

REMAKE

I arrived to Düsseldorf the day before Jon's opening at the Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen. The brutalist building of the Kunstverein complemented Jon's expression, which didn't disguise signs of pressure from the installation. The curator seemed to be ignoring Jon despite the fact that he was the only artist to have shown up to install his part in the show; the suspicion was that it was a form of silent revenge. The photographs Jon was having printed—that Jon had insisted should be shipped from Montréal, but that the institution maintained should be produced in Düsseldorf—were causing complications. I know, I know, Jon can sometimes be sensitive. But it was true that the institution had made some poor decisions and was informed as much, which can tend to frustrate the institution.¹

That said, this spectral family Jon was inducted into was not a shabby bunch. I looked around at the exhibition space, the final touches being put on the gathering of mostly two-dimensional works or projections. Of course technical crisis was terrorizing the 16mm film loopers.

Bernadette Corporation/Claire Fontaine/Reena Spaulings, Kerstin Cmelka, Claire Fontaine, Iain Forsyth/Jane Pollard, Joachim Koester, Jon Knowles, Jonathan Monk, Falke Pisano, Mario Garcia Torres

The group show's title itself was a German translation of a Sol Lewitt aphorism: "The perception of ideas leads to new ideas," and assembled art works that took up the approach of explicitly referencing or re-enacting works mostly from 1960s and 1970s artists (with exceptions).

Josef Albers, Carl Andre, Michael Asher, Valie Export, Sol Lewitt, Bruce Nauman, Blinky Palermo, Ed Ruscha, Joseph Stieglitz, Andy Warhol

Whether or not this list of artists is considered a representation of "original geniuses," an implication of starting from their work, and remaking it, is a challenge to authorship, drawn out by virtue of what we might call the remake's honesty. A remake chooses not to disguise the fact its self-knowledge is based on and owed to other sources. Beginning with an apparently deliberate framing of one's relationship to art, specifically of one's normal and daily research of art history, the scouring of books and information assumes a democratic starting point. The artist is a student for life. For all its evidential savvy the remake appears with all the innocence of the child who never transgressed in ardent and undiscerning belief; the child who simply re-presents monsters, does not invent them. Today the conceit of originality is no longer the dragon that must be slain; with the attention to contextual and historical dimensions, the contribution of a critique of the author is assumed, or not as crucial as is building connections between various authors.

On the other hand it cannot be proven that remaking happens without understanding; it certainly looks like it knows what it is doing. A remake is a kind of *motivated readymade*, in which the role played is not determined by indifference so much as it is the locating of an object in history.² There is an investment of interest in a remake that comes with the desire to tell a story, the non-fiction of history, or its relative, the *what might have been*. It might be said that the remake inhabits an object to allow that object to tell stories, to resonate with a dissonance of contexts and times. This can sometimes act as a gentle invitation to look at an art object again, and to interrogate its values; the contemporary remake often presents the images as elements of the past

¹ For more accounts of unpleasant experiences with art institutions please refer to Knowles Eddy Knowles' *Grievances Against Curators*, 2004-ongoing.

² "You have to approach something with an indifference, as if you had no aesthetic emotion. The choice of readymades is always based on visual indifference and, at the same time, on the total absence of good or bad taste." Marcel Duchamp in Pierre Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, trans. Ron Padgett (New York: Viking, 1971), p. 48. As I mention later, Diedrich Diederichsen notes that taste can be one of the defining dimensions of the referencing and choosing of predecessors.

that mean certain things; referring as markers of *history* to larger social changes—the ideology or ideological-ness of previous avant-gardes, commonly (excerpts able to evoke “Modernism” as a whole have seemed popular). When the student’s re-presentation is particularly pupillary, this can give the impression that the remake’s posture is “post-ideological.”

