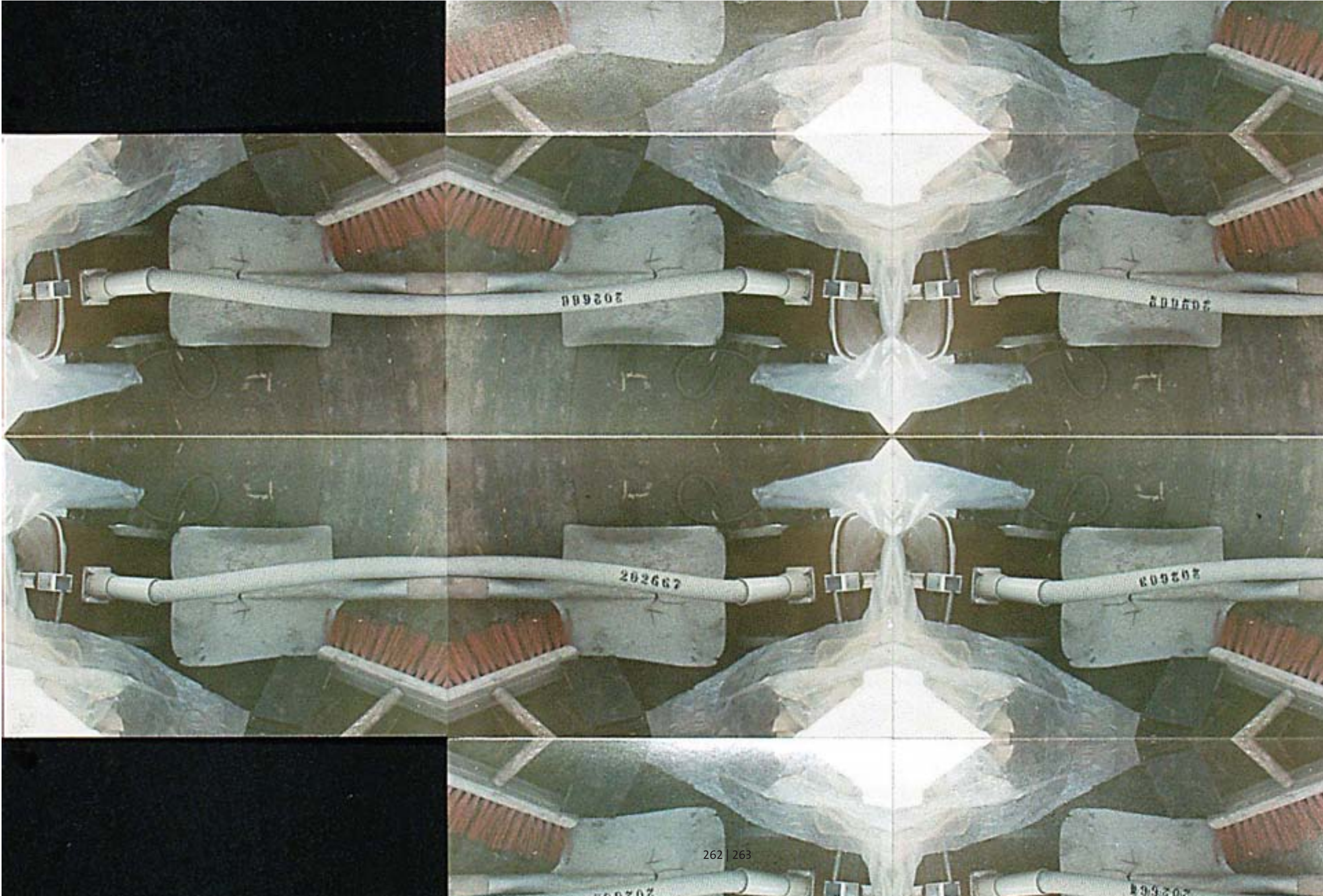


432

431 | Mixed medium on 1 litre juice package, 2005
 432 | (B)Ananas, back side of 480
 433 | Untitled photomontage, series *Mirror Palace*, 1990/2003

Bien had also been a master student of Beuys's, and in terms of the Dutch scene has received a mandate equivalent to apostolic succession, in which he kept alive the ideals of the Free International University, and through his own partner, Eliane Gomperts, also maintained strong contacts with Steiner circles in Holland and Germany. These various personal links brought Jacobus Kloppenburg well within the ambit of the Beuysian circles in Europe, and there was no particular distance in terms of his collaboration with Bien, which also began during the 1980s. This collaboration has also meant that Kloppenburg's works have often been freely translated into contexts around the activities of the Free International University in Amsterdam, and especially in one of the strongest public manifestations of the FIU's work, namely the creation of the Free International University World Art Collection.

The FIU had formed a small study collection made up of gifts from recently co-opted members of the FIU at the end of 1996. This remained a small collection of paintings until a decision was reached to build the Free International University World Art Collection. Details of this can be found at www.fiuwac.com. For the purpose of this essay there are two aspects to note; one is that the spiritual provenance lay directly along the aims outlined in the founding document by Joseph Beuys, and secondly that Kloppenburg played a highly active role in the early formulation of the collection, its contents and shapes, and



262 | 263

433

contributed several dozen works from his own collection, including innumerable pieces for the *Fiutures*, and in some way it was not until the late 1990s that he became publicly involved with artists, many of whom also contributed work to the FIUWAC. Hilarius Hofstede also collaborated with Jacobus on various issues of *Paleo Psycho Pop*, where K has appeared in almost all of the 29 issues published to date. Bien also suggests that at the end of the 1990s he collaborated more and more actively with other artists and groups, that is to say during his sixties.

What is true of the 1980s, however, is that, apart from his works with Bien, Kloppenburg continued with the production of pastels, and his nocturnal working habits. In the mid-1980s, the loss of his mother, to whom he devoted a series of works showing her as she lay dying and dead in bed, deprived him of the one person who had followed his life and work over the previous thirty-five years, often visiting the studio late at night and staying in a rocking chair as he worked away on the pastels. The existence of the *Artchive* itself was known to a few connoisseurs, and a visit was always a very memorable occasion. One of the last visits to the archive, before it was removed, was that of the then art critic of *The Independent* in London, Adrian Dannatt, who wrote a long piece at a time when the fate of the archive had been sealed. With the passing of the years his piece reads like an obituary notice for the archive. His article appeared on March 5, 1998, under the running title "The collected works of Jacobus Kloppenburg".



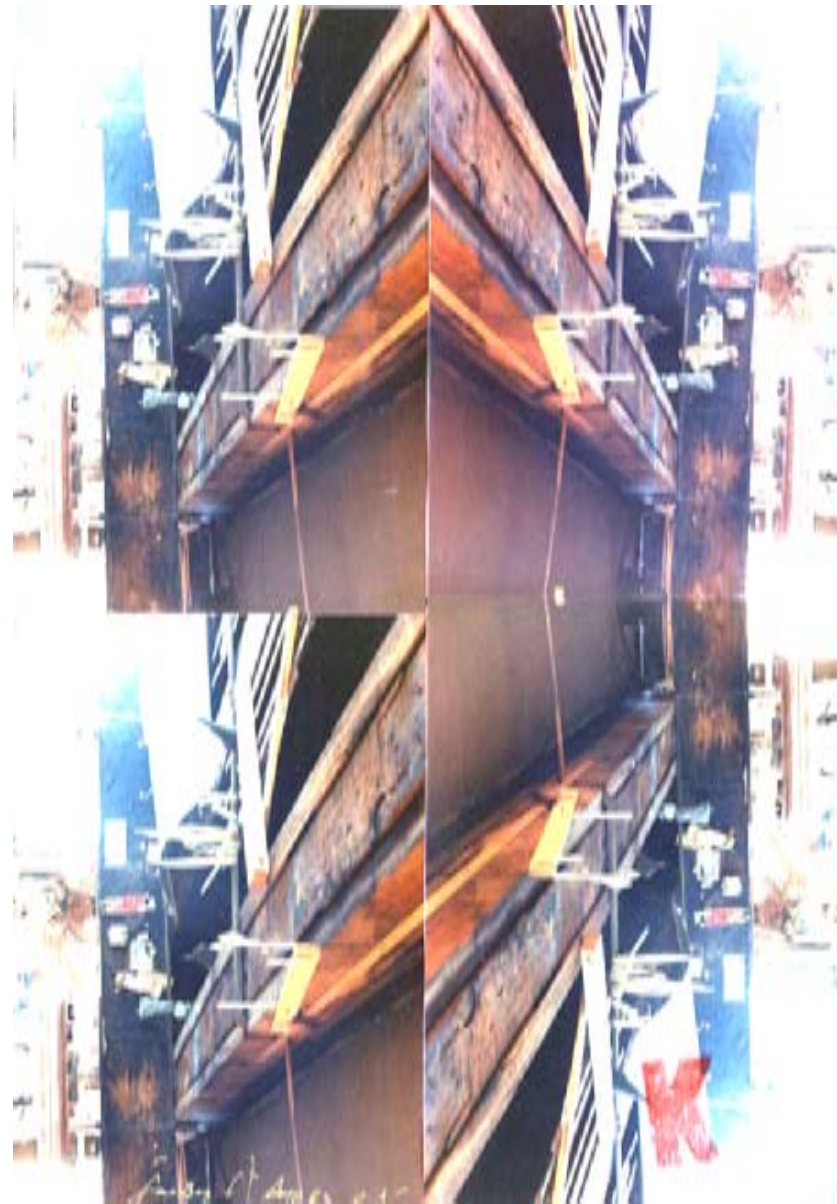
434

434 | Untitled photomontage, 1990/2003.
Photo: P. Mechanicus
435 | Untitled photomontage, 1990/2003



