

**sina seifee**

selected recent works  
2016-2020



[2020]—**Wonders of the Moon - A Thousand Years of Sleepwalking**; *film installation*

[2018]—**Four Eastern Cartographies of Entrapment**; *multi-media installation and performance*

[2017]—**Antlitz des Paradieses**; *multi-media installation*

with Sana Ghobbeh

[2017]—**An Ajayeb's Network Making**; *multi-media installation, computer interface, book*

[2016]—**Difficult Forests**; *writing, video, installation*  
with Foad Farahani

[2015]—**Exercises in Storytelling and Other Cheats**; *multi media lecture series*

with Ale Bachlechner, Jonathan Kastl,  
Benjamin Ramirez Perez, Stefan Ramirez Perez, Linda  
Franke, Alexander Borisovich Gurko, Marat Beltser

[2014-2015]—**An Intro to Islam**; *lecture series*

—Undesirable Decidability -the Indecisions  
and Insanity of Sanctity in Early Islam

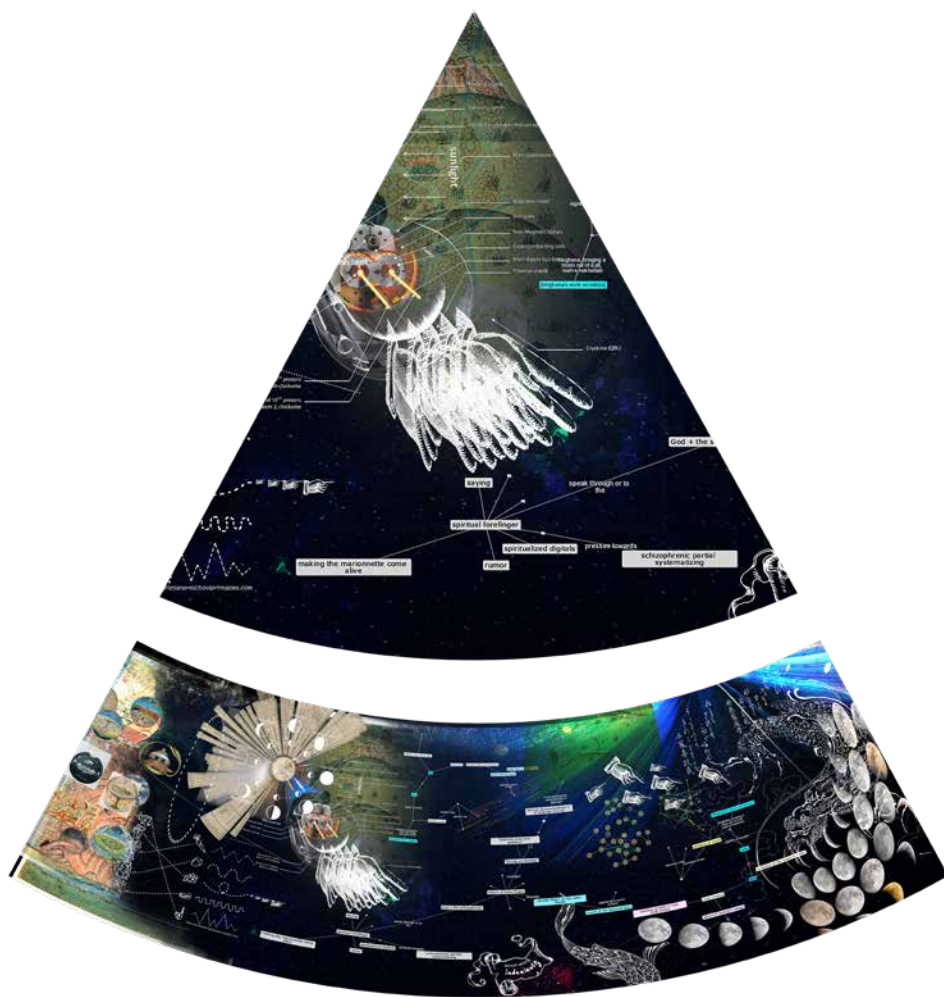
—Bodies of the Prophet and the Celestial Self

Curriculum Vitae

# Wonders of the Moon - A Thousand Years of Sleepwalking [2020] - video installation (projection on cone-shaped wooden structure covered with curved plasterboard), asynchronous audio-video playback (video 21 minutes, audio 47 minutes looped), music track by waterhouse, narration performed by Davis Freeman

Grounded on artistic research in medieval cosmologies, *Wonders of the Moon - A Thousand Years of Sleepwalking* is a video-installation imagined to be a lunar montage machine to render a series of misplaced narratives of shape-shifting and delirious figures in the middle ages from West Asia, a cabinet of curiosities that is dealing with the dark. It consists of figures, associations, atmospheres, and imageries that are inspired by the speculative science of bestiaries, a premodern world of horror-wonder literature. Bestiaries are medieval practices of description that were preoccupied with the monsters, marvels, and irregularities of the nature, encompassing a wider poetics of Muslim imaginal ecological consciousness.

We close our eyes in order to simulate (and make ourselves available to) the time of darkness: a phenomenological atmospheric attuning to an entirely anonymous, indifferent, and inhuman nature of the cosmos. Dark has been both the medium of worship and of deviation. It is where the forgetter (the conspirator), the sleepwalker (the associator), the eraser (the sorcerer), and the smuggler (the polluter) are active. It is the time when they are at work. After-dark is the underground of time, as Jason Bahbak Mohaghegh, the philosopher of deception and masks, proposes. It is where something other and something horror can happen. In crossing the dark, certain figures (shadow, moon, jinn, nature, God) of the premodern Indo-Persian world dissolve into familiar shapes and have a dynamic of disruptive presence within human world.

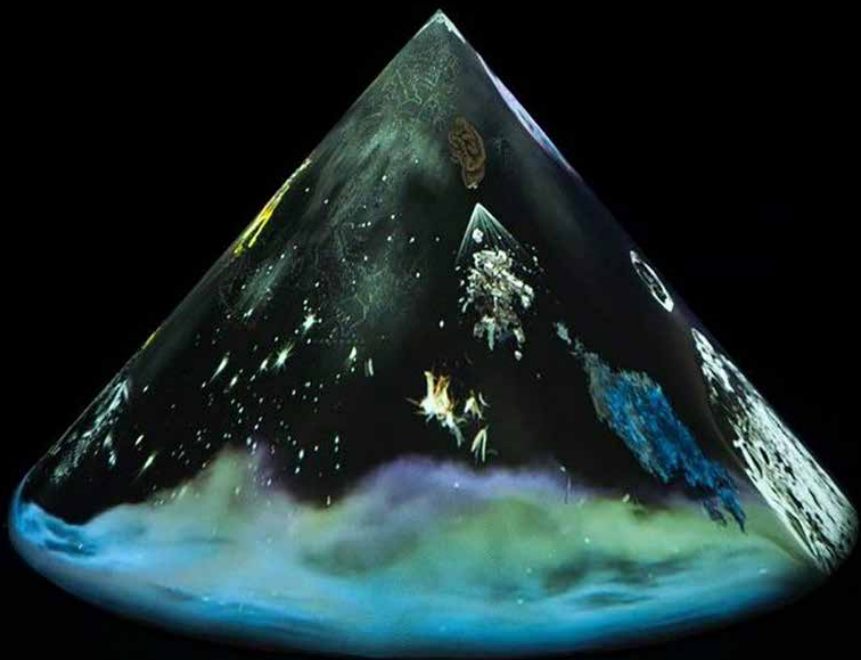


Map of the schizophrenic index finger  
pointing to the medieval moon.  
Sina Seifee 2020



view of the exhibition "Wonders  
of the Moon - A Thousand Years of  
Sleepwalking"

The video installation on a cone  
shape, is imagined to be a lunar  
montage machine, evoking both the  
idea of an engine and an enigma.





