

WHEN  
DOES A  
WORK  
WORKS?

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# WHEN DOES A WORK, WORKS?

THESIS

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Over the past years I worked and investigated in an array of everyday subjects within digital-pop-culture as reference, such as; computer symbols, digital devices, internet, networks, archives. I used digital or/and analogue objects to reflect on relationships between humans and the systems they create. My work employs a peculiar blend of a little humour and visual aesthetics combine with conceptualism. Creating an unexpected perspective to these subjects, to get a different perception of them, I creates a social dialogue about media and the digital age.

A strength of me is that I'm very controlling within my works, but that can also be a contrary. The way I choose my objects and placing them are careful thought out, but when something happens randomly I find it hard to point out. Some decisions are very controlling, but when I listen to my intuition, I find it hard to reflect on those choices. For this thesis I want to ask myself; 'when does a work, works?'. I want to figure out why do I make certain choices, basis on a set of rules that I made. Can I put my works of art in 'boxes' and see if my controlling self is really a benefit in my own practice. Besides the rules I also have a method that I use, named UNCREATIVE METHOD. This is a tool that I develop last year and it helps to keep the process going. The thesis will be a kind of data overview of my artworks from the past year, with the help of the rules and the tool that I both have created.

In this research I will describe, analyse and reflect on my artworks over the past year. Trying to identify the decisions that I made based on these set of rules and the tool UNCREATIVE METHOD; THE JOURNEY TO FUJI project, in which I first experiment with storytelling; BLUETEETH, THE APPLE OF NEWTON AND TURING, and the BOWS AND CLOUD stories, where I explore this narrative method further; ZHUANGZI poems, in which I substituted the names of people and objects; ZOOLOGY ILLUSTRATION where I made my own categorization from existing, non-existing and fantasy animal, based on Jorge Luis Borges THE BOOK OF IMAGINARY BEINGS.

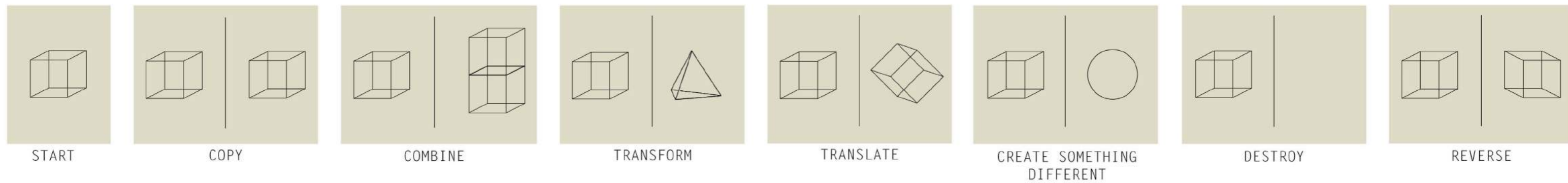
## RULES

<p><b>1. Involves some handcraft.</b> <i>This can be interpreted literal as a hands-on work, or as an editor on a software like; Photoshop or Premiere.</i></p>
<p><b>2. Involves the UNCREATIVE METHOD</b> <i>I reflect on UNCREATIVE METHOD that I created last year as tool of creative thinking and working. (SEE CHAPTER 2)</i></p>
<p><b>3. Selected the medium carefully.</b> <i>The medium is a big part of my work and strengthens the final result.</i></p>
<p><b>4. The work invites a social dialogue about media and the digital age.</b> <i>It highlights contemporary topics and questions them.</i></p>
<p><b>5. There is some irony or tricking involved.</b> <i>The work can be gimmicky, humorous, or even a trick.</i></p>

## 2 UNCREATIVE METHOD

The UNCREATIVE METHOD is a tool that I made last year during methodology classes. It's a method that I always used in my own practices, but now translated in text and visuals. As a fine art artist you work a lot with your intuition and emotions. To translate these choices to a tool, can really be helpful to make clear decisions. This way I'm more conscious of my way of working and reproducing artworks. It's a method that you can use everywhere, anytime, any objects or topics.

This is how it works; you always have a start and you have your ingredients,-copy,-combine,-transform,-translate,-create something different,-destroy,-reverse.



There is no linear order, just pick ingredient and embed with your start. Does it not work out like the way you want it to, try another ingredient, you can use the result of your first experiment as a start. Try all the ingredients to see all the different ways of producing work. Do you miss an ingredient? Than just create one, because this method is never complete.

This process feels natural to me, but now I know, I still want it to be spontaneous. Because normally, I do this without knowing, and I don't want to be force in to this method. The danger of you focus too much on this method it will become mathematical.

### 3 THE JOURNEY TO FUJI

*Long time ago in the village of Minami-Ashigara in the prefecture of Kanagawa, at the foot of Mt. Hakone, there was a young boy named Dai-Nippon Shūichi. He lives in a nice warm house with his mother, father and two sisters. Every morning when Dai-Nippon wakes up he looks out of his window. There he sees the great holy Mount Fuji, situated not far from Mt. Hakone. Mount Fuji is an old volcano that towers over Japan, and it's an important part of Japanese culture. There are all kinds of myths and stories, and each Japanese family tells their own version. The mother of Dai-Nippon always tells the story about the goddess of Fuji. Women were prohibited to climb the holy mount, because they could wake up the jealous goddess Konohana Sakuyahime (tree-flower-blooms-princess). The name refers to the short-lived beauty of the cherry blossom that grows on the mountain. Dai-Nippon is always wondering what Konohana looks like, and imagines how she lives up there.*

*Dai-Nippon's father Asano Shūichi is a big business man, who is known for his company called Fuji Film. When Dai-Nippon grew older his dad's company got bigger and so all the males in the family have to work within the company.  
Dai-Nippon is part of the design department.*

*But one day his dad gives his son a big assignment to make symbols for the cameras. A Big challenge because they are going to be used on every Fuji camera. You have several different modes on a camera, so for each he has to make a symbol. Portrait, reminds him of the goddess Konohana Sakuyahime, so the symbol becomes a female head seen from the side. Close-up mode, makes him think of cherry blossom that grows on the mountain, so the flower becomes the symbol. The last mode is landscape, and he could only imagine one thing, the mountain Fuji. The perfect Japanese landscape.*



A room with the wooden symbol, size of 200x100 centimetres, painted grey. In the space you can hear the audio voice telling the story, for 2.30 minutes long, with Japanese background music. You can walk around it and listen to the voice wherever you want in the space. I also made a booklet of the story, if you missed the audio experience or if you want to read it in your own time. The booklet looks Japanese, like the binding of the pages, the title in Japanese language, and some original illustrations Japanese of the Mt. Fuji by Hiroshige.

