

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

Your path through the collection lead along Dobermans, Nap, Starry sky, long exposure, Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt), 14 April 2023, Interviews with residents of Sandersleben, no specific location, 2023 [2], Red Skirt Popular on the Street, United Until Tomorrow, Invalid Testament, 2024, Temporary Photograph, 2017, A Transparent Forest, (Un)Touching Ground, A DONNER, Swarms, We were a modern house, License Plate, Negative sheet 55, negative 4, negative 5, Negative sheet 02, negative 5, negative 6

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 12.01.2026 12:52, printed on _____ and contains 16 documents on 35 pages. (<https://the-documents.org/log/12-01-2026-6742/>)

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

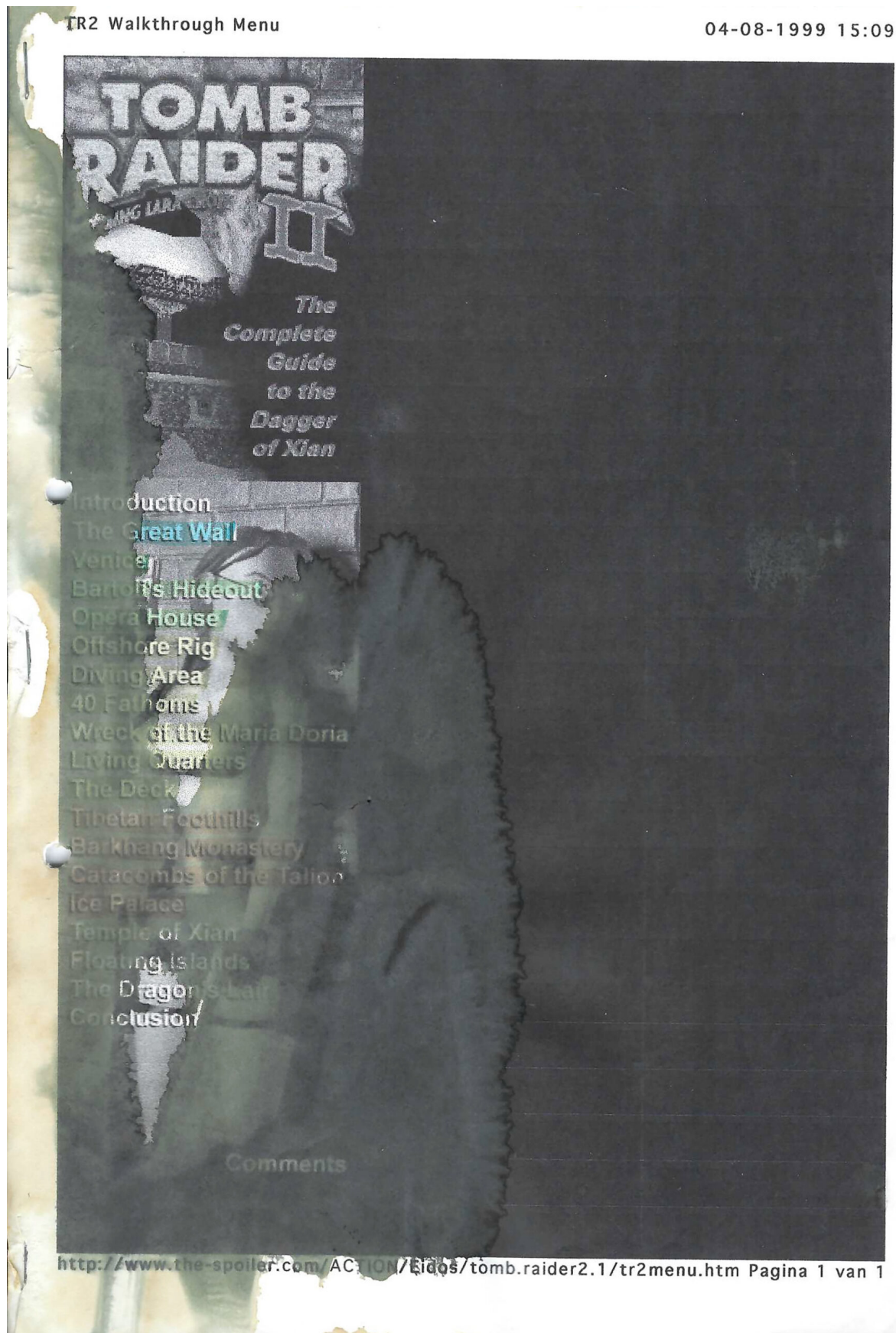


HOGENT
howest

‘Exit at the dock and kill some rats. Go around the building to the left, killing the guard and his rats before flipping the switch. Another guard arrives kill him too, taking the medkits from both your victims. Enter the now open front door and kill the guard on the balcony and his friend who appears on the ground floor. Grab the shells from your second kill then shoot out the window and kill the Dobermans who jump through when you get too close.’