435

264 | 265

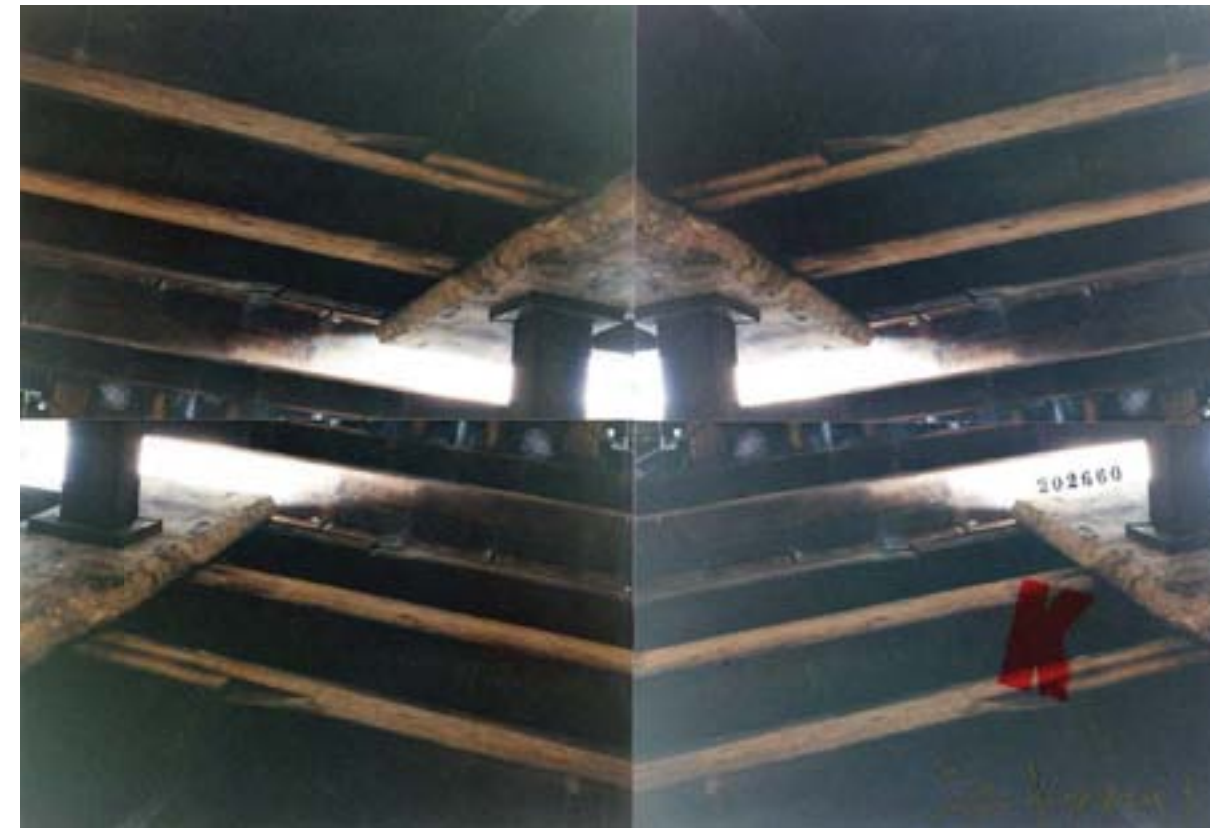


436

436 | Untitled photomontage, 1990/2003

Dannatt's piece immediately suggested that a compatriot of the Dutch, despite their mordant fear "ever since Vincent vanished" of this happening, was about to go neglected in the heart of Amsterdam. Dannatt noted that Kloppenburg's production was of an unbelievable scale, "an oeuvre incalculable" in its sheer profusion. The works had an unclassifiable oddness, and the artist refused to exhibit. Dannatt suggests that the term archive could not possibly indicate the folly "and grandeur of his gathered possession, their mind-boggling chaos", but nevertheless held that "without doubt the Kloppenburg warehouse is one of the clandestine masterpieces of twentieth century creative individualism, comparable to Schwitters's *Merzbau* and Facticeur Cheval's domain or the Fondation Corbusier, a place where so much stuff has gathered that one cannot imagine any human able to inhabit its corners". Further he observed: "the range of transformed detritus is without limits". However Dannatt also realises that, viewed in a certain way, this all seemed like a mess, "the Ur-mess itself". He even extends sympathy to the landlord who might see this as insane squalor rather than as a "unique never-ending work in progress". The collection is endless, Dannatt says, "stretching on like a metamuseum out of Borges". In one instance Dannatt thinks of the pastels as a "folkloric" aspect of his art, and focuses on the result that his sudden fame had on his art, rather than extending that analysis, which may be due to an overhasty exposure during his visit to the studio.

One of the striking features about the relationship of the pastels to the archive, and Kloppenburg's relation to Beuys, is that he is on record speaking about Beuys, and this in the context of an anthroposophical publication, which carried one of the most trenchant pieces to ever appear. In much of the interview there is little reported speech, and Kloppenburg is treated usually as a



437

437 | Untitled photomontage, 1990/2003
 438 | Installation at the *Paleo Psycho Pop* exhibition, Vlissingen, 1999. Photo: L. van Kampen



438



439

kind of phenomenon himself, noted and observed, but with little intellectual exchange taking place with the journalists. They seem content to be surprised by his elegance, or to see him as a kind of sublime oddity. The article also constitutes one of the most astute assessments of Kloppenburg at the end of the pastel production period.

The article appeared in *Jonas* in September 1987, and was signed by Petra Weeda. It carried the running title "The Spiritual in Art".

In Tarkovsky's movie *Stalker* three men embark on an excursion to a remarkable, restricted area subjected to an obscure danger. This 'no man's land' where there is not a living creature to be found, is at first sight dominated by luxuriant green vegetation, until ruins of buildings show up in the landscape. The green surroundings then make place for shallow motionless water surfaces, occasionally disturbed by a falling drop only. At the bottom of the crystal clear pools objects can be discerned, pieces of plastic, syringes, revolvers, corpses. Frozen leftovers from the civilisation that seems long gone but is still ours. It is through the intervention of the water surface that that these things are alienated, and the distance to them becomes insuperably great. A similar sensation of objects taken out of their context and therefore alienating came over me when confronted with Kloppenburg's studio, but mirrored; here the sunken world of the objects had come to the surface and its reality is rendered unavoidable, yet just as alienating. ... K is a master in the maintaining of contradictions. His susceptibility to two worlds expressed by his "exercises with an undirected hand" and his geometrical drawings, with which he provides himself with rational insight. His optimism ("those gloomy medieval images of Dante are far removed from me") ... [my] experiments must have a social meaning; otherwise one would be involved in some individual mythology. One should develop a kind of writing that is legible for everyone, as Beuys has done. But this does not mean there is a norm for such a thing. If it would seem as if there is, it is the task of the artist to break through that expectation immediately.



440



442

In December of the same year, he told Anne Claire Vogtschmidt, writing for *Elsevier* magazine, that he had always been close to his children, and that doing the pastels was an unbelievable experience, because what they were doing was so vivacious and uninhibited, whereas he admitted he had become stuck in his own work, with his belief that he could make geometry more flexible, "but I lacked the necessary freedom". He directly points to learning from the children and taking the decision to start all over again, to have a less restrained creativity, to exercise freedom. "I just started to scratch lines, as a sort of self-release and orientation". Finally, in another interview that same year, Kloppenburg offered the wider public some more insight into what was taken to be a highly reclusive life. It appeared in a text prepared for a solo show in Hilversum, written by J.A. Berkhof, who with her brother has loyally followed the work of Kloppenburg over some decades:

441 | Studio installation, around 1996. Photo: WB
 442 | Blood and pencil on A4 paper, 1993
 Note: A knife is often used for all kinds of different jobs. Cutting himself accidentally in a finger, he grabs paper instead of a bandage. One series that is not depicted shows such bleeding-finger calligraphy, a *Haemoglobin manuscript* that, after more than 15 sheets, slowly runs out of juice. K also works with the juice of plants (Chlorophyll). Then it is not only a specific colour green that is experienced, but also the form, typos and planet signature of the plant, its cosmos.



