

org is an online platform, collecting, describing, presenting and generating documents of all sorts. It documents documents.

Your path through the collection lead along Swarms, We were a modern house, License Plate, Negative sheet 13, negative 24, negative 24,5, Tracking, pgealerts.alerts.pge.com/, 12:13, Flashlight in a dark corner of the Oval Room, The Saddle of a Sparta K-10, Rue Verte, Brussels, Green or blue, John's Sparta K-10, Le dos-cul ment, Seacat, Neptune in opposition [19/20] – Approximation, Neptune in opposition [17/20] – Remote, Neptune in opposition [13/20] – A foraging fox, Neptune in opposition [12/20] – Culmination, 12M m3 [3/8] Swell

What constitutes a 'document' and how does it function?

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the etymological origin is the Latin 'documentum', meaning 'lesson, proof, instance, specimen'. As a verb, it is 'to prove or support (something) by documentary evidence', and 'to provide with documents'. The online version of the *OED* includes a draft addition, whereby a document (as a noun) is 'a collection of data in digital form that is considered a single item and typically has a unique filename by which it can be stored, retrieved, or transmitted (as a file, a spreadsheet, or a graphic)'. The current use of the noun 'document' is defined as '*something* written, inscribed, etc., which furnishes evidence or information upon any subject, as a manuscript, title-deed, tomb-stone, coin, picture, etc.' (emphasis added).

Both 'something' and that first 'etc.' leave ample room for discussion. A document doubts whether it functions as something unique, or as something reproducible. A passport is a document, but a flyer equally so. Moreover, there is a circular reasoning: to document is 'to provide with documents'. Defining (the functioning of) a document most likely involves ideas of communication, information, evidence, inscriptions, and implies notions of objectivity and neutrality – but the document is neither reducible to one of them, nor is it equal to their sum. It is hard to pinpoint it, as it disperses into and is affected by other fields: it is intrinsically tied to the history of media and to important currents in literature, photography and art; it is linked to epistemic and power structures. However ubiquitous it is, as an often tangible thing in our environment, and as a concept, a document *deranges*.

the-documents.org continuously gathers documents and provides them with a short textual description, explanation, or digression, written by multiple authors. In *Paper Knowledge*, Lisa Gitelman paraphrases ‘documentalist’ Suzanne Briet, stating that ‘an antelope running wild would not be a document, but an antelope taken into a zoo would be one, presumably because it would then be framed – or reframed – as an example, specimen, or instance’.

The gathered files are all documents – if they weren’t before publication, they now are. That is what the-documents.org, irreversibly, *does*. It is a zoo turning an antelope into an ‘antelope’.

As you made your way through the collection, the-documents.org tracked the entries you viewed.

It documented your path through the website.

As such, the time spent on the-documents.org turned into this – a new document.

This document was compiled by _____ on 06.03.2024 18:54, printed on _____ and contains 17 documents on 38 pages. (<https://the-documents.org/log/06-03-2024-5812/>)

the-documents.org is a project created and edited by De Cleene De Cleene; design & development by atelier Haegeman Temmerman.

the-documents.org has been online since 23.05.2021.

Notes

- De Cleene De Cleene is Michiel De Cleene and Arnout De Cleene. Together they form a research group that focusses on novel ways of approaching the everyday, by artistic means and from a cultural and critical perspective.
www.decleenedecline.be / info@decleenedecline.be
- This project was made possible with the support of the Flemish Government and KASK & Conservatorium, the school of arts of HOGENT and Howest. It is part of the research project *Documenting Objects*, financed by the HOGENT Arts Research Fund.

Sources

- Briet, S. *Qu'est-ce que la documentation?* Paris: Edit, 1951.
- Gitelman, L. *Paper Knowledge. Toward a Media History of Documents.* Durham/ London: Duke University Press, 2014.
- *Oxford English Dictionary Online.* Accessed on 13.05.2021.



Flanders
State of the Art



July. Our eight-month-old son has a fever. We have a hard time getting him to drink enough. The tally marks on the back of a tortellini-box keep track of the diapers he wets and the millilitres of milk and electrolytes he's able to hold down.

Stuck inside with worrying parents, a sticker-book about a farm is his brother's favourite pass-time.

Tired of having to go back and forth between the pastures and the sticker-filled sheets we decide to use my arm as a repository for animals that share a habitat.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	23.01.2024	IMG_6467.jpeg	1,66 MB	Michiel De Cleene
category	collecting, family, hand, sticker			