Sources

- *Tomb Raider II. The Complete Guide to the Dagger of Xian.*
Downloaded from <http://www.the-spoiler.com> on 4 August, 1999, at 15:03.



type
scan

date
14.12.2025

filename
walkthrough.jpg

size
1,9MB

author
Arnout De Cleene

category
animal, encounter, leakage, manual, precipitation

12:52:31

It's time to have a nap. I tilt the window over its middle axis to let the butterfly out. A breeze ruffles the drapes. Now, it sits on the glass and throws an enormous shadow on the yellow cloth.



type
photograph

date
06.01.2025

filename
_MG_9406.JPG; _MG_9429.JPG

size
6,1 MB; 10,2 MB

author
Arnout De Cleene

category
animal, cloth, decoration, encounter, family, scale, wind

12:52:36



A constant, dependable presence. With the camera focused on the North Star for an extended period, the rotation of the Earth becomes visible. Nearby, in the municipality of Wiederstedt, the geologist, poet and philosopher Friedrich von Hardenberg (better known by his pen name Novalis) spent his childhood years between 1772 and 1784. A quote of his is engraved on a stone bench in the park surrounding the chateau where he was raised: “The human being does not speak alone – the universe also speaks – everything speaks – infinite languages.”

Notes

- From *S. Anders Leben. Eine Handlung in Gesprächen/S. Anders Leben – Living Differently: An Act in Conversations*
- Stephanie Kiwitt (1972) is an artist based in Halle (Saale), Germany. Utilizing a large number of images, various perspectives and also textual elements, she is known for her insightful photography that explores spaces emblematic of contemporary phenomena. Over the past three years, she has focused on evolving habitats in rural areas, photographing traces of transformation and conducting interviews in Saxony-Anhalt, the region she moved to in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, Kiwitt was a guest lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

Starry sky, long exposure, Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt), 14 April 2023



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	14.06.2024	Bild 003_mk.jpg	73 MB	Stephanie Kiwitt
category				
astronomy, literature, Trigger				

12:52:39

Freely adapted from interviews with residents of Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt). Three-act play. The first two acts take place in the present day; the third is set in the future.

From Act 2 ‘The Inhabitants’, Scene 5, ‘Living Differently’.

Characters: MR DUNST club member I, MR WINDORF amateur astronomer

Notes

- Stills from text animation *S. Anders Leben. Eine Handlung in Gesprächen/S. Anders Leben – Living Differently: An Act in Conversations*
- Stephanie Kiwitt (1972) is an artist based in Halle (Saale), Germany. Utilizing a large number of images, various perspectives and also textual elements, she is known for her insightful photography that explores spaces emblematic of contemporary phenomena. Over the past three years, she has focused on evolving habitats in rural areas, photographing traces of transformation and conducting interviews in Saxony-Anhalt, the region she moved to in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, Kiwitt was a guest lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels.
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Interviews with residents of Sandersleben, no specific location, 2023 [2]

HERR DUNST I imagine that if nothing were to happen, the future would be a blank canvas, devoid of anything.

HERR WINDORF Just beyond S, there was a Stone Age settlement. When I gaze at the stars there at night, I'm struck by the thought that what I'm seeing has already been witnessed by someone long ago. From Saturn's perspective, Earth is merely a faint dot, yet here we are living on it – tiny, but incredibly beautiful. It's captivating. It changes the way you walk through the forest, the way you move through S.

type	date	filename	size	author
collage	14.06.2024	2-Stone Age.jpg	108 KB	Stephanie Kiwitt
category	archaeology, astronomy, encounter, landscape, Trigger			

12:52:42

Set in the fictitious Shanghai-based Dafeng Cotton Mill, *Red Skirt Popular on the Street* (1984) follows the story of an enterprising model worker as she navigates the challenges of young adult life, from workplace conflicts to choosing what clothes to wear on her days off. In the reflection of the emerging consumer consciousness of the Reform era, many of the film's key moments happen not on the factory floor, but in the changing room where the workers seek to express themselves through their choice of dress. To this end, the film can be regarded as a document of the fashion trends being introduced into the country at the time, as best observed in the spellbinding array of colours on display as the workers leave the factory at the end of a day's work.

The textile mill used as the setting for Dafeng Cotton Mill is Shanghai No. 1 Cotton Mill. Originally occupied by the no. 13 and 14 mills of the Japanese-owned Naigaiwata Company, the mill was formally established as the China Textile Construction Company Shanghai No. 1 Cotton Mill after the Second World War. It was located at the T-shaped intersection on Changshou Road, with the gate facing Jiaozhou Road. At that time, the area on the north side of Changshou Road extending from No. 1 Cotton Mill formed a continuous industrial zone encompassing many other factories and warehouses, all of which have since been converted into the private residences and creative parks.

Notes

- [Ho Rui An](#) is an artist and writer working in the intersections of contemporary art, cinema, performance and theory. Through lectures, essays and films, his research examines the relations between labour, technology and capital across different systems of governance in a global age.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.



