

Two thousand years under the light of the
star, which we call the Sun and under it, are
running clouds, which hide the light of the
sky

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The thesis will divide into three parts, both thematically and formally. All three parts of the thesis will be interconnected through the concepts and ideas that make up the overall graduation project. Although, each section of the thesis should be able to stand on its own, they should also work collaboratively with their counterparts (all elements of the graduation project). Furthermore these different sections should also conceptually interlock with the final work in the gallery space, as I consider the final exhibited work, equal to the thesis. Moreover I consider the evolution of all these parts equivalent in their required attention and evolution. These three parts represent my current artistic attitudes and methodologies for building up work artistically. They cover different research techniques, which I will further develop for the graduation project, and they are as follows:

Part one) an interview and documented conversation with friend Bogdan Banu, logician and mathematical researcher at the University of Amsterdam. Bogdan specializes in set theory and we will be conducting interviews on the creation of contexts as done in his research. One example is could be the following question. If you have a random number — how do you and how can you, create the formula to make that number an answer to a question? How do you formulate a question when you already have the answer in your hands? The motivation for this section lies in an interest I have for abstracted mathematics. Where mathematics becomes language and tries to — at times solve its own linguistic problems. Set theory is particularly invested in the creation of a context in order to create the ‘infinities of infinities’ and the formulas needed to see this through. I see many correlations to my work within these methods of set theory, abstracted but very real numbers with very real relationship. Not just the number’s inner ‘set’ relationships but their context and connection to the outside world, outside of their set, and outside of the mathematician’s knowledge.

Part two) an essay on Rene Daumal and specifically on the book ‘Mount Analogue: A Novel of Symbolically Authentic Non-Euclidean Adventures in Mountain Climbing.’ In the essay I will flesh out ideas on artistic methodologies and ways of creating and investigating paths towards ‘discovery’ that are within the book. This will be done through Daumal’s influences on him as a writer, namely George Gurdjieff and Alfred Jarry. I will focus on how in the novel Daumal conceptually sets the journey to Mount Analogue into action. The mountain - an unknown and hidden

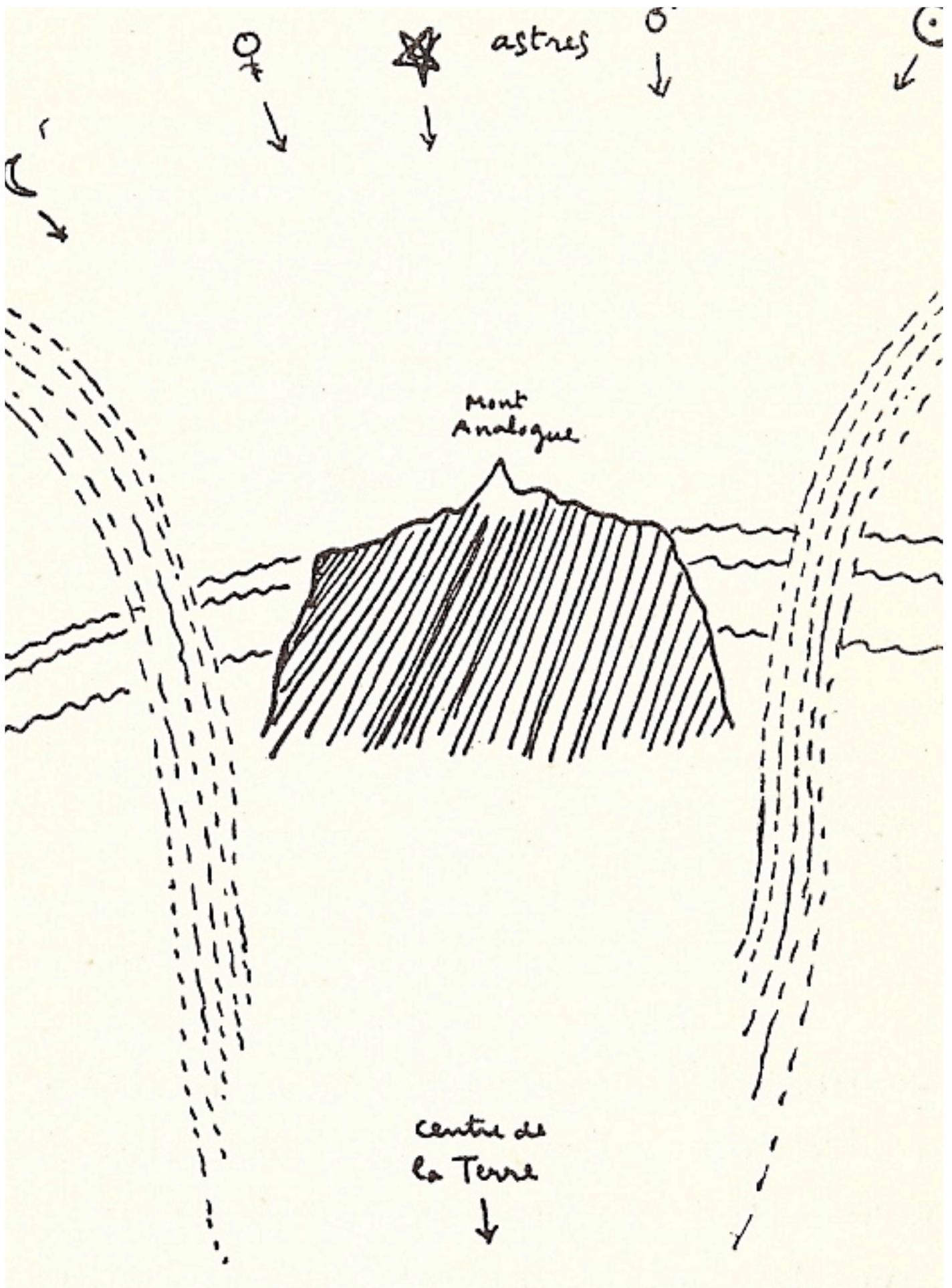
mountain connects earth to heaven but first must be believed in by the climbers in order to be climbed. To find this mountain they must first sail on a ship called the impossible before finding something ‘relatively real’. The book was never completed and the climbers never coming back down from the mountain. As the final chapter stops mid-sentence as Damaul succumbed to tuberculosis in 1944.