09:51:14

*My dream hollyday We were a football
on the beach*

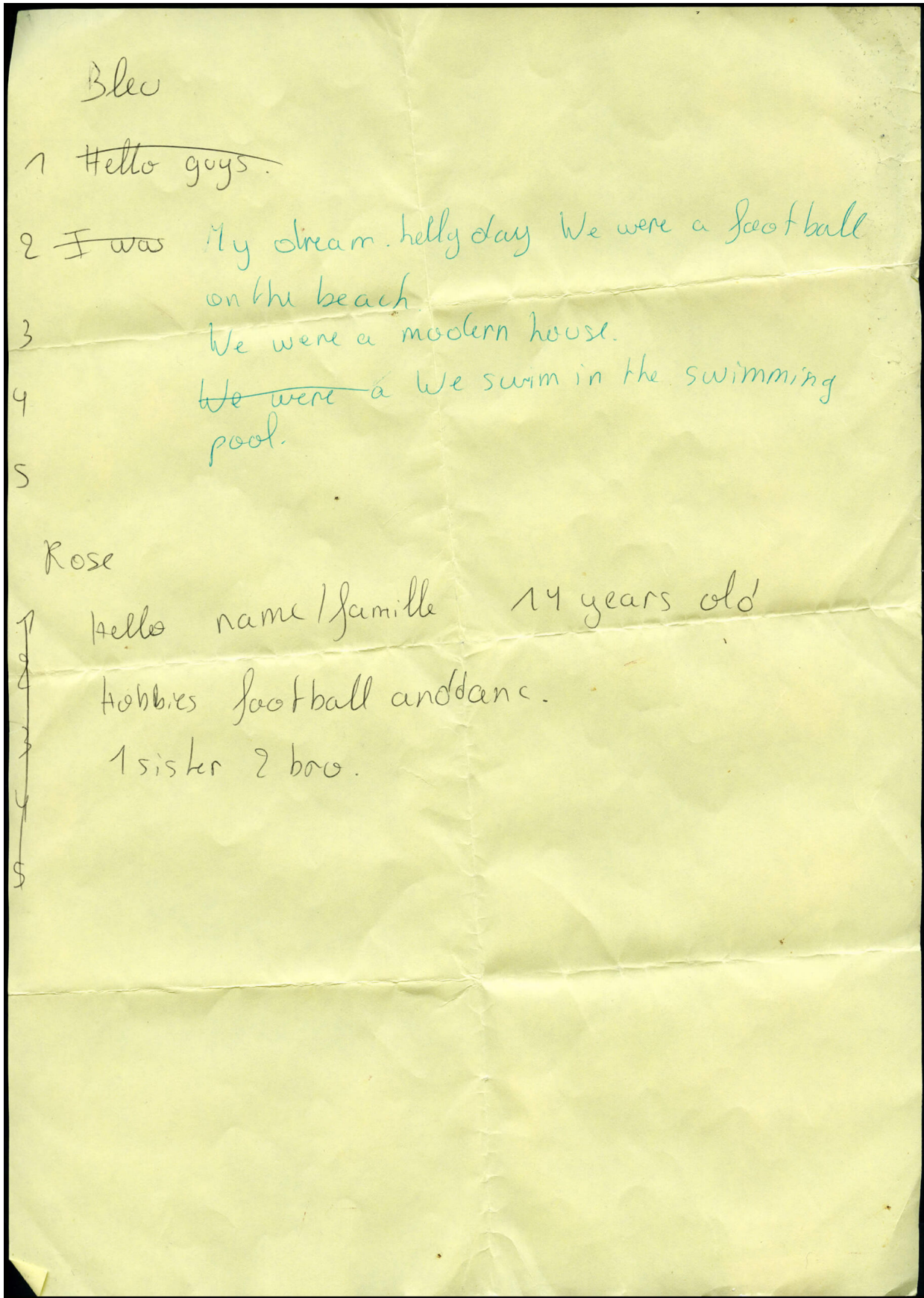
We were a modern house.

*We were a We swim in the swimming
pool.*

June 2022, Marche-en-Famenne. I arrived half an hour early. Waiting for my family to pick me up at the station, near a linden tree, I found a yellow page lying on the pebbles in front of the wooden bench I sat on. It had been a hot day. The sun was finally setting. Music playing in the distance. A white Volkswagen. Windows closed. Hard basses, trembling across the road. Folded three times, the sheet of paper had the size of a DIN A7. A white BMW pulled over. Seven glass jars in a container.

Notes





type	date	filename	size	author
scan	20.09.2023	wewereamodernhouse.pdf	10,12 MB	Michiel De Cleene

