

Rules as



exnovation to



streamline my



art practice.

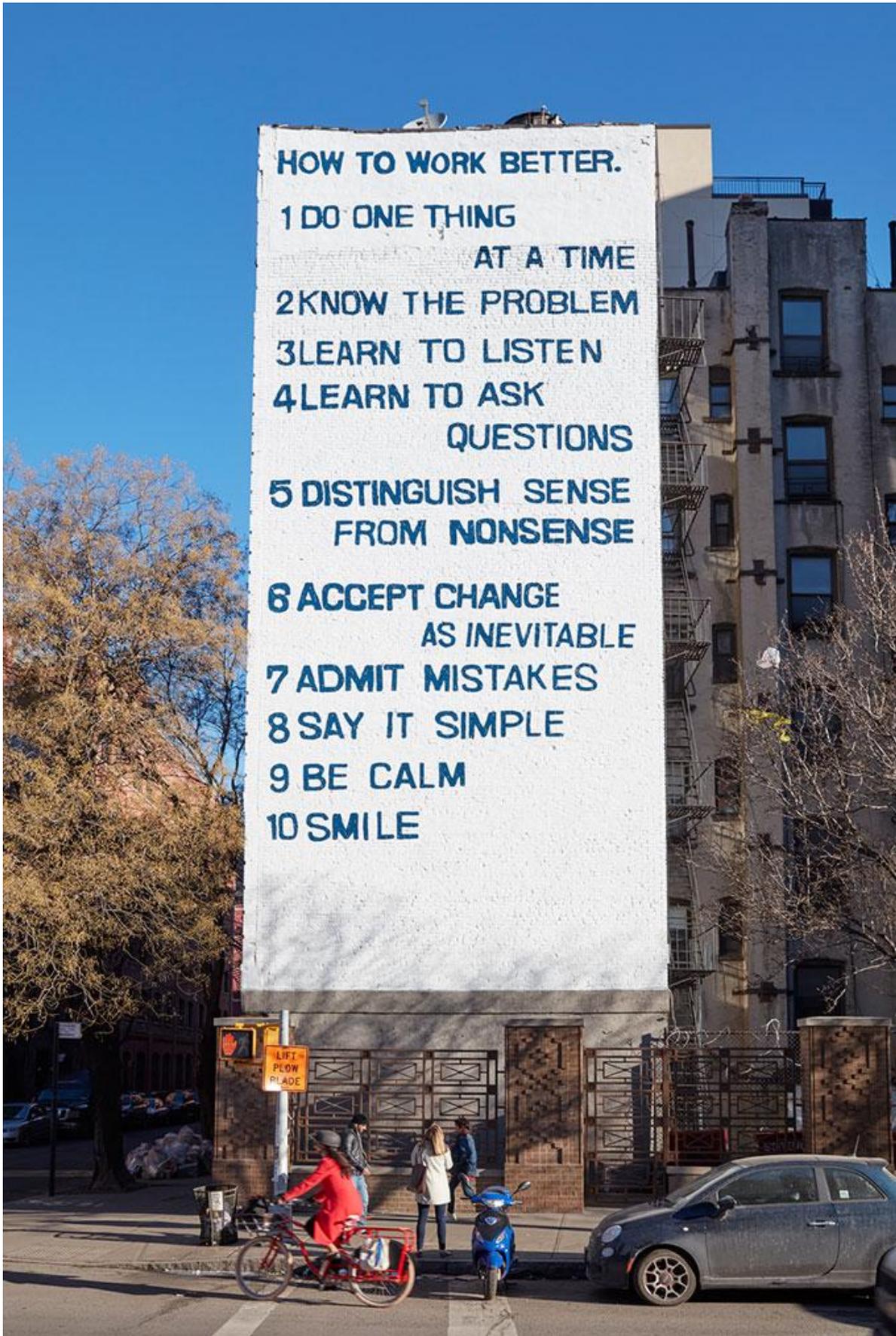
A paper written by **Paul Nieboer**



for the subject **Regenerative Aesthetics,**

given by **Volkmar Mühleis.**





Peter Fischli David Weiss, How to Work Better, 1991. Screenprint on paper, 149.5 x 102.5 cm, unlimited edition.

Exnovation + artistic intervention.