Also included in the section reserved to Daumal will be the ideal of the Peradam, which Daumal describes as

“Adam’s stone,” having some secret and profound connection to the original nature of man. The clarity of this stone is so great and its index of refraction so close to that of air that, despite the crystal’s great density, the unaccustomed eye hardly perceives it. But to anyone who seeks it with sincere desire and true need, it reveals itself by its sudden sparkle, like that of dewdrops. The peradam is the only substance, the only material object whose value is recognized by the guides of Mount Analogue. Therefore, it is the standard of all currency, as gold is for us.”

I will focus on the peradam as a way of thinking about the interaction with art objects. Objects where the material functions between presence and absence, a material that shifts into the perception of the viewer and then out again. The relation between the peradam and viewer is something e/illusive that makes a request to be discovered. As it made the request to be found by the artist, so the request must be made for the viewer to rediscover it. The sub-section will be particularly invested researching the artist-object-viewer relationship and how this can be complicated.

Part three) part essay, part auto-ethnographic account of my work leading up to the graduation-show, whilst working on the above two sections, I will maintain a ‘diary-esque’ account of the tangents and movements of the project, implementing the research methodologies being dug up through the previous two sections. I have kept a detailed diary for the past few years, but this will now fit within a formed part of the thesis. It is hoped that this formalization through the means of short daily essay writing will advocate a distance between myself and the work, allowing me to function as a viewer to the project as well as map current influences and step back from the direct relationship to the project. The utilization of a form in which content trickles into also shapes the temporality towards the final work. This section seeks to be added to daily and thus documents the evolution of the project’s outline. Cathryn Ellis defines auto-ethnography as the



*Rene Daumal's
Illustration of
Mount Analogue*

“research, writing, story, and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social, and political”.

(Ellis 2004) It is within this light of the ‘auto’ moving outwards that represents the influence on the fringes of my research that I would like this section to operate.

This section can also be connected to section one when thinking of it through set theory, as this section seeks to document what exists outside of the set and outside of presupposed ideas I might have of my work.

These three sections have been considered as possible ways to formalize the processes that I have previously used in past projects. Nearly all projects come from forms of conversation, reading, watching film, playing with material, and trying to have a practice that moves in and out of making.