category
 architecture, dusk, encounter, family, tree

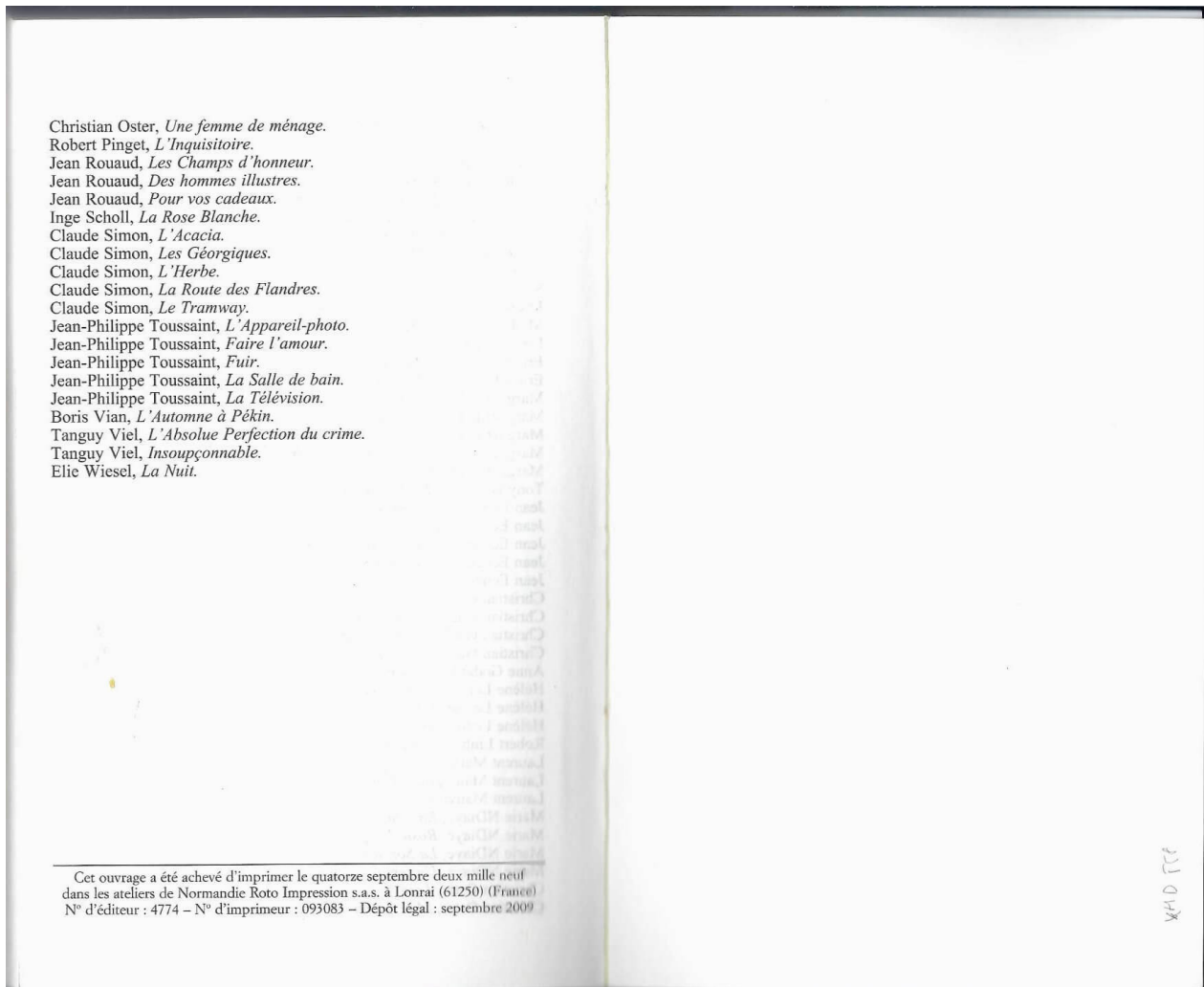
During the preparation of a seminar, I reread Pierre Bayard's *Qui a tué Roger Ackroyd?* (2008). On the inside of the back cover, there's an inscription: it appears I wrote down a license plate number – something I have the habit of doing when a situation seems suspicious.

In *Qui à tué Roger Ackroyd?*, Bayard analyzes Agatha Christie's famous detective novel *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (1926). The literary critic disagrees with detective Hercule Poirot's conclusion: Ackroyd's murderer is not the narrator, James Sheppard, as Poirot would have it. It's a delirious interpretation, 'consistant à rechercher minutieusement des indices, à interpréter des faits et à organiser nos déductions en une construction d'ensemble harmonieuse'.

The car with license plate number XHD 558 is unknown to me. I can't recall what I saw that urged me to write it down, nor the time or location when I saw it.

Sources

- Bayard, P. *Qui a tué Roger Ackroyd?* Paris: Minuit, 2008.



type	date	filename	size	author
scan	15.08.2023	ackroyd.pdf	431 KB	Arnout De Cleene

category
 angst, automobile, book, literature

09:51:39

In Walter Benjamin's *The Arcades Project*, Convolute Q is dedicated to the panorama. Benjamin writes: 'Setup of the panoramas: View from a raised platform, surrounded by a balustrade, of surfaces lying round about and beneath. The painting runs along a cylindrical wall approximately a hundred meters long and twenty meters high. The principal panoramas of the great panorama painter Prévost: Paris, Toulon, Rome, Naples, Amsterdam, Tilsit, Wagram, Calais, Antwerp, London, Florence, Jerusalem, Athens. Among his pupils: Daguerre' (Q1a, 1).

Sources

- Benjamin, W. *The Arcades Project* (H. Eiland & K. McLaughlin, trans.). Cambridge/London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002, p. 528.



type	date	filename	size	author
scan	31.05.2023	013b_16.jpg	1,18 MB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
architecture, archive, decoration, fissure, panorama

09:51:51

I drove through the neighborhood seeking evidence of the disruption using a power outage map as a compass. Winding through quiet streets, I stumbled upon a lone blue PG&E truck idling opposite a charred utility pole with fragments of wood and wire strewn across the pavement. I parked my car and walked toward the truck to ask the driver what had happened. He pointed to the top of the pole where a porcelain insulator dangled precariously from a high-voltage line. "Tracking," he said curtly. "Is that like a short circuit?" I asked. "Kind of," he replied before pausing. He finally elaborated, explaining that the problem arises when moisture from morning fog settles on power lines, creating a pathway for electricity to arc across components.

He then input something into a handheld device before driving away, leaving the repair for another service team to complete. I gathered the debris intending to collect the remaining components that comprise a utility pole, each having failed in one form or another. I shipped the fragments to Maziar the following week.

Notes

- Mathew Kneebone is an artist based in San Francisco. His interdisciplinary practices takes different forms, all in relation to an interest in electricity and technology. He teaches studio and thesis writing at California College of the Arts.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	24.02.2023	02_tracking.jpg, 03_tracking.jpg	3,51 MB, 324 KB	Mathew Kneebone

category
automobile, collecting, encounter, hand, impact, map/plan, precipitation, repair, technology

09:52:11



On a windy morning in April, I was on a video call with a friend, curator Maziar Afrassiabi. He listened patiently from Rotterdam as I labored over a direction for my research. It concerned a device I installed in his art space, Rib, six months prior, that monitored blackouts across California by scraping real-time data from utility companies. When a county experienced a significant blackout, it would cut Rib's electricity in kind—causing Rib to inherit and adapt to conditions that shape Californian infrastructure. During its operation, I'd been researching the grid—learning what it is, why it fails, and how communities respond when it does.

