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

Your path through the collection lead along Mould, Another letter from abroad, Straight in the morning, curvy in the afternoon, Market, At the copyshop, Iguanodon, Cobalt, Crash (2), 12M m3 [4/8] Dam, Potholes, Une étoile est-elle un document?, Roofing (5) – UDI, Directory, The Birds, Border, Gold Varnish, Passing Time Near a Particle Accelerator, Hétéroclites, Guzmania, Pretending to be an artichoke, Plaster

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 Gittelman 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 08.02.2022 20:36,
printed on	and contains 21 do	cuments on 46 pages.
(https://the-doc	cuments.org/log/08-0	2-2022-3784/)

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.decleenedecleene.be / info@decleenedecleene.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.
- Gittelman, L. Paper Knowledge. Toward a Media History of Documents. Durham/ London: Duke University Press, 2014.
- Oxford English Dictionary Online. Accessed on 13.05.2021.







At a dental practice, the white Alligat®-powder is mixed with the right amount of water to get a mouldable dough that is pressed upon a patient's teeth. After thirty seconds, the Alligat®-dough stiffens and takes on a rubber-like quality. At that point, still white, it must be removed from the patient's mouth. Over the next few hours, the mould turns increasingly pink as the substance becomes less humid. Now, it can be used as a mould to create a positive master cast of the patient's teeth.

Outside the dental practice, the powder's possibilities remain to be fully explored.

Notes



Sources

 First published as part of De Cleene De Cleene. 'Amidst the Fire, I Was Not Burnt', Trigger (Special issue: Uncertainty), 2. FOMU/Fw:Books, 25-30

the-documents.c

Mould

org



type photograph date 27.01.2022 filename _44A3429.tif size 36,81 MB author De Cleene De Cleene Because an acquaintance of the family was a missionary, the postage stamp collection had a large quantity of stamps from the Philippines. You had to boil water, hold the empty envelope above it, wait until the glue and the missionary's saliva loosened and evaporated, and then gently peel off the stamp. Then, it was put on a piece of pink blotting paper. Once dry, the stamp was slid into a tailor-made booklet.

Between a Horta building's facade and King Baudouin's portrait, there are exotic fish, religious scenes, butterflies, and advertisements for NGOs.

Mango is the Philippines' national fruit. Pope John Paul II visited it in 1995. There was a guerrilla unit in Northwest Pampanga during WWII.

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Another letter from abroad



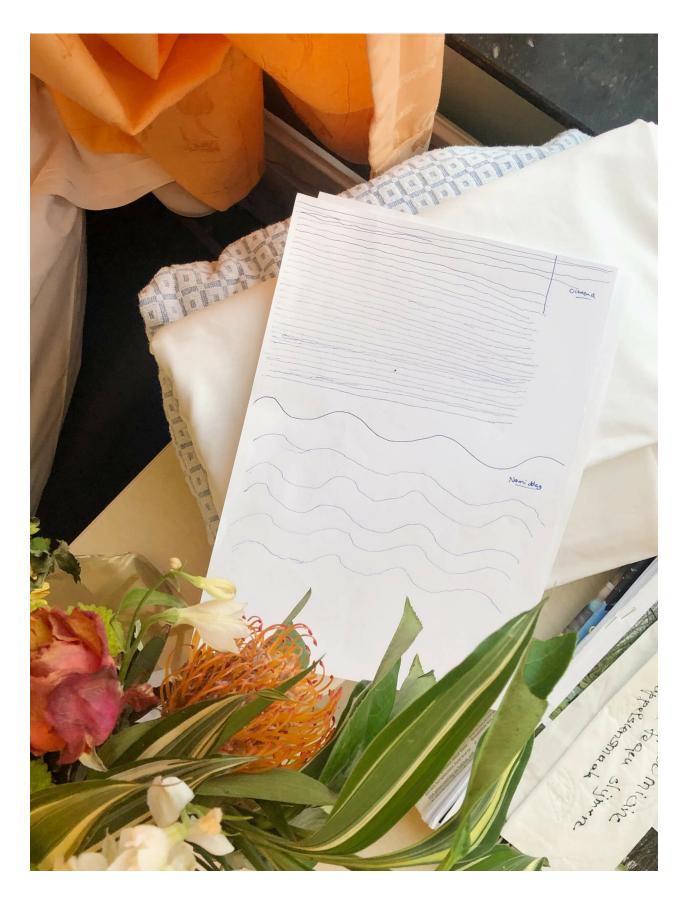
type scan date 23.01.2022 filename 2022-01-22_213134.png size 27,7MB author Arnout De Cleene On a pile of fresh hospital sheets, near the radiator, the tangerine curtains and the black marble window sill (the window looks out over the parking lot), underneath the two-day-old bouquet of flowers and next to a pile of magazines with a handwritten note on top (about a syrup that relieves slime and tastes like oranges), lie two sheets of paper.