type	date	filename	size	author
collage	05.06.2024	redskirt.jpg	4,89 MB	Ho Rui An

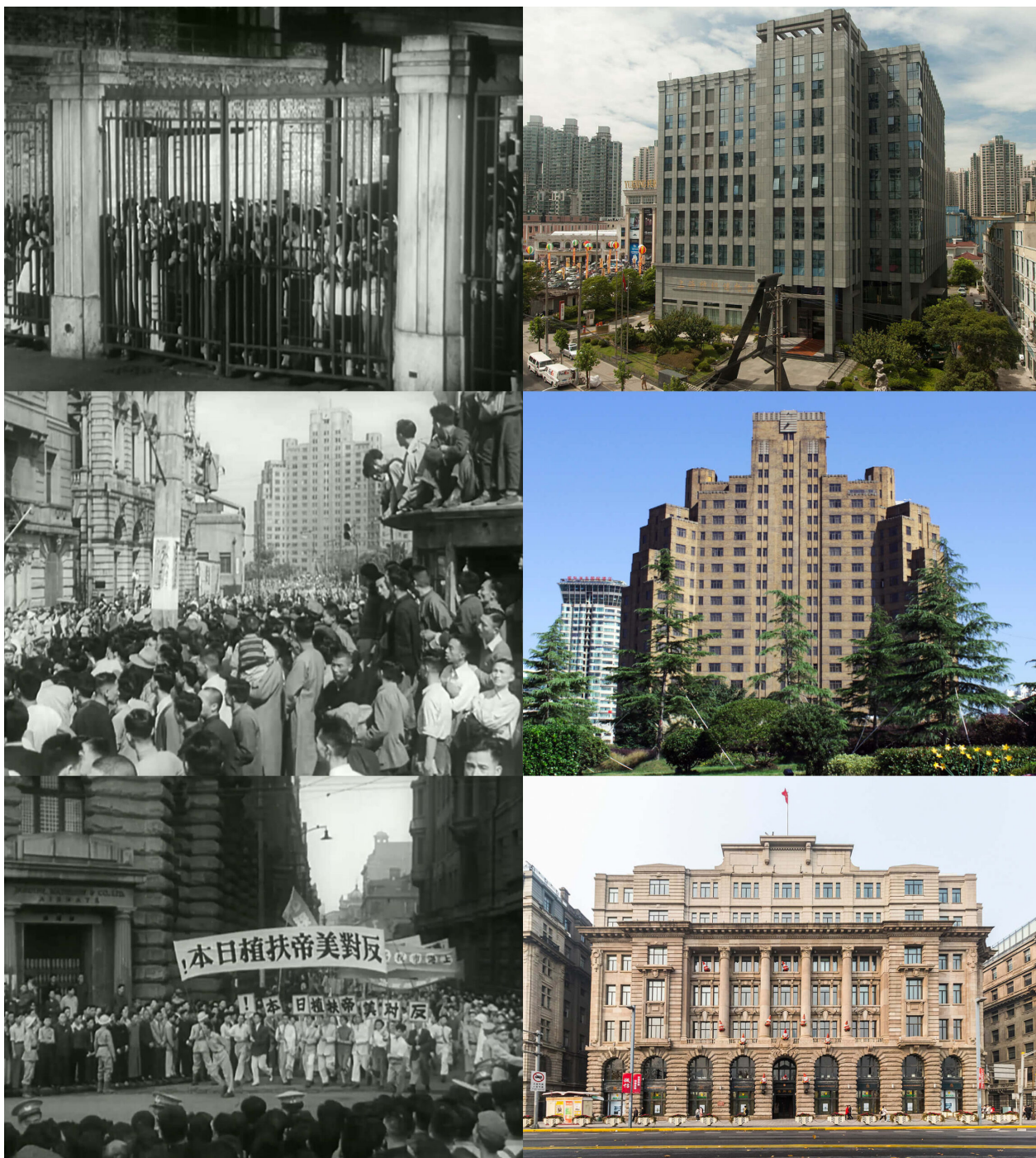
category
architecture, conflict, economy, factory, fashion, Trigger

United Until Tomorrow (1951) is based on the real-life events that took place at Shanghai's Shenxin No. 9 Cotton Mill where workers led a factory-wide strike in 1948 to protest salary arrears against the background of escalating inflation. Shot at the original location of the strike, the film shows the entrance of the cotton mill transformed into a literal and ideological battlefield where workers gain class consciousness and fight to reclaim their rightful place as owners of the factory. In one climactic scene, the workers even seal the factory gate from the outside to prevent the products of their labour from being expropriated by Kuomintang forces.

Located at No. 128, Aomen Road, Shanghai, Shenxin No. 9 Cotton Mill belonged to the system of mills managed by Shenxin Textile Company, a private enterprise founded in 1915 by Wuxi-bred industrialist brothers Rong Zongjing and Rong Desheng. Following the Communist takeover of Shanghai, the cotton mill was nationalised in the 1950s and placed under the management of the Shanghai Textile Industry Bureau. With the subsequent launch of the economic reforms, the bureau was restructured into a holding company in 1998 amidst the deindustrialisation of the city. While many iconic buildings in the Shanghai Bund area today can be seen in the film, little remains of the original architecture of No. 9 Cotton Mill where the Shanghai Textile Museum is now located.