The originality that Claire Fontaine question through their employment of the “ready-made artist” is not only that of the historical avant-garde (because at least it hinted at an arc of history), but the atmosphere that pervades the present in which, ironically or not, “collage and channel-surfing are no longer separate activities, they are the metaphor for our perception of life.”³ What would be post-ideological in this case is our very age; the parataxic equality they critique is built around the total possibility of presenting anything at all; selecting from a chain of facts and becoming “original” in the sense of legitimate, singular. We can look at their version of Carl Andre’s *Lever* as an instance of their refusal to be original, which on its surface means operating how everyone else operates, by selecting and mixing. This rather convoluted critique displays the difficulty of conceiving of critique as alternative, as something identifiably other. We can therefore choose to see the book covers wrapped around the white bricks (Gilles Deleuze’s *Difference and Repetition*) from different perspectives. We can see them as a richly informative reference (depending on whether you have read the book or not, which I haven’t); we can detect some skepticism of the use of philosophy in artworks, as merely more of the professional qualifications that advance the art world; or some sort of wordplay. In any case, the references are made to be known; they lead me to think about the contexts, the histories of each reference, and how they might converge— but indeed, it is hard to pull apart the repetition of a ready-made artist from that of a remaker.

The significance of choosing artists from the 1960s and 1970s is particular as, following in the tradition of the readymade, many of the practices from that period opened up further the question of uniqueness and reproducibility by virtue of their using easily available, modular materials or through the simple delivery of conceptual gestures; even the earlier works of these decades carry with them a certain understanding of intellectual property. Conceptual artworks, especially, called up contents that didn’t have to be visualized or materialized in a strict sense.⁴ This unrealized visuality or sensuality was certainly something waiting like a script to be acted out, or like a bullion cube or skeletal suggestion to be elaborated by the viewer’s imagination.

Mario Garcia Torres has proven in the last number of years to be an exemplary enthusiast of the younger remaking tendency, focusing on artists from the last 40 years such as Daniel Buren, Robert Morris, Robert Barry, Martin Kippenberger, and the list goes on. For his piece in “The perception of ideas leads to new ideas,” a 16 mm film called *My Westphalia Days*, he drove around Münster, Germany, in a caravan identical to the one Michael Asher had been parking throughout the city for all three of the Münster Sculpture Projects, but which had been “mysteriously” stolen in 2007. In the end Garcia Torres abandoned his vehicle in a wood on the fringe of the city. If we consider remaking a child of conceptual art, I ponder what his little trip clarifies for us of this relationship.⁵ We are allowed to travel with an artwork, that hadn’t perhaps

³ “It is the gesture of wanting to produce an “original” work, which transforms authors into multiples of *whatever singularities*. (...) Under the conditions of production of artistic subjectivity that we have just described, we are all ready-made artists and our only hope is to understand this as quickly as possible.” Claire Fontaine *Ready-Made Artist and Human Strike: A Few Clarifications* (2005).

⁴ From the perspective of ownership, this hardly matters much, as things could always be found to have worth later, like original contracts and documents, or as Alexander Alberro documented in *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity* (MIT Press, 2003) these could be seen as being worked into the very “marketing” of conceptual art from the beginning, specifically by Seth Siegelaub and Joseph Kosuth.

⁵ “Following on from the historical positions of the 1960s and 1970s, artists working within a conceptual framework are obliged to engage with an abiding discourse on the topic of conceptual art which precludes the notion of a paradigm shift. Awareness of this background and a continuing delimitating of artistic practice and aesthetics enable an open and reflexive relationship towards recent art history. It is not 1980s Appropriation Art forming the central focus here,

appeared before as an artwork unless one was looking for it using external information and a map. It is so vividly, and so intimately an art piece again, digested and present; one never has to wait or go looking for it anymore. The caravan is rescued from not being art by Garcia Torres' film, whether or not it was asking for help.

Therefore the remake does not simply re-present tout court. Though the conceivable ways one can physically manipulate the readymade (also beyond the initial choice) might apply to the remake, they don't perfectly circumscribe the shapes of the remake. Its mandate is to occupy the original and to do something (noticeable) to it: crossing genres, making it out of another material, adding an element to it, inverting it, luring it out, narrating its other history. It could be said that these acts add an extra twist, a further enrichment of an object by situating it not only within the traffic of readymades but camped out by a spring of art meaning, doubly trespassing. One quality of a readymade, as carried out by Duchamp, was that it could blur territorial boundaries of its reception between home and work.⁶ Somehow the remake is wary of going home; it stays absorbed in an art sphere that knows no domesticity, no everyday banality; or have I overlooked the inverse possibility, that the remake perhaps makes of the artwork a banality?