Earlier that day the physiotherapist had come by. Twice. Once in the morning and once in the afternoon. He had each time drawn the first line, as an example. A straight line in the morning, a curvy line in the afternoon.

With a ballpoint pen my grandfather, who is recovering from an accident, diligently copied the examples (31 in the morning, 5 in the afternoon).

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Straight in the morning, curvy in the afternoon



type photograph

org

date 09.01.2022 filename IMG_9441.HEIC

size 862 KB author Michiel De Cleene

category family, manual, medicine, parking, replica/copy

K. says that the stall where he usually buys fruit has already been packed up. But he is not worried about the quality of the fruit the other vendor sells. He gestures encouragingly.

Five signs of type-1, eleven of type-2 and two of type-3 are visible. Four of type-2 (two visible, two deduced) and two of type-3 retain two vehicles.

Notes 1. 3.

 Márk Redele pursues projects that fundamentally relate to architecture and its practice but rarely look like architecture. www.markredele.com

the-documents.d

Market



type photograph date 26.12.2021 filename
market_.jpg

size 3,82 MB author Márk Redele At the copyshop, on a shelf above photocopier 8, the lid of a box of paper serves as the container for 'forgotten originals'.

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At the copyshop

org

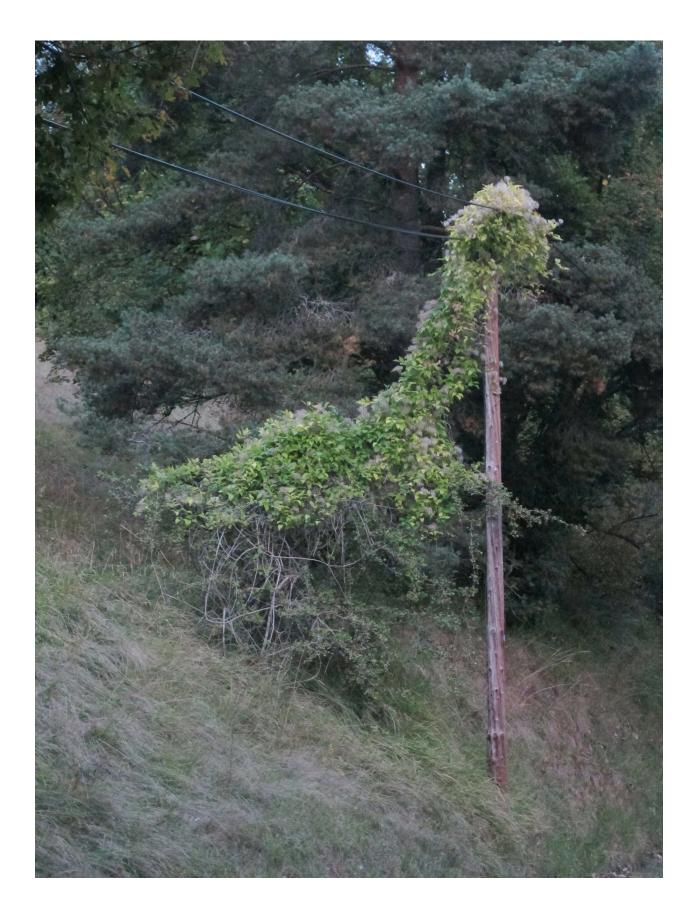


type photograph date 28.09.2021 filename IMG_0105.JPG size 1,8MB author Arnout De Cleene I recognized it in a flash, the late Jurassic-early Cretaceous herbivore looming dangerously over the road I was cycling on. I thought of *Some Windy Trees*.¹

A utility pole (425638, 07/99, 07/2002, COBRA), electrical wires, a hawthorn (Crataegus) and an old man's beard (Clematis vitalba). A symbiosis.