There is something quite important for me about the movement of utilizing different forms of influence but more over, how a natural fluidity of ideas comes once a project has been instigated. For example a work I showed in 2010 titled ‘Tuesday 1974’ came from a discussion I had with a friend, who after a few long haul flights suffered tinnitus. It not only gave him a constant ringing in his ear, it was also constantly throwing off his balance. I did some further reading and discovered that a similar experience happens to pilots during extremely dark nights, bad weather or the combination of the two. Their inner ear tricks them into thinking they are flying under an angle or even upside down. They then correct themselves with false information provided by their bodies and fatally crash the plane. All through misguided information. During a check up, I had a chat to my doctor about this. He told me that the same spatial disorientation was the case with Roger Peterson a 21-year-old pilot who suffered from this confusion, which was also exacerbated due to bad weather conditions. Along with his own death in the February of 1959, musicians Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, and J. P. “The Big Bopper” Richardson were among the fatalities. The incident inspiring Don McLean to write American pie. Lyrically distilling and tuning the destabilizing accident into *‘The Day the Music Died’*.

I then conducted email conversations with a friend-of-friend of my father, who also as a 21-year-old pilot during the Vietnam War suffered a similar spatial disorientating incident in 1974. He could not remember the exact date of the event, only that it was a Tuesday, thus giving me the title ‘Tuesday 1974’ . I

took this account and developed it into a work, which took the form of text on simple A4 laser paper, detailing his first person account. The sheet was placed on the terrazzo floor of the gallery and directly next to it a vertically standing roll of aircraft grade aluminum was positioned, as the completed work.

I revisited the work by writing an essay on how I tried to give myself the same disorientating experience, by closing my eyes in a window seat while on a plane banking from a flight between Suvarnabhumi and Schiphol airports, aptly titling the essay ‘Suvarnabhumi and Schiphol.’ This final manifestation of the work and essay would not have been possible without the initial take off, kindly given by my friend’s misfortunate and inauspicious ringing of his inner ears. This is what is interesting for me, how this knock-on progression occurs, how a movement of ideas travels towards a work and particularly how this also occurs for the viewer when viewing and interacting with these accounts and the objects that create them. In ‘Reassembling the Social’ Bruno Latour makes the claim that we must show the plurality of worlds around us and begin to observe and map these meta-physical pluralism. Rather than attempting to make an object speak the way you want it to speak, we must allow their voices to bubble up. Letting the objects’ autonomy gain momentum through their networks.

‘If we call metaphysics the discipline . . . that purports to define the basic structure of the world, then empirical metaphysics is what the controversies over agencies lead to since they ceaselessly populate the world with new drives and, as ceaselessly, contest the existence of others. The question then becomes how to explore the actors’ own metaphysics’ (Latour 2005)

This is where I am proposing a methodology of participation, as much as it worthy to create, the repositioning of pre-existing object’s energy is as much a part of discovering this network, altering and moving the flow intrinsic and already contained within the objects. Through collaborative object research we can enter at the ground level and view this network on the networks’ terms not only ours.

The theosophist and writer, Alice Ann Bailey explored the actor’s metaphysics and her own when she wrote the book ‘The Consciousness of the Atom’ afterwards claiming absenteeism in the writing of her book. Materially her hand was hers but the ideas in the book were not, but channeled through an ‘ascended master’ named D.K.” later identified by her



Tuesday 1974
Installation

As we were flying a low pass we noticed the close proximity of the stars.

At a second glance we realized we were flying the aircraft inverted and had mistaken the city lights for the stars. Immediately correcting our position we were able to correctly align ourselves with the horizon. The stars above us, and the city lights below us.

Tuesday 1974
Detail

as Djwal Khul. It is important to note that her writing was deeply influenced by Helena Blavatsky, a key figure in the new age movement of the late 1800's. Whether it was Baily that influenced by Blavatsky or D.K that is really undecided, as I'm not really sure who is the one that takes influence if you're the channel to a spirit's desire to write.

I'm not particularly interested in Baily's writing (she was a racist who preached regularly on the subject of the 'ladder of evolution') and god knows I don't want to spend any more time on those black background-neon-letter-occultist websites, but I find the mechanics of her methodology extremely fascinating. In one stroke she claims so many enviable positions, the writer, the channel, the reader, the material, the insider and the outsider, ultimately letting all those voices consciously speak their individual declarations in the harmony of a single hand. Letting the networks of voices speak within a single text. It is with all these methods, ideas and plans that I hope to work my way towards the thesis and graduation work.

"You cannot stay on the summit forever; you have to come down again. So why bother in the first place? Just this: What is above knows what is below, but what is below does not know what is above. One climbs, one sees. One descends, one sees no longer, but one has seen. There is an art of conducting oneself in the lower regions by the memory of what one saw higher up. When one can no longer see, one can at least still know."

René Daumal

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