We took a short break. Maziar, with tired eyes, stepped away for a smoke. While waiting, I watched the power lines outside my window sway limply in the breeze. In spite of its apparent lifelessness, I've always thought of electricity as a psychological force. My mind wandered through a cursory model of the grid, idiosyncratically cloudy and detailed.

Energy simultaneously generated and used, cascading infrastructural operations in a blink. Outlying stations burning, vaporizing, absorbing fuel, spinning vast electromagnetic turbines. Oscillating current. Neighboring transformers boosting volts to kilovolts, compensating for lost energy coursing through long-distance transmission supported by pylons peppered across Menlo Park.

Current flows into enclosed substations. Transformers, insulators, resembling a kind of industrial Watts Towers—though uninhabitable and anonymous by comparison—step voltages back down to levels safe enough for wires traversing the city. They branch out through streets via buried cables or, like the lines outside my window, are strung atop Douglas fir utility poles at roughly 30-meter intervals...curious vestigial markers. I'd read somewhere they were provisionally pitched when Samuel Morse found that telegraph signals wouldn't transmit through the earth.

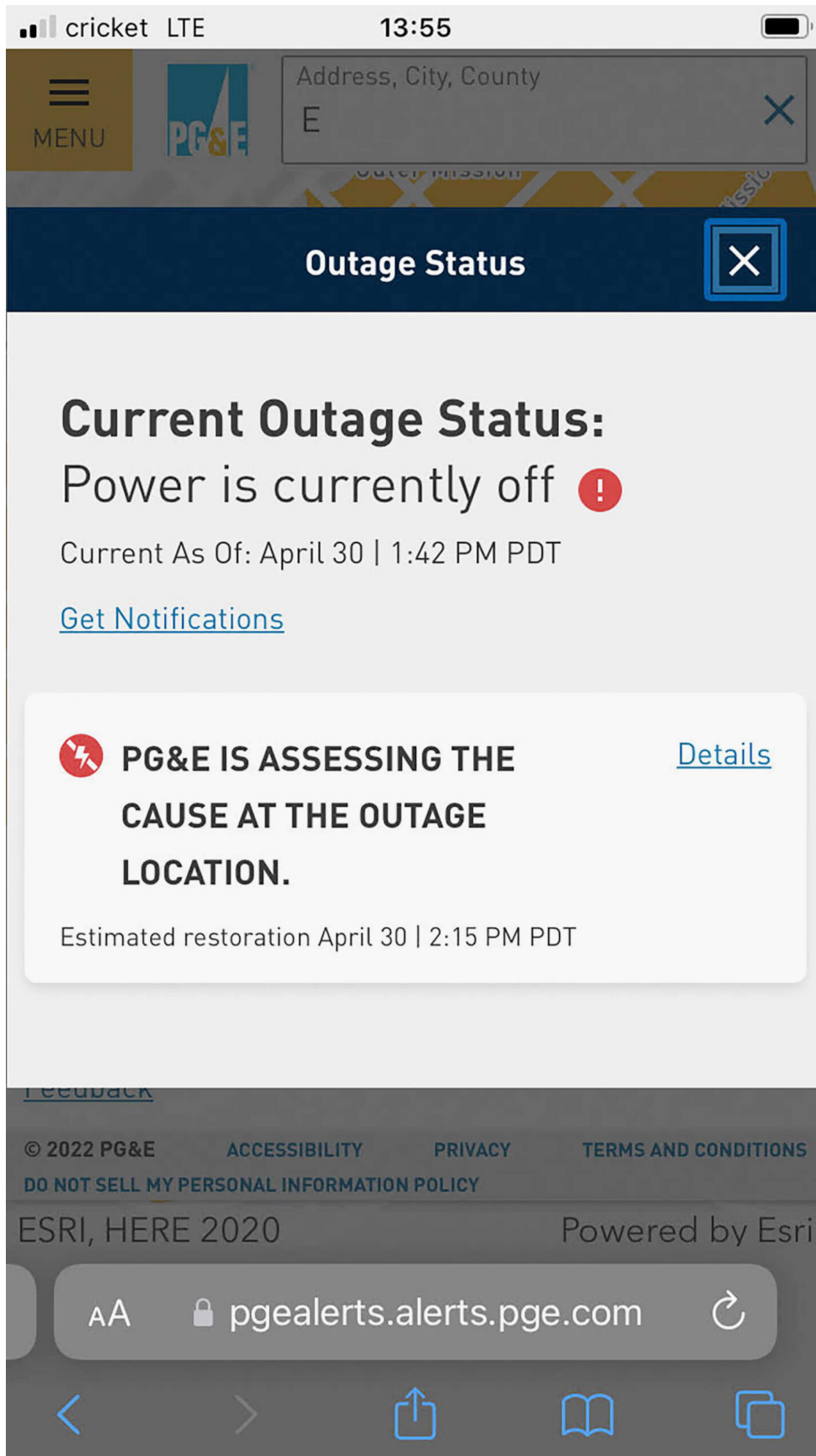
Each pole divides vertically into distinct zones, spaced apart for safety. Treacherous high-voltage wires from substations pass along the top, while safer signals—cable internet and landlines—hang nearest to the ground. The high-voltage wires enter through a barrel-shaped pole-mounted transformer. Within, submerged in oil, two tightly wound copper

coils magnetically harmonize, delivering 240 and 120 volts to three exiting wires, each connected to the electrical meter attached to the building...