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type
collage

date
05.06.2024

filename
uniteduntiltomorrow.jpg

size
4,37 MB

author
Ho Rui An

category
architecture, economy, factory, government, strike, Trigger

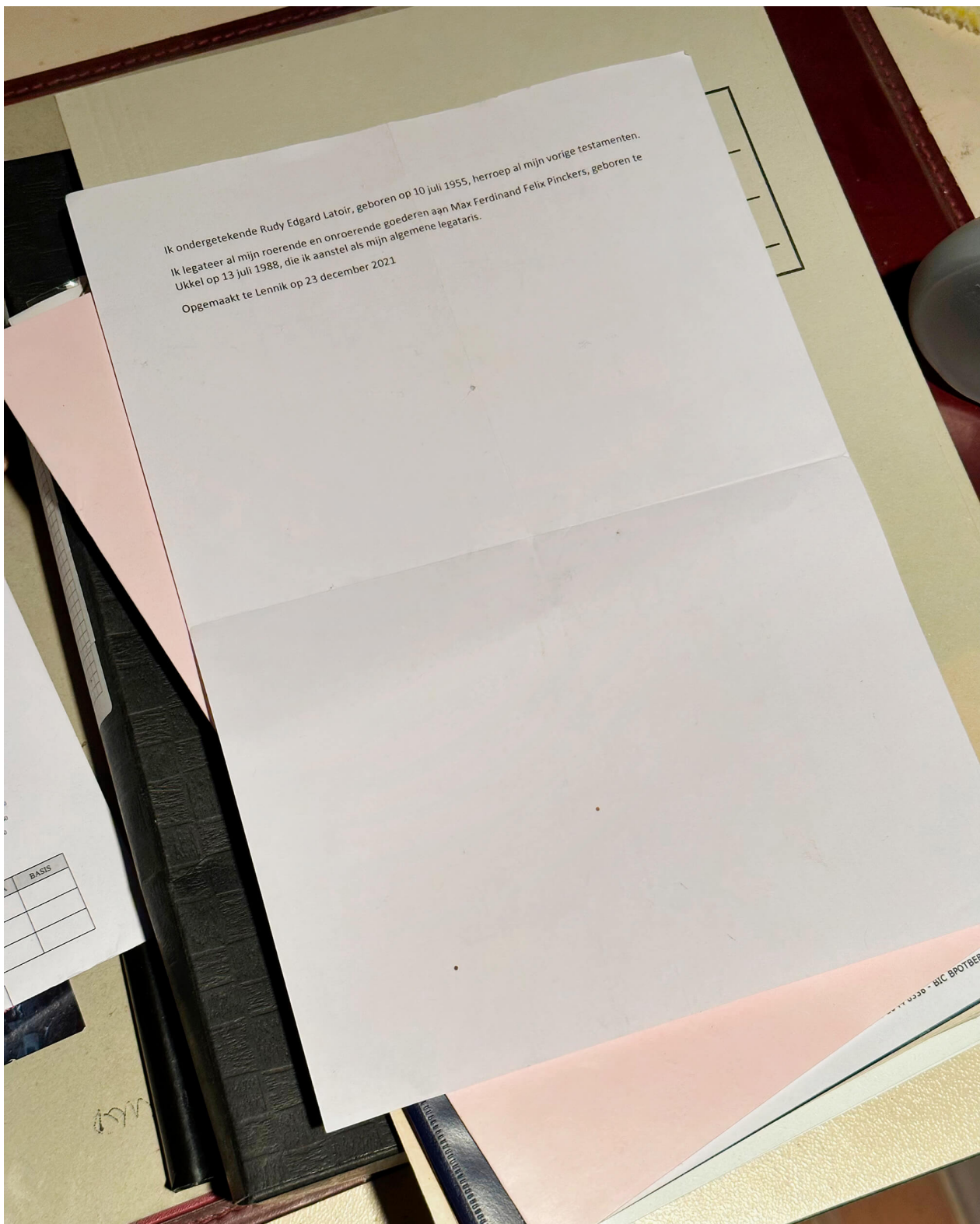
12:52:48

The invalidity of this official document is caused by the fact that it is produced by a machine. Unlike a photograph, the authenticity of this document relies on direct contact between hand, pen and paper.

the-documents.c

Notes

- Max Pinckers (°1988, BE) and Victoria Gonzalez-Figueras (°1988, CA) are based in Brussels, Belgium. They have been working together for the past ten years on documentary photography projects. Victoria works in the cultural field as a researcher and producer. Max is a speculative documentarian, teacher and occasional writer on photography. They are married, in love, and have a son. Victoria has consistently assisted Max in his projects as a production manager, but they have recently been making new work together as co-authors. “Double Reward” is the first such project.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.