Exploded view of the video *Wonders of the Moon - A Thousand Years of Sleepwalking*





## **Four Eastern Cartographies of Entrapment [2018]** - installation (image assemblage wallpaper, diplomatic waiting-room interior-design, animated film on TV-screen) and performance-lecture, produced and presented in Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah July 2018

*Four Masks of an Eastern Postmodernism* is a creative investigation about the modes of subjectivity emergent within the postmodern Middle-East. The project is initiated by responding to dispositives and vocabularies developed in Jason Bahbak Mohaghegh's work ("Insurgent, Poet, Mystic, Sectarian: The Four Masks of an Eastern Postmodernism" 2017) on subject positions that point to the exceptional diversity and heterogenous makeup of Middle Eastern cultural imaginaries. The presentation takes the form of a "radical illusion": installation of wallpaper cartographic mapping of poetic extremism, scenographic interior of cheap diplomatic waiting-room, rhetoric of image assemblage, video on glossy TV-screen, animated film with hypnotic exchange of ecstatic projection, and scholarly detachment in the form of performance-lecture. Investigating hostile and relaxed patterns of "contact" and "nothingness" the project itself becomes a slider between the two. It zooms in and out of knowledge and speculation about nondialogue, nonnarrative, and radical exile spaces that have emerged in eastern postmodernism.

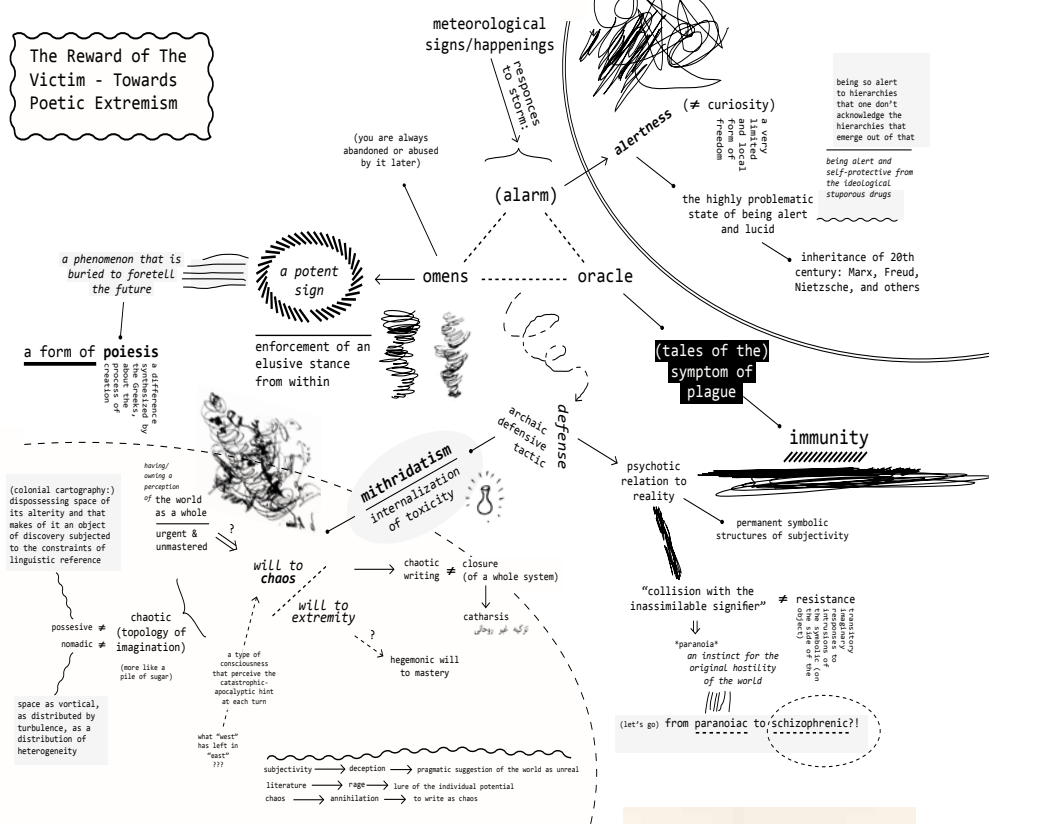
Modernity has been a catastrophic epoch for many older ecologies of subjectivity. A process of fragmentation and destruction in which pre-modern forms of wholeness and integrity were irretrievably broken and capacities for perception were caused to "decay." This has been extreme. And the "extreme" has produced subject positions such as: resistance-fighter, ideological dictator, artistic forerunner, experimental thinker, and different constellations of desire in the last 150 hundred years in the Middle East. In poetry, in particular, the extremist is the one who reads the meteorological signs for the coming of a devastating storm. The signs are felt and cognized as "omens": symptoms of pestilence and plague...



*Writing on Chaos - A Terminal Intimacy*  
video, 12:16 minutes

<https://youtu.be/MxqGa9iamak>

# The Reward of The Victim - Towards Poetic Extremism



## lecture notes



objects of the installtion (superhero mask, plastic wound, knife, skeleton, etc.)





image assemblage  
wallpaper  
*Bad Temper - Apocalyptic  
Climates of Endangered  
Subjectivity*  
installation, video, and text  
Sharjah Art Foundation  
2018



View of the installation *Four Eastern Cartographies of Entrapment*, Sharjah July 2018





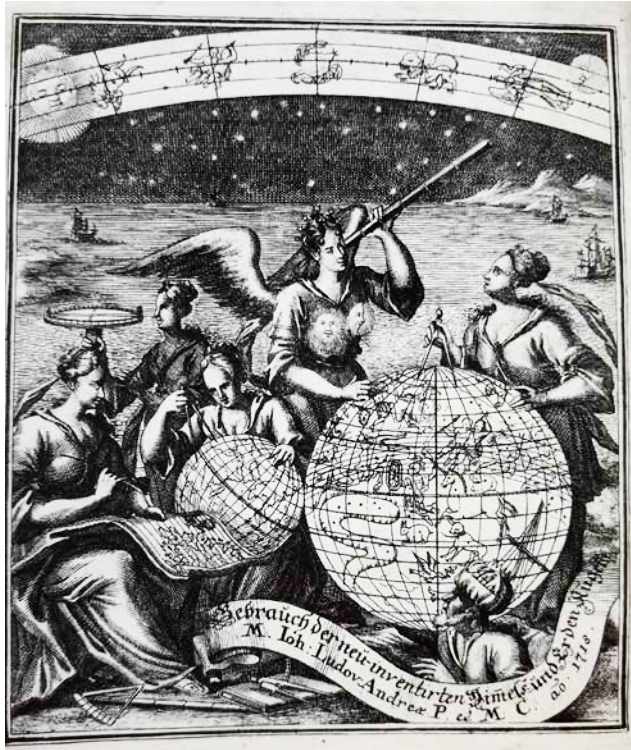
Worlds are  
inadequate

**Antlitz des Paradieses [2017]** - multimedia installation (video projection of 360 degrees spherical image sequence, framed pictures of digital collage miniature printed on photo paper in small dimensions, interactive touch screen, and booklet), with Sana Ghobbeh, commissioned and presented in Künstlerhaus Eckernförde and Galerie NEMO, November 2017 Eckernförde

The project *Antlitz des Paradieses* is a critical-visual-disursive encounter with an early renaissance German cartographer: Adam Olearius. The work throws the diagonal readings of artist Sana Ghobbeh and Sina Seifee together with a post-colonial re-examination of the literary energies of Sa'di (13th century Iranian poet) and the worlds rendered by the cartographic technologies of Olearius. The exhibition is a visual and readerly gesture into a interdiscursive dimension of map-making in the 17th century Germany-Iran relationships. Olearius's methodology was that of a comparatist, so we also perform a comparative and reparative reading of Sa'di technologies of writing, of whom he translated a prominent poetry book into German language.

Maps are never completely translatable nor readable, and language rapidly translates into historical practice, in this case: *carto-literacy*. With Adam Olearius, the German scholar and cartographer (died 1671), we are at an imaginary space, a self-possessed individual, and a rhetorical device, *ekphrasis*: description, and excess of mastery. Built in 1664 under the cartographic enterprises of Duke Frederick III of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorf: Olearius's famous *Globe of Gottorf*, is a Ptolemaic-Aristotelian machinery of large spheres with astrological and mythological symbols on its inside and outside. It creates an effect of totality, of having engineered a world through its own labors, linked to a graphic construction of the self. Fixed to an illusion of a geographic truth, the early 17th century *self* becomes autonomous, and his "national" subjectivity attached to the geographies that it is both mapping and describing "the book of others," in his case the book of Persian "native and nature."