In school we had to run circles in the gymnasium. The sun would shine through the window, and when I walked in the ray of light, I would stretch my hands out to the sun. ... my character is full of contrasts, from very fluid to the exactness of a neurotic Swiss watchmaker. I work with watercolours, but also with millimetre paper ... I work during the night, balancing on the edge of sleep. The idea is to work ahead of yourself as it were. Even though you are normally slow in your reactions, suddenly you are surprised that you can react so faultlessly and quickly. Sometimes the possibilities that offer themselves are much too fast. I can never work on one thing for very long, because I would get behind on developing my ideas. That is why drawing is so beautiful, you can immediately record it. Reason then only watches from the background, it offers direction but is not contemplative.

It follows that one of the most complex aspects of Kloppenburg is precisely that he is a master of contradictions. Even in the course of the year in which he gave most of the interviews one finds contradictory statements: the need to expel the problem of writing and at the same time to develop a kind of legibility, but one that is not normative. This raises questions of the deepest interest, in that on the one hand the relation of vertical solidarity in the society in which the artist lives requires a communality of educational norms and literally

444

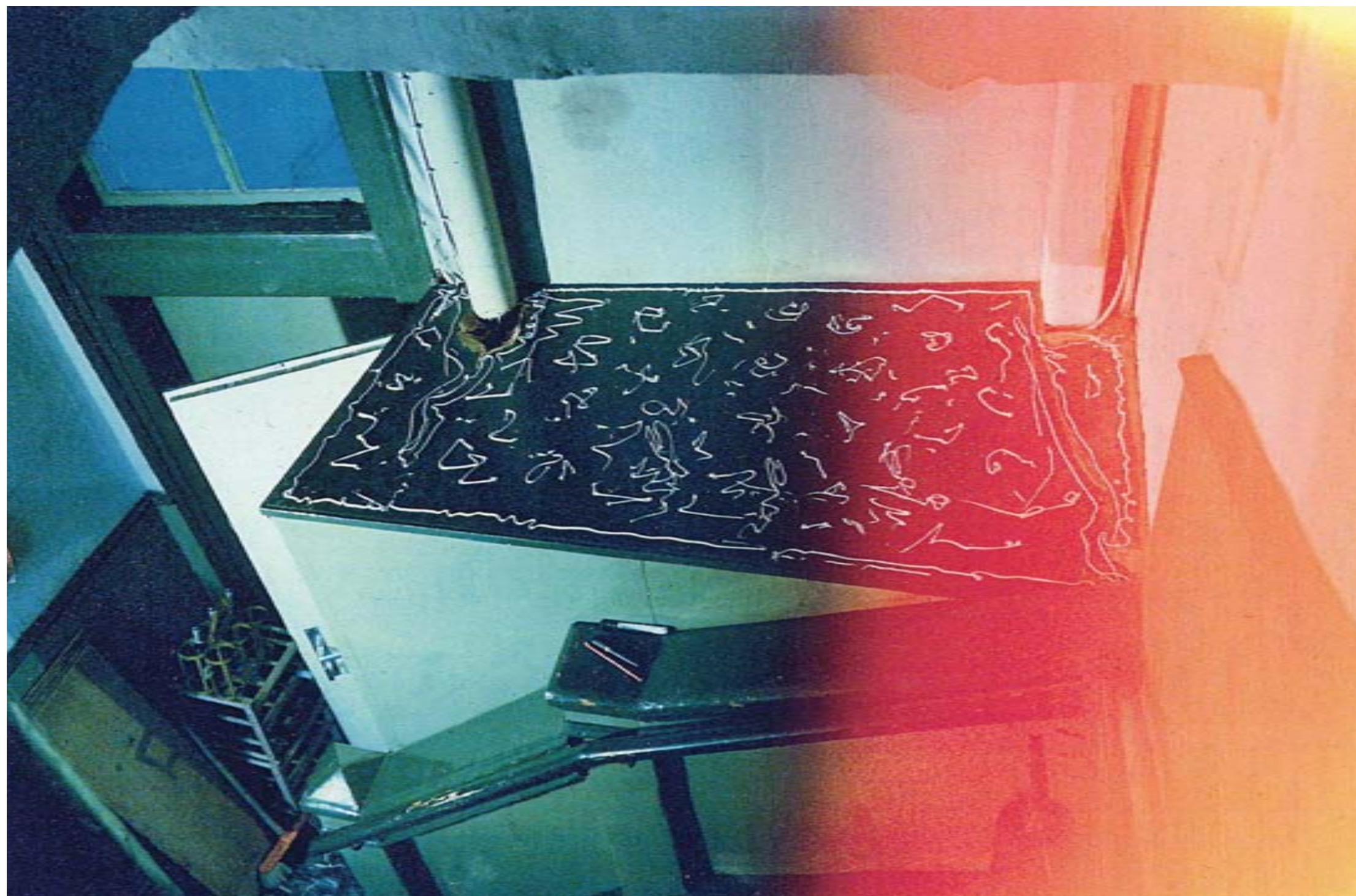


445

- 445 | Orange Peel Cut
 446 | Day by day kitchen scene. Photo: M. Rutkowski
 447 | *Minute Drawing*, glue on wood panel, Neubrückstraße, 2001. Photo: M. Rutkowski
 Note: The time frame has a double reference: a. The drawing was executed within a minute; and b. it would be visible for no more than a minute. A restoration job had to be done and right after the glue was brought on, a new panel would be pressed on top and the drawing out of our sight. K stays with his imagination between the wood panels, to follow the transformation of the pressurised and expanding glue drawing that unrolls for the inner eye, something that has been studied before between glass plates and around 1960, in his Free Form Formula – Form Research Centre, EYAA, the flow form experiments with paint. The laminated boards that one could find in The Artchive, and that for the onlooker had no way of recognising as an artwork, were serious works of art, as well as stages in their development.