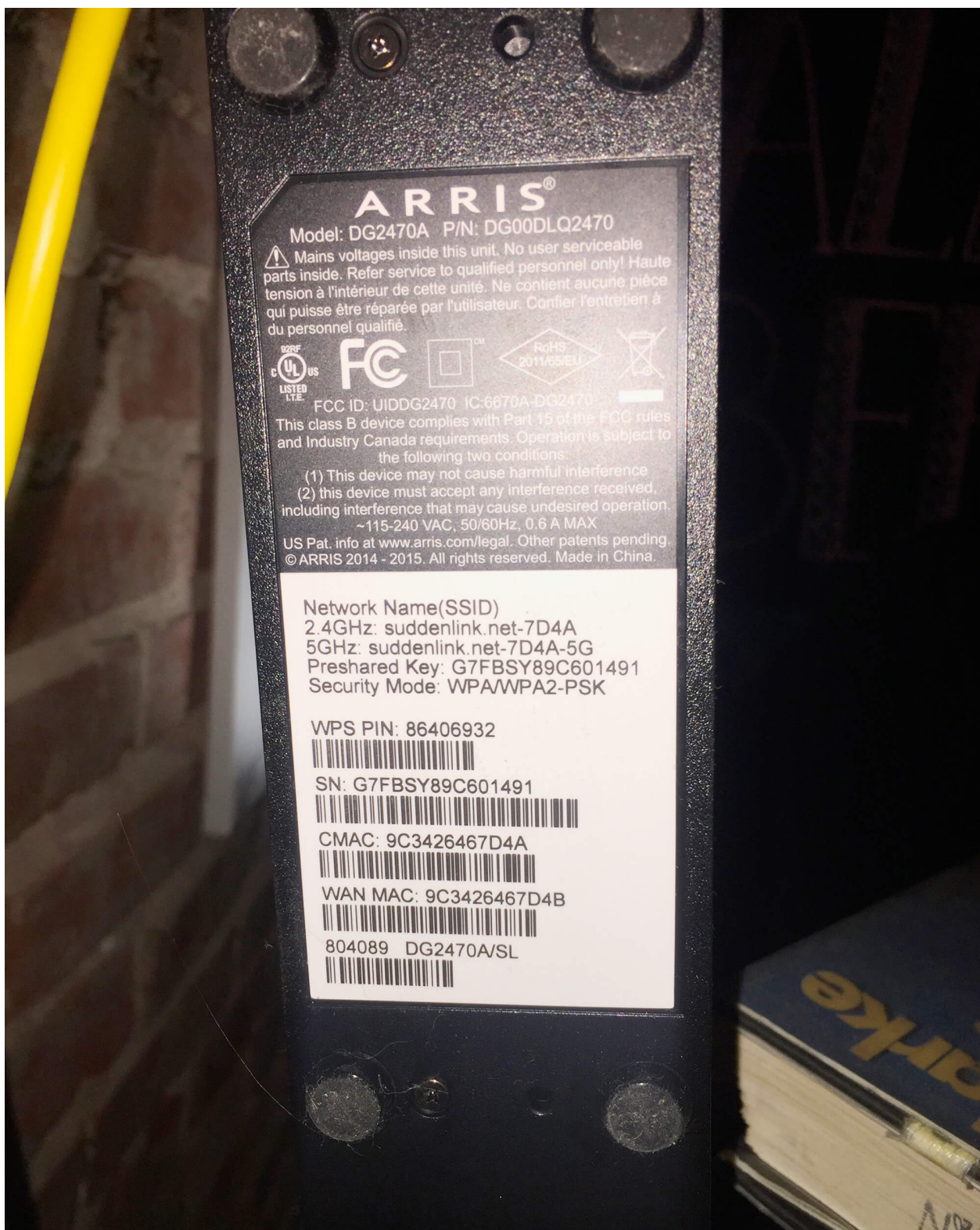
type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	30.05.2024	Testament.jpg	4,4 MB	Max Pinckers
category	government, hand, technology, Trigger			

12:52:49

The bartender didn't remember the passcode, so he pointed out where I could find it: on the bottom of the router box. Instead of trying to read the tiny numbers on the router label in the dark, while at the same time awkwardly typing it into my small, cumbersome smartphone keyboard, I decided to photograph the label. This allowed me to retreat back to my seat, zoom into the image and easily enter the code into my phone. The photograph immediately lost its value the moment this action was completed.

Notes

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- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.



type
photograph

date
30.05.2024

filename
IMG_0058.jpg

size
3,8 MB

author
Max Pinckers

category
technology, Trigger

12:52:49

During the second half of April 2018, passers-by complained on Twitter about the massive chopping of trees and bushes in the area of the park site in Ranst, Belgium, along the E313 highway, in close proximity to the city of Antwerp.

Initially, the Department of Road and Highway Maintenance answered on Twitter that no pruning activities had taken place. They wouldn't want to disturb breeding birds. But soon after, they admitted to the pruning. Their argumentation took a turn: 'These are pruning activities in the context of the transmigration-problem on parking lots, as requested by the Police Department and the State Governor, so that transmigrants will no longer be able to hide. In the future, we will take up this discussion in our pruning policy for the upcoming breeding season.'

Upon closer investigation (an inquiry by Nature Inspection), the scale of the chopping became clear. The trees closest to the highway and the parking lot were chopped, while other trees were pruned at the bottom. Species such as European black elderberry, maple tree, sorbus, hazel, English holly, wild black cherry and breaking buckthorn disappeared. Rare species, only found in ancient forests, such as Solomon's seal, were severely damaged.

These activities resulted in what the investigators described as a 'transparent forest' – a forest without density at lower levels, which is ecologically speaking not valuable. It has no 'forest feeling'.

Notes

- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and [Trigger](#) co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.



type	date	filename	size	author
image	27.05.2024	DCDC_ranst_2_039.psd	1,03 GB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
automobile, botany, conflict, government, landscape, parking, Ranst, tree

‘These attempts to dismantle occur amidst timeless acts of protest and resistance.’