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Iguanodon



type photograph date 17.10.2021 filename IMG_2711.jpg size 4,66 MB author Michiel De Cleene

category angst, animal, book, botany, dusk, mistake, tree, trompe l'oeil, wind

Cathedral glass, or Flemish glass, lets light through, but distorts visibility. It can show something or someone is present behind it, but not in detail. Often used in front doors, it marks the opaque edge between the private and the public sphere, laying bare their presence, without disclosing their contents.

A blue hand, or a spider (*Cyriopagopus lividus*), traces the cracks that testify to the fact that the jammed door had to be closed with force. The hinges need oiling. Cobalt blue tarantulas are said to be extremely defensive.

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Cobalt



type photograph date 03.11.2021 filename _44A6301.dng; _44A6305.dng size 47,32MB; 54,99MB

author Arnout De Cleene

category animal, house, impact, insurance, mistake, repair, trompe l'oeil

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Near Avenue 61 on an artificial island close to Seef, a truck is being towed after the driver lost control over the vehicle and flipped it onto its side. A warm wind blows in from the Persian Gulf.

A police officer signals us to come closer. 'Why are you taking pictures?' he asks. 'This is just an accident. You have to delete the pictures from your phone. Now.' After checking the pictures-folder on our phones, he gets in his car, drives a few metres, stops the car and rolls down his window. 'And don't do it again!' he yells. Then he drives off, raising a cloud of sand in his wake.

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Crash (2)



type photograph date 08.05.2021 filename IMG_5071.jpeg size 2,71MB author Michiel De Cleene Seven years after the devastating flood, in 1954, the building of the dam is decided upon. Between 1959 and 1963 the infrastructure is built, and the reservoir gets filled with water in 1964 to act as a buffer for sudden floods and to guarantee a flowing Thur through the highly industrialized area downstream.

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type photograph date 02.12.2021 filename IMG_0510b.jpg size 5,85 MB author Michiel De Cleene Holding two cans of spray paint, a city employee walks through a sweet chestnut grove on the graveyard. He's looking for potholes.

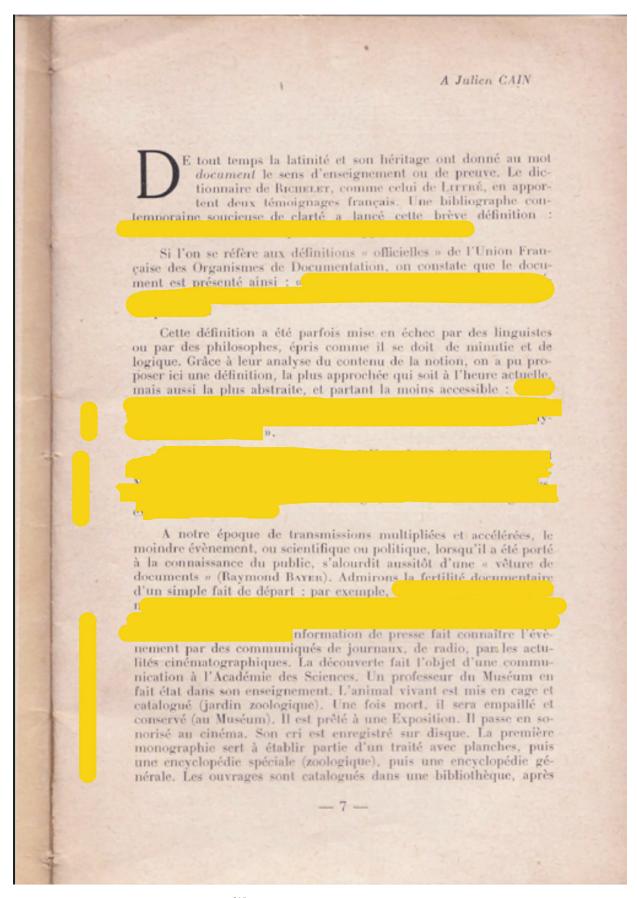
the-documents.