Last spring I moved into my new atelier. It is a big space. I guess around 400m² meters. When I viewed it for the first time I was immediately enthusiastic, and I was surprised that there were not many other atelier-searching-artists who applied for it. But then on the other hand, beside the benefit of a lot of space comes the cold. For it can not be heated. And also it has some major leaks in the roof. When it pours there is a serious waterfall coming down, making a lot of noise. Because of that there are big puddles in one part that never fully go away. The constant puddles make the air humid and the smell moldy. That then attracts a lot of spiders. Big black spiders that make webs up to a meter long.

Now I could try to upgrade the space a bit. Make it a little easier for myself to work and to store work. A little invention for example so my drawings don't go all wobbly because of the humidity. But then I got introduced to the opposite idea of invention, namely exnovation. Both innovation and exnovation are interventions to improve a situation. So instead of coming up with something new, I am going to try to improve the situation by keeping things as they are. Or maybe better said bringing things back to the state they were in.

In order to judge if an invention or 'exnovation' really were an improvement, you have to establish a situation you call good. A ground situation so to speak to aim for. In my case I will take the building as it is as the situation in which to work, in combination with my original motivation to make work. Because I often forget this motivation and get distracted.

Last time I walked into my atelier, it was such a mess that I had no idea what to do or where to start working. It is the downside of having so much space and a chaotic way of working. I do little projects and often leave the remains where they are, and just move a little bit. Now it is at the point that it is just one big mix of leftovers, finished works, rubbish, stock and works-in-progress. The confrontation with this mess often makes me wonder why I was doing this again. For the situation feels chaotic and restless and is rather draining than energizing. The question of 'why I was doing this again' asks to recapture. To go back and get rid of all unnecessary things, motivations, problems and other attention-asking-issues. In cleaning up I not only hope to get more space physically but also to create space in my head to focus on the things I want to do. The motivation to make work and the space as it is will be the desired situation I will start my thinking from. But how do I get there?

I thought about Russian orthodox icons because they are made out of a specific motivation and aim to create a mental space. I once read that in the painting of icons it is not about artistic innovations by individual artists. This makes a lot of icons look alike. The icon expresses a state of being, a starting situation as it were. In order to keep the icon to be about this start situation there are rules to follow for the painter.

Rules can be very effective in keeping a situation as it is. I searched for more examples where rules were applied to artistic practice. And found a couple. The artists Fischli and Weiss have a work called 'How to work better'. It consists of ten rules. I also found the six principles from Xiehe by which to judge Literati paintings. Another ten rules by Corita Kent, a non who made screen prints. And last, I remembered a talk by Anthony Huberman on the exhibition 'the blind man looking for the black cat in the dark room that isn't there', in which

he focuses on not-knowing. From these sources I will pick my rules to streamline my atelier practice.

1. Rule 10: We're breaking all of the rules. Even our own rules and how do we do that? By leaving plenty of room for x quantities. John Cage

This is the last of the ten rules by Corita Kent that I want to use as my first rule. She on her turn also borrows the rule from John Cage. The reason I choose this as my first rule is because it can help me think about what rules actually are, before I choose the nine other rules. It sounds like a contradiction to have a rule that says to break all the rules. How could such a rule ever be demanding, for it would ask to break itself? But maybe the question is not how rules demand but why would rules demand something? When I read the nine other rules by Corita Kent they didn't feel very demanding. They felt very gentle, uplifting and got me excited about the image they created. To come up with these rules she asked her students what they thought was important within teaching. This input she transformed into rules. So first she looked at the situation as it was, and then tried to form an ideal about that situation that would be realistic. So in that sense: a rule does recognize something in the environment where it can be applied to. It would be weird to have a speed limit for driving in a classroom, for example. After the situation is examined there must be an ideal situation formed. So the rule is not just pointing something out that it has noticed but gives a direction for that something. For example the first constitutional law of The Netherlands says that all citizens are equal. This rule recognizes that the people who live in The Netherlands are citizens and this rule has an ideal that they are all equal. This sounds very obvious and it is easy to overlook the fact that it is a social construct. Once it has been invented. For example when the Apostle Paul stated that in Jesus Christ there is no division between Jew or Gentile, or man or woman and so on (King James Bible, 2008, Gal. 3:28), it caused a true revolution. It was a rule that would break many other rules that were in place at that time. One of them being for example that Caesar was not a god. This is just one example to say that rules are always constructions that at a certain place and time come into being.