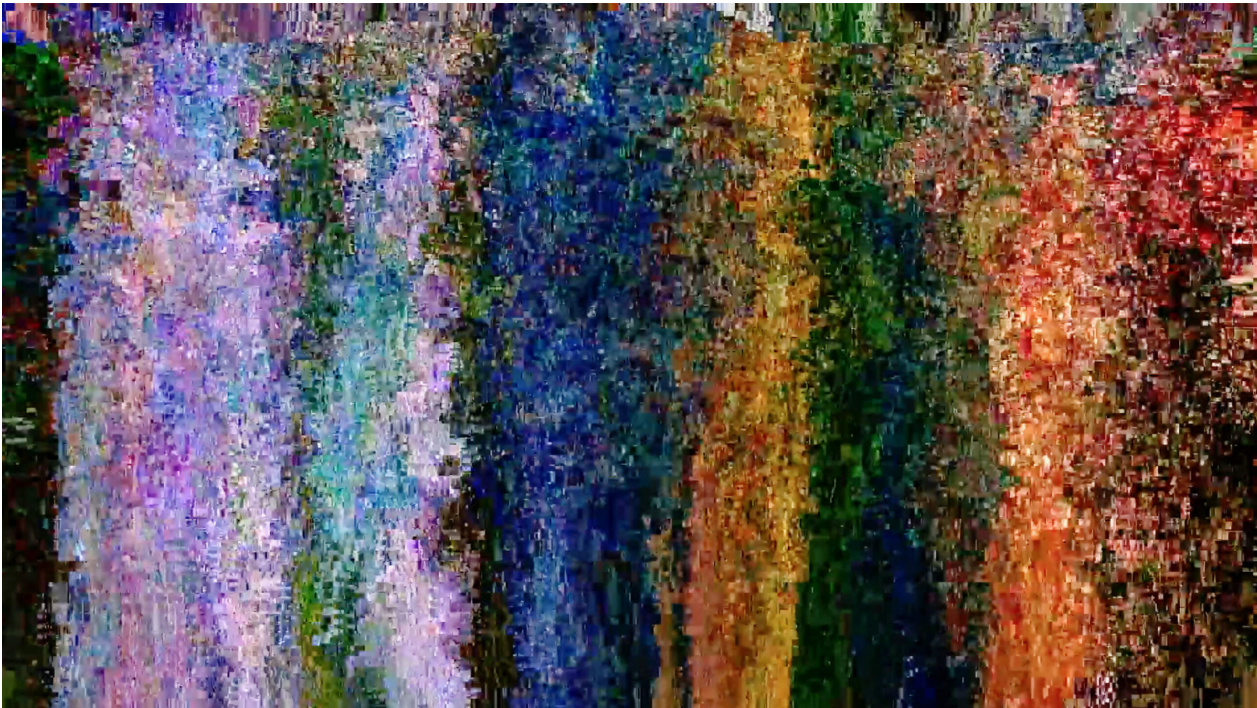
the-documents.c

Screenshot from film chapter *(Un)Touching Ground* where archival images that document a history of protest and resistance movements in Lebanon are put through a process of data-moshing. The disruption of the image in this pixelated moment in the film, forms to highlight the mass of people that make up these movements for intersectional revolution.

Frame of Accountability, 01:00:00, Helene Kazan, 2024.

Notes

- Helene Kazan is an artist, writer and educator. Her work investigates ‘risk’ as a lived condition produced through the conjoined violent effects of capitalism and conflict. This is observed in the colonial roots of international law and its material formation of the lived-built environment. In response, she uses decolonial, feminist, poetic and critical-legal approaches in her work, which explores ways of dismantling the ongoing effects of neo-colonial violence towards wider frameworks of accountability and justice.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and [Trigger](#) co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.



type	date	filename	size	author
screenshot	25.05.2024	FrameofAccountability_HKazan_2023_002.jpf	517 KB	Helene Kazan

category
archive, government, technology, Trigger

A snow-covered stainless steel and glass shelf has a note, written in red marker, cello-taped to one of the steel supports: ‘A DONNER’.

Now a park, the Place Marie Janson – colloquially called *Carré Moscou* or *Carré Monnaies* – used to house *L’Hôtel des Monnaies/het Munthof*. For a century, the coins of some twenty-two countries were minted in this building.

Sources

- [hotel_monnaies_nl.pdf](#)