Potholes



type photograph date 15.07.2021 filename IMG_7751.HEIC size 4,7 MB author Michiel De Cleene In the introduction to her book *Qu'est-ce que la documentation?*, French 'documentalist' Suzanne Briet asks what a document is. In a scrappy scan of her book I found online I am highlighting almost everything she writes. Is a star a document? Briet says it isn't. But the catalogues and photographs of stars are. When I quickly opened the file with Apple's 'Preview' application to check the above paraphrase, the highlighted sentences were illegible.

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type screenshot date 17.05.2021 filename Schermafbeelding 2021-05-13 om 11.41.58.png

size 201KB author De Cleene De Cleene The torn off section of roofing on the grass has part of a text carved in it: 'UDI' and 'EN' are still legible. It must have come from another roof; the one shown in the photograph has no missing sections, nor visible repairs.

The roofing that is still on the garage shows a drawing of some kind. A floorplan for a squarish building with a supporting column along each side, or the layout for a tactical explanation, perhaps.

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Roofing (5) – UDI



type photograph date 14.04.2021 filename IMG_6509.jpeg size 6,90MB author Michiel De Cleene

category automobile, decoration, fissure, map/plan, parking, roofing, sign $% \left(1\right) =\left(1\right) \left(1\right)$

In 2020, the print versions of the Flemish telephone books 'Gouden Gids' and 'Witte Gids' (The Golden Guide and The White Guide), were published for the last time. From that year onwards, the directory could only be accessed and consulted online. The effect of the production of print telephone directories on the environment is considered to be enormous. As yearly updated, ubiquitous books, they were publications that soon turned superfluous. They led to piles of waste.

From the beginning of the 21st century on, both the print version and the online version had been available. This was a period of medium transition. During the last two decades, the print directory increasingly referred to the websites of the companies listed. To search for e.g. someone to inspect the heating installation, it was possible to find such a company's website via the print directory, and consult the inspector's services and price online, bypassing search engines such as Google and its complex algorithms. The telephone directory had a thematic and alphabetical order, combined with the possibility to buy additional advertising space.

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Directory

org



type photograph date 02.10.2021 filename _MG_7415.JPG size 8,2MB author Arnout De Cleene This is the spread one sees upon opening the bird field guide that once stood, as the stamp indicates, in the library of a psychiatric institution. 1 It shows birds' silhouettes, as they can be seen beside the road.

The drawing has a kind of Hitchcock feel to it.² The birds seem to be spying on each other, as they also seem to be spying on the unsuspecting passer-by.

The composition of the scene is marvelous. The electric wires, the tree, the wire fence, the double framed list with the birds' names, handsomely positioned in a birdless patch, at once superimposed on the telephone wires, and pushed to the background by the skylark.

Imagine seeing this scene. What are the odds: to see the silhouettes of Europe's twenty most common species of birds in one glance, from your car's window, as you are driving home at dusk.

Before closing the book, the last spread seems to show the birds fleeing, maybe attacking.³

Notes

- The stamp indicates that, at the psychiatric institution, the book was part of the sublibrary for the Catholic Brothers of Charity. The crossed-out part indicates that there was also a separate physicians' library, to which the book might have originally belonged.
- On the web, discussions on whether Alfred Hitchcock's The Birds (1963) was shot in colour or in black and white, abound



Sources

Peterson, R.T., Mountfort, G. & P.A.D. Hollom. Vogelgids voor alle in ons land en overig Europa voorkomende vogelsoorten (J. Kist, transl.). 3d ed. Amsterdam/Brussels: Elsevier, 1955.

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The Birds



type scan date 19.07.2021 filename Document_2021-07-19_094741.jpg size 7,5MB author Arnout De Cleene Belgium, approximately 1.5km from the French border, photograph made on 16.06.2018.