Andreae, Johann Ludwig, 1724, *Mathematische und historische Beschreibung des gantzen Welt-Gebäudes zum nützlichen Gebrauch zweyer auf eine neue Art verfertigten Himmels- und Erd-Kugeln*



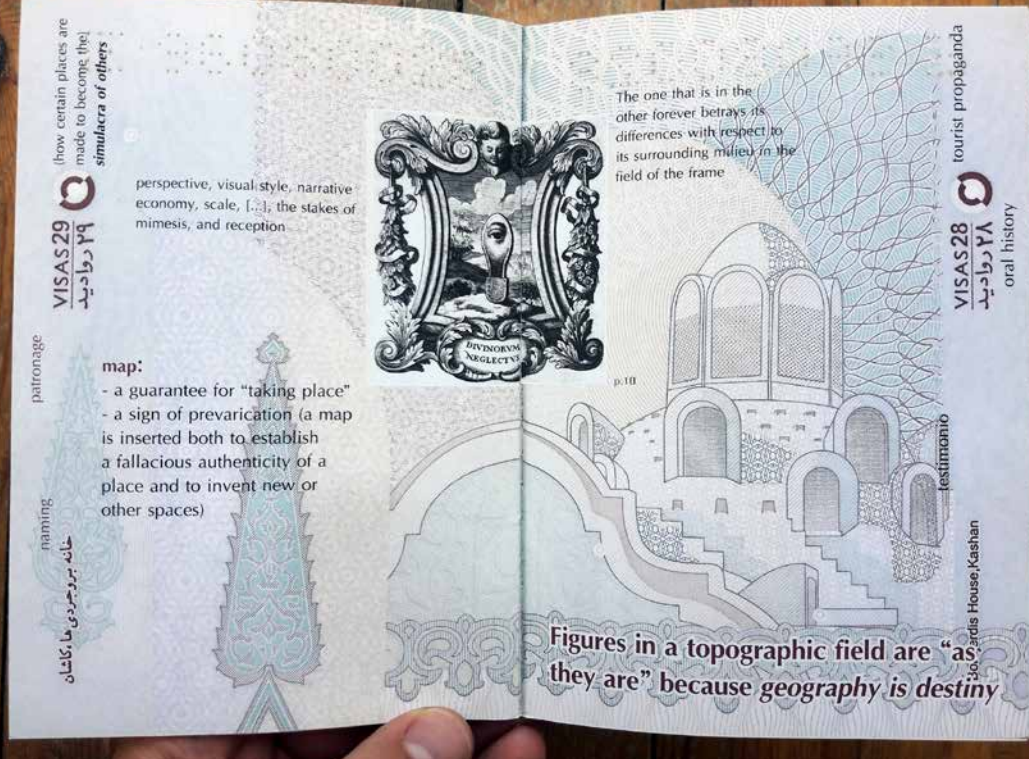
<https://youtu.be/zkz0MULEdhE>

360 degrees spherical video essay  
view of the exhibition "Antlitz des Paradieses"

We are rehearsing criticism studies with Adam Olearius. When he traveled to Perisa we rediscover him lodged in the corporal space of an image of "man" in a process of discovery that maps its movement as it goes through the graphically inscribed unknown. In this project, we are engaged in an anti-globe making, a transitional object, a field of diagonal or interdiscursive play between his and our tools of worlding. In our exhibition, we are working the gridded/allegorized cartographic discourse/consciousness through appeal to spatial rhetoric, with an actively vagrant mode of reading and nomadic examination of "new" forms of a self-produced "geography" of writing that emerged in 16th century and its ideological materials.



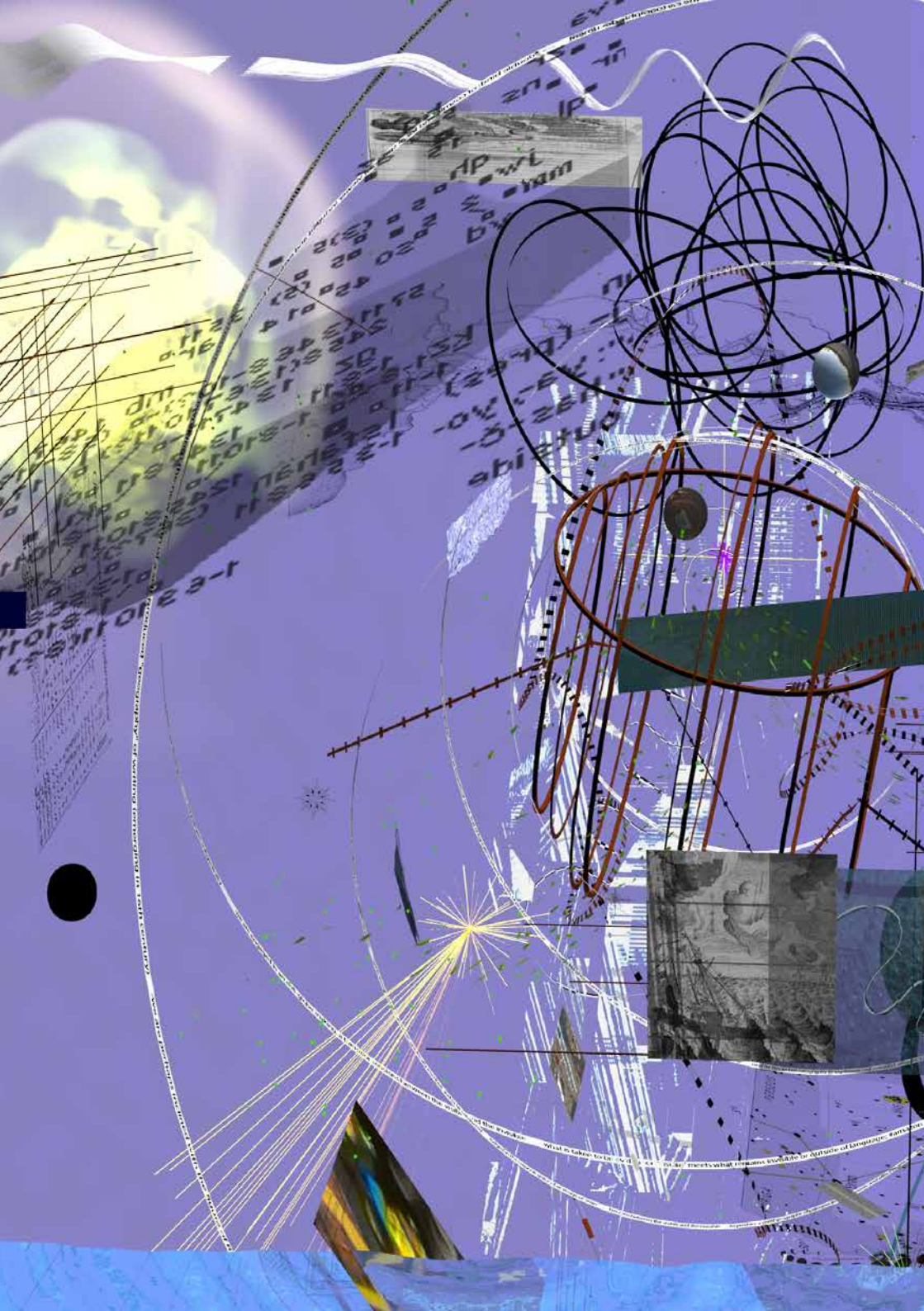




spread from the booklet of the exhibition (research materials, text and image assemblage overlaid on an Iranian passport)



