

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

Your path through the collection lead along Negative sheet 13, negative 24, negative 24,5, Crocodile Copy, Directory, LIGO, Neptune in opposition [6/20] – Pier, A Seismic Change, The Birds, Crash (2), Neptune in opposition [12/20] – Culmination, The first light of day, Last night I dreamt of Juan Pedro, AI submission, Flint, Index, The Birds, Original Copy

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 20.06.2023 15:46, printed on _____ and contains 16 documents on 36 pages. (<https://the-documents.org/log/20-06-2023-5368/>)

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.
- 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



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

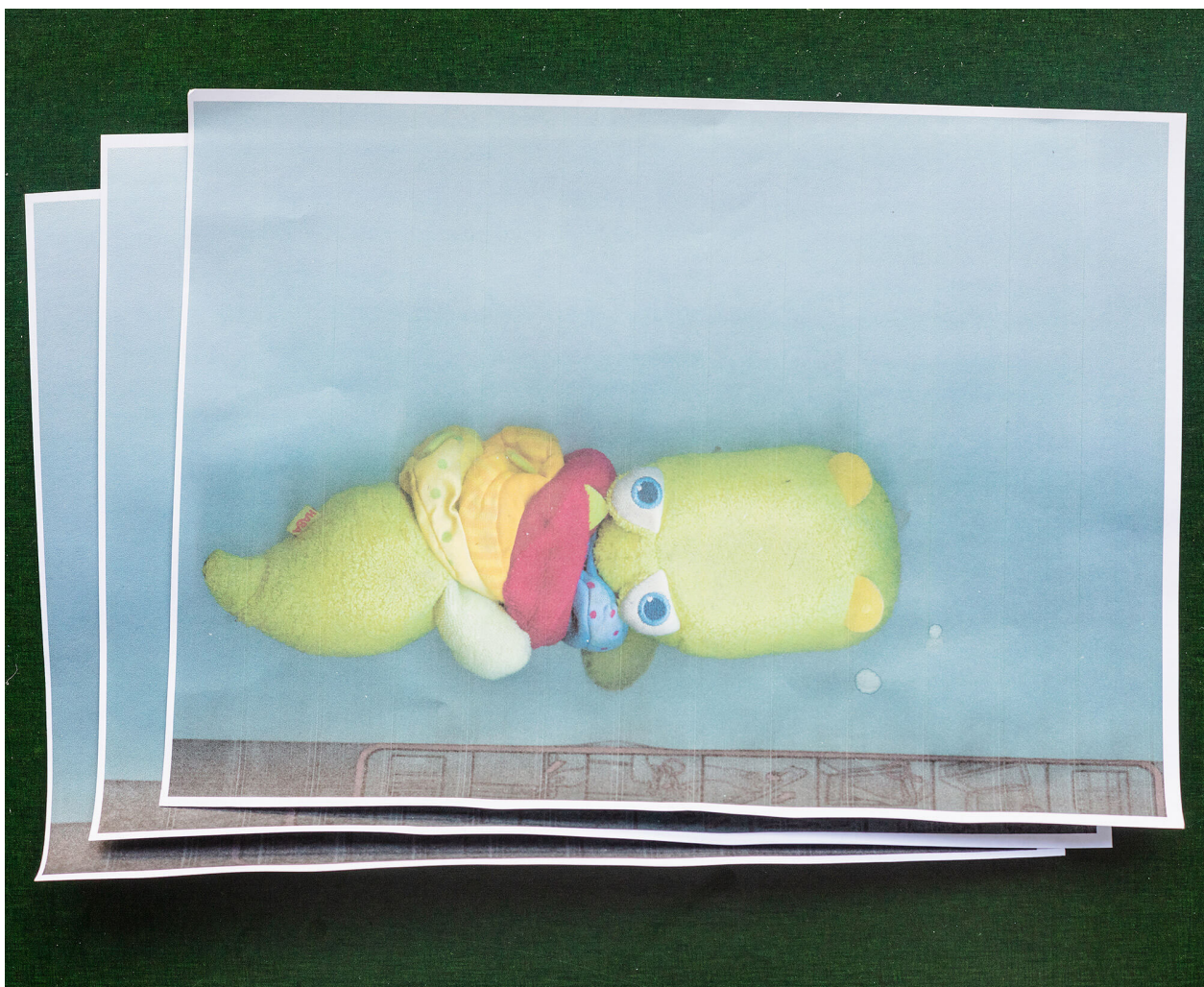
- Benjamin, W. *The Arcades Project* (H. Eiland & K. McLaughlin, trans.). Cambridge/London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002, p. 528.