During Thematic Project last year we investigate the photobook as narrative possibilities of both tradition photobooks and exploring possibilities of the digital reinvention of the 'photobook'. I chose to research the symbol of 'two mountains', which is often used as the 'empty placeholder' in the online photobooks lay-outs. I was curious where the symbol came from, therefor I investigate his historical background and how it contributes to a more contemporary use of symbolic imagery.

I started by looking all the variations of mountain imagery used in these layouts, and intended to investigate the historical path which these images took. This symbol stands for a landscape and that's how I found the relationship to photography, especially the Fuji Camera, which leads me to the Mt. Fuji.

I have assigned my own history to the "two mountains" as the Mt. Fuji in Japan. Based on my own fiction and some facts, I created the story around this symbol. This story is told by a female voice with serene Japanese background music. Beside of the audio voice, I placed the symbol in the room made out of wood, so the Mt. Fuji is present while you listen to the myth. I wanted to change the context of the symbol, and the perspective of these 'two mountains', by giving it a historical and cultural Japanese background.

The combination with the audio and installation created what I like to called it a Japanese-myth experience. A lots of Japanese mythology includes god, goddesses, and spirits, and most of the stories concern the creation of the world.<sup>1</sup> I concern the creation of this symbol and include Japanese mythology to bring it more to life. To combine this symbol to cultural folklore from Japan, and the iconic Mt. Fuji it creates a mythologies. A story that you want to past on, to your children or friends.

<sup>1</sup> Ashkenazi, Michael. *Handbook of Japanese Mythology*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2003. Print



### *Template books*

One of the first experiments was template books, where I copy the templates and place them again in the online photobook template. First I made screenshots of the templates, which the company provides for you to make the photobook. Some of the companies respond to me that the book was 'empty', but I told them that I put images of the template in the book. I receive six template books, and all of them looked different. They all used different templates, different 'mountain'-symbol, and colours. I want it to see all these different templates translated in a photobook itself, than watching it on a screen. These books look like gimmick objects and I like the diversity of them. These little books are all very different, but they all have one similar element, and that is the symbol of the two mountains.