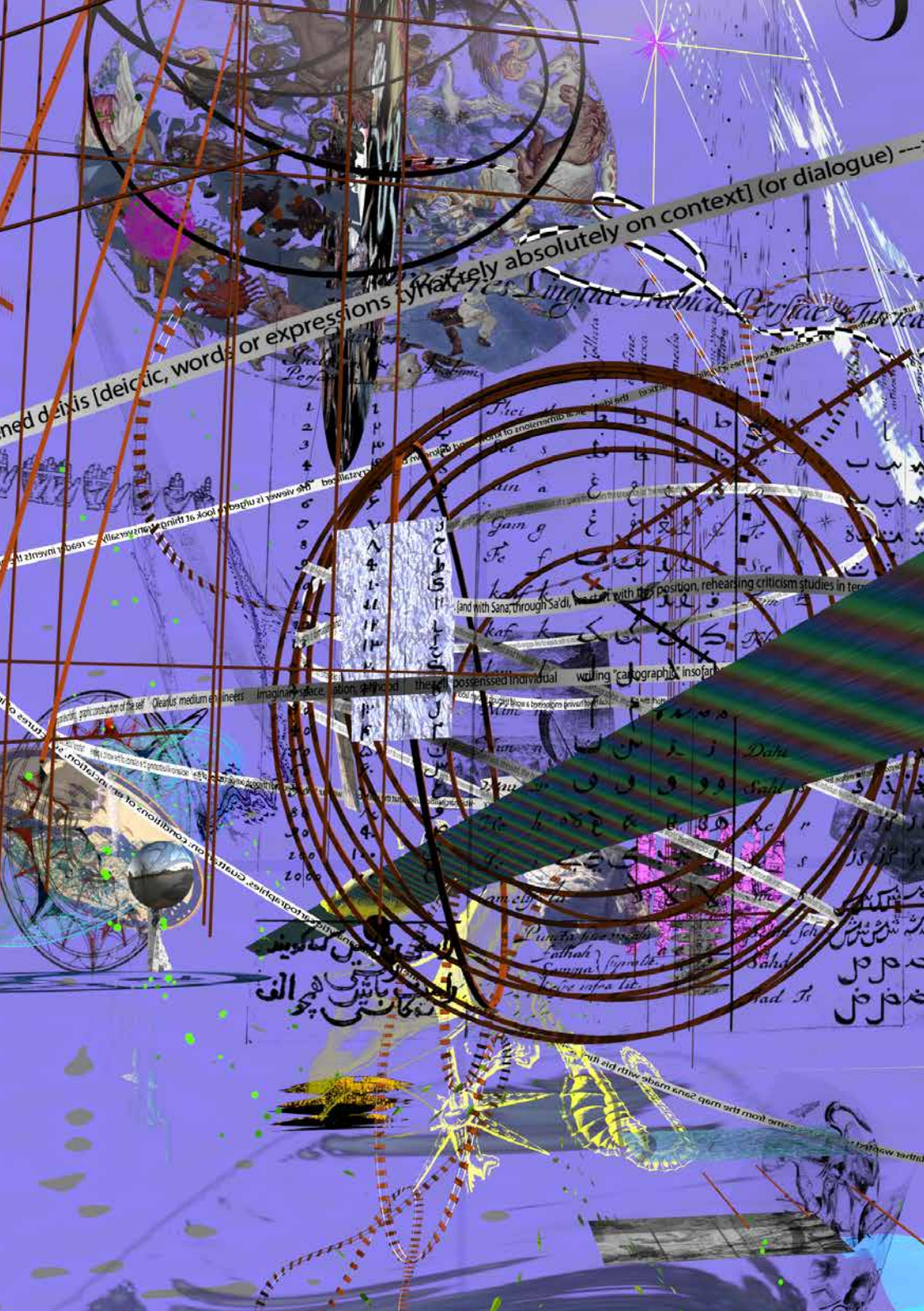




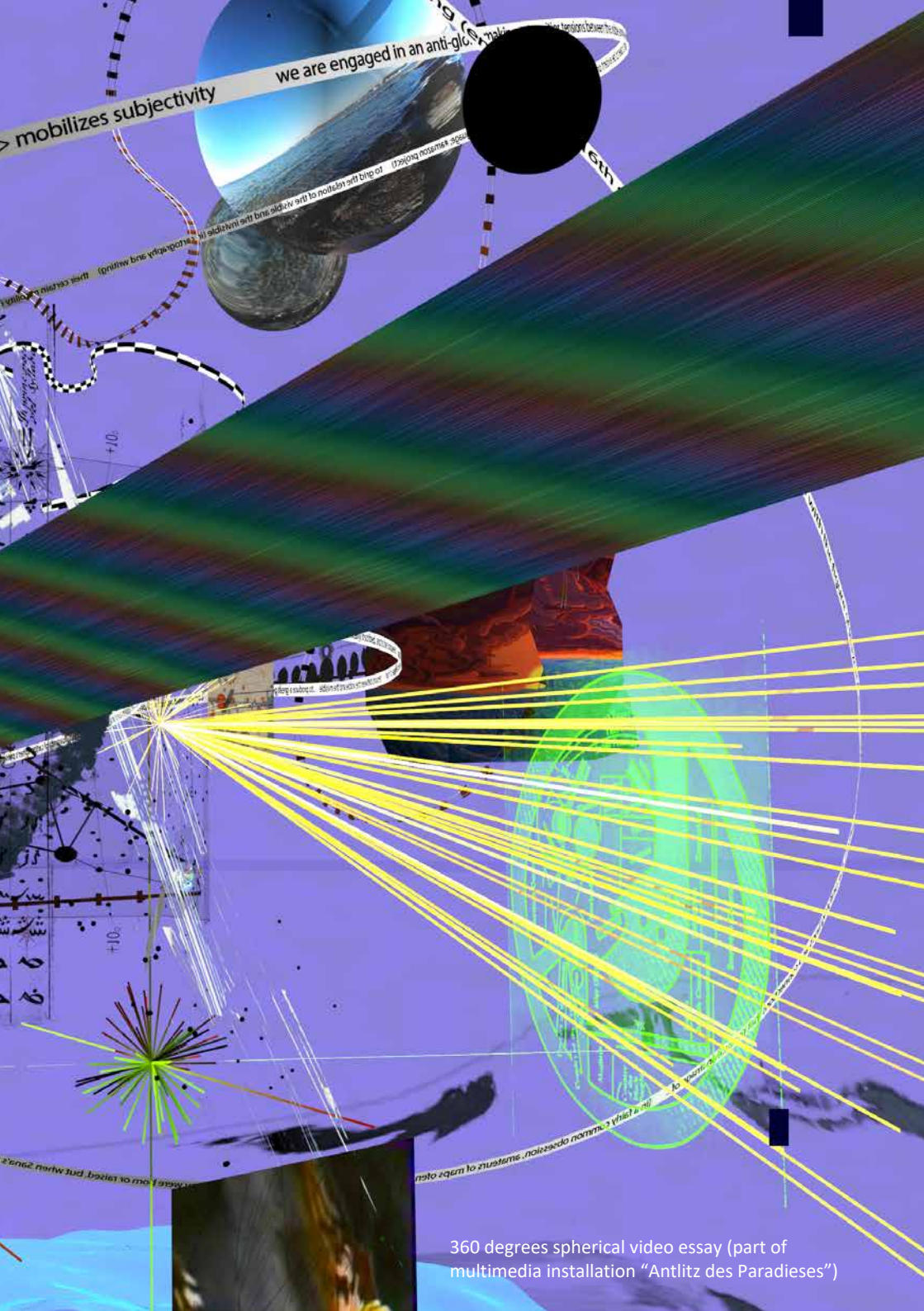


360 degrees spherical video essay (part of  
multimedia installation "Antlitz des Paradieses")









360 degrees spherical video essay (part of multimedia installation "Antlitz des Paradieses")

# An Ajayeb's Network Making [2017]

multi-media installation (1 channel looped video on TV, pop-up book, printed notes and images on photo paper large scale on the floor and mounted), produced and presented in *a.pass* September 2017 Brussels

Installation of a station for research presentation in the context of the exhibition *No Communication Without Noise - five a.pass researches*, curated by Laura Herman. The video and the pop-up book materialize a slice into the process of intense artistic research in *a.pass* during 2016-2017. While each of the components of the installation embody different energies, they compose together 'a place of study' that ventures into the thickness of a speculative work on Persian medieval bestiaries.