type
photograph

date
03.04.2024

filename
_44A8275.dng

size
52,46 MB

author
Michiel De Cleene

category
card, decoration, dusk, precipitation, sign, waste

12:52:51

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
photograph

date
23.01.2024

filename
IMG_6467.jpeg

size
1,66 MB

author
Michiel De Cleene

category
collecting, family, hand, sticker

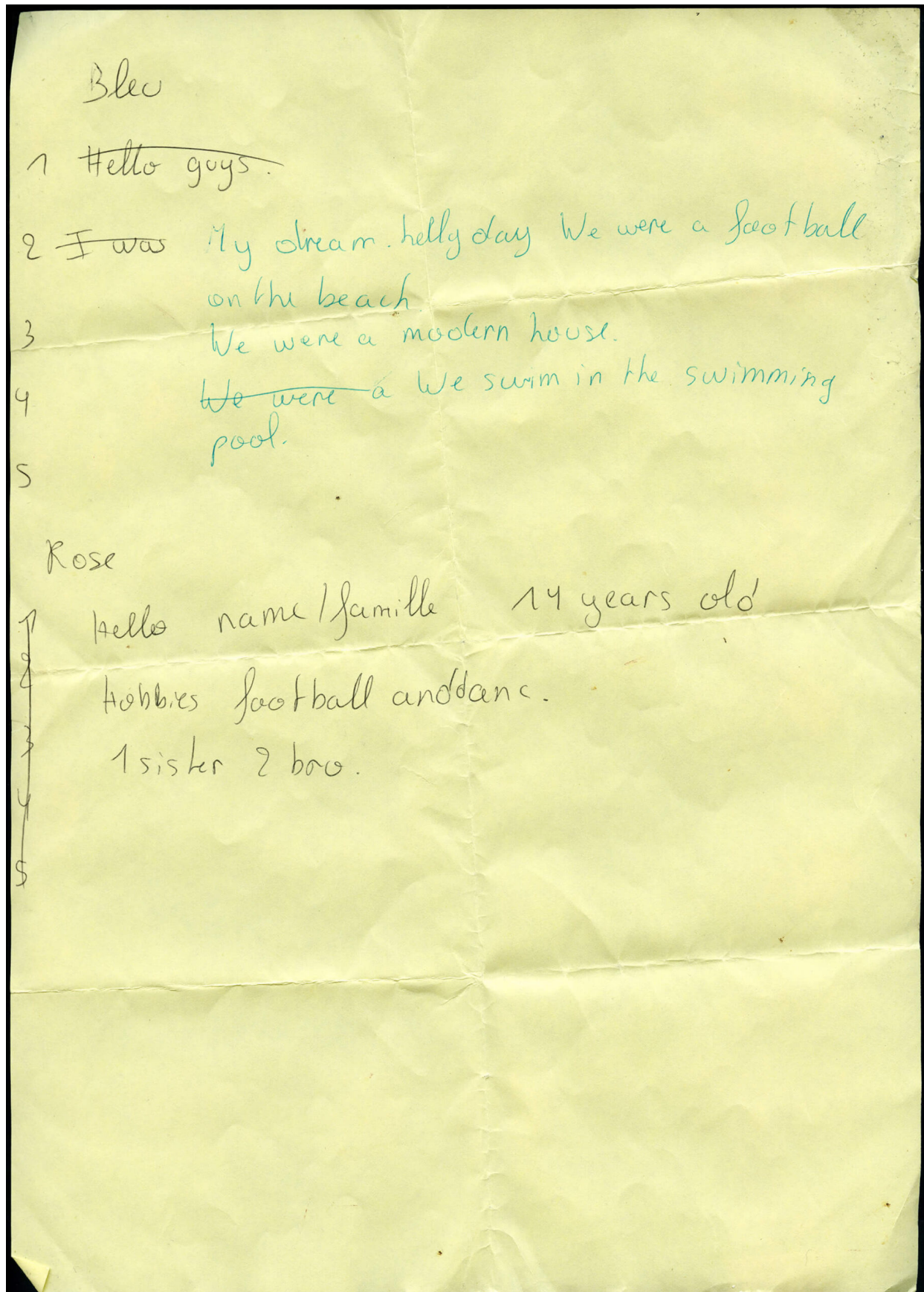
12:52:51

*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
scan

date
20.09.2023

filename
wewereamodernhouse.pdf

size
10,12 MB

author
Michiel De Cleene

category
architecture, dusk, encounter, family, tree

12:52:52

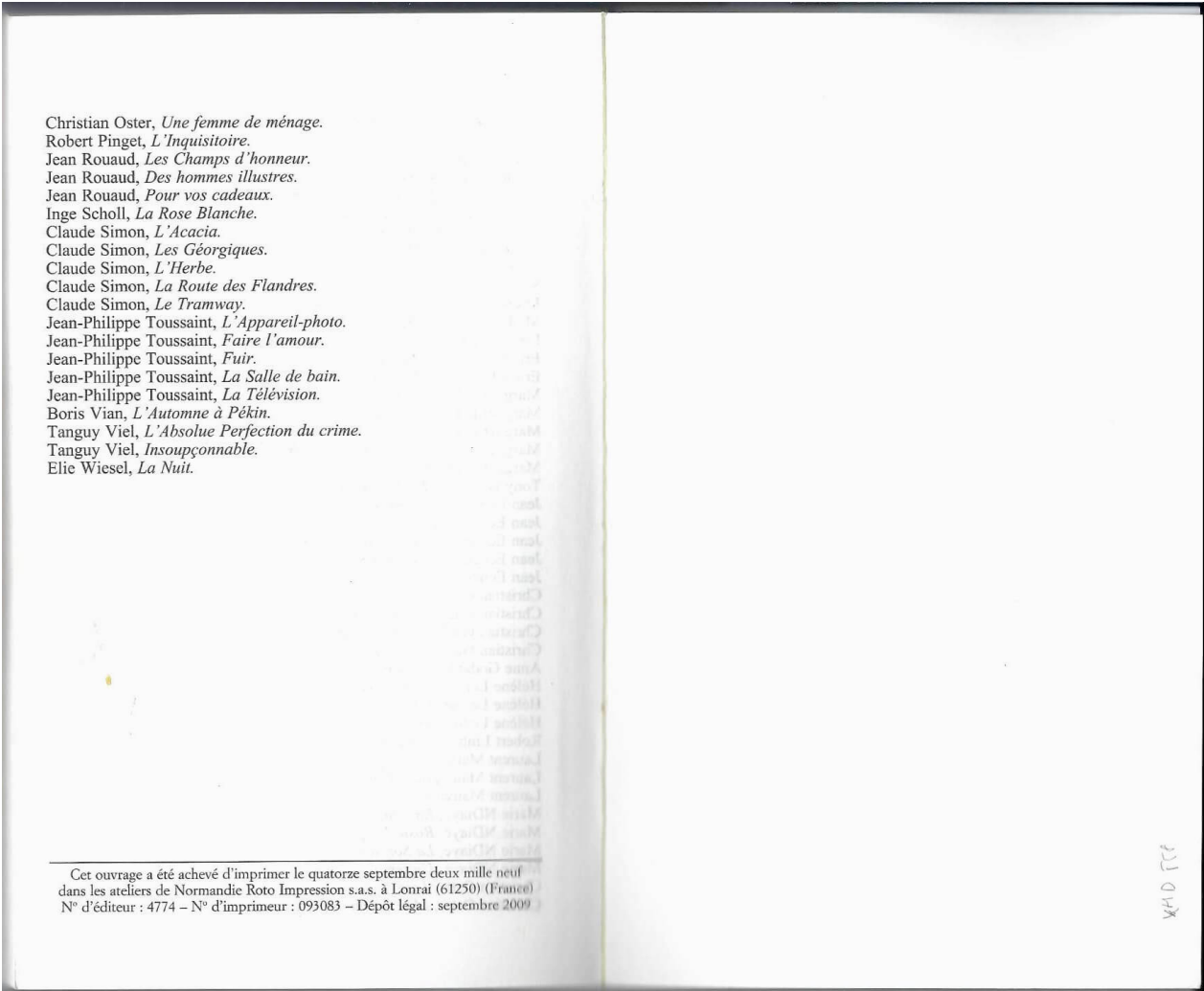
During the preparation of a seminar, I reread Pierre Bayard's *Qui a tué Roger Ackroyd?* (2008). On the inside of the back cover, there's an inscription: it appears I wrote down a license plate number – something I have the habit of doing when a situation seems suspicious.