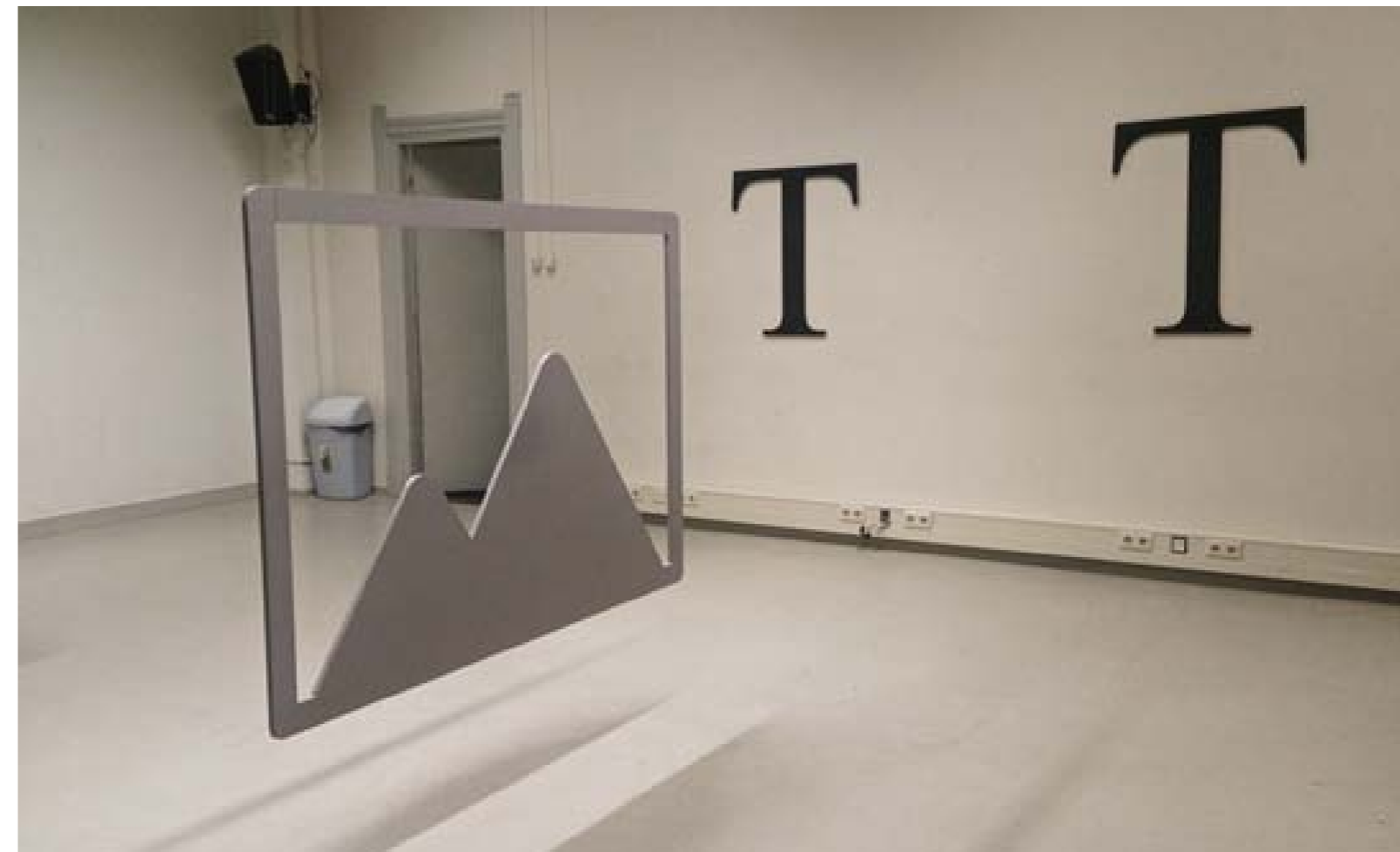
### *Template room*

After I made the books I realized that we are living in a big template. Everything is already planned out for the human. In a nutshell; we go to school, get a job or a career, get married or have babies, retired and die. Our whole life is planned out by the system that humans create. Everything around us is a plan, and the template provides a path to follow. You are filling in this template with your own life experiences, you are filling in the empty placeholder. The symbol of the two mountains is being replaced by your life.

I was sitting in my studio with these ideas of the room as a template, including the symbols. To create this template room, I CNC the symbol of the mountain, and the 'T' of text, of wood. I make them large that they match up the studio, what I took as an example of a template room. I painted them in the colours such as the template books and placed them in the room. I made a flyer with 'you are here' to lead the viewer in to this template room. The idea is that you get conscious that you are in a template room, and you as a human are filling this space. In the end I think it was too literal, this transition from template in books to a physical space. What I did discover is that I can use the CNC-wooden Mountain for other purposes.

### *Fuji tourist*

When I connected the symbol to the Mt. Fuji in Japan, I found a lot of images of the mountain, especially tourist photos with this iconic mountain. Now that I have my own wooden mountain right here, let's make tourist photos with it, so my mountain will also be iconic. I want to experiment if this maybe helps to let my wooden frame refer to the Mt. Fuji. I was quite easy to get people on photo with my mountain, like it was made for it. After my tourist day, I printed the photos out, and I discover that the images that I created were quite ambiguous. Because the tourists are not only holding the Mt. Fuji (wooden frame), but also a symbol that refers to an empty placeholder, like in the templates. In a template you fill in this symbol with a picture, now the symbol is in the picture too. The symbol becomes more than an empty placeholder, it becomes special and part of life. After this experiment the wooden frame became part of the story, what I presented during the presentation.







Maria Entraigues Discovery Channel interview

Example Discovery



Screenshot of the video, Sato in the exhibition

### Mockumentary

Almost after a year when I started this project, there was a Fuji exhibition in the SieboldHuis, Japanese museum in Leiden. This exhibition consisting of 140 works, gives a multi-dimensional view of the sacred Fuji. Masterpieces by legendary artists Hokusai and Hiroshige will feature prominently in this two part exhibition. Mount Fuji is undoubtedly the most famous scenic element in Japan.<sup>1</sup> When I went there to see it I felt so inspired to try another experiment with this project. I want to create a mockumentary with THE JOURNEY TO FUJI and test if the story also translates in a video. Mockumentaries is a type of film or television show in which fictional events are presented in documentary style to create a parody.<sup>2</sup> This kind of video making attracts me, and I want to experiment if the video can fool the viewer even more than the first presentation.

I contacted the museum if I could film in the exhibition, and to tell my story about the two-mountain-symbol. There were amazed by my story, and they believed it, so I think therefor they allow me to film there. But to make really this mockumentary work I needed a Japanese to tell it for me. I found Sato Endo, a performer and yoga instructor, to help me with my project. First I made a different version of the original story, so her role in this video is like a museum guide/historian. Then we meet up and made a plan when we going to film there. She translated my latest version and we were ready to go. I had the idea of making overview shots of the exhibition and between them you will see her telling the story. The head-shot looks like what you often see on documentaries, like those on Discovery.

Most mockumentaries are there to let you believe in something, and there for the video has to be believable. It's a fake documentary. With this video I try to convince the viewer that my myth really took place, and that the symbol of two-mountain are the Mt. Fuji. I want this to believable because this symbol can mean much more than what it is.

<sup>1</sup> *Fuji: Images of an Iconic Mountain*. Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, 10 Dec. 2015. Web. 29 Feb. 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Campbell, Miranda. "The Mocking Mockumentary and the Ethics of Irony." (2006): 53-62. 4 Oct. 2006. Web. 20 Apr. 2016.

<b>1. Involves some handcraft.</b>	Yes it did! A lot; making the photobooks; the wooden symbol; the template room; the tourist photos; recording the audio; preparing and making the mockumentary. It feels good when I'm busy.	V
<b>2. Involves the Uncreative Method.</b>	I used the uncreative method a few times; copy; translate; create something different; combine.	V
<b>3. Selected the medium carefully.</b>	The medium was a big role of the project, how do u tell this story? Two options came out of it; the storytelling voice with the installation; or the mockumentary. Both can be really interesting, it depends on the place and context of the event or show. The video works well online, because you can just take your time to look at it, where ever you want. The audio voice is an installation and therefor better in a space that you can visited. This installation is hard to experience from home.	V
<b>4. The work invites a social dialogue about media and the digital age.</b>	The symbol is a media object; it's used in digital templates and also you see it quite often on your own desktop, both representing an image. With my story I hope to open a conversation about these common symbols, to get a different awareness of them. Next time if you look at the two mountain symbol you will be reminded of Mt. Fuji.	V
<b>5. There is some irony or tricking involved.</b>	The trick of this whole project is to let the viewer believe in my fictional story about the two mountain symbol. I succeed this more with the mockumentary than the installation, because the video is shot in a way that's informational. The short video communicated knowledge of a particular fact that I created. The installation presents a myth and an experience.	V

THE JOURNEY TO FUJI, was really a journey for me. It really inspired me to make different experiments and it felt if I was in my element. To work step by step to a different outcome, and work with the method, keeps me going. After one experiment it inspired me to create another one. Two experiment were more extended, the installation with the voice (in the beginning) and the mockumentary video (in the end). Both with different outcomes and feel, but yet the same story. The first one felt more like a poem, because of the voice and the Japanese background music. That Japanese-myth experience what I talked about early, becomes more forward in the first experiment. The video becomes more a documentary and therefor something that's informative. It does not gives you really an experience, because it's just a video what you looking at. The first installation you are really involved in the story and the room. For me the video presents the story as 'real', contrary to the installation more like a myth. Both trying to fool and trick the viewer in this story.