Rules thus do recognize and envision. But when what is envisioned does not match with what is recognized the rules must be broken. So when quantity x comes into view the rules have to be reconsidered which show that rules are subjective. As a social construct they say something about our viewpoint on the here and now and on the future. In that sense the character of rules is maybe more sensory and creative. They make us interact with the surrounding and give form to how we interact. It is in this activation that we can say that rules are demanding. The demanding aspect is the outcome of sensory and creative rules.

So if I am going to choose nine other rules for my atelier practice they should make me more sensory and creative in order for me to obey them, and not the other way around.

2. "Before starting work, make the sign of the Cross; pray in silence and pardon your enemies".

Once I enter my atelier and close the door, it does not mean I left the outside world behind. My mind is still occupied with the things I did that day, the things I have to do tomorrow, the people I spoke to, the way that made me feel and so on. They hinder me from really diving back into my work. The constant doings of daily life can be a real obstacle to get into a state of reflection. For that is what it means for me to work in the atelier, to reflect. You step out of the world for a little while in order to stand back and do something else. The relation to the world is not broken by this act but is more indirect. Robert Filliou has an art work with the title: 'Dear Skywatcher: Art is What Makes Life More Interesting Than Art'. In that sense is the making of work a passe-partout to become more aware of life. A moment of reflection, a stepping back in order to more fully engage with life. To create distance in order to get more close in the end is also a tactic that Anne Ferran uses in her photographs. In an interview with Thierry de Duve, she talks about how her photographs express a complex combination of all sorts of feelings. The images show landscapes that are looked upon from above. The strange perspective makes the grounds seem to be unstable and moving. When knowing that the landscape used to be the camp for women convicts, the meaning changes drastically.

First you can ask yourself why would someone make a photo of a piece of land with historical traumatic meaning but without a clear visual representation of that history? The quick answer would be in order to come to terms with that historical trauma. But time is a problem here because so much is gone. There are no victims to talk to, no guilty ones. There are barely any remains. As Ferran is well aware she cant speak for the victims. And she has the luxury of choosing sides. This makes the dynamic within the photos more complex. There is empathy for the victims, there is a feeling of shame for what happened to them and that you are not one of them. Does that mean you are one of the aggressors? Is the photo just the physical form of shame? No because there is also hope within the photos in the form of a little strip of sky.

Looking at the photos becomes in this sense a contemplative doing. Pardoning your enemies, wondering whose enemy you possibly can be. Coming to terms with your environment in order to get to making work and through the making of work.



The Feodorovskaya Icon of the Mother of God, with the Legend of the Icon in 16 border scenes. Painted at the end of the 19th century. Icon-painting villages of the Vladimir region. 36x31x2,5 cm.

"...Hij legde de Moeder Gods Fjodorovskaja op de tafel, keek ernaar en zei met luide bewogen stem: Klaar is ons moedertje! Gelijk een Kelk ben jij, een bodemloze Kelk, waarin vanaf nu de bittere hartetranen der mensen zullen vloeien...' Daarna bezatte hij zich en kwam pas enkele dagen later boven water." (Gorki, 2013, p. onbekend)

'...He laid Mother God's Fjodorovskaja on the table, looked at it and said with a loud and emotional voice: Our mommy is done! Like a chalice you are, a bottomless chalice, where from now on the bitter heartfelt tears of the people will flow into...' After that he got drunk and disappeared for a few days from the face of the earth.' (freely translated into english.)

These sentences are from the youth memories of Maxim Gorky, and speak of a time when Icon painting was in a downfall. The rules for the Icon painter speak of an ideal situation. A situation when things are cleared out, enemies are forgiven, the painter gets to a state of unity with the saints, the tradition, with God. But an ideal in daily life is often something we strive for but do not reach. It does mean that I can easily relate to the sentences from Gorky's memories, and I think many others as well. For how often is it not that we are left with a feeling of discontent of what we have not achieved, not noticed, did not speak out or didn't do and so on. When the feeling of peace and unity is not fully present you keep longing for it. This same longing is also in the photos by Ferran. They are too like bottomless chalices. Objects of hope and consolation to capture our bitter cried tears.

The photos move beyond guilt and shame, and become reparative. Not because they solve trauma or answer questions but because they open up a space of contemplation.