On the banal level of value, the artistic heritage of appropriation art has already traversed the pragmatic realms of copyright law, in a lawsuit against Jeff Koons, for instance, where a New York court found in 1992 that "there is simply nothing in the record to support a view that Koons produced "String of Puppies" for anything other than sale as high-priced art."⁷ The awkward relations between "low" and "high" art seem to form the line that separates Koons' sculpture from what we identify as today's remakes, and are somewhat skirted in those pieces of Sherrie Levine's which re-presented canonized or bastardized (resembling just enough, charily) works of modern art. The critical (and at times political) edge of appropriation art was associated with its reclamation of the meaning of images and the spaces they occupy, dominated by advertising, or the writing of art history, dominated by patriarchal art institutions. From the viewpoint of these remakers, the cause of re-possession or re-distribution of representational power is less directed "outward" or "upward", but rather toward dissecting the positions taken by "allies." Whether or not these allies come from the past or could be considered predecessors, the relation is along a horizontal axis and implies comparison rather than critique.

For instance, also appearing in "The perception of ideas..." Kerstin Cmelka re-enacted Valie Export's photographs of performances through somewhat large black and white photographs and concentrated on the gestural impressions of the work of the former rather than on a schism in time or context. In these "updates," the documentary mode was pressed to recover its meaning over its ambiguity as an image. One could glimpse, through the filters of Cmelka's deferral, the *referral* of Export's treatment of public behaviour, but it was as if a footnote on performance documentation itself. Faint smiles or odd postures held the attention rather than the point or context of the public performances, thereby clutching the artwork within the cipher of its flat existence. This flatness wasn't because of a patent swipe of Export's images and the resulting aura of an absent author, but because it picked up certain aspects of the compositions and let the rest of the story be cut away by the frame; flat like a face.

blithely adopting figuration through repetition, but rather a (self)-reflexive transference of established positions from art history into a contemporary context." From the curatorial statement of "The perception of ideas leads to new ideas."

⁶ "Work Avoidance: The Everyday Life of Marcel Duchamp's Readymades" Helen Molesworth, *Art Journal*, Vol. 57, No. 4 (Winter, 1998), pp. 51-61. Published by: College Art Association

⁷ A description of "Rogers v. Koons" can be accessed on the website of the National Coalition against Censorship: <http://www.ncac.org/art-law/op-rog.cfm>. Appropriation is associated with remaking in general as well as in this exhibition. From the curatorial statement: "The strategies of appropriation and contemporization determining the approach to historical works are many and various."

Despite the “quality-control” of appraising old masters paintings and the occasional court case like that of Koons’ (a number of examples also exist of reverse-appropriations by advertising firms, whereupon artists have threatened legal action: Fischli & Weiss, Wearing, some YBA’s etc.), the question of copyright doesn’t emerge as the most pressing at this point, with these remakes, in the way it embroils other technologically reproducible media industries. The remakes of the art world are, legally or financially speaking, most often protected by their exceptional status as unique objects.⁸ The marks or agreements of authenticity and authorship that persist in determining the price of art works render benign the threat of remakes, but more than this a sort of social contract of the art world can be perceived, whereby professional networks also, in a different way, regulate authenticity.⁹

Of course price isn’t equivalent to value; and the art remake’s relative harmlessness is also because it wasn’t intended to be mistaken for the original, nor to directly vie with it on the commodity level. This should distinguish the art remake from the very real moneymaking ideologies of the film business, for one, whose appropriation tendencies are apparent not only through the controversies of individuals spoiling its unparalleled profitability by downloading or copying, but also through the popularity of the remake as a genre beyond genres. The art critic Sven Lütticken has spoken of the “mythic-neurotic return” that characterizes the culture industry and its endless repetitions that present “a cyclical rather than historical world.” In commenting on the growing popularity of art institutions to convert into would-be cinemas hosting art films that appropriate and re-enact scenes from mainstream film history, Lütticken cautions: “This industry of repetition sparks off reactions that preserve elements from the Romantic-modernist cult of originality. But as much as the current practice of remakes and other forms of repetition seems to warrant opposition, mere rejection not only misses what is most problematic in them, but fails to notice the dormant potential of the remake, the promise inherent in repetition.”¹⁰ I agree with Lütticken’s view that one cannot throw remakes to the archaic ardours, but his “haunted” remake hints at undercurrents of profitability of a different sort, in an art world that feeds off an ever-historical, rather than ever-cyclical, time.