The European flag symbolises both the European Union and, more broadly, the identity and unity of Europe. It features a circle of 12 gold stars on a blue background. They stand for the ideals of unity, solidarity and harmony among the peoples of Europe. The number of stars has nothing to do with the number of member countries, though the circle is a symbol of unity.¹

- 1. Coat of arms of Gmina Puck, a rural district in Puck County, Pomeranian Voivodeship, in northern Poland.
- 2. Illegible.
- 3. F.C. Hansa, Mecklenburg, Pommern, FC Hansa Rostock is a German association football club based in the city of Rostock, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. They have emerged as one of the most successful clubs from the former East Germany and have made several appearances in the top-flight Bundesliga. Hansa Rostock's official anthem is "FC Hansa, wir lieben Dich total". Hansa struggles with hooliganism, estimating up to 500 supporters to be leaning towards violence. The club's logo consists of a red sailing ship with a blue sail showing the Rostock Griffin.
- 4. Mon École Écologique.org is an organization for environmental conservation. On 07.01.2021 there was no website listed on this URL.
- 5. Illegible.
- 6. Illegible, apart from '1962' in the middle.
- 7. Innocenti Bruderschaft, EL, 2018, a community of German Lambretta Innocenti riders and aficionados.
- 8. Imag'Ink, Bretignolles Sur Mer, Tatoueur, 06 06 44 13 51, a French tattoo shop.
- 9. Illegible.
- 10. Hardly legible, the only word that can be made out is 'Futbolom': Russian for soccer.
- 11. Kaluga on tour. Kaluga is a Russian city 150km southwest of Moscow. It is often called the cradle of space exploration thanks to the city's most famous resident: Konstantin Tsiolkovsky.
- 12. Hansa Ultras, F.C. Hansa. The Ultras are a group of F.C. Hansa fans (see: '3').
- 13. Illegible because '12' was stuck over it.
- 14. Illegible.
- 15. La Hutoise is a regional student-association for higher education students from the Belgian town of Huy and its surroundings. Its aim is to

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- bring together students from Huy in a spirit of camaraderie and to perpetuate student folklore. The logo consists of a two headed bird of prey with a cap on each head. The bird wears a scarf over one shoulder and holds a glass of beer in each paw.
- 16. F.C. Hansa, Grimmen. The F.C. Hansa logo (see '3' and '12') is combined with the coat of arms of Grimmen: a griffin on a pile of 10 bricks. Grimmen is a German town in Nordvorpommern on the banks of the river Trebel.
- 17. Illegible.
- 18. Heil Hansa. To the left of this text the F.C. Hansa logo (see '3', '12' and '16'), on the right a logo consisting of a black bull with his tongue out and a golden crown on his head.

 This controversial sticker lead to several arrests in the run-up to the match between F.C. Hansa Rostock and Bayern München in February 2020. Supporters of F.C. Hansa had attached this sticker to public buildings on their way to the stadium.
- 19. Illegible because '16' was stuck over it.
- 20. The Cuban flag.
- 21. Illegible.
- 22. Illegible.
- 23. Kaluga (see '11').
- 24. De Veterinnen, a round, black sticker with a red print of a head wearing a round hat and a carnivalesque collar with a carrot for a nose. No further information found.
- 25. Zlombol 11. Zĕombol is a yearly charity car rally racing event that starts in Katowice Poland. Contesters must drive a car that was built or designed during the communist era. The destination of the 2011 edition was Loch Ness
- 26. F.C. Hansa, Mecklenburg, Pommern, identical sticker to '3', see also '12', '16', and '18'.
- 27. Torpedo Moscow, only for white. Football club Torpedo Moscow is a Russian professional club based in Moscow, founded in 1930. Some fans of the club wave far-right symbols and banners, both during and outside of matches. Massive fan-protest ensued when the club tried to sign a black player in 2018. The player's contract was cancelled.
- 28. Heil Hansa. See '3', '12', '16', '18' and '26'.
- 29. Illegible.
- 30. Illegible.
- 31. Illegible.
- 32. Illegible.