A blackout in my neighborhood cut my thoughts and the meeting short. The sudden silence in my apartment indicated Maziar was also in the dark. I received a text message from him and the utility company.

Notes

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type
screenshot

date
18.02.2023

filename
unnamed.jpg

size
84 KB

author
Mathew Kneebone

category
house, interference, technology, tree, wind

09:52:30

During a two hour tour, H.V. (head of the science collection) guided us from the library to the observatory and back. Along the way, he touched upon various rarities: one hundred ninety-five volumes of the *Encyclopédie Méthodique* (according to H.V. the most complete copy left in the world), the severed summit of Mont Blanc ('Actually de Saussure brought back a triangular piece of rock from just below the snow line near the summit'), an original copy of the publication on the infamous Lügensteine ('These date back to the time before the hoax was unveiled')...

In guiding us from room to room, H.V. piled oddity upon curiosity. He showed a particular interest in all things fish-related.

Notes

- First published in: De Cleene, M. *Reference Guide*. Amsterdam: Roma Publications, 2019



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	30.01.2023	teylers.tif	36,68 MB	Michiel De Cleene

category

animal, archaeology, architecture, archive, astronomy, book, encounter, hand, Reference Guide, replica/copy

09:53:34

How slanted is this saddle? Anyone looking at the full photo of this Sparta K-10 might think that the street fence is pushing its saddle down at an angle. However, the bike and its saddle are leaning against the fence, they are not pushed under it. Whether the saddle is as slanted as the photo suggests, we are not sure. This detail of the photo suggests otherwise. The rail to which the saddle is attached is already mounted slightly less slanted than the line of the fence behind which the saddle is partly hidden, and above that part of the fence something vaguely protrudes from the back of the saddle. Presumably that is the edge of the saddle, which would reassure us about the cyclist's comfort.

Notes

- Lars Kwakkenbos lives and works in Brussels and Ghent (B). He teaches at KASK & Conservatorium in Ghent, where he is currently working on the research project 'On Instructing Photography' (2023-2024), together with Michiel and Arnout De Cleene.