The more spelled-out re-presentations of forbears can emphasize the task of remembering, or the protest against forgetting, to quote the reference-lover Hans Ulrich Obrist, quoting historian Eric Hobsbawm. Perhaps homage is needed lest we forget certain figures that did not fit into a canon, that were faced with similar obstacles as those living on today; a form of vocational activism or mourning, or a rehearsal anticipating our own disappearance. The extent to which this is really in service of the fallen has been discussed by Diedrich Diederichsen, who in a discussion on “artist’s artists” has asserted that there are substantial rewards for those who have a sense for choosing the right names at the right times, and (despite the remake’s tendency to draw from common narratives) at times the properly obscure names, whose selections reflect tastes that may be values external to the remade object.¹¹ Remakes invest in a base value that can be built on and mined; in

⁸ Consider Elaine Sturtevant’s *copies* (obviously a tenuous term), often produced nearly contemporaneously with their sources’ first appearances, which draw a line less between now and then, the modern and the post-modern, the dead and the living, than between the viewers and the objects. Names and stylistic genealogies emerge as inherent features of the objects, the ‘originals’. *Who* becomes more than a factual aspect of the work, splitting between a manner of interpreting the object and an obstacle in the way of interpreting the author. But then who is this born-again author? A sycophant?

⁹ For example, the dealings between artists, galleries and collectors are frequently accompanied by a flurry of correspondences with others in the field, to check up on the backgrounds and reputation of each other, for instance to ensure that a buyer doesn’t intend to flip a piece to the secondary market. This is rather unlike the process of buying other commodities.

¹⁰ Sven Lütticken “Planet of the Remakes” in *Secret Publicity*, p. 133.

¹¹ “The self-discovered predecessor, by contrast, is someone I can choose freely. The advantage about him is that he represents an objective historical given and is yet simultaneously, by virtue of my choosing him, entirely my own creation. His traces in my work, moreover, are at my disposal, always voluntary and deliberately recognizable aspects, not a momentary loss of control that would embarrass my artistic narcissism, not the insinuations of higher beings

some cases the subverting of the power of the master, in others a telescopic reach into a disparate and rare (and exhaustible) knowledge that can only be repeated once (if repeated and repeated it becomes something different, less apparently stable and aware of the reason for remaking; to remake once, decisively, implies a healthy (read: repressed) cogito). The contemporary artist's interests or obsessions with the prior can function as a priori indication that it is proper art, historically rooted and historically suited. This can be pronounced in those production processes that "begin" site-specifically, and therefore under the watchful gaze of an institution, but generally a remake can give *them* what *they* want; curators, collectors, writers can be sure with a remake they will have something to relate to and to re-insert into a discourse.

However, Diedrichsen claimed a valid space for "a cognitive interest that is unmistakably artistic and not self-promotive" in the identification of where one's affinities lie. Referring to earlier generations like Mike Kelley and Cosima von Bonin who had decidedly examined the practices of other artists, including "predecessors" or their own contemporaries, Diedrichsen held that these examples posed critical potential in their situated-ness as research into their own oeuvres, and as explorations of roads taken or untaken. The role of affinity is not a stable marker that can be used to evaluate honest or exploitive remaking, and has already gradually deteriorated according to Diedrichsen, mentioning that these methods had already been "eagerly studied by the next generation." For the very reason of the suspect value of affinity, it may deserve a second thought as to how affinity or intimacy might function in an age with so many friends.¹²

Knowing that Jon's work was basically that which he had shown in the Montréal Biennale, what I saw upon arrival to Düsseldorf caught me somewhat by surprise.¹³ (Apparently we were not as up on each other's work as one could assume for people in correspondence nearly every day.) An array of Pink Floyd's "The Wall" record jackets formed a flat square on the floor (*History has a lot of ankles in its maw and is pulling straight down*) and, with their cinder block graphic and the subtle discolorations from wear or differing production conditions, simultaneously recalled two separate Carl Andre sculptures, *Equivalent VIII* (1966) and *Steel Magnesium Plain* (1969). Beyond that, the Pink Floyd reference hovered somewhere rather unfixed for me. The title of the rest of his work was *History has a lot of ankles in its maw and is pulling straight down (supplements)* and was made up of various pieces arranged together. On one wall, three Röntgenograms of clouds, red, blue and green, referred to the photographic series *Equivalents* by Alfred Stieglitz. A studio still life photograph of un-exploded fireworks hung on the opposite wall. The only new additions to this transferred set of references were rails leaning against the wall next to the x-rays.