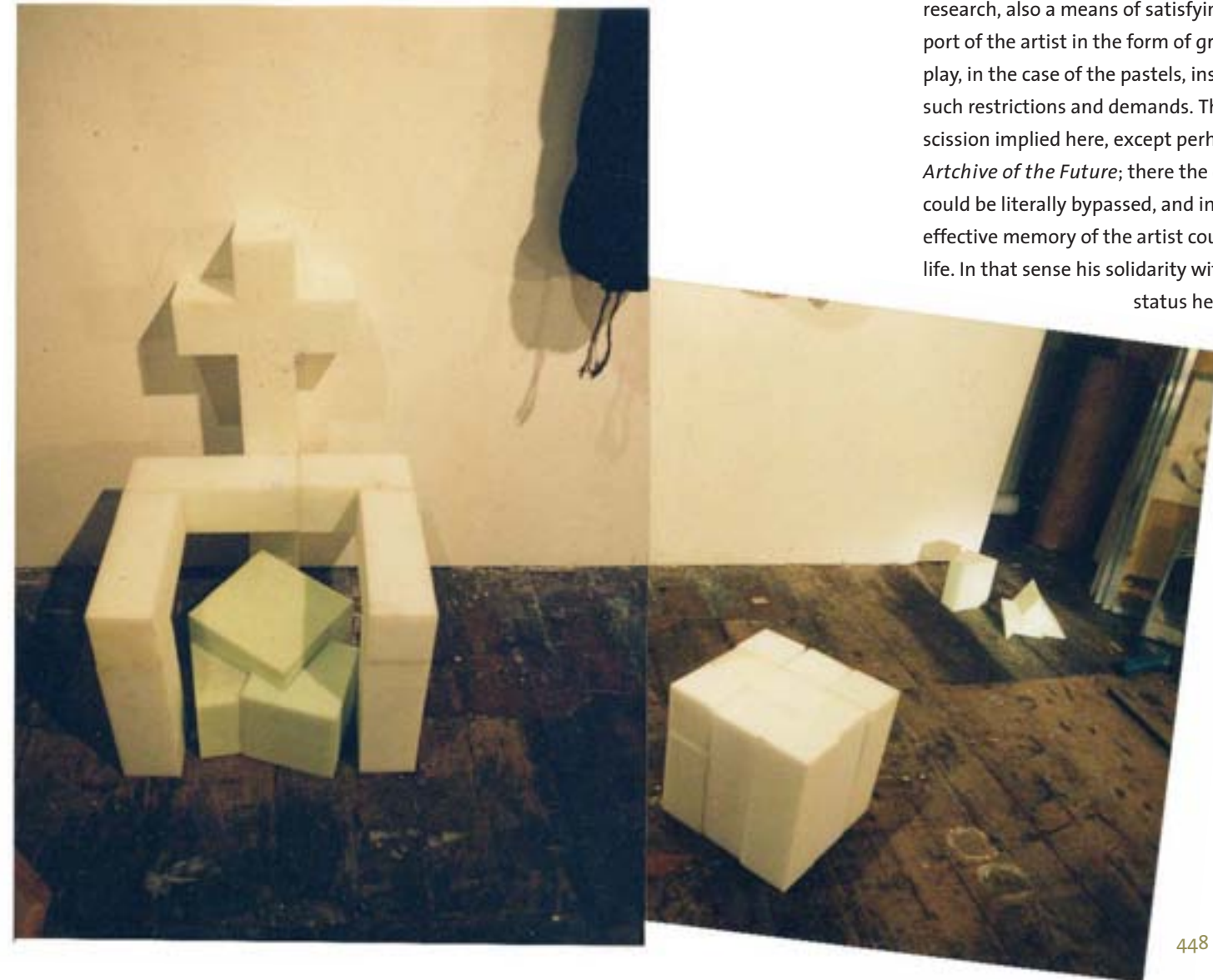


446



447

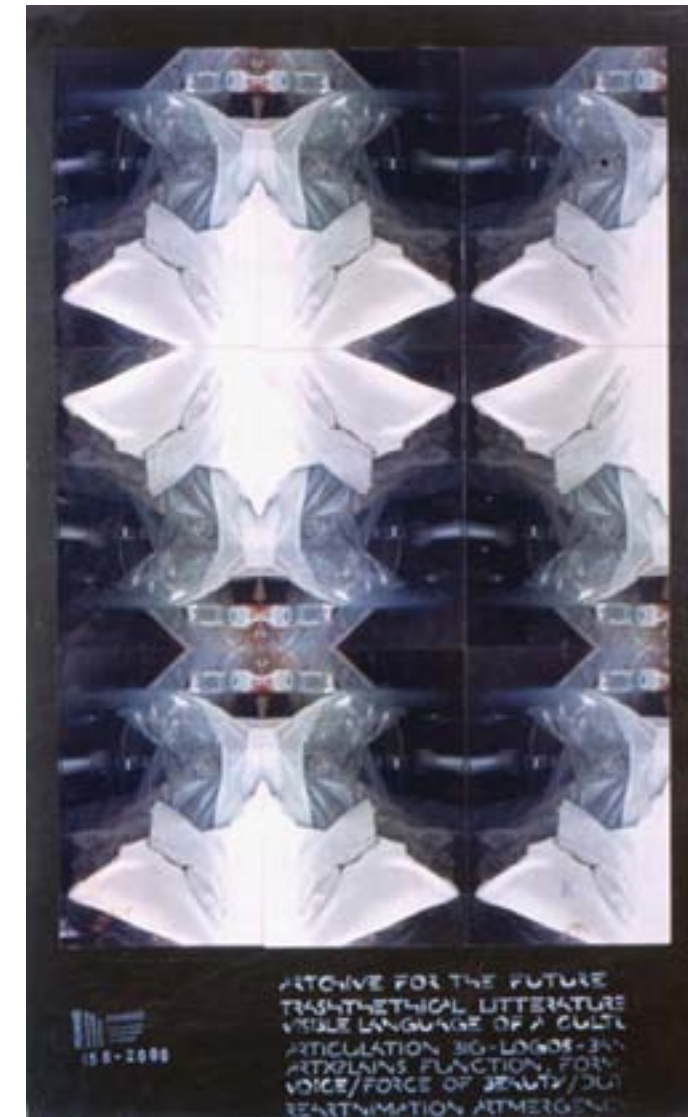
'scripts', and this also suggests that the learning of writing is the process by which the absorption of normativity occurs, whilst on the other hand the artist struggles with his being set apart from and outside of the dominant demands of society, or at least in the case of Kloppenburg, emphasises areas of the social and the individual which are lost sight of in the integrating stories that hold the various relations of dependence on the state together. This too goes to the heart of the dualism in his work, on one side, the geometrical and canonical research, also a means of satisfying the requirements of the state for the support of the artist in the form of grants and subsidies, and on the other the free-play, in the case of the pastels, inspired by his children, which set him against such restrictions and demands. There was in effect no effort to overcome the scission implied here, except perhaps in the insistence of the unity of *The Artchive of the Future*; there the competing claims and the schizoid situation could be literally bypassed, and in the vast work of accumulated traces, the effective memory of the artist could result eventually in the message of his life. In that sense his solidarity with other artists pulled him out of the "loner" status he had been given in the public perception, as was the case during his visit to Philadelphia, where he was regarded as an example of "outsider art", a misunderstanding that was later reflected in correspondence by the Stedelijk Museum in which his work was referred to as "hippie art".



448



449



450

448 | Five and a bit cubes, 1996. Photo: WB
 449 | The elimination of symmetry, Croutes, Normandy, 1996, FIUWAC. Photo: WB
 450 | Untitled, photomontage on office furniture desktop, 43 x 70,5 cm, 1990, FIUWAC



451

451 | *Artvocado Runen, 3D Flatform, 1995/97*. Note: A description of how the *Artvocado Runen* are made can be found in the biographical section, under 1990. Here they are spread out by Bien on the studio floor like a Sinologic manuscript and recorded. Work in an edition of two, signed by both artists. Collection Museum Schloss Moyland, FIUWAC

452 | *Showing Melon and Orange Peel Cuts, 1999*. Photo: WB



278 | 279

452



453-454 | October 14, 1997. Beginning of the forced evacuation. Photo 452, 454: WB
 Note: Just two weeks before the publicly announced transfer of *The Artchive for the Future* into the collection of Museum Schloss Moyland in Germany where it would find a safe harbour, The Artchive was forced out of the building by the City of Amsterdam. Warnings concerning the threat of great, if not total, damage which could result if not professionally handled, as well as the request for a two week delay by Moyland's Director Hans van der Grinten, Walter Hopps, The Menil founding director, F.I.U. Amsterdam and others, were left unanswered. The City of Amsterdam promised the court as well as Museum Schloss Moyland that it would carry out the eviction with "utmost care". This was then entrusted to a professional demolition company, Fa. Schmidt. The result provides confirmation of their specialty. What was built up most carefully over a period of thirty-five years was destroyed in four days. Thousands of the most fragile artworks were brutally thrown into thirteen containers like rubbish. A full description of the affair and documents can be found in the biographical section. The photo is a double exposure of the eviction. *The Artchive for the Future*—Trashthetical Litterarture concept, delivered the night before and spread out in The Artchive to seal the work with the author's own description of it. Composed as a sonnet, it can be seen in the photo as well. Since neither the artist nor the Museum Schloss Moyland was willing to pay the NLG 71, 245.74 demanded for the professional demolition of the Artchive, the City of Amsterdam has kept the artist's oeuvre hostage, until today, summer 2005, and the artworks are rotting away in the containers. MODERN ART – WHO CARES.

455 | Portrait of Hans van der Grinten, Kranenburg, with tragedy mask, after receiving the message of the destruction. Photo: WB
 Note: In a recent letter to Waldo Bien, F.I.U. Amsterdam, April 18, 2005, the Secretary of Education, Culture and Science stated that the experts of the Institute Collectie Nederland are the opinion that *The Artchive for the Future* is a "total loss"





the feeblest man's easy acquisition:
one thing you must grant and I beg it in solemn fear.
Let my sleep be protected by terrors that scare,
so that only a fearless unrestrained hero
may one day find me here on the rock.

◀ 456 a–e

WOTAN

You ask too much, too great a favour.

BRÜNNHILDE

This one thing you must allow.
Destroy your child, who clasps your knees,
trample on your favourite, crush the girl,
let all trace of her body be destroyed by your spear;
but do not be so cruel as to
condemn her to vilest disgrace.
At your demand let fire blaze up;
round the rock let it burn with flaring flames;
let its tongues flicker, its teeth devour
any coward who rashly dares
to approach the fearsome rock.