This project is about *Aja'ib al-makhlūqat wa ghara'ib al-mawjudat*, in short *ajayeb*: a cosmographic encyclopedic knowledge-assemblage from the Middle Ages, more known in Europe as Book of Wonders. In trying to explore the intensity and plasticity of lived compositions proliferating in their world, the authors of *ajayeb* created reports of the world in dense and textured stories of entanglements of affect, attention, the senses, and matter. *Ajayeb's* textual aesthetic body is 'a once lived affect,' pushing a present into a composition, an 'expressivity' that tries to guess and describe 'what is the world up to' in little animal moments, small-time materialist scenes, as well as macrocosmic, big-time world formations.

The reading of *ajayeb* portrays a global (and therefore ethical) consciousness at the end of 12th century Middle-South Asia. It mobilizes descriptive practices of poetics and natural history in a Middle Persian corpus. In *ajayeb* I am learning cultivating the ability to fruitfully approach texts from different cultures and pasts, to study the radical poetic force of the Persian texts, to become enhanced and enchanted in skills of reading wider ranges of linguistic registers, and to open up an approach to a dauntingly complex region of *islamicated* thought. (Not the ideological enterprise of "Islam," which is usually badly politicized in the historical memory of the West.) *Ajayeb's* version of World are stories of historically nonhuman people in descriptive intra-actions with reality. In it humans and language are part of the configuration of the world. In my work on *ajayeb* I am becoming more and more committed to learn ways of having stories meant to pull me into the sentience of the world I am in; give it density and texture.





*fat pink boy abstraction*  
 analogical stories for ajayeb critical bestiaries



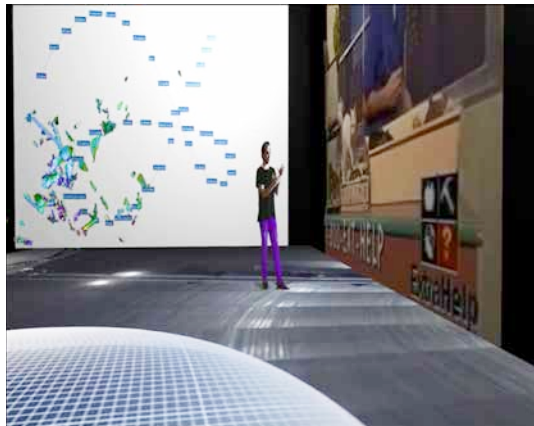
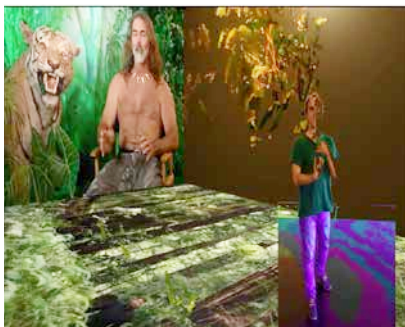
view of the exhibition  
(with the support of Steven Jouwersma)



ajayeb pop-up book







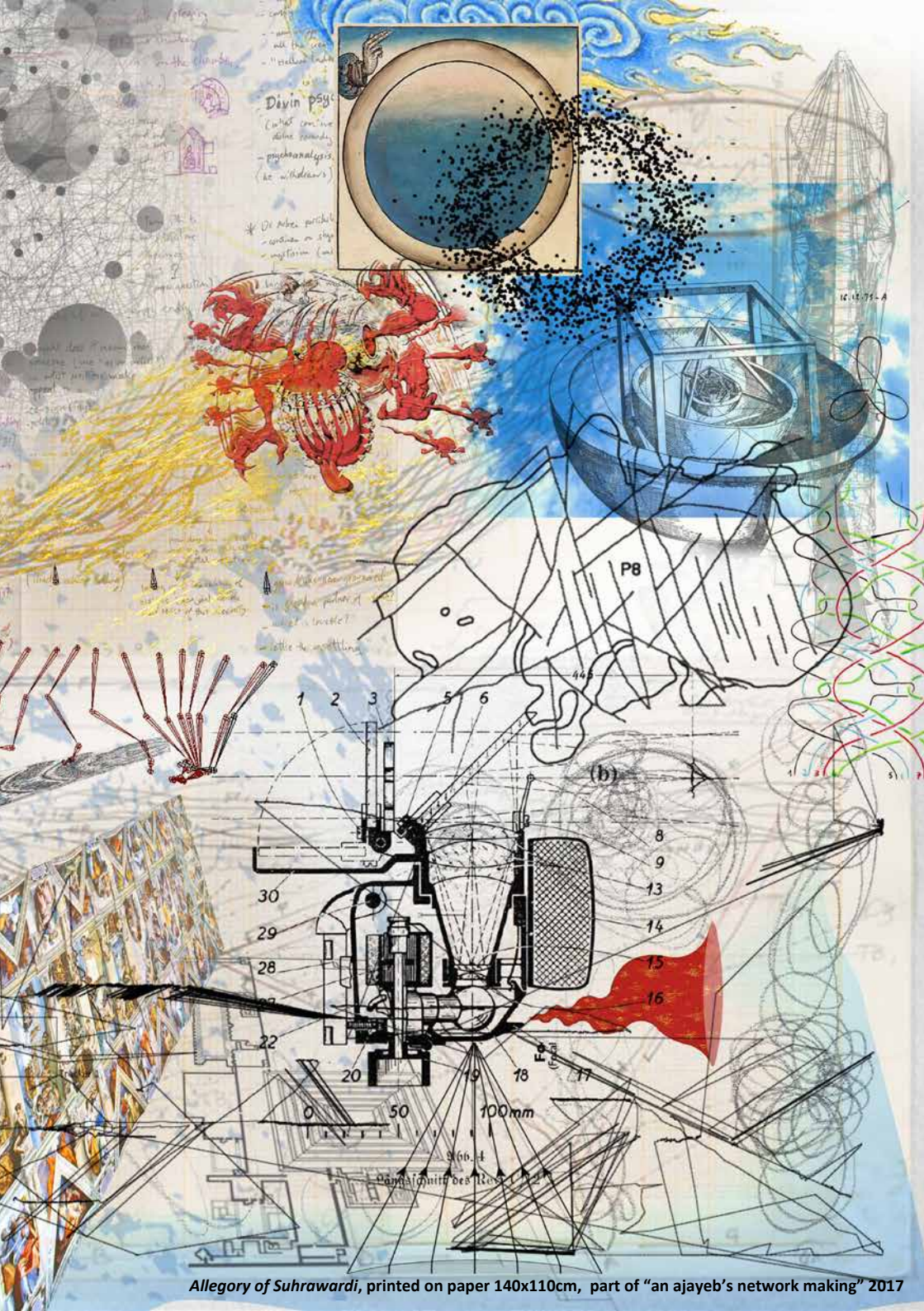
video, one channel TV - part of the installation "an ajayeb's network making" 2017 Brussels a.pass

<https://vimeo.com/239993483>









*Allegory of Suhrawardi*, printed on paper 140x110cm, part of "an ajayeb's network making" 2017



^468489.2.6\$[\*]+ajayeb

[...] new world in a state of uneven emergence, an ambient mapping of the not-yet or as-if of things becoming **phenomenon**" which itself became a repetitive impulse

I can't find a better kind of description of what **ajayeb** does than **Stewart** describing 'description' that **literally** puts a point things: "the expressivity of what h things throwing together in words is a kind of description attuned to what does not completely **unfold** but instead melds together with other unnamed but palpable th collected like a field of mineable resources and shiny afterthoughts."

things throwing together in words ==> expressivity

**ajayeb**: collected (unnamed but palpable) things like mineable resources and shiny afterthoughts

پس اندیشه

[\*]perspective: (an attending, enduring **presence**, a **compositional** node,) **perspectival agency** in which things jump into **relation** but remain unglued\*\*\*  
(**Stewart**)

...across a field of subjects-objects-bodies-**trajectories**-affects

realm of killed off things

**Stewart's**

- "throwing together"
- "manner of"

(in **ajayeb**) the whale: throwing together of the **phenomena** of fish and water, sailing, mood, atmosphere, and sensory charge