In the tradition of a remake, one could remark that this gathering of objects and images was rather obscure, partially because certain elements (the picture of fireworks; the Pink Floyd reference; the

beyond my power to decide. In this sense, a felicitous choice of predecessors can not only furnish me with an attractive genealogy but also deploy a shiny new family romance of my own making to cover up the entire-inevitably embarrassing-issue of my origins and the curses that haunt me." Diedrichsen "Monsters and show freaks" in *Texte Zur Kunst*, Issue 71, p.151.

¹² "We are addicted to ghettos, and in so doing refuse the antagonism of 'the political'. Where is the enemy? Not on Facebook, where you can only have 'friends'. What Web 2.0 lacks is the technique of antagonistic linkage. Instead we are confronted with the Tyranny of Positive Energy." Ippolita, Geert Lovink & Ned Rossiter, *The Digital Given; 10 Web 2.0 Theses*, available: <http://networkcultures.org/wpmu/geert/2009/06/15/the-digital-given-10-web-20-theses-by-ippolita-geert-lovink-ned-rossiter/>

¹³ Jon had told me that the Düsseldorf curator, in Montréal for a congress of the International association of curators of contemporary art (IKT), had contacted Jon on account of his work in the 2008 Montréal Biennale, entitled "Rien ne se perd..." I had been under the impression that Jon's work for that show had been an audio compilation of all of the records from Robert Smithson's collection, which had been listed in a monograph on the late artist; beginning precociously while still a student in the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Jon had been gathering the records over the course of about four years.

fact that the red, blue and green photos of clouds were x-rays) didn't seem to refer directly to any particular or salient fact or feature of the artists or artworks evoked. The other queer thing was about their being gathered together, which seemed to hinge almost feebly on a common word, "equivalent." A lot of ankles.

What the quandaries of this installation in toto helped me to see were the requirements of sound connection and clear statement that are expected of the remake format. Consider another of the contributions in the show—the Sol Lewitt cube transformed into a black and white 16mm film loop by Jonathan Monk (*A Cube Sol Lewitt Photographed By Carol Huebner Using Nine Different Light Sources And All Their Combinations Front To Back Back To Front Forever*, 2001) is about its very bald explicitness. The audacity of its pursuit of nothing much more than its dependency (however, seeming like a rhythmic enhancement of Lewitt's cube because of the sensuous, animated film delivery) is a recurring aspect of Monk's work in its strategies to demystify the creative process and ideas of purity in modern art (paraphrase of Lisson Gallery blurb). This dependency that undermines is also called cleverness, a value fostered at least in part by a culture of remixing, which stands as something of a template for contemporary production. Certainly there are analogues in music, as it is about re-performing an object; a knowing re-performance. The remake's author-figure is the connoisseurship of the DJ rather than the affect of the cover band. Not over-expressive theatre, but *clever gestures*—the smallest amount of effort necessary—tactical resistance to the labor demanded of an artist. But labor is at this point routinely replaced with information, which comes much quicker most of the time.¹⁴ I suppose you could say Monk's use of 16mm film is a form of labor, but what he wants to tell you about is how easy it is to make art.

Jon told me a story of the x-rays. He had once worked at a hospital in Montréal and had met the granddaughter of Joseph Stieglitz, who by then was elderly and a patient in the hospital. From her bed, she recounted that she and her grandpa used to sit by a gallery window overlooking the street and would play a game in which grandpa asked the child to assess each passerby, to declare whether each one was living or dead. To Jon this game had some bearing upon Stieglitz' work *Equivalent*s; once I heard this and the contexts of observation juxtaposed, I saw in Jon's images the poetic intentions I had assumed were behind Stieglitz' original series, refocused as an eye observing typologies, generating the information and judgments (as well as the sensations) behind a modern's gaze at the sky.