WOTAN

Farewell, you bold, wonderful child!
You, my heart's holiest pride.
Farewell, farewell, farewell!
If I must reject you
and may not lovingly
greet you again with my greeting,
if you may no longer ride beside me,
or bring me mead at table;
if I must lose you whom I loved
you, laughing joy of my eyes:
then a bridal fire shall burn for you,
as it never burned for any bride!
A blaze of flame shall burn round the rock;
with devouring terror
let it scare the fainthearted;
let cowards run away from Brünnhilde's rock!
For only one shall win the bride,
one freer than I, the God!
That bright pair of eyes
that often I fondled with smiles,
when lust of battle won you a kiss,
when childlike chatter in praise of heroes
flowed from your dear lips:
that radiant pair of eyes
that often in tempests blazed at me,
when hopeful yearning burned up my heart,
when for worldly joy my desires longed
amid wild weaving fear:
for the last time
let them delight me today
with farewell's last kiss!
May their star shine
for that happier man:
for the luckless immortal
they must close in parting.
For thus the God departs from you,
thus he kisses your godhead away!
Loge, listen! Harken here!
As I found you first, a fiery blaze,
as once you vanished from me,
a random fire;
as I allied with you, so today I conjure you!
Arise, magic flame,
girdle the rock with fire for me!
Loge! Loge! Come here!
Whosoever fears the tip of my spear
shall never pass through the fire!



In many ancient scribal traditions, and especially in the Egyptian Middle Kingdom, the scribe was committed to learning by rote, pericope by pericope, texts which not only ensured continuity of the tradition, but also placed the scribe in a position of performative normativity; being a “good” Egyptian was the ability to do precisely that: to list by heart what had been learned, through various stages of practical apprenticeship. The relation of writing to administration and temple cult also meant that the scribal was the perfect training for the priest and the administrator, and both had the duty to reflect the sustaining and sustained order of the world, the standardisation through re-iteration of the exact words of ritual, or the measuring that was necessary for storage in a supply economy, which made them the epitomes of the state itself, the absolute guarantee of order. There were no schools in the modern sense, one learnt the scribal activity at temples or centres of administration. As Jan Assmann has argued in his *The Mind of Egypt*, that knowledge “was not a form of specialised expertise that ensured the correct performance of administrative or religious duties. Rather it was knowledge of the fundamental normative and formative attitudes of Egyptian culture, the acquisition of which made an apprentice scribe into an educated, well-brought-up, right-thinking Egyptian”.⁴⁸

48 Jan Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt*, transl. A. Jenkins, Harvard University Press, 2003.

456 a–e | The textual concept, written with white paint on bicycle tubes the nights before the eviction, here spread out over demolished sections of the Artchive. (The complete affair is related in the biographical section.) It was Kloppenburg's intellectual signature under the artwork and a way of sealing *The Artchive for the Future* off against misinterpretations. Photo: G. Gussenhoven



457



458

457 | Last sunrise in *The Artchive for the Future*, October 17, 1997 Amsterdam.

458 | *Götterdämmerung*, the final evening, October 17, 1997, Amsterdam

459 | In conversation with Hans van der Grinten, during his visit to F.I.U. Amsterdam, December 4, 1997. Photo: WB

There is clearly in the work of Kloppenburg a direct confrontation with the normative and well educated of the society in which he works. Against its persistent *imago* of well-trimmed appearance and clean fingernails, he has set the detritus of the real of the consumer society, challenged its commitment to minimalist claims in the area of the aesthetic, and literally flouted its most cherished conventions. In a significant collaborative work with Bien in the 1990s, *To Our Investors*, both artists meet in the common ideal of their shared rebellion, and even though it is not common to think of Kloppenburg in terms of an ongoing social critique, one has to see that part of the hostile response to his work among certain elements of the cultural elite stems from their obvious awareness that his standpoint in his work and commitments is diametrically opposed to theirs. The work *To Our Investors* employed a direct shock tactic, and a stark confrontation, which had been all but banned from the official art world. If Schwitters had suggested that Holland was dada, because it always

459

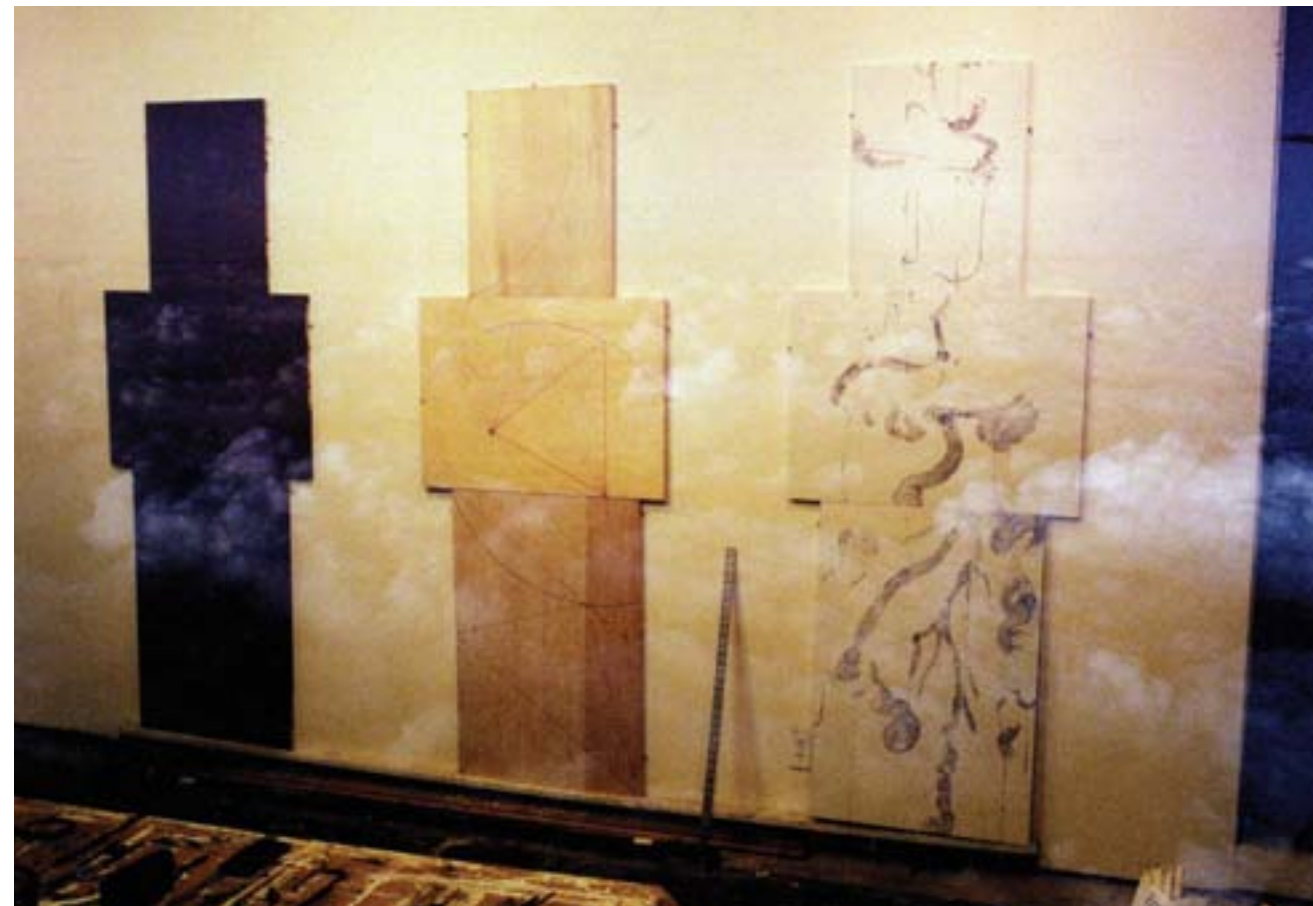


282 | 283



460

460 | Waldo Bien-Virgil Grotfeldt-Jacobus Kloppenburg. *Works in an open framework*, Kunsthalle Recklinghausen, Germany, 2000. Photo: F. Ullrich
 Note: Within the framework of annual working meetings that have been going on since 1994 between Bien and Grotfeldt, meetings in which collaborate artworks originate, some two hundred or more of these “collaborations in open framework” have already been created. Kloppenburg participated in this working session in Houston (Meeting 6, November 17–28, Houston Texas, 1997, the Heights). It is an important moment within this Bien-Grotfeldt series and a spiritual crash-test for the F.I.U. open framework idea. All of the paintings that have been made so far, have as a common denominator an “open” frame, a frame with three sides instead of the usual four, in order to illustrate that one is not dealing here with a closed private meeting between two artists, but with an “open conversation” in which others are also able to participate. For the first time this could now be put into practise and examined. In this manner, by way of an F.I.U. test case, a collaborate work emerges, a “triptych, three crosses, with equal parts”, every part of which is put together from three unequal parts. The tripartite context in this work is also a reference to the SOCIAL TRIPARTITION of Rudolf Steiner. The motto of his Social Ethic being: THE HEALTHY SOCIAL LIFE IS FOUND WHEN IN THE MIRROR OF EACH HUMAN SOUL THE WHOLE COMMUNITY FINDS ITS REFLECTION, AND WHEN IN THE COMMUNITY THE VIRTUE OF EACH ONE IS LIVING. (See: *Waldo Bien* by Patrick Healy, Wienand Verlag, Cologne, 2000, or the book about Virgil Grotfeldt, also from Wienand.)