IMMACULATE HEART COLLEGE ART DEPARTMENT RULES

- Rule 1 FIND A PLACE YOU TRUST AND THEN TRY TRUSTING IT FOR A WHILE.
- Rule 2 GENERAL DUTIES OF A STUDENT:
PULL EVERYTHING OUT OF YOUR TEACHER.
PULL EVERYTHING OUT OF YOUR FELLOW STUDENTS.
- Rule 3 GENERAL DUTIES OF A TEACHER:
PULL EVERYTHING OUT OF YOUR STUDENTS.
- Rule 4 CONSIDER EVERYTHING AN EXPERIMENT.
- Rule 5 BE SELF DISCIPLINED. THIS MEANS FINDING SOMEONE WISE OR SMART AND CHOOSING TO FOLLOW THEM.
TO BE DISCIPLINED IS TO FOLLOW IN A GOOD WAY.
TO BE SELF DISCIPLINED IS TO FOLLOW IN A BETTER WAY.
- Rule 6 NOTHING IS A MISTAKE. THERE'S NO WIN AND NO FAIL. THERE'S ONLY MAKE.
- Rule 7 The only rule is work.
IF YOU WORK IT WILL LEAD TO SOMETHING.
IT'S THE PEOPLE WHO DO ALL OF THE WORK ALL THE TIME WHO EVENTUALLY CATCH ON TO THINGS.
- Rule 8 DON'T TRY TO CREATE AND ANALYSE AT THE SAME TIME. THEY'RE DIFFERENT PROCESSES.
- Rule 9 BE HAPPY WHENEVER YOU CAN MANAGE IT. ENJOY YOURSELF. IT'S LIGHTER THAN YOU THINK.
- Rule 10 "WE'RE BREAKING ALL OF THE RULES. EVEN OUR OWN RULES. AND HOW DO WE DO THAT? BY LEAVING PLENTY OF ROOM FOR X QUANTITIES." JOHN CAGE

HELPFUL HINTS: ALWAYS BE AROUND. COME OR GO TO EVERYTHING. ALWAYS GO TO CLASSES. READ ANYTHING YOU CAN GET YOUR HANDS ON. LOOK AT MOVIES CAREFULLY, OFTEN. SAVE EVERYTHING-IT MIGHT COME IN HANDY LATER.
THERE SHOULD BE NEW RULES NEXT WEEK.

3. Rule 1 'Try to find a place you trust and then try trusting it for a while'.

The first rule by Corita Kent from her ten rules. If you think of all the places that you know, how many places do you trust? What does it mean to trust a place? The first thought that comes up in my head is to feel comfortable. You feel like you are supposed to be there, as if you belong. When I think of my atelier, this feeling is a bit difficult. The only reason for me to be there is to make work. So the quicker I get to work, the more sense it makes for me to be there. But that is a little bit the other way around. I get to work in order to trust the place, instead of trusting it first. I think I am not the only one in this. When we enter a workspace we get to business. Because we know what we have to do, and if we start now then somewhere in the future we achieve what we want and we can go on with our lives. In this case the place has just a practical function. It helps us to get to where we want to be. But it overlooks the relation between the place where we are, the workplace, and to where we want to be, our goals we want to achieve.

Last November on the 20th, I attended a workshop by Jozefien De Leersnyder. She is a professor in social and cultural psychology at the university of KU Leuven. The workshop focussed on an intercultural learning environment. She showed us a lot of statistics around the different learning results between children with a migration background (mainly from Turkish and Moroccan background) and Belgium children. The conclusion drawn from these researches was basically that it did not matter what the social-economical background of the child was, or what language they speak at home, or if they were first, second or third generation 'migrants', or how intelligent the children are; migrant children were always significantly lower in that graphs than the Belgium children. The reason for that is that they often do not feel as comfortable in a school environment as the Belgium children do. And it turns out that if you do not trust a place it dramatically influences your learning capabilities. It is not enough to set goals, to test and plan only for future gain. There needs to be a context in the here and now that gives meaning to this whole undertaking. And that is a rather difficult situation to establish. One that takes time and effort. You have to be open to your surroundings and to other people.

If I think back at my atelier, this humid and cold space, I still have no idea how to get started with that. But maybe that is not so strange, because finding a place you trust and trusting it for a while, is not about knowing on the forehand 'how' and 'why'. It is something you try and give time. So it is a rule that prevents you from speeding ahead and invites you to be where you are. Only then the possibility can arise that you feel you belong and you can be welcoming to others.