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			

22:42:34

Our one year old's favourite toy he's not supposed to play with is the *HP Officejet Pro L7590 All-in-one* in my office. I have given up on forbidding him to play with it. We have a new game: he brings me one of his other toys, we put it on the flatbed, close the lid – as far as possible –, press the button 'START COPY – COLOR' and wait for the print to come out of the machine. When we place the original onto the copy, he laughs. So far we have copied his blue pacifier, his planet-earth-bouncy-ball and his rattling crocodile.



type
photograph

date
16.02.2021

filename
_44A8728.dng

size
50,04MB

author
Michiel De Cleene

category
animal, archive, decoration, house, replica/copy, technology, trompe l'oeil, family

22:43:00

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.



type
photograph

date
02.10.2021

filename
_MG_7415.JPG

size
8,2MB

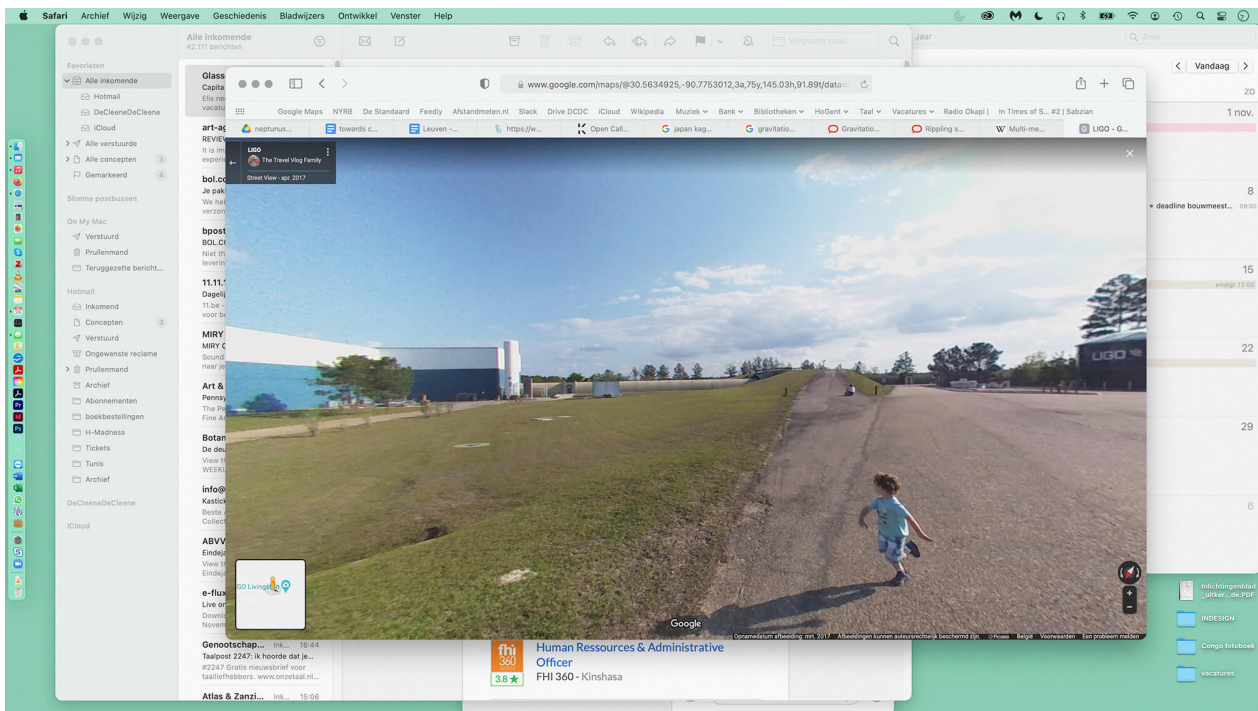
author
Arnout De Cleene

category
book, botany, data storage, technology, waste

22:43:09

To detect gravitational waves, physicists built enormous research centers, amongst others at Livingston, Louisiana. The facility mainly consists of two tunnels in an L-shape. Mirrors inside provide data. Disturbances from gravitational waves are miniscule. To prevent interference from outside, such as vibrations caused by people passing in the neighbourhood, the mirrors have to be detached from the earth. They ‘float’, suspended by glass fibers in a pendulum-like construction.

As I was watching my screen, a courier was on his way to deliver a book (Noel-Todd, J. *The Penguin Book of the Prose Poem: From Baudelaire to Anne Carson*. London: Penguin, 2019).



type	date	filename	size	author
screenshot	24.11.2020	LIGO.png	6,9MB	Arnout De Cleene

category
physics, seismology, mirror, interference, book, architecture, mistake

22:43:26