type
photograph

date
22.01.2023

filename
Naamloos.jpg

size
189 KB

author
Lars Kwakkenbos

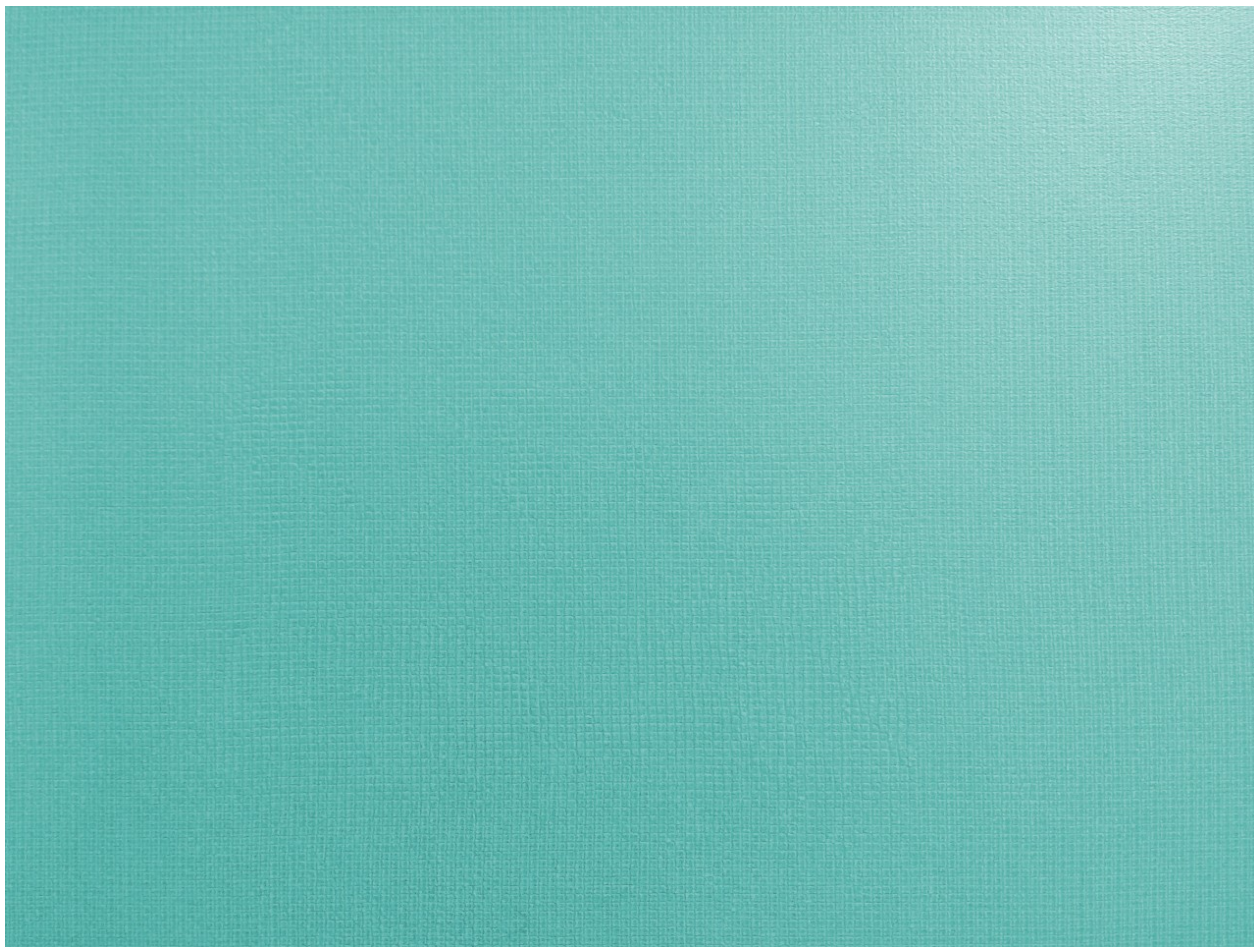
category
bicycle

09:53:35

According to @missbluesette, the green K-10 put up for sale by Fred from Zwolle that I came across on marktplaats.nl on 29 September 2022 is not green, but blue. The colour resembles turquoise, I explain, a colour I have always called green. No, turquoise is not green, but blue, she replies. And the texts of my Instagram posts are too long, she says, so she doesn't read them.

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type	date	filename	size	author
image	19.01.2023	teal-turquoise-plastic-with-square-pattern-texture.jpg	308 KB	Lars Kwakkenbos

category
bicycle, encounter, mistake

John from Middelburg offers a K-10 without a loop at the back on marktplaats.nl. His K-10 does have a front light, which strangely never seems to be mounted in the front of the long tube of the frame. The asking price is 75 euros, bids may start from 50 euros.

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The screenshot shows a Marktplaats listing for an 'Originele Sparta K-10 retrofiets (model vouwfiets)'. The listing includes a main image of the bicycle, a price of €75,00, and a 'Bewaar' button. The seller's profile, 'John', is visible with a 6-year history on the platform and 23 reviews. The listing also features a 'Bericht' button and a 'Bieden' section with a price input field set to €.

Originele Sparta K-10 retrofiets (model vouwfiets)

178 views, 3 likes, sinds 6 sep. '22, 22:07

€ 75,00

Ophalen of Verzenden

John
6 jaar actief op Marktplaats
Bekijk meer advertenties
★★★★★ 23 ervaringen

Deze verkoper heeft aangegeven een particuliere verkoper te zijn. Hierdoor is consumentenrecht niet van toepassing. [Lees meer](#)

Bankrekening gecontroleerd
Betalen met IDEAL

Middelburg

Beantwoordt 37% van de berichten, meestal binnen 2 uur

Bericht

Bieden
Vanaf € 50,00
€

Plaats bod

Deel via WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook, Twitter, Email, or Kopieer link

Kenmerken

Conditie	Gebruikt
Merk	Overige merken

filename

Screenshot 2022-09-30 at 09-09-26

Originele Sparta K-10 retrofiets

(model vouwfiets) – Fietsen

Vouwfietsen – Marktplaats.png

size

437 KB

author

Lars Kwakkenbos

type

screenshot

date

16.01.2023

category

bicycle, economy, technology

09:53:45

This is a trace, and it is not.

Ceci est une trace et ne l'est pas.

What is a trace?

Qu'est-ce qu'une trace?

Le document n'en est pas, le document documente.

Documents what?

Peu importe, le mot 'document' est dérivé du latin *docere*, c'est à dire...

to show, to teach, to instruct. The document is docile, unlike the trace.

La trace ne montre pas, n'enseigne pas, n'instruit en rien, à moins d'interpréter.

The trace as indexical: it does not 'show' though one can see it. It does not teach,

sauf que tout nous pré-existe, ou plutôt, nous insiste, n'est-ce pas?

It doesn't: it's never there as such until we name it so.

Documenti!

Papier!

Poètes, vos papiers!

(Léo Ferre 1956)

Le document.

Le dos-cul ment.

Le d'au-cul ment.

Le dé au cul ment.

Mais co-ment?

Butt how?

The do-cum-meant.

The doc-cue-mint.

The dock-comment.

This is a cardboard mousepad.

Are you happy now?

Are you happy?

Are you?

Now?

document: *a paper or set of papers with written or printed information, especially of an official type.*

(<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/engli>

'He's more of an official type.'

A document *is a written, drawn, presented, or memorialized representation of thought, often the manifestation of non-fictional, as well as fictional, content*

Notes

- Sébastien Conard (1982) is a graphic artist, writer and teacher. He draws, writes and publishes comics, post-comics and artist's books. From 2023 until 2026, he will explore the graphic trace in the context of a postdoctoral research project at LUCA School of Arts.