My goal at first was to learn people about this symbol, and tell something about the significance of every day symbols and the unknown meanings or uses that came before our contemporary uses or appropriations. In the end I wasn't that serious and I trick them with my fictional conclusions. Give this different perception and unexpected perspective to the viewer by fooling them, means that I succeed. The joy and the kick what I get when the viewer gets amused and questions if it was real or not. It's really a compliment is you can make something that believable.





#### 4 THE APPLE OF NEWTON AND TURING

*When Steve uttered the name 'Apple', Ronald laughed and said,  
"It's a computer company, not a fruit store."  
"But I like apples and love to eat them.."*

*So the name was created for the computer company. Apple was the idea of bringing simplicity to the people, in the most sophisticated way and nothing else. But what about their logo?*

*Steve always admired Sir Isaac Newton, the great English physicist and mathematician. During his studies he was fascinated by his book *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, first published in 1687. So Steve really wanted to incorporate Newton in his company. The designer, Ronald Wayne, agreed and the first logo showed Sir Isaac Newton, sitting beneath the very tree from which an apple had fallen on his head as he revolutionized the laws of gravity. If you look carefully, the phrase on the outside border reads,*

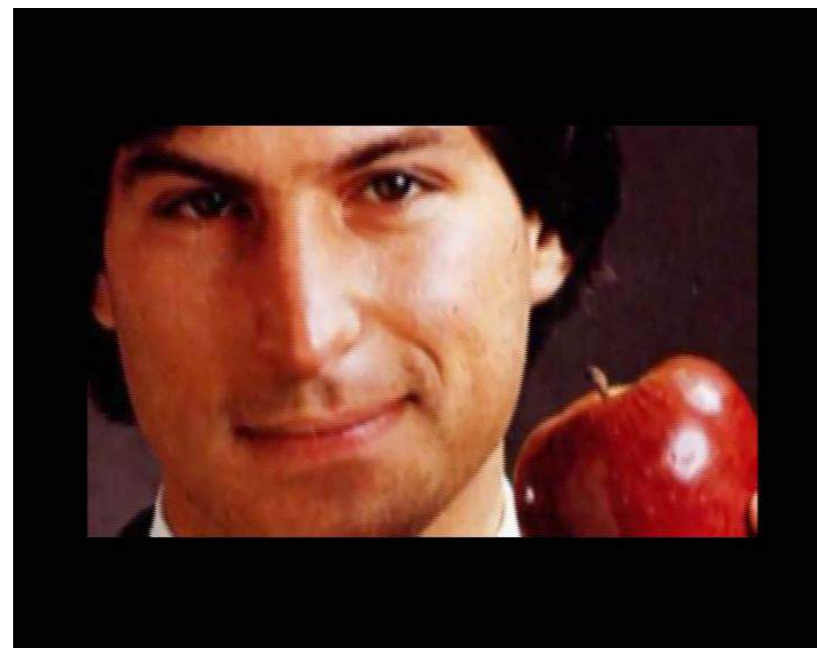
*'Newton... A mind forever voyaging through strange seas of thought... alone'*

*After 22 years, it was time for some change, a modern change. Steve hired Rob Janoff with the task to design a new logo. Little did he know that the logo he planned to design would become the most iconic logo in corporate history. It was inspired by the death of Alan Turing, the ground-breaking mathematician and computer scientist, who committed suicide by eating a cyanide-laced apple in 1954. When his body was discovered, an apple lay half-eaten beside his bed, and the apple was tested for cyanide. He committed suicide because he couldn't live any longer as a gay man in that time, which was punishable up until 1967 in England. Steve could relate to Alan and therefor, the iconic logo was created. The logo in a form of an Apple with a bite out of it, and again with a personal touch as an underlying thought. But that was a secret.*

*When Steve was asked why he named the company 'Apple', his answer was simply..  
"I like apples and love to eat them"*

There are a lot of stories about these specific symbol, the Apple. It's also a good marketing tool to tell a great story about this famous icon. I choose this symbol, to practice my storytelling. After THE JOURNEY TO FUJI, I want to train this skill of storytelling, and see if THE JOURNEY TO FUJI was just good luck, or can I use this method more often. When I was researching all the possible stories for the Apple symbol, I noticed that there was already a historical path. In opposition with THE JOURNEY TO FUJI, where I had to create this path, I used what I could find.

In combination with the story I created a video of found footage that connects the story. For example; when I talk about Isaac Newton, you will see him in the video; when I talk about the first logo, you will see the first logo of Apple. These video footage I found on Youtube, and make a kind of collage to support the story. An assemblage of different videos from Apple, to creating a new whole. I find video a good way to experiment, because you kind find every visual online and mixing them up on your screen is much easier than cutting/pasting physically. It's like a first step for me, if visuals work with the narrative.