As an architectural structure, the pier is fundamental in observational astronomy: it can be found in the backyards of amateur observatories, as well as in professional ones. This column is a quintessential part of the physical interventions that are necessary to distinguish noise from valuable data. The pier disjoins the telescope from the observer, from the observatory and from the surroundings. Tremors of passing cars, the astronomer's footsteps and coughs, the neighbour's soundsystem: they could result in an agitated telescope. A falling mug would cause the instrument to shift lightyears away from its target.

Notes

- In August 2019, I visited Chris De Pauw, an astrophotographer, at home. He showed me his private observatory. As we were both waiting for clouds to obscure the sun and get softer light for the photograph, he told me about the rolling shed, its advantages and the modifications he was planning on. On closing the observatory – by rolling the shed over the instrument – he manoeuvred the instrument into its 'park'-position: an azimuth of 160 degrees and an elevation of 8 degrees above the horizon. The shed's doors and hinges barely cleared the telescope.



type
photograph

date
21.09.2022

filename
_44A7375.dng, _44A7394.dng

size
55,61 MB,
56,96 MB

author
De Cleene De Cleene

category
architecture, astronomy, encounter, Neptune, technology

22:43:34



The road down from the top of Mount Vesuvius, at Atrio Del Cavallo. The sun sets. The last tourist bus has headed down. Then the headlights of the guardian's car swing their way down. It must be freezing. I am holding an orange-sized piece of petrified lava, probably stemming from the 1872 or 1944 eruption. A kilometer further down the road, the old Observatory is empty. Nowadays, monitoring seismic changes is done in a research centre in the city of Naples. Their seismographic registrations can be followed online, in real time. Two headlights swirling along the slopes, underneath me, are coming upwards.



type	date	filename	size	author
audio	15.01.2021	A seismic change.mp3	862KB	Arnout De Cleene