**\*ajayeb's** descriptive apparauses: a mutating realism of a certain vision of light meeting movement

[\*]**ajayeb**: things that were once named, perhaps **written** down, (differently than now,) through some kind of trickery (called **citation**), and then metastasized (spre throughout a body) into circulation (**readings**, **translations**, etc.) are raised, incised, made singular and charged

- **ajayeb's** **stories**/reports ~a forms of co-recognition, something witnessed that gets cooked down into something saucy\*\*\*
- **ajayeb's** **writing**: a more-than-representational **method** of **writing** attuned to the qualities of **phenomena**
- **ajayeb's** **fabulations** (appear as:)

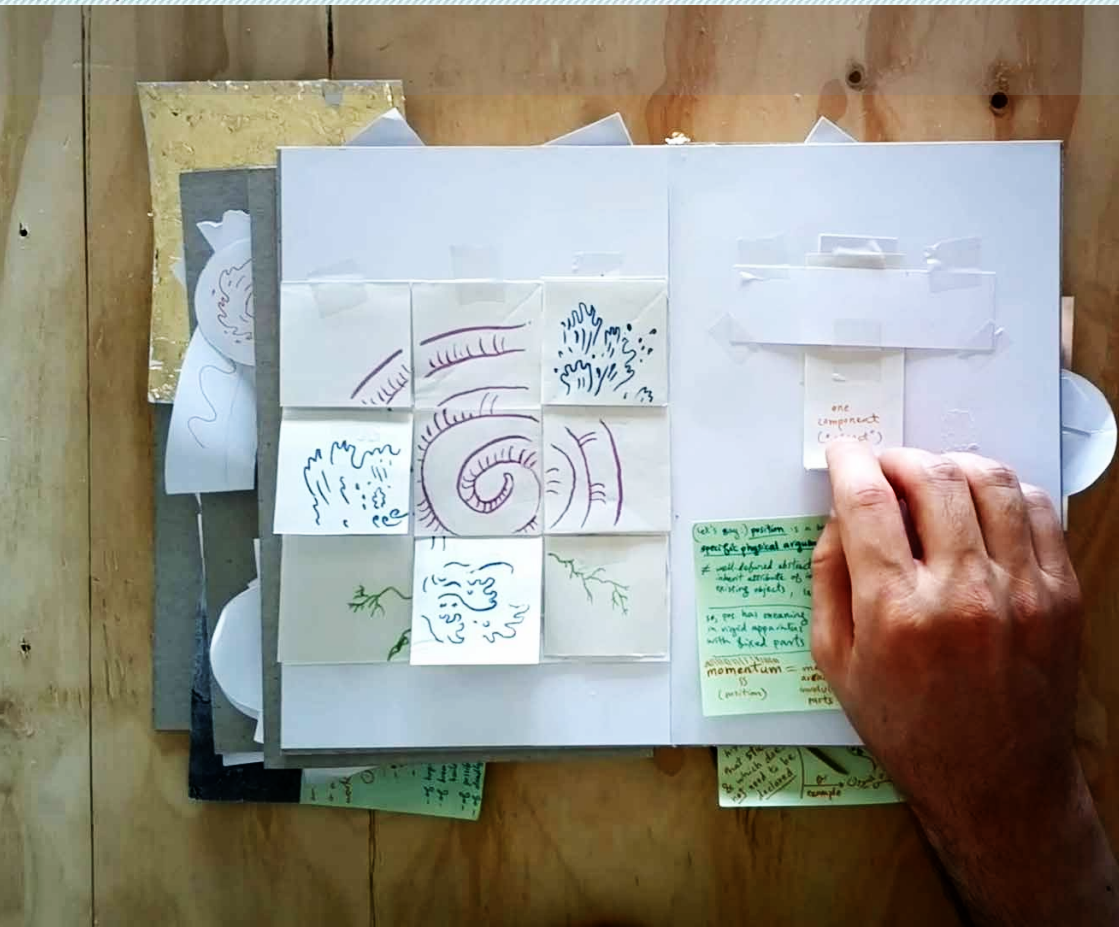
• **ajayeb's** **fabulations** (appear as:)

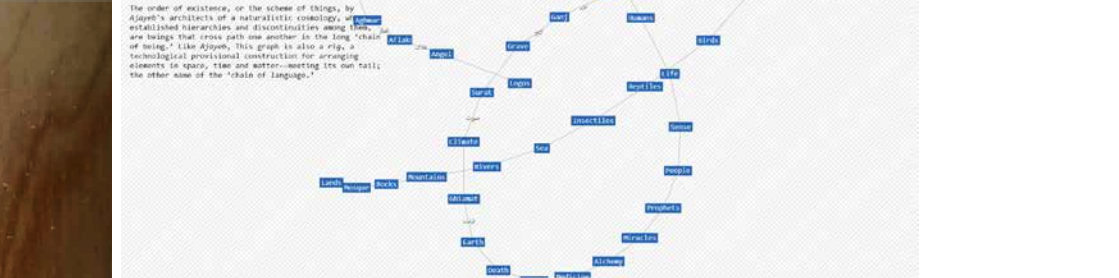


→ ajayeb

wind fact environment affect plot story literature ajayeb wonder inflow signifier nature culture

[source: Qaswini]





Ajaye.net hypertext (initially programmed to be a search-engine for my notes) is a growing bibliography enacted "to provide a feast of reading pleasures." A computer interface, a word scrambler and sequencer, a site for writing, and a game of guessing that I am building for my research inquiry.

As a project of narrative remediation, to re-story, to stage matters of care differently, I crafted this sketch of a pop-up book to learn hosting multiplicity of bodies, characters and materialities to approach 'description' as "speculative theory in practice of how a (described) world works."

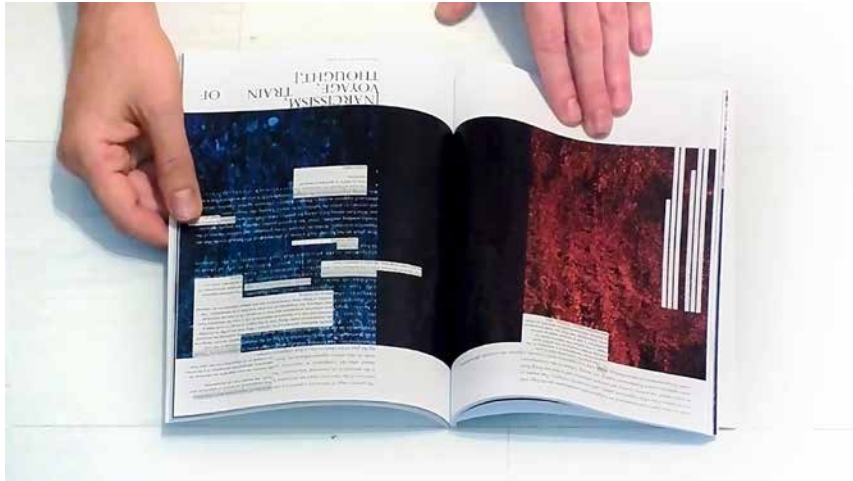
# **Difficult Forests [2016] - multi-media installation (3 channel looped video projections overlaid, book publication and presentation, framed and mounted Lambda c-type prints on photo paper, 3D print objects), in Nevertheless Gallery, Köln**

**Installation and publication from the content material of the *amazon#2 Difficult Forests - A Technological Poem on the Structure of the Eye*, a book in collaboration with Foad Farahani. The book is the result of a web of interconnected and interrelated theories and thinkings about the boundaries between biology and surface of encounters in categories of virtual and concrete in the context of a travel to the Amazon.**

A travel to the Amazon region (2013) in Colombia with the Kinect as recording device created a series of digital memoirs spelled out on systematic screen glitches, comes out now to report a technological relationship to a life-historical category. The representation of the journey—itsself as complex problematic event—together with the horde of visual artifacts tell a set of interfacial stories with my co-travelers. This project addresses the splicing of direct and tactile human perception of reality with another reality, one that is mediated and technical. It is an aesthetic dream, dream of isomorphism between the discursive object and the visible object in the Amazonian forests.