The still life photograph of unexploded fireworks seemed to relate directly to the colourations of the sky in the three x-rays on the opposite wall, while having very little to do with Stieglitz. I think Jon pointed out about that picture, though it is perhaps self-evident when one stops looking for the reference, that these items represent stored aesthetic potential. In fact I saw it as quite a "normal" picture in that way, but given the context it circulated in its constellation as a rotten apple threatening to ruin the basket's disciplined containment of purview. It threatened to elaborate.

References hold stored aesthetic potential, but so do institutions—so upon being informed that some parts of a Blinky Palermo installation were being kept in the basement of the Kunstverein (the rails I had mentioned), Jon had opted to use them in his installation. He arranged them leaning against the wall in a precarious vertical fashion, and used them like thrones to prop up two small cartoons from a 1976 Heineken beer advertisement mocking *Equivalent VIII*. This readiness to include one more reference in the configuration loosened the "(self)-reflexive

¹⁴ "[...] today, however, information does often appear as a virtual readymade, as so much data to be reprocessed and sent on, and many artists do "inventory," "sample," and "share" as ways of working." Hal Foster, *An Archival Impulse*, p.4.

transference of established positions” that we expect to witness, and we don’t really know who is haunting Jon; perhaps the reference itself.

I can’t for the life of me remember the anecdote behind the Pink Floyd record covers, and after asking Jon several times to remind me what he had told me back in 2008 (there was some relation to the picture of fireworks), he never provided an answer or even acknowledged my request for more information.

Jon hadn’t made these backstories public; when I had asked him why, he had said that what he had related to me was kind of his own personal reasoning behind the work, a form of private bonus. The observer was left to wonder heuristically about Jon’s motivations, which were not furnished as apparently as many of the works by other artists in the show.

As Jon’s friend and collaborator I have access to certain ideas or history, the type of information that is still often sought in artworks, whether or not one has this personal connection. If we pursue this as a means to study authorship we run the risk of an age-old fallacy and fascination of regarding artists as special people, and attributing values to biographical data. It is debatable whether knowing a person is knowing his or her work, and vice versa, and I wouldn’t propose to convert the requirement of referential clarity to the requirement of direct interaction with an artist. But emptying out the subjectivities of authors, placing them as exchangeable signs along sequences isn’t an effective critique of the over-valuing of original persons (in any case such figures reappear behind their references as those *obsessed*, *intrigued* or *feverish* with historical topics).¹⁵ Jon’s gesture seemed muted from allowing himself to adopt and internalize these works by other artists, so that they associated with one another, became tangled and linked, which isn’t to say such a process happened unconsciously; however, I doubt whether all the connections were pursued down to some simplified gesture of consciousness. If I can step away from what I know from my proximity to the artist, I would say that if Jon’s approach wasn’t original, it did leave things open to a delay that isn’t common within the genre of the remake. But what does a delay achieve, after being associated as an historical condition of the readymade, in which the delay was that of waiting for the viewer assigning it art status?¹⁶ If information is a “virtual readymade,” then is a delay the only means of irritating the smooth passage of legitimate artworks to and from information? I’ll have to ask Jon what he thinks about this.¹⁷

¹⁵ “[Mario Garcia Torres] communes with these earlier artists—particularly conceptual artists—through various means, sometimes reperforming their original gestures, *obsessively* researching and representing documentation of their work, and in some cases engendering imaginary conversations with them.” From the press release to “Je ne sais si c'en est la cause, What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Stronger, and Some Reference Materials,” MATRIX 227, University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, distributed over e-flux February 20, 2009.

“*Intrigued* by contemporary ruins and concerned by the rapid destruction of modernist architecture, Gaillard explores notions of state vandalism, gentrification and the picturesque.” From the press release to Cyprien Gaillard’s show “Beton Belvedere” at Stroom Den Haag, distributed over e-flux February 21, 2009.

“Might archival art emerge out of a similar sense of a failure in cultural memory, of a default in productive traditions? For why else connect so *feverishly* if things did not appear so frightfully disconnected in the first place?” Hal Foster, *An Archival Impulse*. OCTOBER 110, p. 21. All italics mine.

¹⁶ “If the viewer wants to avoid *feeling regret as soon as possession is consummated*, he or she must suspend the desire to see, slow down *the inevitable response to shop windows*, and defer aesthetic pleasure: *the fruit still has to avoid being eaten*. Which is to say that for the gaze [*regard*] Duchamp substitutes the *delay* [*retard*]. Thus, after the equation art = making = choosing, here is a second syllogism: *use “delay” instead of picture*, says a note from the Green Box. Now, *the viewers make the picture*. Thus the viewers make the delay.” Thierry De Duve, “Critique of Pure Modernism” October 70, p. 76, 1994. Italics the author’s.