category
automobile, data storage, dusk, seismology, Vesuvius

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

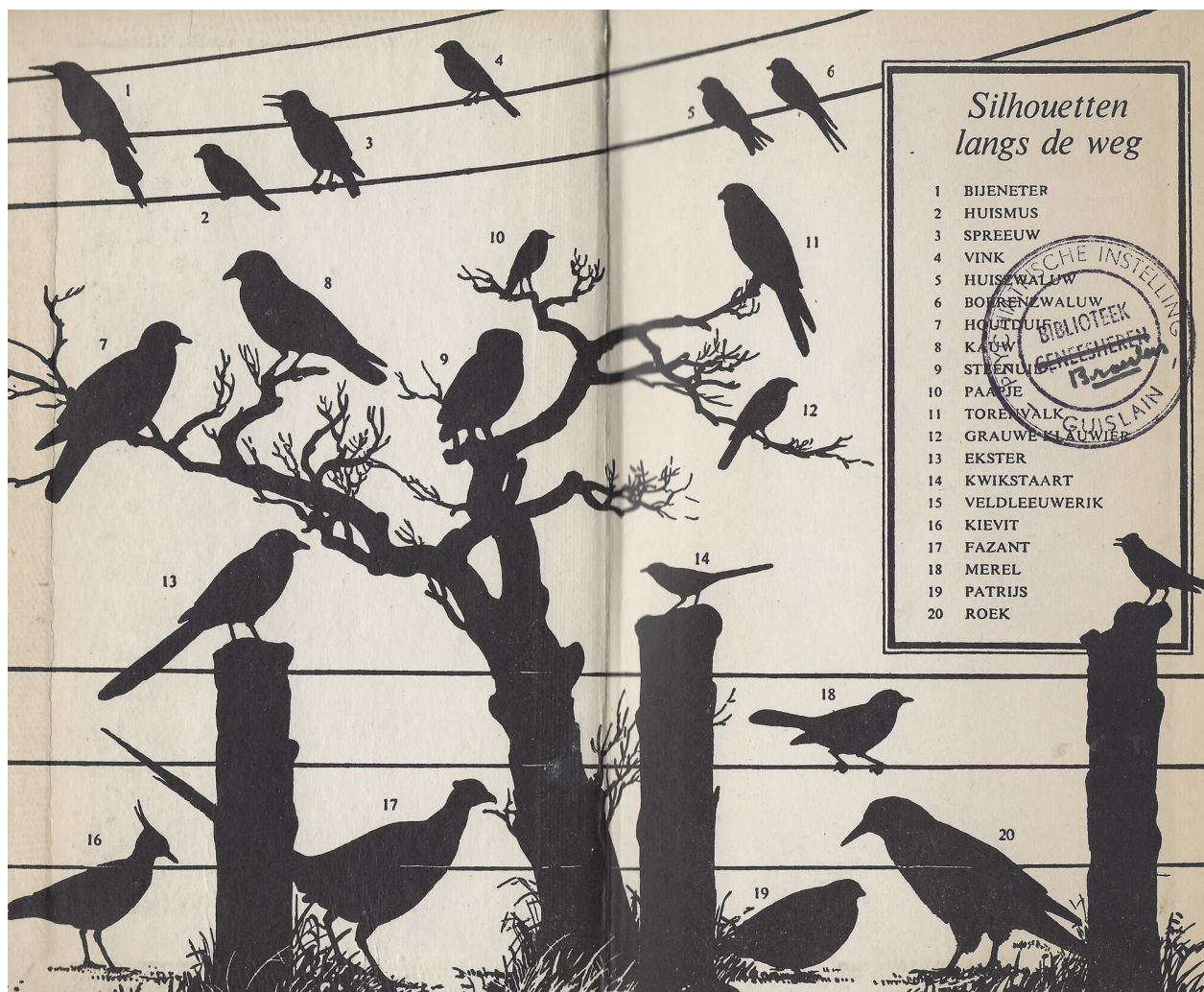
Notes

- 1 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.
- 2 On the web, discussions on whether Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* (1963) was shot in colour or in black and white, abound.
- 3



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.



type
scan

date
19.07.2021

filename
Document_2021-07-19_094741.jpg

size
7,5MB

author
Arnout De Cleene

category
animal, automobile, book, dusk, encyclopaedia, landscape, tree

22:43:55

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.

Notes

Photograph taken and recovered from my trash bin on 18.12.2020.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	08.05.2021	IMG_5071.jpeg	2,71MB	Michiel De Cleene

category
Bahrain, crash, data storage, drought, government, interference, mistake, parking, sand, technology