This project vibrates rather as an amalgam of ideas and relations that I first tried to draw performatively in roughly three tangled layers in 2014: (1) My experience of a mode of traveling with a child that came to me to resonate the pleasures of traveling-with the radical and joyful alterity of child in a clarifying opposite of the lonely masculine traveler—in the context of an intimate relationship and trip (at the end of 2013) to Amazon in the border of Colombia, Peru, and Brazil with Karin Demuth and her two year old boy Hanno; (2) A palimpsest reading of technologies of interfacing within the computer culture and means of thinking about the category of interface and its overlapping areas and problematization in both “surface” and “jungle” by doing so; (3) A multi-channeled visual essay of the highly technical images recorded by Kinect infrared 3D-scanner/motion-detector in the course of the journey.









view of the exhibition 'NATURE, 404 / Difficult Forests in the Digital Flux'

multi-media video installation (3 channel video overlaying), book, framed pictures (Lambda c-type print), 3D print objects

<http://www.sinaseifee.com/DifficultForests.html?U1rtq>





*X-Ray of the Unmarked*

digital print on paper mounted on cardboard with laser cut-out, (170 x 80cm)



[FORM, LOCATION,]

What I am trying to spot and unpack are two prefigured experiences of form: (1) the pure and transcendent geometric, (2) the organic and raw, one that the world's flesh is made of. These are issues of translation and exchange between the material and semiotic. That which has been the material semiotic fields of meaning orients the properties of systematicity in my Amazon. How can I have an argue for the epistemologies of location, positioning, and situating at the same time stay with the visual metaphor? If the Kinect's reports are not objective information nor culture, what kind of information of environment is the image of Kinect about, a personal testimony, descriptions of a technological dealing?

path of journey<sup>13</sup> was a scattered social relation and yet in writing I must stay committed to a or my math of gathered asocial relation, to resist prototyping means of countering objects of journey — of thought. The animated spatial variables that Kinect indicates confuses me, seduces me to a void of mathematical ontology, to a field-referential medium-specific obsessive self-marginalising asceticism.<sup>14</sup> Can we propose a reciprocal and adjustable encounter with technology? How can we not repeat the field-specific computer game and learn to think forms that are not just formal? Which eye cultivates a mind capable of working through changing and unfinished processes for which there can only be dynamic metaphorical markers on a screen?

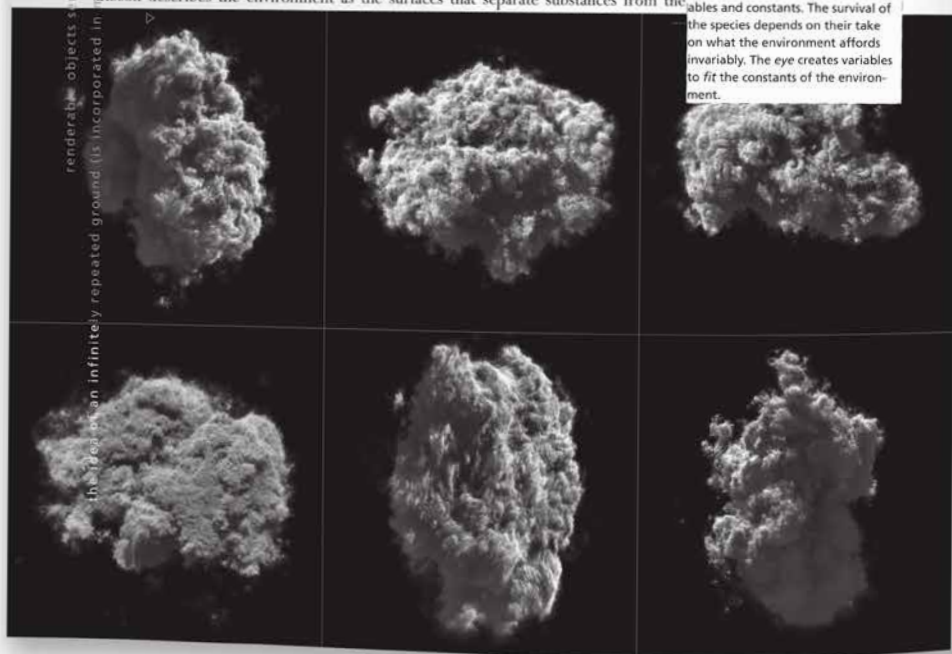
THEORY OF AFFORDANCE, THE EYE THAT FITS,]

The *Theory of Affordance* could help to interfere with the technical tensions of information pick-up processes postponed in the artificial eye of the Kinect, happening between the variables of the organic sensory systems and the constants of the environment. Gibson describes the environment as the surfaces that separate substances from the

In order to re-entertain questions about perception and experience, this project tries to propose a visibility rather than an image, to investigate the varied apparatuses of visual production, including the technologies that are in interface with our eyes and brains.

...peering into the abyssal techné  
→ go to 'marked language' in Forest's "Space"

The organic game of perception is about the thresholds between variables and constants. The survival of the species depends on their take on what the environment affords invariably. The eye creates variables to fit the constants of the environment.



medium in which the animals live. He argues that to perceive the environment is to perceive what they *afford* to the perceiver. This implies, he continues, that the “values” and “meanings” of things in the environment are not just abstract physical properties<sup>15</sup> and can be directly perceived and that they are *external* to the perceiver. That is an experience of an observer that is not a property of the observer.<sup>16</sup> Affordance, as an ecological approach to perception, acknowledges the complexity of an environmental system that is not reducible to pure functionality for the observer. It allows a horizon beyond the functions of objects or actions for a local point of view. Can we say about the artificial graphic systems, colour enhancement techniques, and visualization technologies programmed in the machine’s lens that they acknowledge something about the environment? And in spite of the perceptual variations they can testify a form of objectivity<sup>17</sup> that is attuning in a way to the structure of environment? But how to take in account in any project the fact that we are ecological beings, to attain the virtual nature of the eye to an ecology deals with the ways of how to read real reality? And again, as biological person, a mysti-

how much an ecological perception can be returned to our 'defaults' as a eco-bio-techno-semiological vision?<sup>28</sup>

"Picture does not make an image."<sup>19</sup> Contrary to the scientific visual forms of photography where one is on the right place at the right time with the right equipment. The per-

of the photographic lens is in that it tries to let the viewer "experience" the moment of discovery in the immediate vision of the "object".

Interwoven with visuality, this project also takes place within the grammatical and figura-



and projective project upon any space that humanity encounters. The surface of the screen now conveys our material relations in a virtual transformative and electronic flux. The screen that has become itself a complex structure in architecture Surface can now be read as architecture itself, layered space of interaction between subject and object.

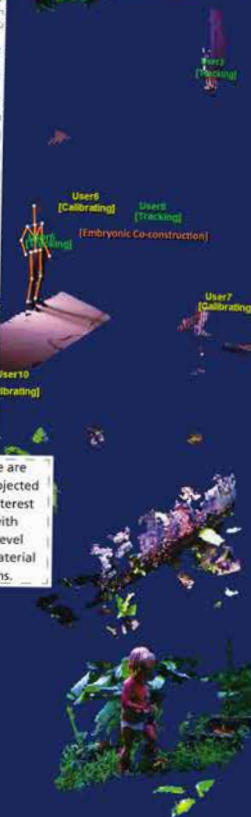
of membrane in our environments. While we might question who engages with the superficial matters and how deep the surface goes, the meeting place of different kinds of forms are constantly being "reconnected in the interface and thus creating new forms of admixture."<sup>1</sup>

All astronomy from twenty thousands years ago until the twentieth century was optical—within the limits of our perceptual range. We are still thinking with optical brain, building optical machines with optical properties delegated as nature that epitomize an outside world and subvert the processes that constitute the planet. Today science more than ever is struggling with impossible subject-positioning, the codification of flesh, visualization of scientific narratives and the aestheticization of information, all of which tell us about a longer line of cultural fantasies about information, code and technology<sup>4</sup>. In this interconnection of embodied being and enviroing world, "what happens in the interface is what is important."<sup>5</sup>

[KINECT, AMAZON, TRAVEL] I repeat this as someone who does NOT necessarily think that "we are part of this digital world, but we are not necessarily subjected to its terms." The interest of this project lies with understanding the level of codification in material and immaterial forms.