461

461 | Waldo Bien – Jacobus Kloppenburg – Virgil Grotfeldt, mixed medium on woodpanels, 1997. Note: Kloppenburg took the photo at Grotfeldt’s studio, Houston, Texas, right after the work was made. Then, on the way back to Amsterdam, flying over Greenland, the film was double exposed with clouds, an optical (re-) confirmation of the F.I.U. spirit of this collaborative work.

462 | Waldo Bien *Portrait of Walter Hopps*, FIUWAC

had been, then the power of protest had become drained into childish antics within a small circle, where curators, critics and artists, all supped from the same pot, and created in effect a cosy cartel, which administered the cultural domain as part of the broader ideological requirement of the state. The work was a direct assault, and in many instances the artists challenged the current orthodoxy. The level of hostility to Beuys in Holland was also phenomenal. The critical line developed after the war under the leadership of Dibbitts and his clients – the former acting as a patron through educational establishments, curatorial connections and the protection of favourite critics – was that the refinement of Mondriaan’s research should be taken as the main work of artists, the study of optical and other visual phenomena, and that a bulwark was to be created against surrealist tendencies, figuration and the kind of expressionism that resulted in any form of allegiance to the work of Beuys. Art in Holland was to be the extension of the principle of design.

Even the highly pragmatic merchant ideology could not hedge its bets to cover such extreme antipathy, as the works of these artists were said to illustrate, against the regnant ideology. Even if exceptions could be allowed, and that surely is part of the cunning of any such hegemony, they had to have a place and in the end simply re-enforce the cardinal direction set out in the public agenda. The social responsibility of art, the vast influence of commissions and administrators responsible for funding, the incestuous relations



462

284 | 285



between museum curators and critics, with a few appointed galleries, meant that the system of supply was carefully monitored and controlled, acting as incubators for the future direction of the arts, and thus little mercy was shown to those who would challenge this on any fundamental level. There was too much at stake for one artist to upset the highly wrought system of checks and balances put in place to maintain the hegemony of the cultural oligarchy. Artists who wanted to avoid the tight conger of interests had to make their way outside the country, in some sense exile was the relevant political act. Make your reputation elsewhere and perhaps eventually, and grudgingly, you might be given a room in the hall of honour of one of the larger museums.

The long waiting for this social accolade kept people in each other's pockets, socially and personally, in some cases for decades, even spending the waiting time drinking in the same bars, and maintaining close, even clannish social dependencies to preserve the identity of the forlorn group. One can trace this fairly accurately throughout the last three decades, and the patronal and normative aspects of the systems are also very much at odds with the claimed tolerance and democracy which the art is said to serve and exhibit, or the rational values and intellectual claims, which resulted in one critic referring

463 | View at the Kloppenburg section with Trashthetical Litterature, PPP, Paleo Psycho Pop exhibition, Water Tower Vlissingen, 1999. Photo: L. van Kampen
 Note: The red/orange work on the wall is a *Portrait of Ernst Ris with his BoaBoa*, a work by Hilarius Hofstede.
 464 | PPP no. 9, the catalogue for the exhibition, edition 10,000



464



465

to the work of Kloppenburg as being irrelevant because it “has too much fantasy”. There was a sectarian edge to much of the social organisation of the various artistic groupings, and the precise system of advancement allowed for little leakage, or simply forced people to explode or implode, often leading to maniacal loneliness coupled with poverty for those who were not included or had not received the necessary initiation to the coven of the talented. Kloppenburg was not susceptible to the exclusionary activity of gossip, or indeed to being included in any meaningful way. He did not serve the agenda, and the only resolute strategy was, as in the case of the critic Marcel Vos, to describe him as an eccentric, who “does those pastels”, which clearly lacked any value as they had “too much fantasy”.

Living between Germany and Amsterdam, maintaining a small circle of friends, capable of working without expensive materials, and remaining aloof to critical discussions and endless meetings, Kloppenburg was able to develop his entire oeuvre independent of most of the ostensive



466

465 | PPP exhibit, 1999. Photo: L. van Kampen
466 | *Spiegel ei*, 1997. Photo: WB
467 | PPP exhibition, 1999. Photo: L. van Kampen



467

288 | 289



468 | PPP exhibition, 1999. Photo: L. van Kampen

demands which normally serve to direct artists towards equating their own feelings and creations of form with commercial and market oriented works. One finds in Bien a similar resilience and resistance. Despite his numerous exhibitions and the critical notice he attracted – mostly outside Holland – he refused to become a commercial sculptor by being involved in commissions for works in public spaces.

The work *To Our Investors* is a key document for grasping the stance that these artists took towards the public domain, and also for grasping the depth of hostility to their continued presence; gadfly and stinging rebuke, they continued through the 1990s to act as agents provocateurs and critics of the desiccated world of official art that would ultimately culminate in the visible collapse and failure of cultural policy in the Netherlands; with museums being closed, curators disgraced, collections being withdrawn from museums, disputes over the provenance of important works, the collapse of the publicly funded storage of previous generations, the failure to attract support for Dutch artists at the level of international attention, the increasing cynicism of a trivi-



469 | PPP exhibition, 1999. Photo: L. van Kampen

ECOLOGY

Wer will guten Kuchen backen, der muß haben sieben Sachen: (old German children's rhyme) (Who wants to bake a good cake...must have seven ingredients to make)

Waldo Bien / K (Jacobus Kloppenburg)
Design for the boardrooms of the future, here for



Lothar Baumgarten



7



5

K
Colour reference:
Haemoglobine
Chlorophyl



3



THE FIUWAC AND THE TRIODOS BANK

B. and K
a permanent seat for plants and
animals on conference tables:
flora=green (Chlorophyl)
fauna= red (Haemoglobine)

2



K (Kloppenburg)
marrowbone spectacles

4



B.
plantportrayal (photonegative)

6



B.
Topos Earth
Rock sample with topographic
specifications



Rudolf Steiner
Blackboard drawing
(Nat.Econ.course)

1

ECONOMY

Steering the future

Waldo Bien / K (Kloppenburg),
with Lothar Baumgarten and
Rudolf Steiner 1919/2003

Tools needed for board conference
tables, to ensure social and envi-
ronmental economic decisions.

Filling corners with positive energy and consciousness

One corner of the Conference Room should function as a refreshing well during meetings and breaks. In the Triodos Bank Zeist NL a block of Grotfeldt works was installed, in Brussels, a series of Kloppenburg smoke and pencil drawings.

TRIODOS BANK ZEIST

where flora and fauna are boardmembers

alising, so-called post-modernism, the domination of commercial success, the effort to initiate a young “star” system, the systematic choosing of candidates whose careers were to be promoted from educational establishments where both patron and critics acted as jury and promoters, and this in tandem with commercial galleries that benefited from money in the public purse to contribute to this “fair” system of election and grace. Within the broader ideology of a “knowledge economy” there was the ongoing transformation of teaching institutions into “number and profit” organisations; the genuine lack of milieu with real diversity and differences of artistic interest which could promote a lively scene; the rigid doctrinaire criticism which remained trapped in one of the boxes painted by Mondriaan. Concurrently there were the over-intellectual and theoretical demands generated out of these positions; the commitment to a version of a simple, artisan, storytelling, in which neither viewer nor artist should be strained in their comprehension, often resulting in minimalist wallpaper dressed up as conceptual statements; the blandishments of bore-



470 | On the first of October, 1999, the first F.I.U. board and conference table Toolkit is installed at the Head office of the Triodos Bank, Zeist, NL, and at the same occasion the Free International University World Art Collection, FIUWAC, comes to life. For full report: see Bio section, Sept. 10th, 1998. Photo: D. Former