<b>1. Involves some handcraft.</b>	I only try to support the story with a video-collage. After I did this, I noticed that there are more similar videos on Youtube about the history of Apple.	V
<b>2. Involves the Uncreative Method.</b>	Just one time; combine, when I was making the video collage.	V
<b>3. Selected the medium carefully.</b>	I didn't, the story isn't new and the video collage already exist.	X
<b>4. The work invites a social dialogue about media and the digital age.</b>	It doesn't add anything the existing dialogue about the symbol.	X
<b>5. There is some irony or tricking involved.</b>	Not at all, because we know about the symbol. What was really different with the two mountain symbol, is there nothing to find about it. If you look for the historical background of the Apple symbol, you will find a lot, and therefor is known and no longer a trick to fool you.	X

After my second experiment with exercising the storytelling, I failed. I failed because I chose the wrong symbol to work with. There is already so many information about this symbol, I didn't have to create a historical background for it, because than no one will believe it. I used that existing information, and not my own imagination, therefore it wasn't my own voice. I just put the existing stories what I found together, and create another version of the Apple story in a video collage. It just become another one, besides all the other stories what look also similar to my version. Even with the rules I failed, because of my bad decision of choosing the Apple symbol. If I look at it now, it was good to stop, and not putting more effort in it.

## 5 BLUE TEETH

*A great king of a land far away, in the East of Denmark who was named Harald Blåtand Gormsson held a great feast to celebrate the harvest of the blueberries. He invited everyone to come to his castle and eat the newest and finest blueberries of his land, which the king is extremely fond of. He even helps the farmers of his land to harvest, because the king finds his blueberries so special. Each year, the feast is bigger and grander, it has become a national holiday for Denmark.*

*On the 20th anniversary, king Harald wanted something extra special at his feast. He asked everyone to help with the harvest, so the feast can start as quickly as possible. Finished the harvest, they collected all the blueberries around the castle for the feast. Once back from the land, the king couldn't stop smiling from happiness, but the villagers noticed something about the king. His teeth were blue!*

*King Harald didn't only start his feast meal with his beloved blueberries, but after 20 years consuming the blueberries so regularly and in such volume, they stained his teeth blue forever. The king accepted it, and he wasn't going to stop eating his lovely blueberries. Only the king had a new nickname that is still remembered today: Bluetooth, the 10th century king of Denmark.*

Just like the Apple story, was this Blue Tooth symbol-story also a practice for me. When I was researching the blue tooth symbol, I found one sentence that inspired me to extend this story: Bluetooth” now commonly refers to the Bluetooth wireless specification design started by Ericsson, Nokia, Intel and Toshiba to enable cable-free connections between computers, mobile phones, PDAs, printers, etc. The Bluetooth communications protocol in these devices is named after the king, because he unified Denmark and Norway much like the technology whose goal was to unify computers and cellular phones.<sup>1</sup> Blue Tooth was named after the king Harald I from Denmark, also known as Harald Bluetooth, because he eats a lot of blueberries as a cause of his blue teeth’s. For me the story already sounds amazing and unbelievable, that I like to develop this story further.

Beside this story I try to create a different support for it (then a video), I found real teeth’s and made them blue. I wanted to give this object the feel if the blue teeth’s were from the king. Instead the teeth’s were more like a prop what you see in amusement park, such as the Efteling. They became too literal.



<sup>1</sup> “Bluetooth Fact or Fiction.” *Bluetooth: Fact or Fiction*. Bluetooth SIG, Inc, n.d. Web. 21 Apr. 2016.

<b>1. Involves some handcraft.</b>	I painted teeth’s blue, so they look like they were from the king.	V
<b>2. Involves the Uncreative Method.</b>	Just one time; transform, turn in the teeth to a prop.	V
<b>3. Selected the medium carefully.</b>	I selected the fairy-tale as a medium for this story and this object as a prop. Did I selected it wisely, I don’t think so.	X
<b>4. The work invites a social dialogue about media and the digital age.</b>	Not enough, I made a fairy-tale for a certain media symbol, and that wasn’t my goal. I wanted to present this symbol to learn something about it, and tell about the significance of every day symbols and the unknown meanings.	X
<b>5. There is some irony or tricking involved.</b>	Not at all, because of the fairy-tale way of telling the story, is really not believable. It’s a most amusing for the viewer and I’m not convincing them.	X

Because there is a King and a castle involved in the story, it took quite easily a fairy-tale tone. Fairy tales are known of their folkloric fantasy characters, such as dwarves, elves, kings, princess. The BLUE TEETH story also had a happy fairy tale ending. These are all ingredients for a fairy tale story, BLUE TEETH has them all. Nobody thought that the story was real, and could not possibly be true. Even when I chose the Bluetooth facts, the way I presented it was totally unreal and unconvincing. I took it maybe too far with all these fairy-tale elements, especially with the prop; the blue teeth’s, I took it quite literally. Maybe the blue teeth’s worked in a collection of Cabinet of Curiosities objects, but not by itself. Again this was a good experiment, but I’m not creating the next Grimm’s book of media fairy tales.

## 6 BOWS AND THE CLOUD

*I set my bow in the clouds — the rainbow, it is likely was seen in the clouds before, but was never a seal of the network till now. This seal is fixed with repeated assurances of the truth of that promise, which it was designed to be the ratification of; I do set my bow in the cloud to connect to other clouds. It shall be seen in the cloud, and it shall be a token of the network. The rainbow appears when the clouds are most wet. When we have most reason to fear the rain prevailing, God shows this seal of the promise that the rainbow shall not prevail. The rainbow appears when one part of the sky is clear. When the time is right, and the clouds are hemmed. As it were, with the rainbow, that they may not overspread the heavens; for the bow is coloured rain, or the edges of a cloud gilded. As God looks upon the bow that he may remember the network, so should we, that we also may be ever mindful of the network with faith and thankfulness.*



For this experiment I choose the cloud symbol to create a narrative. The cloud stands for 'on-demand computing', is a kind of Internet-based computing, where shared resources, data and information are provided to computers and other devices on-demand.<sup>1</sup> The first thing that I do to create a story is searching the word, this time 'cloud', on Google. I look at the research results, and the images that Google provides for me. Then I found the story of BOW IN THE CLOUD, and sounded like a good starting point to make a connection to the symbol. The story is of the Bible, Genesis 9:13, and I used it as a structuring device.<sup>2</sup> It's like a place holder, in which I substituted the names of people and objects; God and covenant is replaced by the word network. This Bible story gets a whole different meaning, and feel to it. It's not about God anymore, but about the rainbow connecting these clouds, and the network with faith and thankfulness. It reads weird and ambiguous, it sounds familiar but something is just not right. Even when I read it, I get confused what it is about, and I think that was the reason that I could not continue with it. I didn't made any visual support for this experiment. Also I don't want to offend the Bible by doing this, I can imagine that it can be an insult to some believers. Either way this is not a good placeholder, but the method of substituted words of an existing narrative structure can be interesting.