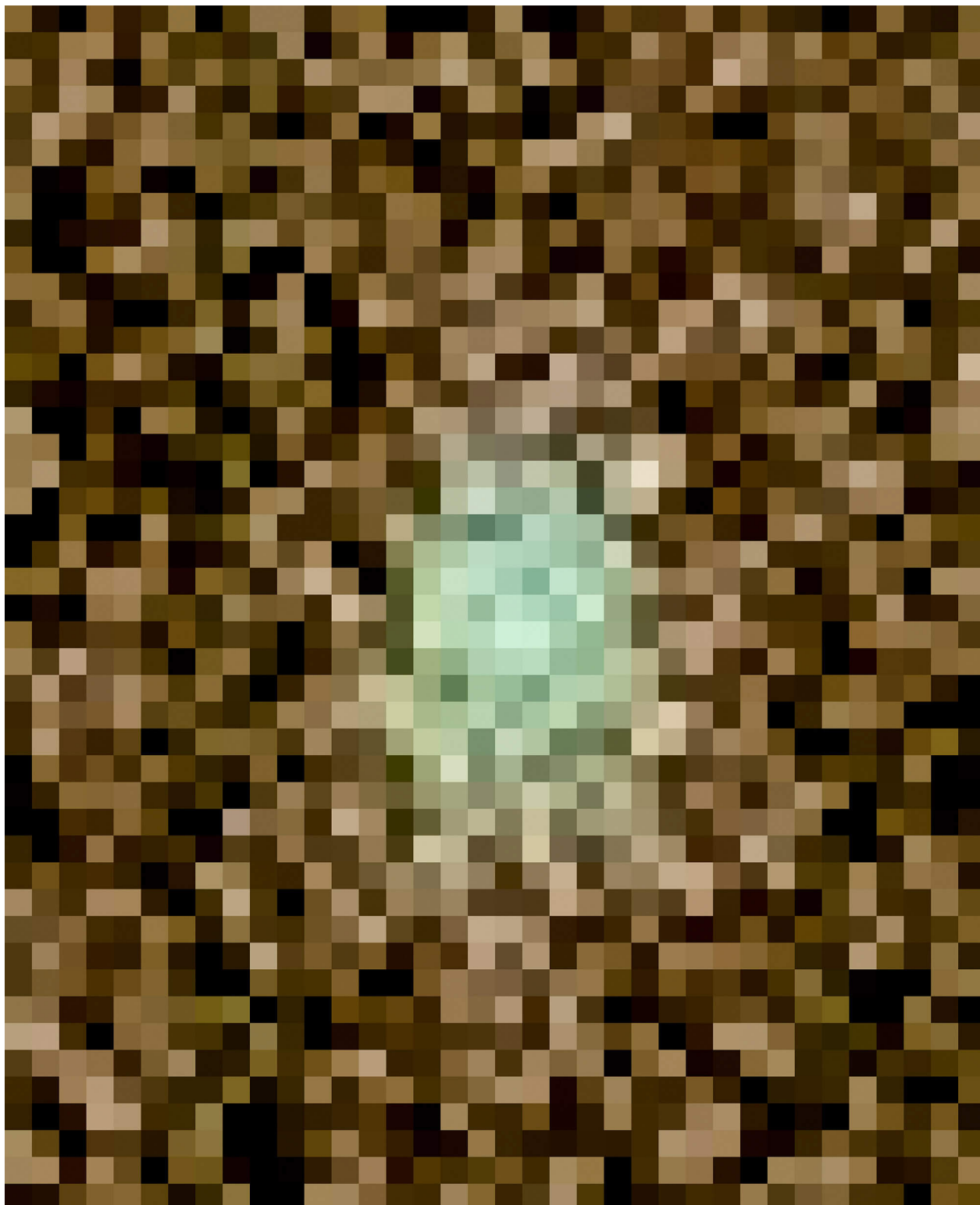
22:44:11

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			



A year ago, mid-August, just before sunrise, the mostly unlit office buildings line the road that leads to the underground parking. I turn off the ignition. I'm in F36. The walls are painted pink. Looking for the exit, I take the escalator and get stuck in an empty shopping mall. The music is playing but all the shops are closed off with steel shutters. So are the exits. I'm out of place. In keeping early customers out, the mall is keeping haphazard visitors in. I'm back in the parking lot. The elevator is broken. I take the stairs and walk by a homeless man, sleeping. There's shit on the floor. I open the door that leads out of the stairwell. It slams shut behind me. There's no doorknob. I find myself on a dark floor between mall and parking lot. People are sleeping; some are awake. Heads turn toward me. I start walking slightly uphill towards where I think I might find an exit, or an entrance. The scale of the architecture has shifted from car (F36) and customer (the closed mall) to truck. I find myself amidst the supply-chain. It takes five minutes, maybe fifteen, maybe more to get out and see the office buildings towering over me in the first light of day.



type
photograph

date
15.10.2021

filename
_44A4965.dng

size
52 MB

author
Michiel De Cleene

category
angst, architecture, automobile, economy, map/plan, mistake, music, parking

22:44:36

While I was sitting in the laundromat one evening waiting for my laundry to finish its cycle, *La Isla Bonita* by Madonna came on the radio. Competing with the rustle of seven rotating laundry machines, the song reminded me of a T-shirt that was now being washed.