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.



Christian Oster, *Une femme de ménage*.
 Robert Pinget, *L'Inquisiteur*.
 Jean Rouaud, *Les Champs d'honneur*.
 Jean Rouaud, *Des hommes illustres*.
 Jean Rouaud, *Pour vos cadeaux*.
 Inge Scholl, *La Rose Blanche*.
 Claude Simon, *L'Acacia*.
 Claude Simon, *Les Géorgiques*.
 Claude Simon, *L'Herbe*.
 Claude Simon, *La Route des Flandres*.
 Claude Simon, *Le Tramway*.
 Jean-Philippe Toussaint, *L'Appareil-photo*.
 Jean-Philippe Toussaint, *Faire l'amour*.
 Jean-Philippe Toussaint, *Fuir*.
 Jean-Philippe Toussaint, *La Salle de bain*.
 Jean-Philippe Toussaint, *La Télévision*.
 Boris Vian, *L'Automne à Pékin*.
 Tanguy Viel, *L'Absolue Perfection du crime*.
 Tanguy Viel, *Insoupçonnable*.
 Elie Wiesel, *La Nuit*.

Cet ouvrage a été achevé d'imprimer le quatorze septembre deux mille neuf
 dans les ateliers de Normandie Roto Impression s.a.s. à Lonrai (61250) (France)
 N° d'éditeur : 4774 - N° d'imprimeur : 093083 - Dépôt légal : septembre 2009

1111

It has been snowing. A black BMW is parked on the other side of the street and is cut in half by the separation between negatives 4 and 5. Apart from a slight kink in the landscape, the negative on the right is a perfect continuation of the one on the left. The fence around the orchard, the branches of the apple tree and the power lines connect implicitly in the void between the negatives.

Notes

- Based on De Cleene De Cleene, *The Situation as it Is. A Photonovel in Three Movements* (APE, 2022).



type	date	filename	size	author
scan	08.05.2023	55f-56a.jpg	1,34 MB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
architecture, archive, automobile, botany, family, mistake, trompe l'oeil, precipitation, tree, landscape, panorama

12:52:53

The architect's photographic archive contains seven images that can be labelled as panoramic pictures. However, they only appear as such when the photographs are viewed in the archive, as strips of negatives. In order to see the panoramic construct, the viewer needs to be presented with two consecutive negatives.

There are two kinds of panorama in the archive: the kind that can only be attributed to a kind of laziness or a need for efficiency on behalf of the architect, and another that originates from frugality.

The former type of panorama is created when the architect is documenting the situation as it is: it is compulsory to document the context of the building or lot, as part of a building application. He simply pivots from left to right, capturing the first and second photograph consecutively. On the filmstrip a panorama appears.

The other kind of panoramic picture only appears at the end of the film role. The last negative on the film has been exposed (the twenty-fourth or thirty-sixth), after which he exerts force onto the lever to move the film forward anyway. Some films are known to have, by accident, a twenty-fifth or a thirty-seventh negative. The plastic between the sprocket holes tears and the film does not advance enough. The result differs fundamentally from the other kind of panorama: there is no separation, no void between the negatives. Rather, there is a slight overlap. A thin, vertical strip of film that has been exposed twice, suggesting contiguity that might not be there. The two exposures might be from altogether different sites, creating a new situation.

Notes

- Based on De Cleene, M. & De Cleene, A. *The Situation as it Is. A Photonovel in Three Movements*. Gent: APE, 2022



type	date	filename	size	author
scan	27.04.2023	002_17.jpg	1,45 MB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
architecture, archive, house, mistake, precipitation, family, panorama

12:52:53