<b>1. Involves some handcraft.</b>	Not at all, I didn't feel inspired by the story to create something	X
<b>2. Involves the Uncreative Method.</b>	No, only the writing and recreating the Bible story. But that's not part of the method.	X
<b>3. Selected the medium carefully.</b>	I didn't, I think it's was wrong to choose the Bible as my placeholder. It got me confused and stuck.	X
<b>4. The work invites a social dialogue about media and the digital age.</b>	I have to develop it further to create this.	X
<b>5. There is some irony or tricking involved.</b>	I don't want to make a fool of the Bible, I think therefor it's also a bad decision of choosing this structure	X

Conclusion, bad, bad, decisions overall. None of the rules apply on this story. It was still in his early stage, I could develop it further to the next level to make it stronger. Only I didn't because I got confused and stuck, and I put it away. It was just a short experiment. If I look back at it now, I should take a closer look and amplify what I had going.

<sup>1</sup> "Cloud Computing." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 18 Jan. 2016. Web. 08 Feb. 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Structuring device or what I called a placeholder, are composed parts to organized something, what I used as a method to rewrite the material. The structure of this text remains in the same state, I substituted words and names, to create a new text.

## 7 ZHUANGZI

### Original

*Once upon a time, I, Zhuangzi, dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes a butterfly. I was conscious only of following my fancies as a butterfly, and was unconscious of my individuality as a man. Suddenly, I awaked, and there I lay, myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly, dreaming I am a man. Between a man and butterfly there is necessarily a barrier. The transition is called Metempsychosis.*

### My Version (1)

*Once upon a time, I, stone dreamt I was a bird, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes as a bird. I was conscious only of following my fancies as a bird, and was unconscious of my individuality as a stone. Suddenly, I awaked, and there I lay, myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a stone dreaming I was a bird, or whether I am now a bird, dreaming I am a stone. Between a stone and bird there is necessarily a barrier. The transition is called Metempsychosis.*

I used the story of ZHUANGZI, The Butterfly Dream, as structure device.<sup>1</sup> The poem means to make a philosophical point about what we take to be real. The general question – do I wake or sleep? – seems both valid and ultimately unanswerable. If we do not know whether we are waking or dreaming, we cannot appeal to a body of knowledge belonging to the world of the waking. The realization that if we can see how dreams can seem completely real, then we can also see how reality can be just like a dream. There is the temptation to find oneself ‘understanding everything correctly.’<sup>2</sup>

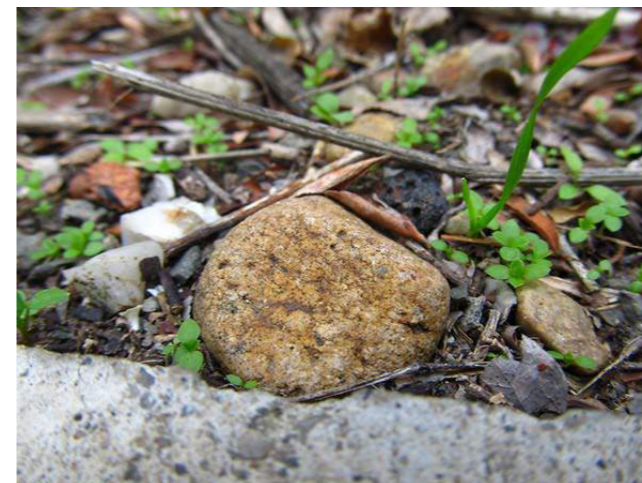
This time I substituted the words of people and living creatures; ‘Zhuangzi’ and ‘butterfly’, I change with other livings or Mother Nature. My versions of this poem creates a different kind of relationship, and a different intersubjectivity.<sup>3</sup> The way I started, was looking to find two living things that comment each other and find an interesting opposition. The first version what I created was already interesting, because I give an anthropomorphic voice to a non living stone. In the original story it’s between a man and a butterfly, both living creatures. To see a different relationship between objects and living, gives the poem a different intersubjectivity. To see this contrast was for me the most interesting part of this experiment.

To support my poem I experiment with video. It’s a nice way to experiment with visuals, because nowadays you can find easily found footage online to explore your ideas. Again I use found footage of Youtube that connects to my narrative. The words that I have replaced are the key-words for my video search. For example; the bird, I looked for a calm video and natural environment of this animal. Because the original story has this natural feeling and it’s about dreaming, I try to look for videos to compliment that. In the story I replaced two words, therefor I find two videos, and I place them next to each other. These images on the left are screenshots of the video. This visuals helps you to relate more to the narrative. In the background of this video, you will hear the story.

1 “Butterfly Dreams (Zhuangzi Quote)” YouTube. *YouTube*, n.d. Web. 04 Jan. 2016.  
 2 Tallis, Raymond. “Zhuangzi And That Bloody Butterfly.” *Philosophy Now*. N.p., 2009. Web.  
 3 Intersubjectivity, is the idea that’s possible to share or relate something with two or more subjects.