¹⁷ “An argument against art that addresses contemporary issues and topical culture rests on the virtue of slowness, often cast aside due to the urgency with which ones work must appear. Slowness works against all of our prevailing urges and requirements: it is a resistance to the contemporary mandate of speed. Moving with the times places you in a blind spot: if you’re part of the general tenor, it’s difficult to add a dissonant note. But the way in which media culture feeds on its own leavings indicates the paradoxical slowness of archived media, which, like a sleeper cell, will always rear its head at a later date. The rear-guard often has the upper hand, and sometimes delay, to use Duchamp’s term, will return the investment with massive interest.” Seth Price, *Dispersion* (2002). The remake, with its appeal in the present but

Intimacy is a good way to end a text on art, as it is the impossibility represented by art, represented by representations, which always invite us to get closer while the hands they extend tend to be false. (Artists train how to shake these hands. Sometimes they use fake limbs without even knowing it.) Actually, in correspondence about this text, Jon was the one who suggested looking more at intimacy as a region of development. I can make guesses at why this seemed important to him after the experience of such a group show with its neat curatorial theme and list of other artists, who had sent in pieces, all quite procedure. After the opening, we had sat at one end of the table at the restaurant with the curator and her invited guests, including the curator Nikolaus Schaffhausen, at the other end. The curator hardly spoke to Jon the whole night; by all indications Jon's work must have appeared as crystal clear as the others; a reference machine, composed of equivalents.

Indeed my own writing of this text relies on references, appropriates the arguments and observations of others, and in a sense remakes certain aspects of the works I have described. This process, at least the way I have pursued it, seems impossible or maybe just coquettish (Jon takes perverse pleasure when I use that word) if these real contributions are foregone or eliminated; I considered such directions. But then I found that the thoughts of others make me patient, where I may have been dismissive or declarative about the opportunism of remakes – and this brusqueness was probably why Jon asked me to write this, over a year ago already. I will admit that over time my writing has come to resemble more and more the writing I was reading, and less like how I started out, somewhat wild and fiery and looking like this:

Appropriation is the older brother or sister, sophisticated and nearly grown up, taking what it wants and showing a straight face to its interrogator.

Reference is the adulterous adult, the game among grown ups by which relations are traced. A reference can be erotic, it can be dry and factual – but it is always made to be known. Surely there is such a thing as an involuntary reference? Fear of influence... (Where does originality figure in with this family of resemblances? The myth of originality is not a foil for these lineages, it is not the answer, just because derivativeness is rampant doesn't bring originality back like a contract mercenary.)

Readymade is the mother, the shopper returning home.

Remake. The ostensive gesture of the readymade is skipped – a return to a discursive function of dependency.

Imitation is the method of the infant, learning, learning to please; it is also the method of the greedy uncle. What happens when the infant keeps on imitating?

Oedipus (Is it about killing the father? Not really. This is the 21st Century – fathers and children can get along now.)

Teen lust Remake; Delicious Pubescence; 2 coats

Cindy Sherman: Older sister?

Shreds of this original text remain throughout, but now it is difficult to take the above route. Through the ensuing process I have been led to wonder whether the text resembles all the others because that is simply its most complete form, or because that is the way we have learned to generically value texts; a subtle, stupid or circular distinction, granted, but applicable to the logic toed by the remake. Just as someone writing a text on remakes refers to press releases, catalogues and publicity as sources of information, which present knowledge in certain ways, so does the art mentioned here, and art in general, constructed in a society and an art world saturated with information, and having to be easily re-convertible into information, circulated and hyperlinked so that we can identify it as art, like some caravan parked in the cosmos.

Whether it was by beginning with the established form predetermined, or through the gradual succession of choices made here, if my remake had to be like another artist's work, I would rather it be like a Jon Knowles than a Jon Monk.

appeal to the past, complicates Price's comfortable opposition between the archival and speed, but makes evident that our own utterances (and not just the curios of obsolescence) play as much a part of any archive of "resistance."