4. “Seeking rhyme instead of similarity in shape and all the stumps of flowers and trees are planted by my five fingers”.

The first principle by Xiehe on how to judge a Literati painting immediately appealed to me when I first read it. It sounds like making work is like the first spring day where every plant is about to burst out into leaves and flowers. Quite the opposite of how I described my atelier in the introduction of the paper. Maybe that is the reason why it appealed so much, because I want ‘making work’ to be like that.

The principle emphasizes on how subjective meaning instead of similarity in shape plays a bigger role in Chinese painting, then in Western painting for example. The subjective meaning arises while scanning the painting and in this motion feeling the rhythm of the forms and how they rhyme. The reason to focus on the rhyme of form rather than the physical representation of forms is so the painter is more able to express emotions. Emotions are felt by a person and in that sense they are always subjective. The more subjective the language is the more easy it becomes to express the emotions. The subject of the painting, a landscape for example, becomes just a vehicle to express the emotions. That the focus lays so strongly on the emotions of the painter does not mean that it is just about a personal, closed off world. For the emotions arise from knowledge and experience.

‘Dong Qichang says “We can obtain them somewhere”, namely “Read thousands of books and travel thousands of miles”. Reading thousands of books is early education and traveling thousands of miles is life.’ (Wenxiu, L., 2015, p. 61)

To be able to achieve rhyme in forms within a painting means that the painter has an idea of coherence within the world. Something rhymes on something else that came before. To make forms that rhyme means to know the form that came before, the landscape for example. The mess in my atelier is not formless. Maybe it is the case that I just haven’t found the rhyme yet. If I start with one form and let it rhyme with another, and then again with another form, there will be a rhythm that starts to dictate the form that has to come next. In that sense it is not so much about the atelier being chaos or cleaned up, but about my perception of the situation. For forms that rhyme have a cadans that I can use a logic to make work.



Dong Qichang, 'Rieten hal van Wanluan', 1597, hanging scroll with washed ink and color on paper, private collection.

5. "Do not be jealous of your neighbour's work; his/her success is your success too".

In 2022 there will be the fifteenth edition of Documenta in Kassel. This edition will be curated by Ruangrupa, a collective based in Jakarta, Indonesia. The list of artists, collectives and other organisations that Ruangrupa selected for the Documenta 2022 was published in a magazine called 'Asphalt'. This magazine is sold by homeless people and other socially disadvantaged people. The use of this alternative network is complementary to the list that is published, in the sense that the main part of participants are collectives. It is clear that Ruangrupa has a focus on collaboration.

The visual arts within the wider field of arts, are the more solitary ones. Where it is logical for theater or music to work together, there is not such a need for the visual artist. This in combination with the idea that creativity is the outcome of a thought process of an individual makes it even more so. But in the world today this is challenged by the problems that societies experience. Problems such as climate change, migration and inequality require to be handled as a group. That is the big challenge for our world today, to act as one group. When we start to realise that 'his/her success is your success too' is literally true, for example in the case of climate change or the corona pandemic, it will be easier to work together. I think that because of those urgent issues also within the visual art world there is nowadays a big emphasis on collectivity.

I also recognize this in my own practice. For a while already I have the desire to work more collaboratively. Although I want it, it only happens now and then, but is for sure not the core of my practice. Maybe it has to do with the fact that I am not really sure what working together will look like. Does that mean that you make one thing together, or do you just talk about each other's work when they are finished. I guess it is just something you have to start doing and figure out while you try. It means at least that you are willing to look further than your own ideas and are open to what the end result can be. Maybe it can change the whole attitude of making it all together; the goal is then not to end up with an artwork but to have the goal of an artwork as a reason to work together.

In these times it feels very logical to work together and to be aware of the ecosystem that supports you. It feels like it makes sense.

6. "distinguish sense from nonsense".

A concept often clarifies an artwork's logic. To a certain extent it gives a context so the object made is not just random but makes sense. But to have a concept often also installs a speaker or thinker who, mostly the artist her/himself. To draw upon the previous paragraph this would be completely different when deciding what makes sense within a group process.