TRIODOS BANK BRUXELLES

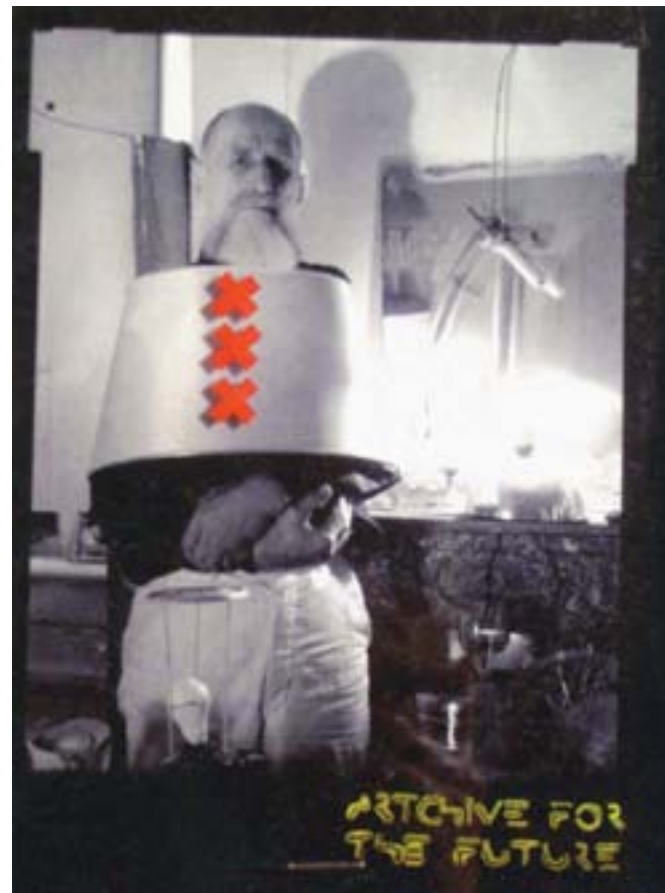
where flora and fauna are boardmembers

dom as research, and most tellingly the requirement of art to deal with the problems which the social and political were unable even to properly identify, such as issues of migration, multi-culturalism, race politics, social divisions, welfare, and the extreme polarising leading to visible increases in a servile politics of the right with its brand of incandescent American capitalism, which is dubbed under every event of public life, and in what would be most emblematic of the failure and lack of concern for a vital artistic milieu, the destruction of *The Artchive for the Future*.

In the bio-bibliography by Bien there is a detailed chronicle of Kloppenburg’s activities during the 1990s, which leads to the tragedy of the Artchive’s destruction. From the beginning of the 1990s there is further research in the Artchive itself. Kloppenburg advances into a new unwrapping of his object world. The various series of photographs again take up topics that had been pursued since the 1950s. It may be the case that the naming of the archive in the public domain gave Kloppenburg the impetus to re-engage with the overall unity of the work, since it was only in 1987 and the years that followed that

471 | Conference room of the Triodos Bank in Brussels, where, in 2002, a second F.I.U. TOOLKIT was installed at the request of its director, Pierre Aeby, a social present from the F.I.U. Amsterdam to Triodos Brussels, since, alas, there was no budget available. A third F.I.U.TOOLKIT, requested for Bristol, was in preparation. Photo: WB





475

474 | In 2004 the City of Amsterdam had still not taken any responsibility for the destruction of *The Artchive for the Future*, October 1997. Ignoring all international protest against the ongoing threat of total destruction (VERNIETIGEN) and leaving all correspondence concerning the Kloppenburg affair unanswered. On the initiative of PPP, the *Bison Caravan* and the F.I.U. Amsterdam, a first public protest exhibit was planned, also as an homage to Kloppenburg, who's life's work *The Artchive for the Future*, was, and still is, kept hostage by the City of Amsterdam under fatal conditions. The affair is fully documented in the biographical section. A series of works, composed as a Trashthetical Lecture in preparation for Triodos Bristol, was kept apart for the upcoming *Bison Caravan* exhibition at the Water Tower Vlissingen where it all would take place. Other works were added or produced. Bien then prepared the works for presentation, as an F.I.U. public lecture/dislecture, and according to Kloppenburg's own Litterature concept: needed ingredients should come from the street. Here we see a block of artworks in progress, on Bien's studio wall. Photo: D. Former

475 | "Kloppenburg as Hostage of the City of Amsterdam" by Alfons Alt /Waldo Bien, 2003

476 | Work in progress, 2003. Photo: D. Former



476



477



478

477-478 | Fold – Unfold, ink on envelope with photo, 2001
 479 | Trashthetical Lecture in progress, 2003.
 Photo: D. Former

it was brought into full public prominence. This, as previously noted, took place between February 2 and March 8, during a solo exhibition in the Rotterdam Artspace, *The Writing Typeflyer*. The invitation card showed a portrait of the artist's deceased mother, to whom the show was dedicated. The exhibition included drawings, a group of pastels, and, among other things, a worktable and two chairs from the Artchive. The exhibition was accompanied by a press release, and the text, which seems to have been composed by Waldo Bien, contains the first public statement about *The Artchive of the Future* released by the artist, along with the information that:

For twenty-five years K has been working incognito on THE ARTCHIVE FOR THE FUTURE. Whoever enters it will desperately search for the order that is so characteristic for an archive. The whole gives an impression of an ill-assorted collection of luggage for the coming migration of a nation. Stacks and heaps that seem to be waste give an impression that eludes every social definition. But this chaos is misleading; behind the symptom hides a carefully assembled whole, in which K registers the smallest change immediately, as if it were his own body.

479



The phrase "as if it were his own body", points to the significance of the whole work as the sensorium of the artist, a concrete diary of feeling and association, a vast assemblage of his visual activity and registration.

In that sense the wish to view the Artchive as an enormous variation on the ideals of *arte povera*, as in the work of Zorio, Calzolari, or Orzco, does not grasp the way in which the Artchive is for Kloppenburg as much a decomposed signature of space as it is of time. It is indeed the signature of things in which the meaning of the writing is itself in constant expressive unfolding, that is to say the metamorphosis remains active. The dialectical process never stops, there is no momentary arrest in the image, even the imaging is a fluid and continuous process, only the pre-established harmony of the tone world of the archive's unity gives one a consistent possibility of holding it all together. The element of light is also a real apparition of the event, it is the very brightness of his seeing which allows the light and the appearance to come into manifestation. The manifestation has nothing behind it, it is not directed towards any fixed goal, and does not share some presumed coherence of either the natural or the social order and



480

300 | 301

480 | Triodos F.I.U.ture Nr. 120



481 | View at the PPP – F.I.U. Public Protest, Water tower Vlissingen. Relevant documents concerning the destruction of *The Artchive for the Future*, letters, press articles etc. where enlarged and glued onto the wall next to a flow of Trashthetical artworks and...the ten public questions to the Lord Mayor and Alderman of the City of Amsterdam, left unanswered until today, summer 2005. Photo: WB