type photograph date 20.01.2021 filename _44A2787.dng size 52,4MB author Michiel De Cleene

- 33. F.C. Hansa. Variation of '3' and '26' with a circle of yellow crops around the logo. See also '12', '16', '18' and '28'.
- 34. Live animals, contents: Rivne UA. These stickers are required by the International Air Transport Association for airline cargo pet travel. Rivne is a city in western Ukraine (UA) with an international airport. The sticker does not specify the transported animal but displays a dog, two birds, two fish and a turtle.
- 35. Illegible.
- 36. Illegible.
- 37. Illegible.
- 38. Illegible, apart from 'lska' on the bottom.
- 39. Norrland Fly Guys, Reading Water. The sticker displays a minimal landscape with two pine trees, and a shed on a chunk of floating ice, a single four-point star shines in the sky. Norrland is the northernmost part of Sweden. No further information found. Whether the 'fly guys' own airplanes or are involved in fly fishing is unclear.
- 40. This sticker displays what appears to be a smiling potato in front of an enlarged snow crystal. No further information found.
- 41. Traumsucht is an artist collective from Berlin. Their website lists German rap-artists
- 42. Illegible.

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I'm taking a scan of a family photo album given to me after my grandmother passed away, wanting to write something about the marvelous portraits inside. The genealogy is only partly clear to me: I recognize my dad as a kid, my uncle, my grandmother, her brother in the laboratory he (said he) ran. He smelled of cigars and severe perfume. The older photographs present people I don't know, but must be my ancestors. My grandmother told me stories¹ that, historically, reach further back than the figures I recognize in the photographs. There are no names and no dates in the album. The first two pictures seem to be the oldest ones.² I retract them from the album pockets in which they were slid to check if something is written on the backside. When I take the album away from the scanner's glass plate, particles of leather, gold varnish and sturdy cardboard come loose. I place a sheet of paper on the glass plate and press 'scan' again.

Notes

Once she (my grandmother) went home from school, sick, with her bicycle. She studied to become a nurse. The school was in Brussels, about 60 kilometers from her native village M. The milkman's van tipping over in front of my grandmother's parental house. A milk covered street. My great-grandfather, physician and mayor at M. Something happened during the Second World War having to do with telephones or radios when she was still a kid.



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Gold Varnish

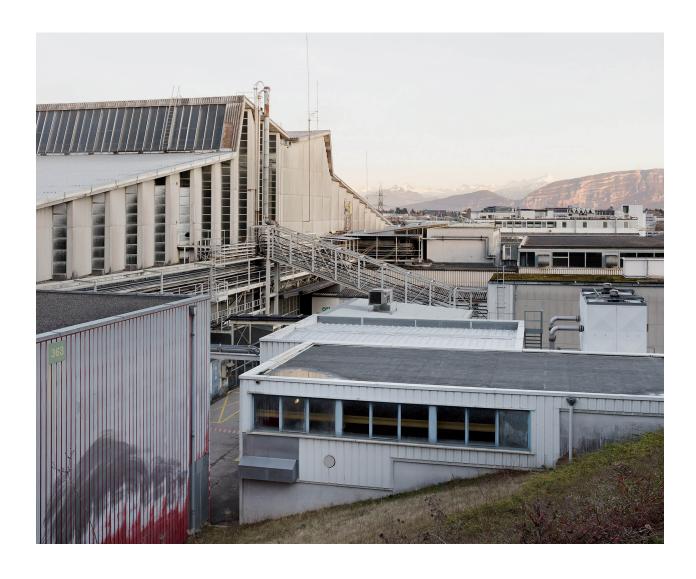


type scan date 20.06.2021 filename Handgeschreven_2021-06-18_110124.jpg

size 1,9MB author Arnout De Cleene On the second to last day of a research visit at CERN, there was some spare time in the schedule. I took a long walk towards building 282 in search of some excavation samples: cylindrical pieces of rock that were preserved when the tunnel was dug, glued to a block of wood and frequently exhibited in museums over the last three decades as material evidence of the earthwork and as a witness to the depth. The route led me along the back of building 363 where the wind caused young trees – now gone – to scuff the facade over time.