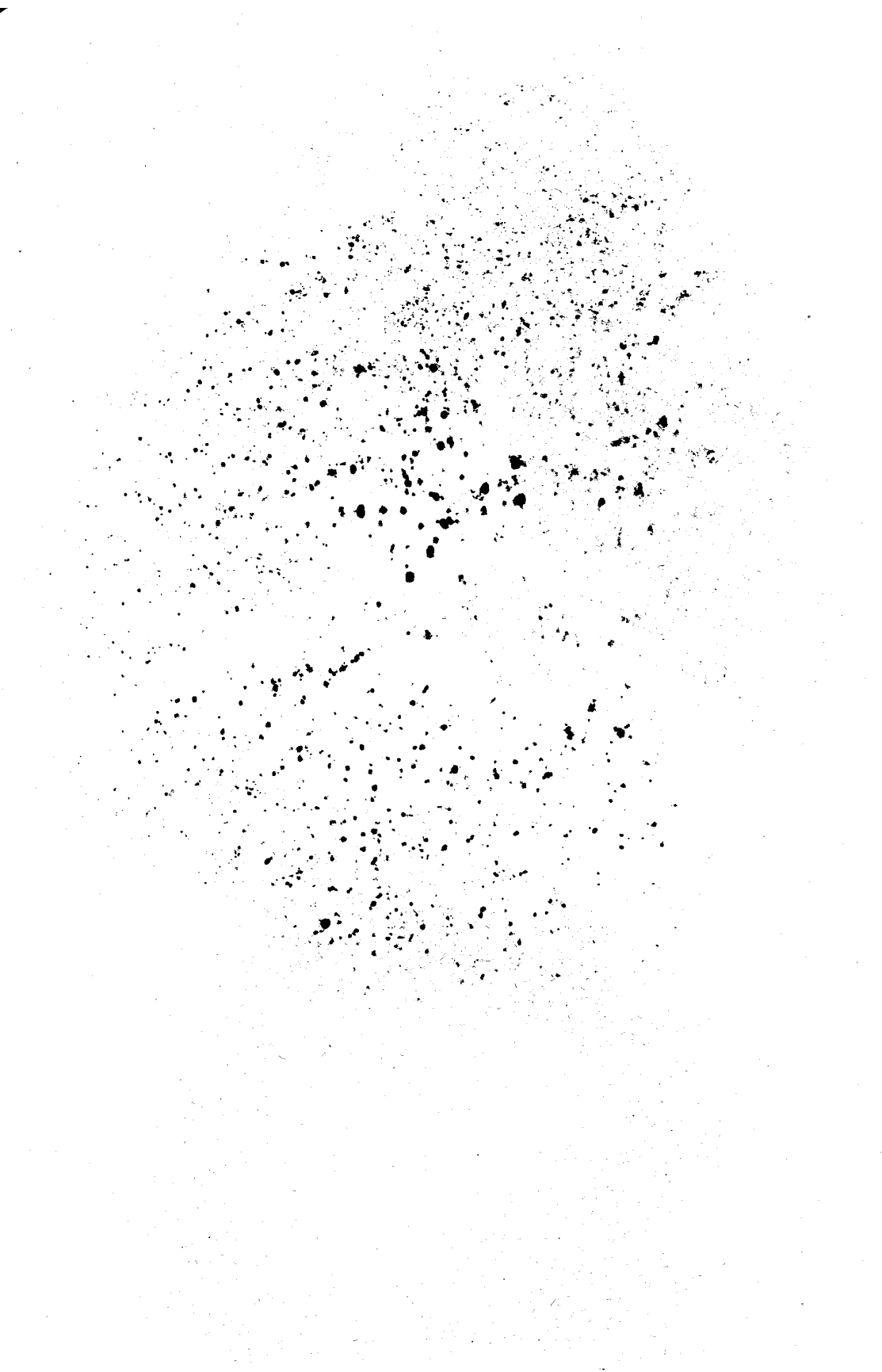
content.

(<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Document>)

'She was quite content.'

Tha back-ass lies!

7



type	date	filename	size	author
scan	06.01.2023	Conard-Mousepad2022.png	115KB	Sébastien Conard

category
book, data storage, manual, sign

Coming back from holidays, we were waiting for the ferry to take us from Ramsgate to Ostend. We were well on time. As the ship entered the harbour, I asked my parents if I could take a photograph. It's the first photograph I recall taking. I remember my dad telling me to wait long enough for the ship to get closer. I didn't. I only got one try.¹

It took a while before the film was developed. I couldn't stop imagining what the photograph would look like: some picturesque waves in the foreground, the shining white ship, the red and blue text on the side, and a cloud filled sky.

Notes

- 1 Following every holiday, when we got home, the garden and our house would be photographed with the remaining exposures on the roll of film in the camera.



type	date	filename	size	author
scan	10.11.2022	48b_08.jpg	427 KB	Michiel De Cleene

category
archive, family, landscape, sea

09:53:47

Sundown at the public observatory in Beisbroek. A choir of birds mixes with the continuous hiss of the freeway nearby. The camera captures the receding colours. The blinds are open; the half dome is closed.

A documentary approach: moving along a tension between proximity and distance. If the pendulum swings to either side, it becomes difficult to speak of *the documentary*. Proximity without distance, and distance without proximity, undermine it, precisely because any approach is then out of the question.

Sources

- Excerpt from [Towards Civil Dusk](#) (De Cleene De Cleene, 2020)



type	date	filename	size	author
video	04.10.2022	approximation.mp4	176,3 MB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
animal, architecture, astronomy, automobile, dusk, landscape, Neptune

09:53:48

‘My backyard is oriented perfectly, I can see the entire southern sky without obstructions.

In two years, they will start building an apartment block, though, two floors high with a roof on top. The height is not a problem, but of course it does mean heat and potential turbulence. I just hope they will be well insulated.

This is what I like doing. I have never been interested in remote observations.¹ In my backyard. I hear the geese flying overhead at night. An owl. The silence. I want to be near.’