Because in order to work together there must already be an idea of sense. A bit like playing a game. In order for the people to play the game it has to make sense. This means that they have to understand the rules of the game but also certain tactics that make the game interesting to play. For people who just watch the game it does not have to be so obvious

how the game works and why it is fun to do it. Or the same is true for a ritual. The people who are part of a ritual understand it because they experience it. But if you just watch it can be a nonsensical happening that looks random.

Deciding what is sensible and what not can occur quite naturally within a group because what makes sense is what holds the group together. The forms, in material or within action, that are used within the group make it possible to communicate with each other, to express oneself and also to keep on moving. Because from form you can move away or closer, it is an orientation point. Would everything be formless you wouldn't know you had moved. To move, to get a process going is a sign that things make sense. And it requires that the people who participate contribute to what is going on. And at the same time to be open and allow their thoughts and works to be shaped by others.

This is often not easy and working together is a real skill you have to acquire. The question is how would you train that skill? First of all, I think it requires an open attitude towards the world and others. To deal with input and ideas that are not immediately appealing to you. That made me think of the work of curator Anthony Huberman.

7. Focus on "don't like what I don't like"

In a talk at the Contemporary Art Museum St.Louis Anthony Huberman talks about his curatorial practice. He starts by saying that he is not going to explain so much about the way he works but rather would like to share with the audience the things that inspired him in his career. One of these things that stuck with me was a saying by president Rumsfeld. Rumsfeld tries to save his political reputation in a talk show after false information about mass destruction weapons in the Iraq war that he assumed was true. He says the following:

"[A]s we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns — the ones we don't know we don't know."
(Rumsfeld, D. 2016)

Although it is not a very convincing argument in his case, a lot of people mention the saying, whether they agree with Rumsfeld politically or not. The idea that there are things that we don't know that we don't know seems to be intriguing. And where for Rumsfeld it is just an excuse, Huberman takes the saying and tries to put it to use. He replaces the word 'know' with 'like' and gives an example for each category in his talk. The point he wants to make is that in his opinion a good exhibition falls in the last category of 'don't like that I don't like. It means that you walk into an exhibition, you are put off by what you see but at the same time you wish you liked it.

In a certain way at that moment you touch the boundaries of who you are, and you take a sneak peek at your future self. But to focus only on the future would be misleading for you are already affected by what you saw. Something that for now you are not able to put words on what has touched you. You are aware of the process that is going on in your head where you are trying to make that 'thing' your own. Bernarhard Waldenfels would say that this process is the dynamic between Pathos and Logos, and in the stage of 'don't like that I don't like' it is maybe somewhere in the middle as 'passion'. Pathos is what touched you but what

you can never fully capture. In that way it is open and moving, and keeps you motivated as a person. This motivation leads to passions. Things that you really like or dislike. You are aware of them but you are not fully able to control them. In a way they control you because you can not really say why you like or dislike them. When you are able to put it into words they become Logos. Logos is a stage in which you are able to face what has touched you. You now can make it fully your own, and it is also in this phase that you can begin to lose your interest. Because now that it is your own, it is not the Pathos outside of you that touches you and drives you but just your own logic. In order to keep interested you can try to innovate. Within the realm of Logos you try to create a novel idea. But you can also exnovate. That would be the thing that Huberman is aiming for when he curates his exhibitions. In opening yourself up, experiencing something, letting yourself be touched, you leave the realm of Logos. The categorie 'don't like that I don't like' is actually in the past. By giving it your focus you get closer to Pathos. That what has touched you before you realized, the thing that drives you.

I can understand that Huberman is interested in the category of the unknown unknowns, because that is where things start moving. And that is maybe the paradox of looking back at what drives you that it can create the energy to change things today. Not because of new insights but by acting out of passion instead of Logos.

8. Accept "don't like what I like" (a.k.a guilty pleasure).

The other side of the coin is 'don't like what I like'. The things in this category you are well aware of the fact that they have an affect on you. The guilty pleasures, the songs you've heard a million times but still you hadn't had enough of. And where 'don't like that I don't like' is exciting for it points you towards the things that drive you, 'don't like that I like' is often quite tiring. You just try to avoid those kinds of things, hide them for other people and just forget them.