<b>1. Involves some handcraft.</b>	I created a couple of short videos to experiment with the visuals and the story.	V
<b>2. Involves the Uncreative Method.</b>	I used; translate and combine. The translation is the way I interpreted the text and rewrite it. The way I use combine is to put the new text in combination with the video.	V
<b>3. Selected the medium carefully.</b>	The work was still in the experiment phase, I chose the medium video because it is an easy and quick way to create visuals. In the end all the videos looked the same, because I was presenting the same story over and over again, only with different elements.	V
<b>4. The work invites a social dialogue about media and the digital age.</b>	Maybe not so much for the digital age, but from a psychology view where the original story from, could be showing different point of views. Nowadays understanding everything correctly, is hard to reach, whether we are waking or dreaming. Conceptually is not where I normally find myself.	X
<b>5. There is some irony or tricking involved.</b>	There is no fooling around here, that’s way I see myself failing conceptually.	X

Because it’s repeating the story over, and over again, even the words changes, it becomes dull. You know what’s going to happen, in the next version. It is quite hard to keep het interesting for the viewer, even when you looking at stunning documentary images. I try now twice the ‘placeholder’-method, and notices that it’s missing my voice in these narratives. I use more of the original structure than rewritten my own version, therefor is lacking my imagination. Also the choice of this story doesn’t really fits my genre of working with media and the digital age. It’s involved to much the psychology view, and because I use the structure I would lose that part. That’s also the reason I’m not fooling anyone here.



## 8 ZOOLOGY ILLUSTRATION

For this Thematic Project we had a group exhibition in V2, with the results of the research of the encyclopaedia of media object. The illustration that I found were quite dated and that's way I chose to make slides and project them during the exhibition. But only the slides were not enough, so I made a little guide for the slideshow. Each slide has a number, where the guide tells you a short description, and which category the animal belongs to. These descriptions are about the animals, some parts of the information are facts some of them are fictional. If that was not enough I also had an audio voice reading the guide for you. Every time when a bell rings through your headphone, you could go to the next slide by the remote controller on the slide projector. All this together felt like a zoology class, that's way I put a school desk, chair and notebook, were you could teach yourself in your own time. Just listen to the audio voice, read along with the guide, writes some note, a manual the slide projector yourself.



During the third Thematic Project in the first year with Florian Cramer, we research the encyclopaedia of media object. We dissect this topic by questioning each word individual; what are objects, what is media, and what is an encyclopaedia? While we research these issues, we approaches a lot of theories, such as Jorge Luis Borges THE BOOK OF IMAGINARY BEINGS.<sup>1</sup> This fictional book contains descriptions of 120 mythical creatures from folklore and literature. Often descriptions from one to four pages, these creatures are bizarre of far from absurd. Borges gives the mythological origins of each, and also some indication of how they have been used and seen throughout the ages.<sup>2</sup> Borges was my biggest inspiration and starting point of this project.

I created my own 'book of imaginary beings' in an installation called ZOOLOGY ILLUSTRATION. My project started with hard to classify animals; the platypus and the extinct dodo. These animals are rare, because they are egg-laying mammals, and have evolutionary relationship between mammals and reptiles.(I can't be sure of the dodo) Borges inspired me to find and imagine more of these animals and came up with my own categorization; existing, extinct and fantasy animals.

The search for these animals proceed in the following way; category existing, I looked for animals like the platypus, and other rare evolutions within animals; category non- existing, most of the extinct animals have a rare evolution and there for it fits well in the category. Most of them I find by searching the keyword- extinct animals; category fantasy, has a totally different way of searching, because I didn't have to look far. I carry a book named LEVEN NA DE MENS, from Dougal Dixon, since I was 7 years old.<sup>3</sup> The book is a fictional guide to zoology of the future. In it, he presents his hypothesis of various organisms apparent after a mass extinction succeeding our own time. Beside the descriptions of these creatures there are incredible illustrations of them next to it. I was always amazed by the book and still today I loved to look at the illustrations. For the category fantasy I chose one of my favourites. After I chose all the animals for my categorization, I collected illustrations of them. These illustrations are found footage from the internet. I try to find the same drawing style, this way you won't tell the category by the image.

1 Borges, Jorge Luis, Margarita Guerrero, and Andrew Hurley. *The Book of Imaginary Beings*. New York: Viking, 2005. Print.

2 Hamalainen, Mervi. "The Book of Imaginary Beings." *The Book of Imaginary Beings - Book Review*. Curled Up, Sept. 2006. Web. 14 Feb. 2016.

3 Dixon, Dougal, and F. Hillenius-Gehrels. *Leven Na De Mens: Gids Voor De Dierenwereld Van De Toekomst*. Utrecht: Het Spectrum, 1981. Print.





<b>1. Involves some handcraft.</b>	A lot, making slides was the hardest to accomplish. The medium is hard to get and it takes a long time to develop, because nowadays it's getting rare to make them. Working with a slide projector was also a task, because there was always something wrong with them. Same here, is hard to get parts for them and fixing it.	V
<b>2. Involves the Uncreative Method.</b>	I used; translate, copy, combine. I use The Book of Imaginary Beings as my reference and translate it to my own interpretation. The copy method you see in the images that I took. There where all fond footage, I didn't create them. The combination part is where you see all the elements come together; sound, images, projector, classroom setting, the books, ect.	V
<b>3. Selected the medium carefully.</b>	Yes, the images I chose carefully so they look that they belong together. The way of presenting them fits the images and is inviting.	V
<b>4. The work invites a social dialogue about media and the digital age.</b>	I think it invites you to think of what you are seeing, listing and reading about. Not everything is real, so isn't the world around you.	V
<b>5. There is some irony or tricking involved.</b>	You have a lot of impulses coming at you in this installation, therefor you just take it in and believe it. Afterwards you will think was it all real what I just saw, or was it fiction.	V

This project had a lot going on, slides (projector), audio, booklet, and school-set up. Normally I always try to be as minimal as possible, because all does things could also be distraction. The project worked because all of those things, but it's really not my style of work. What I found interesting of this project, is the way I gather all information and illustrations, and in the end make it my own. Choosing books from my past connecting to contemporary found footage of the internet, and transform it with changing the context, and you get a very personal result that nobody can imitate. It creates something really special and original. Maybe the outcomes wasn't my style, but the method was a disclosure process for me.