Notes

- In the photograph [John Sussenbach](#) is manipulating the telescope’s focus slightly during the recording.
- 1 To make better images, astrophotographers can rent time on a ‘remote observatory’: a fully equipped observatory located in a less light-polluted region and with a more stable atmosphere than the one the average amateur astronomer lives in. A command given from a computer directs a massive telescope in Chile towards a desired spot.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	02.10.2022	_44A6751.dng	48,84 MB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
animal, astronomy, house, Neptune, technology

09:53:48

A first try at using the instrument for making a recording: excitement as we succeed in pointing the telescope at the brownish dot afar we just noticed on the other side of the valley. As it continues scavenging, we wait for night to set in.



type	date	filename	size	author
video	27.09.2022	2020-05-30-1755_8-CapObj	105,04 MB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
animal, astronomy, encounter, food, landscape, Neptune, technology

09:53:52

The orthopaedic surgeon left early that morning for his shift at the hospital some twenty kilometres away. It must have been around the time Neptune was at its highest, invisible in the morning sky.

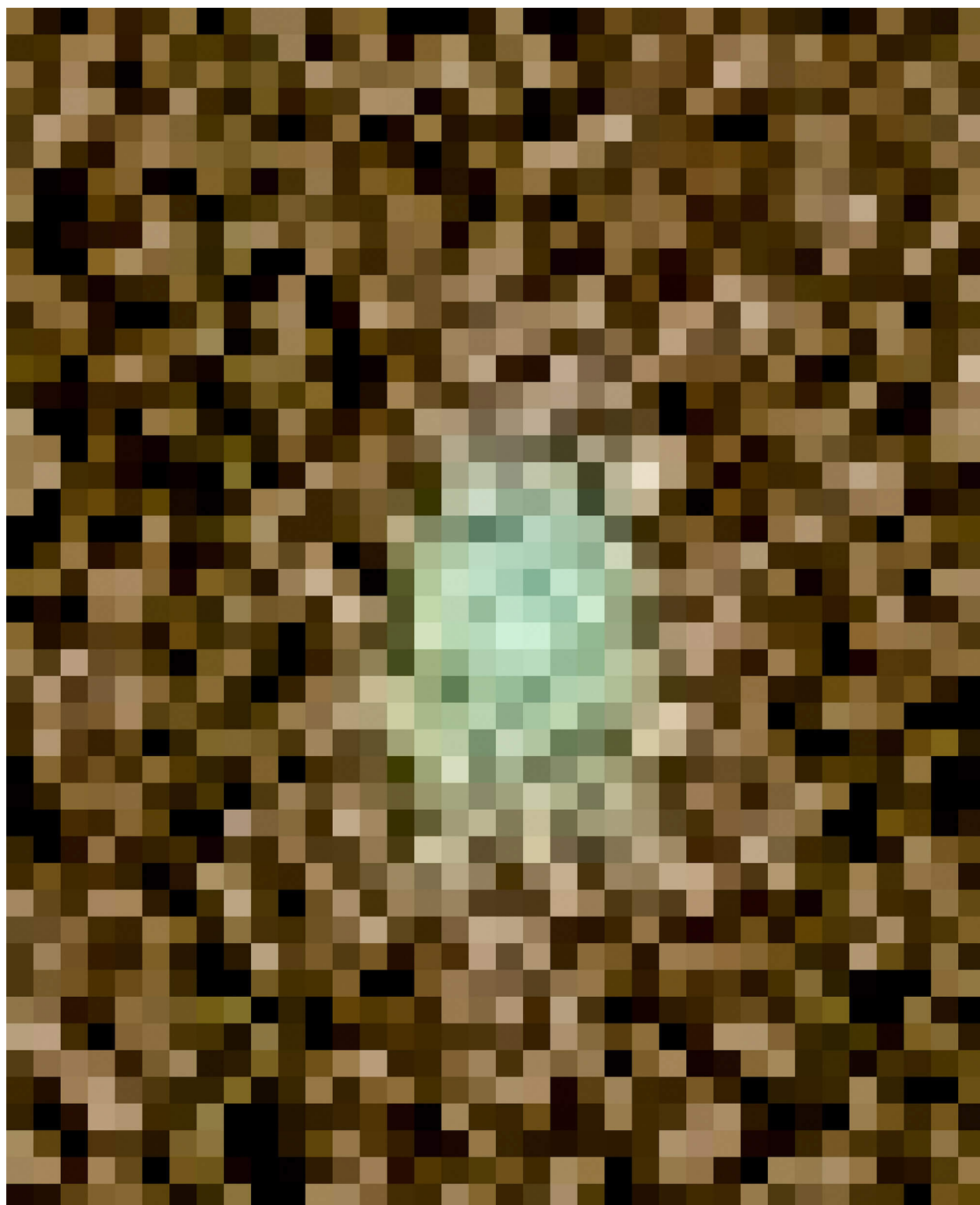
When he got back later that day, we attached a tow cable to the front of my car and the back of his.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	27.09.2022	_44A2295.dng	54,58 MB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
astronomy, automobile, encounter, medicine, Neptune

09:53:53



The river swells and eventually overflows, causing the death of six people and extensive damage: washed away bridges, damaged homes, submerged factories, destroyed food stocks, heavily eroded roads and paths.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	01.12.2021	IMG_0507b.jpg	6,12 MB	Michiel De Cleene

category
impact, landscape, precipitation

09:53:58