I recognize this in my atelier, most of the time when I feel a bit restless and everything is messy, then I just want to make a masterpiece. I want different materials, difficult techniques, complicated but at the same time elegant concepts and the best spaces to show the future art works in. This often leads to a lot of thinking and frustration. After a little bit I am already fed up with it and I decide to just pick something up and make something. And again I have an a5 paper in front of me and a ballpoint. I just started doodling. And before I know it an hour has passed and the table is full of quick drawings. At that moment I don't really know what to do with them and just store them somewhere. Often they are the main input for my work when looking back.

It is the things I do in daily life without special attention, the earworms, the routines, the therapeutic things I do just to ease myself, those practical things that just need to be done that form in the end the inspiration for the artistic process. Because those are the things that connect me to my surroundings, to others. In other words to a lived experience. That is where I get my hands dirty, where I touch the world. And in touching the world the opportunity arises to be touched myself by the world. It is this dynamic of acting and being acted upon that works like a dynamo. They enhance each other to the point that it is not clear any more what is what. And that is how the same old dull thing is also the primal material world that forms the material for my work.

9. "accept change is inevitable".

Now I am thinking of rules in this paper, and how they work and what they are, it seems to me that there is a similar energy between Pathos and rules. Maybe at first sight they seem to be completely the opposite. For rules are thought through over and over again and Pathos is that 'thing' that can never be articulated fully. But still I feel that rules as rational limitation are motivated and point towards what touched us. They limit and direct behavior in order to shape it and create opportunity for Life. For safe traffic, for a biodiverse forest, an equal society and so on. So although rules are there to regulate things they create the conditions for change. For that is what Life is: change.

The one who thinks that rules make a situation stiff and foreseeable misses the dynamic there is between rules and Life. Rules are propositions, they can always change. They don't separate the good from the bad. They don't clarify the surroundings. In that sense it is so important to see affect as something that chooses you to find an expression in. That affect can be autotelic. Being a synthesis between 'biologism' and social determination, it bridges the thinking individual with the sensory being that is able to be affected by the environment through the noticing of novelty.

I think that all the major world visions are in the end about this dynamic. In Taoism, the context for Literati painting, it is the Tao as the 'way' that is the rule and ultimate source. In Christianity it is Jesus Christ who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. They are the outcome of long standing traditions that form a synthesis of the ultimate source and rule.

Phenomena that really fascinates me. For my artistic project I thought about how I could put this idea in material form. And by accident I found a material form already in my atelier. It was some sort of a painting I once made with salt on synthetic fabric. But when I noticed it again the salt had turned into water drops that stayed on the fabric. This made me think of what is said in Matthew 5 vers 13. There the Jews are called to be the salt of the earth, to give taste. And also that the salt can lose its saltiness, and how it would be useless if so. So to be salty salt. I also thought of the conversation Jesus had at the well with the Samaritan woman. They talk about the well, and how it was given by Jakob, the great ancestor so that people can now live there. They can come every day to take water and sustain themselves. And then Jesus says that if the woman had an idea who he was she would ask him for water, living water. When you drink it once you will never be thirsty again.