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Passing Time Near a Particle Accelerator



type photograph date 11.07.2021 filename cern_011.tif

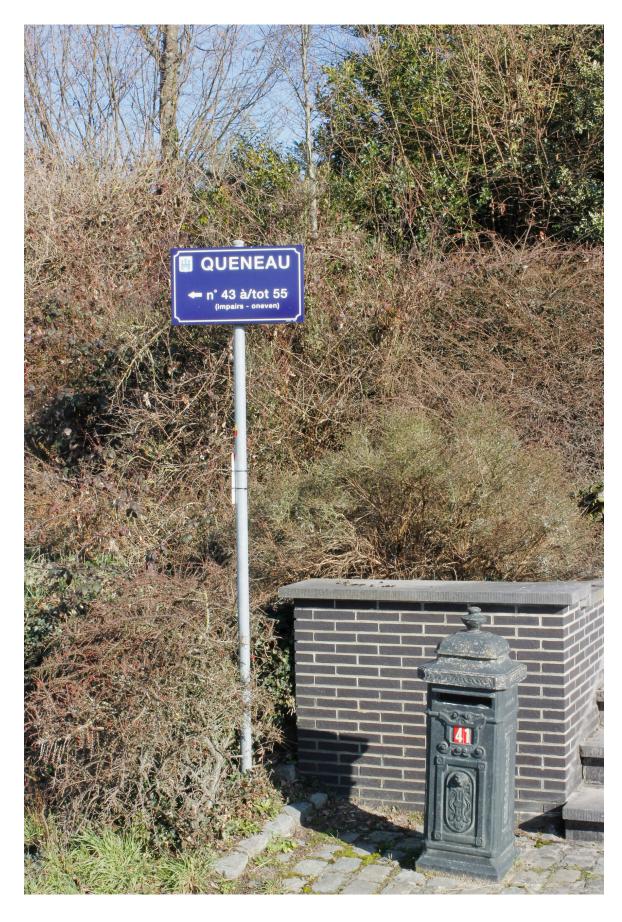
size 57,57 MB author Michiel De Cleene French writer Raymond Queneau did extensive research into what he called hétéroclites, and at other times fous littéraires, a continuation of a longstanding bibliographic project of assembling texts proposing eccentric theories that were never picked up by the scientific community. Disappointed by the results of his research and unable to find a publisher, he abandoned the idea of publishing the encyclopaedia he was compiling. Later, in his encyclopaedic novel Les enfants du limon, he picks up the thread, from a different perspective. It tells the story of two quirky characters, Chambernac and Purpulan, wanting to compile an encyclopedia on fous littéraires. The novel cites from the texts they have dug up. The novel ends when they give up on the project, and give their findings to a novelist they meet and who says to be interested in the material, and asks if it would be OK if he'd attribute it to a character in a story he's writing. Chambernac agrees, asking the name of the novelist he's meeting: 'Monsieur comment?' - 'Queneau'.

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Sources

- Queneau, R. Aux confins des ténèbres. Les fous littéraires du XIXe siècle (M. Velguth, red.). Paris: Gallimard, 2002.
- Queneau, R. Les enfants du limon. Paris: Gallimard, 2004 [1938].

Hétéroclites



type photograph date 06.03.2021 filename _MG_6560.JPG author Arnout De Cleene

category book, encyclopaedia, mathematics, sign $% \left(\frac{1}{2}\right) =\frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) \left(\frac{1}{2}$

Anastasio Guzmán was a Spanish pharmacist and naturalist. He spent most of his career in South-America. He died in 1807 during an expedition in the Cordillera de Los Llanganates in Ecuador, in search of the lost treasure of the Incas. Some time after his death, his colleague Juan José Tafalla suggested naming a certain genus of plants after his friend.

Guzmanias are mainly stemless, evergreen, epiphytic perennials native to Florida, the West Indies, southern Mexico, Central America, and northern and western South America. They are found at altitudes of up to 3.500m in the Andean rainforests.