The short phrase in the song's lyrics 'last night I dreamt of San Pedro' would nestle itself somewhere in the back of my head and bubble up every now and again for no particular reason. I made this shirt for the occasion of Valentine's Day in 2019 to commemorate my friendship with Jan-Pieter. I remember once mumbling the lyrics to *La Isla Bonita*, replacing 'San Pedro' for 'Juan Pedro', forgetting it for some time and then a while later printing it on a T-shirt.

Notes

- Tjobo Kho is a graphic designer and publisher based in Amsterdam. Since 2017 part of the floating collective and publishing platform OUTLINE, and recently started his own publishing house *no kiss?*.



type
photograph

date
25.07.2022

filename
photo_2022-07-11_17-29-40.jpg

size
132 KB

author
Tjobo Kho

category
music

22:44:47

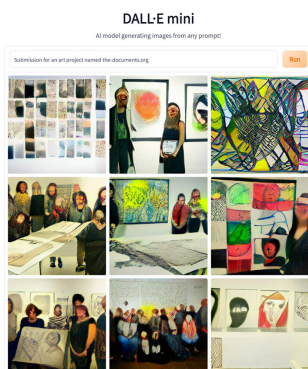
‘Submission for an art project named the-documents.org’ is a collection of 9 images¹ generated by DALL·E mini², an open-source AI model, on the basis of the prompt ‘Submission for an art project named the-documents.org’.

DALL·E mini is a freely available AI tool that generates images based on a description of the desired image (a prompt) provided by a user.

Though DALL·E mini seems to be primarily used as a source of humour within the online community – being able to create a set of images from any specific or abstract prompt – it also gives rise to more serious questions on AI ethics and copyright. As the model is trained with unfiltered data from the internet, it may reinforce societal biases, generating images that contain stereotypes against minority groups. DALL·E mini and similar, more advanced tools, are also capable of creating art ‘in the style of’ when they have sufficient data to source from (e.g. using a prompt as “Van Gogh painting the Eiffel Tower”). This leads to the legal and ethical question whether an artist should have a say in the use of his/her artwork as AI input data, and whether the artist should be able to claim rights for AI generated images based on this data.

Notes

1



- 2 DALL·E mini was created by Boris Dayma et al. 2021-2022, <https://huggingface.co/spaces/dalle-mini/dalle-mini>, to be migrated to www.craiyon.com
- Ward Verwaeren is a legal counsel in the tech industry, and former IP lawyer. He tries to know more about art than the average lawyer, and more about law than the average artist.



type	date	filename	size	author
screenshot	01.07.2022	dallemini_2022-6-19_21-53-48.png	1,61 MB	Ward Verwaeren

category
archive, data storage, technology, artificial intelligence

22:45:42

A cigar box, standing at the back of a shelf next to the heating installation, with in it silex-like stones with what seem to be traces of prehistoric usage.

In the garage, there were papers (the archive of O. Clemminck) and objects (stones, tiles) left to us by a man who had worked at the city archive. He was an acclaimed expert on our village's history.¹

Notes

- 1 A recent study by professor Philippe Crombé at Ghent University states that during the last Ice Age, in the region where I grew up, there was once a great lake, with, at the shores, proven presence of prehistoric man. As a kid, we dug up shells with a toothbrush, and set a perimeter with plastic tape. The former presence of a tavern where my parents now live, and the restaurant which still serves seafood at the other side of the road, prevented accurate dating.



type
photograph

date
11.10.2021

filename
_MG_7417.JPG

size
6,5MB

author
Arnout De Cleene

category
archaeology, animal, collecting, archive, family, house, landscape, mistake, waste