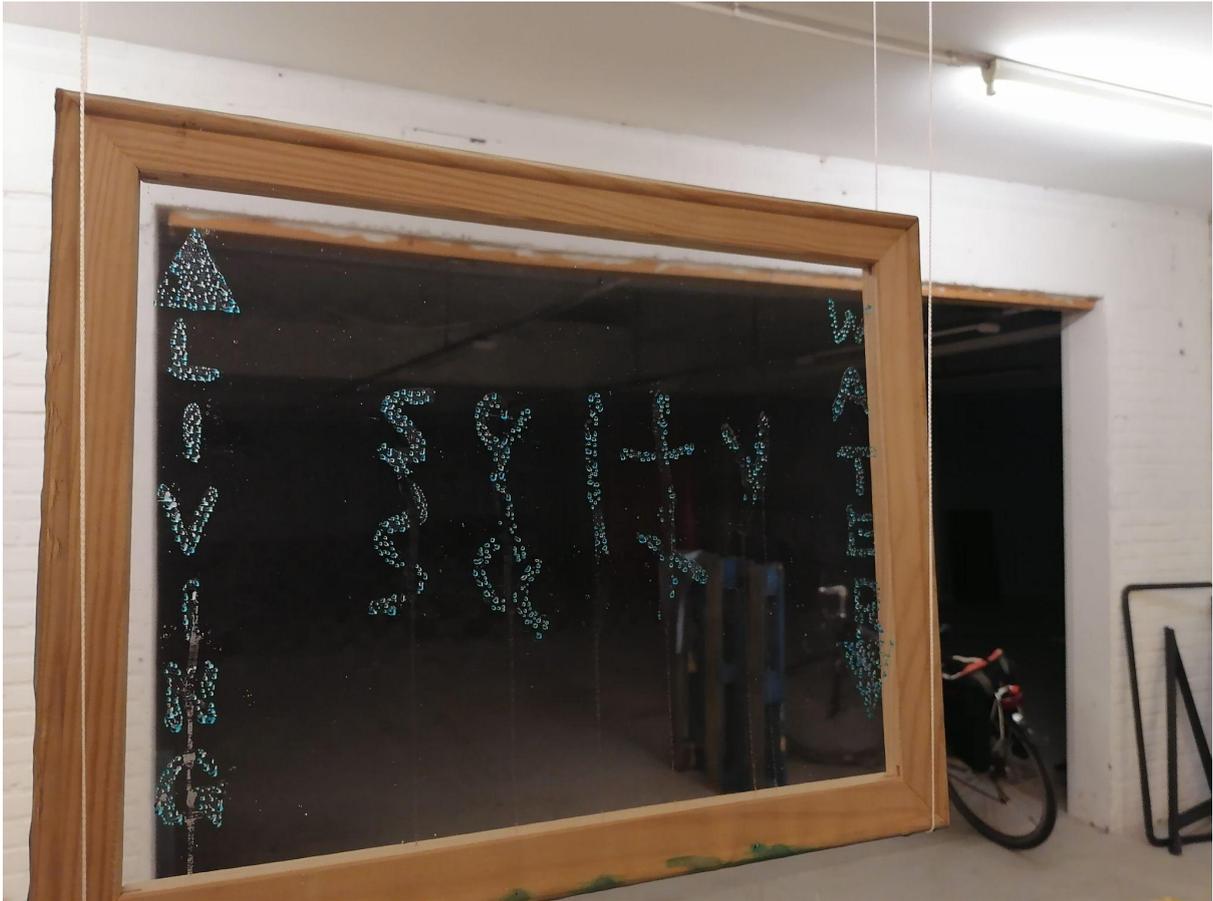
If I would take the salt painting out of my atelier the water would turn into salt again. I decided to paint the words 'salty salt' and 'living water' onto synthetic fabric with salt. A text that would respond to the environmental conditions. A work that would collect material that to me as a human being is so essential. The 'salty salt' stands for me for Logos. That is what I can control and is crystalized. The 'living water' is Pathos, that is what sustains me and I always long for.



version 1, still salt.



Version 1, in water drops. I had put a bit too much salt on the fabric and the water started to run down.



Version 2, in water drops. The second time I mixed the salty water with a bit of ink in the hope that it would give a bit of grip to the water drops. I also used less salt. The image is more subtle now but still readable.



Version 2, close up.

10. Rule 7: The only rule is work.

The rule that is printed in a bigger font than the other rules, in Corita Kent's list of rules, is number seven. It is not the first rule or the climax as the last rule, but still is emphasized by making it bigger. In society today this rule would be a little bit misplaced. So many people are overworked, burn-out or bored-out. Working more would not be the solution. But still it is nice to be able to work as if there is no limit to your energy. Going home at the end of the day and feeling contempt. If work is the thing you don't have to do but what you want to do, to me that would be a sign that there is a balance. There is a drive that moves you and goals to strive for. And to put it very simply: to work is to move. And to move is to change and when things change they are alive.

So in the end, when I enter my atelier, another confrontation with a messy space and the potential of future masterpieces; whether it gets me excited and going or if it stresses me out, it does not matter so much. When I start to move, pick things up, touch materials I will be touched. The exposure will create a dynamic and over time this will lead to ideas, and more moving and more working. And what kind of space it is, how moldy and damp, it does not matter. The only thing that matters is to be there and to work.

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2. The Feodorovskaya Icon of the Mother of God, with the Legend of the Icon in 16 border scenes. Painted at the end of the 19th century. Icon-painting villages of the Vladimir region. 36x31x2,5 cm.

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4. Dong Qichang, 'Rieten hal van Wanluan', 1597, hangende rol met gewassen inkt en kleur op papier, privécollectie. url: [Wanluan Thatched Hall by Dong Qichang - Dong Qichang - Wikipedia](#)