## 9 CONCLUSION

**1. Involves some handcraft.**

*This can be interpreted literal as a hands-on work, or as an editor on a software like; Photoshop or Premiere.*

**2. Involves the UNCREATIVE METHOD**

*I reflect on UNCREATIVE METHOD that I created last year as tool of creative thinking and working. (SEE CHAPTER 2)*

**3. Selected the medium carefully.**

*The medium is a big part of my work and strengthens the final result.*

**4. The work invites a social dialogue about media and the digital age.**

*It highlights contemporary topics and questions them.*

**5. There is some irony or tricking involved.**

*The work can be gimmicky, humorous, or even a trick.*



I started this research to describe, analyse and reflect on my artworks over the past year. Trying to identify the decisions that I made based on these set of rules and the tool UNCREATIVE METHOD. See if my strength, of totally control, helps me to find out when does a work, works? And if this characteristic can benefit in my practice.

I put my artworks in boxes of rules to get a better overview of the choices that I made over the last year. My starting point was THE JOURNEY TO FUJI project, which was really a disclosure for me. My approach to this project is the same like always, but this time the outcome was surprising, even for me. If your method is open enough to allow you to bring these spontaneous inputs, you get these surprisingly outcomes to your projects. This doesn't happen often, so you have to embrace its lucky moment in your process. Even after a year, like the Fuji exhibition in Siebold Museum, I was to tempt to leave it. Besides that I found other strength of me, and that is fooling people. I notices this especially with the mockumentary, because his goal is to fool you. Even when I contacted the museum, I just trick them to get in. My goal at first was to learn people about this symbol, and tell something about the significance of every day symbols and the unknown meanings or uses that came before our contemporary uses or appropriations. In the end it took a different approach, and I trick the viewer with my fictional conclusions. The joy and the kick what I get when the viewer gets amused and questions if it was real or not. It felt like complement to me, is you can make something that believable. With that thought I created another rules to the list; **there is some irony or tricking involved.**

Because the project work so well, not only the result, but also the process of experimenting with different methods, I wanted to hold that rhythm. I tried to write more narratives based on a symbol; THE APPLE OF NEWTON AND TURING, BLUE TEETH and BOWS AND CLOUD. Unfortunately, none of them worked the same as THE JOURNEY TO FUJI. They all had some failing parts during the process, and I felt some pressure to create another JOURNEY TO FUJI. For each experiment I made some bad decisions. THE APPLE OF NEWTON AND TURING, I chose the wrong symbol. There was already too much information online about this symbol's background. I took existing facts, and there it went wrong. I didn't use my own imagination, and there for it wasn't my story. Even with the rules I failed, because of my bad decision of choosing the Apple symbol. With BLUE TEETH, I also used facts that already existed, put the approach is where I failed to. The story took quite easily a fairy-tale tone, because of the king and castles are involved. Stories that are never believable are fairy tales, but the funny part was that the story was real. Because the way I present it, with the teeth and fairy-tale structure, it could not possibly be true. It didn't convince anybody, especially not with those blue teeth. If I didn't made enough mistakes with the last two experiments, BOWS AND CLOUD exceeded with bad decisions overall. I took a different approach of writing a narrative, using the structure of the text as a placeholder. I thought this was a good strategy, because I'm not a writer, but unfortunately the result was to confusing. I didn't know what to do with it, and I put it away. This happens often when I do experiment and I get stuck, I just throw it away and leave it for what it is. When I look back at it now, it's a big learning point. I should not take a step back, put reflect on what's happening and move forward. I didn't follow my rules or even the tool. What I did pickup was the method of a placeholder, and I experiment with this in ZHUANGZI. I did a small intervention in these existing text and give a different intersubjectivity. It's a different strategy than THE JOURNEY TO FUJI, but I wanted to explore it. It was a short story there for I made different versions, but every version looked the same, because of the small suggestion that I changed. It was hard to keep the viewers' attention and these inventions are so small that I was lacking my voice. Another part what was missing, was the whole fooling element. It was just not part of it. I won't say the method of a placeholder is a bad strategy, but I most not take it to literal. A good example is ZOOLOGY ILLUSTRATION, where I took The Book of Imaginary Beings as my placeholder.

It was an interesting approach to literature, and translated it in an installation. Also the way I gather information and illustration, made it also very personal. It's not only about Jorge Luis Borges animals, but mine collection. What I less like was the whole set up of the installation. It had a lot going on and a lot of impulses. With this project it worked in my advantage, but it's just not really my style. I prefer minimal elements and a kind of calm feel to the whole. The method and the strategy that I followed, even with the personal touch, it something that I can take with me.

I started this thesis with THE JOURNEY TO FUJI, and the way I created it in my mind for the next projects. Because of the success of it, it's was hard to match up. I was just lucky what I found during the journey, and I couldn't imitate that with other symbol stories. What I overall learn, doesn't matter how small the experiments where, I feel now more comfortable with writing. Normally I avoid it because of my dyslexia, but I found out that I can also be creative with words. That doesn't mean I'm going to use writing or narratives in my future projects, but if I have to choose the best medium for my concept, narrative can be now an option.

I never reflected so extensive on my artworks like this. I could say I learned a lot about myself and how to go further with my practice with préciser decisions. If my strength is control, I should put it more in my process and not only in the end results. I made a few mistakes twice, if I was more precise with the choices that I made, I would not happen. Do I now know when does a work, works? If I make cleverer choices and decisions, follow the set of rules that I made and the UNCREATIVE METHOD, the chances of succeeding are big. To write this thesis I apply the rules afterwards, but if I'm conscious working with the rules during the process, I think it really helps me to create works where I feel good about. These rules are a red thread to all my works, and my personal motive. The same applies for the UNCREATIVE METHOD tool, that's more focus on the process.

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