22:45:53

In John Berger and Jean Mohr's groundbreaking book *Another Way of Telling*, the index at the end gives information on the images printed throughout the book. Most of them are Jean Mohr's. In the section 'If each time...' – a wordless sequence of images which aims to develop an alternative way of telling a story – some images are referenced as 'documents'. The information is sparse. On page 138, the index states, there is a 'Document, detail'. It features a closeup of a knitted piece of fabric. It appears to be the same picture as seen on the first page of the section (p. 135), where it is printed beneath another image – a photo by Mohr of hands knitting. On this occasion, the image is indexed as 'Document'.

Sources

Berger, J. & J. Mohr. *Another Way of Telling*. London / New York: Writers and Readers, 1982.

- 113 Baby at breast (photo: Saul Landau)
123 Boy sleeping, May 25, 1912, Budapest (photo: André Kertesz)
125 Friends, September 3, 1917, Esztergan (photo: André Kertesz)
127 Lovers, May 15, 1915, Budapest (photo: André Kertesz)

If each time . . .

(All photos are by Jean Mohr unless otherwise indicated.)

- 135 J.'s hands
135 Document
136 A spring, Haute-Savoie
137 A spring in the *alpage*, Haute-Savoie
138 Document, detail
139 In a meadow, Val d'Aoste
139 Document, Russian painting
140 Village in the Tatry Mountains, Poland
141 Poland
142 Mother and child's hand, Great Britain
143 Poland
144 Document
145 A spring
146 J.'s hands
147 Paris
148 Tunisia
149 Geneva, bird tracks
150 School in the Township of Mieussy
151 Rabbit skeletons, Haute-Savoie
152 *Ibid*
153 Katya (photo: John Berger)
154 School
156 Foundation of a chalet, Norway
157 Document
158 Children going to the dairy, Fribourg, Switzerland
158 On the road to Sommand, Haute-Savoie
159 *Ibid*
160 Six in the morning at the dairy, Haute-Savoie

type	date	filename	size	author
scan	18.02.2021	Document_2021-02-18_092842.jpg	541KB	Arnout De Cleene
category				
book, cloth				