The symbols beneath the photographs indicate that these Guzmanias require full light, but it is advised to avoid bright sunlight in spring and summer (HALF WHITE, HALF BLACK SUN), the compost should be kept moderately moist during growth, allowing it to dry slightly between each watering period (HALF FILLED WATERING CAN). Unlike, for instance, the Grevillea Robusta, a Guzmania does not require being sprayed regularly (SPRAYER). The four digit code is the AUCTION CODE: 'Every product has a code. This code is indispensable for the trade.' The COLOURED BAR at the bottom shows the availability of a plant quarterly. RED means good, PINK means moderate and WHITE means not available.

The introduction to this booklet mentions that '[p]rinted colours are often not as accurate as the colours of the plants themselves, which is why it is possible that colours shown in pictures in this booklet may be a little different from the colours of the real pot plant.'

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Guzmania

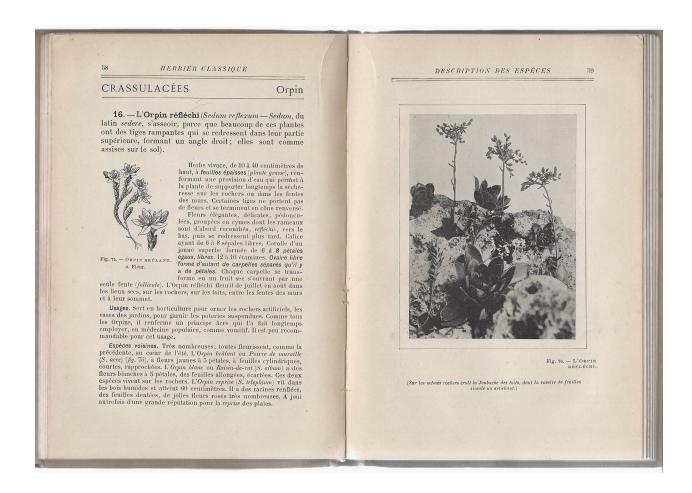


type photograph date 12.04.2021 filename _44A0323.dng size 45,38MB author Michiel De Cleene The *Sedum reflexum* grows on rocky soils and in crevices of walls. In *L'herbier classique*, it is depicted in two ways, just like the other plants in the book. This double portraiture is important, the author states in the introduction: 'one consists of the reproductions of the photographs taken by the author of this book [...]; the other, drawings made by excellent artists who observed the plants themselves, showing details photography can't reproduce, highlighting aspects the photographs leave untouched. [...] From this double representation, interesting comparisons can be made, highly enlightening from an artistic point of view, between the realistic aspect of nature's "productions" and the interpretation thereof by the draftsman' (5).

A detail not covered by the drawing of the *sedum reflexum*, is the presence of other species in the vicinity of the plant, a detail shown in the photograph and described in the caption: 'The Common houseleek grows on the same rocks, with its rosette of leaves pretending to be an artichoke' (59).

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Pretending to be an artichoke



type scan date 15.08.2021 filename Document_2021-07-19_111850.jpg size 10MB author Arnout De Cleene As a result of intense drainage of drinking water, an area around the Belgian city of Waver was designated as having a potential for land subsidence – the downward movement of the soil over an extended period of time. People in Waver were startled to find their town mentioned in an international study published in *Science*. Flemish newspaper *De Standaard* uncovered that the researchers had used an older study, published in 2005, which claimed that the soil in Waver had moved some five centimeters in a period of eleven years. Pictures of fissures in Waver-facades had been added to the original article.

Last year, cracks in our living room wall were covered up by placing plasterboard in front of the plastered brick wall. As such, we avoided having to paint the wall with the cracks and the marks left by the IKEA Billy bookcases.

Sources

- https://science.sciencemag.org/content/sci/suppl/2020/12/29/371.6524.34.
 DC1/abb8549_Herrera_SM.pdf
- https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20210106_97889104
- http://earth.esa.int/fringe2005/proceedings/papers/677_devleeschouwer.p df

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Plaster



type photograph date 11.12.2020 filename IMG_0280.JPG size 2,6MB author Arnout De Cleene