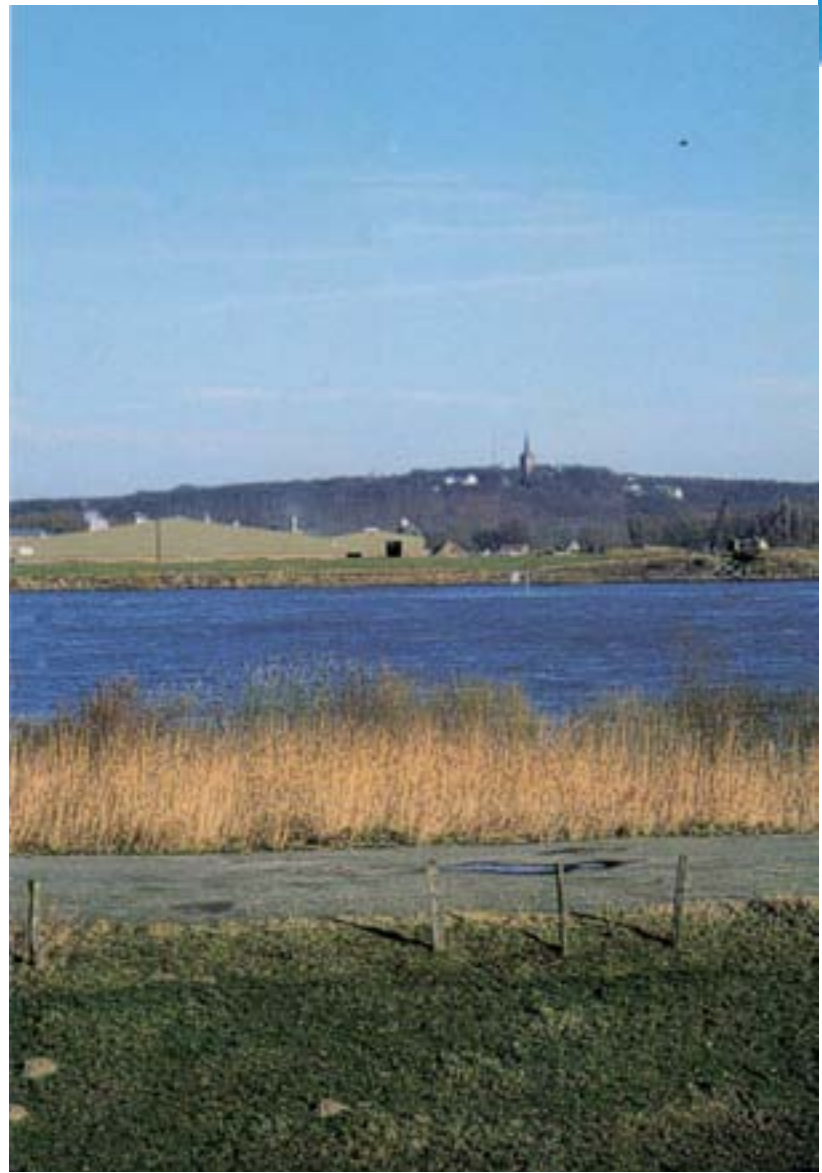
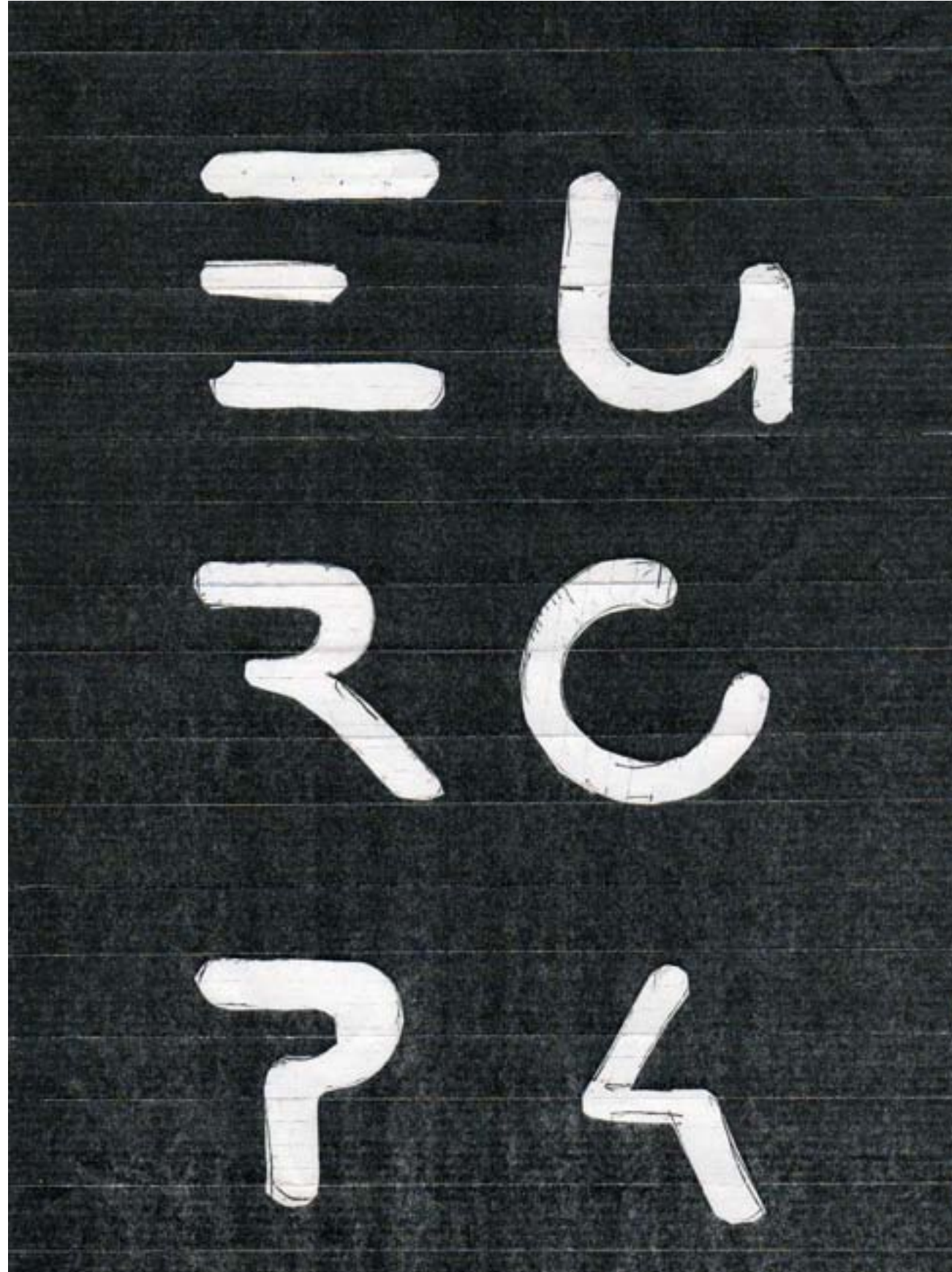
483

their presumed concomitance as exchangeable categories. It is this aspect of constant becoming that has never been relinquished by Kloppenburg. Throughout his art, process, experiment, trial and error, have been the intrinsic activity of all of his searching, and it can be described as the aspect of constant problem solving and learning that belongs to a thoroughly evolutionary notion of metamorphosis.

Throughout the 1990s, and until the last days of the Artchive, Kloppenburg consistently continued with his life-long quest, and now in his seventy-fifth year, despite everything that has happened, without any bitterness or resentment, the artist works on, his spirit alive, vital and bright, generous and open, the long trajectory of a life lived with vision and hope. When it was proposed that a study would be made of his work, he showed a certain hesitation and puzzlement, after all he was “only beginning”. Long may he continue.

Patrick Healy, Amsterdam, July 14, 2005.

482 | K, studio Lasserg, 2005. Photo: E. Kloppenburg
 483 | Design for a sculptural commission on the banks of the River Rhine, Landschaftsskulpturen Achse Hoch-Elten – Kleve, Germany, 2005
www.skulpturen-achse.de



484 | EU-RO-PA
 Design for public sculpture EUROPA at the bank of the river Rine,
 2005
 Project: Skulpturenachse Hoch-Elten – Kleve

Jacobus Kloppenborg starts out from the dodecahedron, a specific platonic figure: 20 corners, 30 sides and 12 pentagonal planes. For thousands of years this has been a meaningful geometric figure, full of mathematics, harmony and magic. Its symmetry fuses the pentagonal with the hexagonal. By rotating a cube on one of its diagonals it develops as a dodecahedron: "The cube, as a metaphor of the earthly-physical, and the dodecahedron, as cosmic- spatial expression, are not only captured in the fullness of wisdom, in the trembling deep, but allow the physical observer from ones own power, to rise from the earthly to the cosmic". Starting from the pentagon, one arrives at the golden section. Kloppenborg has chosen the inner space of the dodecahedron. Three equal sized rectangles, central within the dodecahedron and positioned in a 90-degree angle to each other, confined and connected. In the crystallography this is known as the assembled planes. The sculpture stands on one of its 12 corners, all planes angled into space, able to rotate in the wind. The size of the needed pedestal is not fixed yet. The sculpture itself will measure between 6-8 meters. The observer is afforded many new viewpoints and the inner cross in the sculpture shifts in appearances. At the same time the wind becomes visible as the power of nature. The sculpture can be understood as a ship signal or traffic sign, as it will be positioned on the riverbank, visible for all those who cross and sail on the river. In a wider sense it is a signal for the 'ship of life' (Prof. Christian Holland.) This sculptural work of Kloppenborg destined for the banks of the Rhine river, not only demonstrates the power of his many individual maquettes to be realised as sculptures, but also indicates his generosity to the project of Europe to which he offers a view of dynamic assimilation, openness and diversity. Through the steel plates he has cut out in his own reduced alphabet the letters for Europa. The spatial conception is such that it is intimately connected with the site of the river, the sources of winds, and the spating and flooding of the river, its different activities through the year. The construction points also to the spiritual significance of the platonic solids, as the internal pattern of matter, earthly and cosmic, and the free dynamic of his own wish for the life of the continent. It has been accepted for a site on the river Rhine, and marks a beautiful chapter in Dutch-German relations, specially artistic co-operation. Felix Droese designed the sculpture for the opposite riverside: www.skulpturen-achse.de



485

**ALLINONE:
BIO-BIBLIO-EXHIBIT-GUIDE-NOTES-LECTURE**

PLEASE FASTEN YOUR SEATBELT



486

485 | Artocado peel masks, 1997. Photo: WB
486 | I Can Tell You, Trashthetical object,
2003, FIUAWAC