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

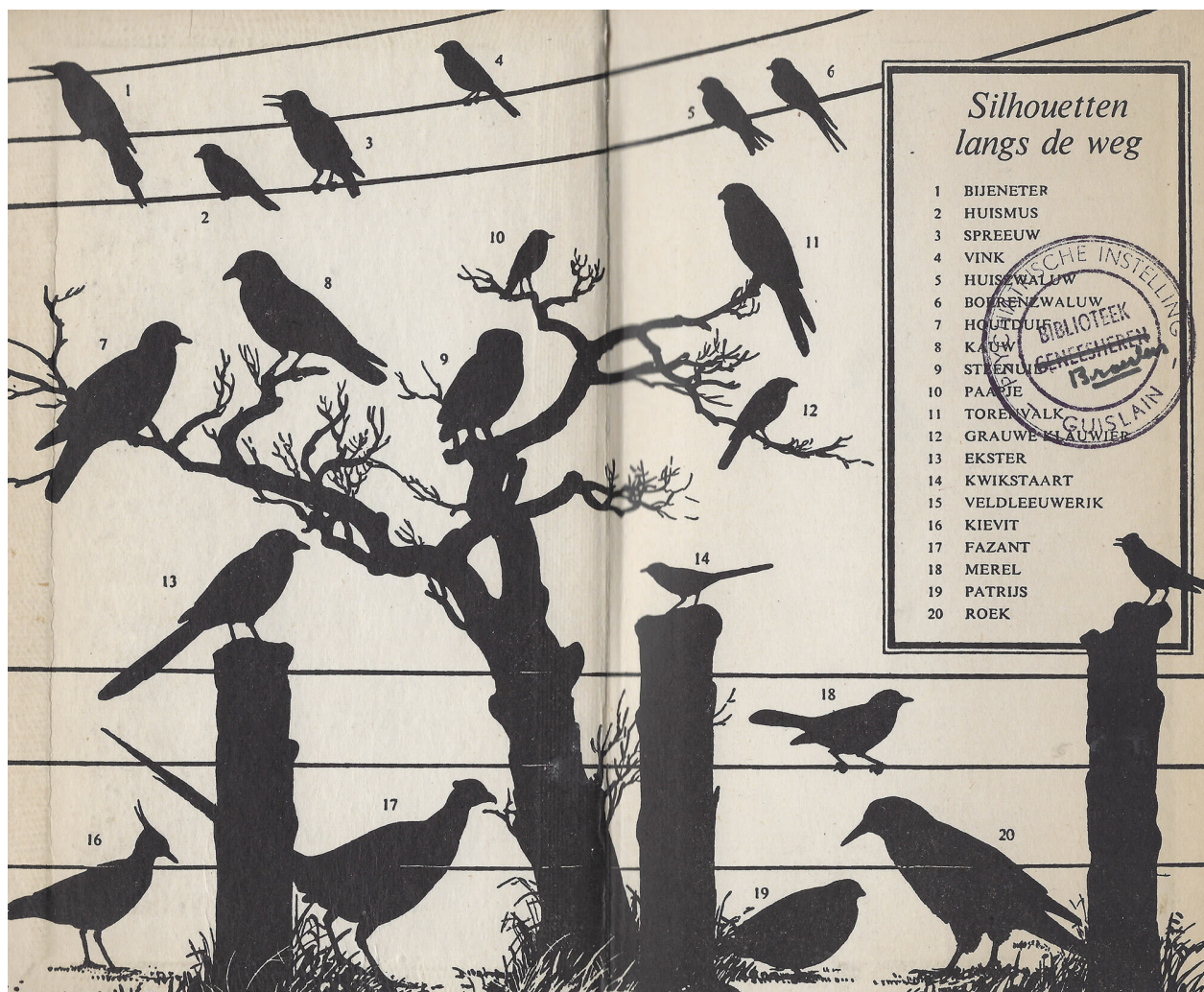
Notes

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- 3



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.



type
scan

date
19.07.2021

filename
Document_2021-07-19_094741.jpg

size
7,5MB

author
Arnout De Cleene

category
animal, automobile, book, dusk, encyclopaedia, landscape, tree

22:46:21

On Wednesday, May 9, 2018 at 2:23:14 PM Koh Elaine starts the thread *original or original copy* on the The Free Dictionary by Farlex's forum.

the-documents.c

'Is "original copy" correct or should it be "original"? Thanks.'

The seventh reply to Elaine's question is Wilmar's on Thursday (his was preceded by towan52, georgew, NKM, Koh Elaine, Sarriesfan, ChrisKC, Ashwin Joshi).

'An original copy IS the original.

Folks usually call the document first created the original, but some will say original copy. If I run that original thru the copy machine, I end up with two copies (yes, I said copies) of the same thing – the original and the duplicate of it (in terms of content). This is how the term is commonly used.

If your writing or conversation depends heavily on understand the difference, I would recommend using the terms original and duplicates. There are many times when that is very important, in that the original must be retained by a particular party, and the duplicates are marked as such and distributed or stored as required depending on the document and the circumstance.

If you are just trying to make sure that you have enough copies to distribute to everyone at the company meeting this afternoon, use whatever terms trips your trigger. But, if you want to ensure that you keep custody of the original, so that you can make additional duplicates (copies) when additional people attend, then be more specific about the words you use.

OH, and, please, in the future, include some context with your question. Asking if "word" is correct doesn't go very far in supplying a reasonably useful response.'

Sources

https://forum.thefreedictionary.com/postst182102_original-or-original-copy.aspx

[Wilmar \(USA\) 1M](#)



Rank: Advanced Member

Joined: 6/4/2015

Posts: 5,721

Neurons: 1,278,032

Location: Vinton, Iowa, United States

type	date	filename	size	author
screenshot	16.02.2021	Schermafbeelding 2021-02-16 om 11.08.01.png	45KB	Michiel De Cleene
category				
archive, mistake, replica/copy, technology				