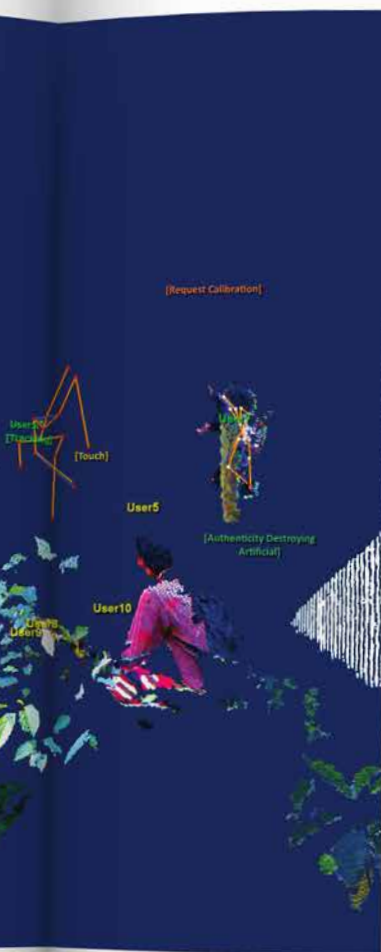
This project This project vibrates rather as an amalgam of ideas and presented in-relationship to other projects, people, and things that are connected with me, is more like a cascade of ideas that tries to be observant of the ethics of being one packaged project with clear boundaries and aims to be rather open to the relationships that are there in the artist's practice.

[Archive] [Request] [Rating] [Archive] [Request] [Rating]



Giuliano  
Brown, Politics of  
Shine: SURFACE EN:  
COUNTERS, a film journal  
24 Oct. 2015  
4. Campbell, Nivola. "The  
technological gaze in adver-  
tising." *Artforum* (2007).  
5. Jaffe, Dan. *Bodies in  
technology*. U of Minnesota  
Press, 2002.





relations that I first tried to draw performatively in roughly my thinking. three tangled layers in 2014: (1) My experience of a mode of traveling with a child that came to me to resonate the pleasures of traveling-with the radical and joyful alterity of child in a clarifying opposite of the lonely masculine traveler. I am borrowing Haraway's naming of this specific character of thought and agency of in the context of an non-relation. The "lonely masculine traveler" that moves through the matrix grid intimate relationship and trip (at the end of 2013) without experiencing the pleasures of earth-bound kinships and all the responsibilities and unsettling curiosities that comes with it. to Amazon in the border of Colombia, Peru, and Brazil. <<https://www.google.de/maps/@-3.8126573,-70.3475281,12z>> with Karin Demuth and her two year old boy Hanno; (2) A palimpsest reading of technologies of interfacing within the computer culture and means of thinking about the category of interface and its overlapping areas and problematization in both "surface" and "jungle" by doing so; (3) A multi-channelled visual essay of the highly technical images recorded by Kinect infrared 3D-scanner/motion-detector. The software that is used with the Kinect in this project is called Brekel/Kinect, which is an open-source application using PrimeSense's OpenNI and NITE. It allows capturing 3D objects and exporting them to disk for use in 3D packages. The software could also do skeleton-tracking which can be streamed into other applications in real-time, or exported as files. For this project the user interface of the Brekel while connected to the Kinect was captured and saved as 2D image sequence as well as 3D point cloud data on disk, which was open for digital manipulation and was rendered later and edited in other packages.

6. From now on I am going to refer to the computerized and partly computerized thing that I am going to refer to as "Kinect" by that I am referring to "plaid" that holds in check the ecological structure of environment, personal and partial sublimations, virtual perspectival modalities, the material dimensions of the system we call "digital".

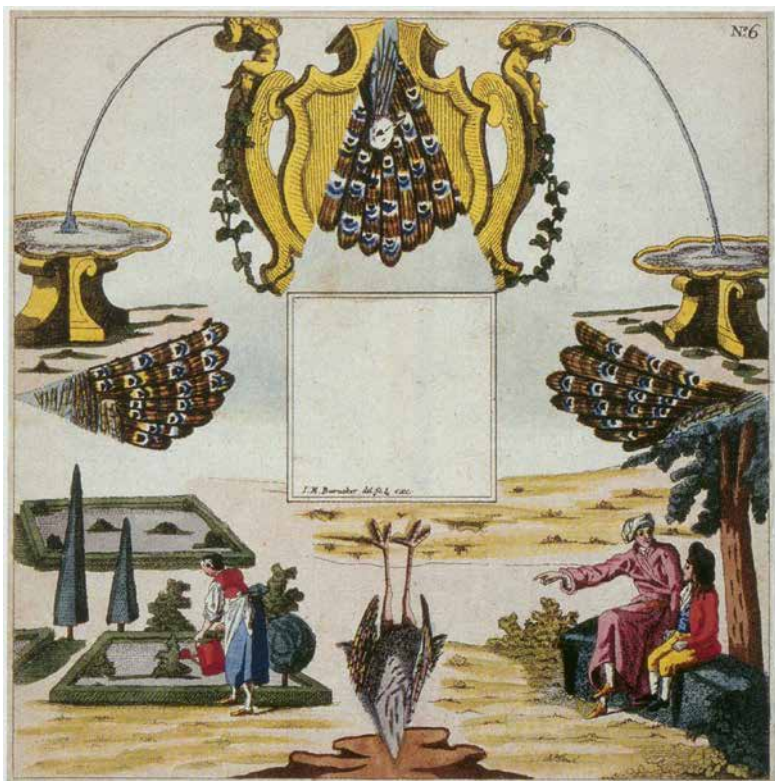


# **Exercises in Storytelling and Other Cheats**

## **[2015]** - Performance series consisting of lectures in different locations in Köln (Sufi Zentrum Köln, Blauen-Haus puppet theatre, akademiespace, and outdoor location by the Rhein) - commissioned and produced by Akademie der Künste der Welt, in the context of PLURIVERSALE II

A performance series designed as events, like a lecture or seminar, practicing different modes of disciplinary encounter and theatricality, providing an engagement with thinking about certain objects. There is no master rail that bounds the tracks of thought in these series, at each gathering Sina Seifert follows various curiosities and lets word-play to engage with a certain start. These starts might entertain a short story, a joke, a philosophical remark, or a translation. And from that an idea of a work might present itself as form of engagement with the elements of improvisation and preparedness around its subject, remembering personal readings, awaking some artistic metaphors, playing with the on/off switch of pedagogy, psychology, and toying with instances of historical/cultural fantasmas.

Each lecture takes place in a different place in the city of Cologne, locations chosen for their certain reservation values and different hospitalities towards art (an industrial riverine landscape, children puppet theater, Sufi-center, art gallery), relating the gestures of exhibition and addressing architecture of socialisation. These talks are fancy but careful responses to the irritation of intercultural narratives that perform meaning-making and commitment before that which demands thinking. They perform mutating perspectives on the chosen topic, reading and unfolding different discourses and literacies under the influence of language, history, and certain technologies.



Johann Michael BURUCKER (1763-1813) Série de 6 anamorphoses gravées

<https://vimeo.com/146877319>



## **(#1) Standing on the Shoulders of Giants**

multimedia lecture performance in  
AKADEMIESPACE (five video projectors, multiple  
audio channel, lighting, rocket maquette and  
clothing on installed panels, printed text, various  
stages with different heights, live video editing,  
music) in collaboration with Ale Bachlechner,  
Jonathan Kastl, Benjamin Ramirez Perez und  
Stefan Ramirez Perez. (17.4.2015)

**The project *Standing on the Shoulders of Giants* performs and studies a speculative overlapping of three narratives: the expressions of humility in the history of science; Multi-literate relationships between three ancient teachers: Farabi, Mir Damad, and Aristotle; The parasitical and intertwined story of the evolution of lice in vestimentary semiotics.**

The metaphors of humility in science goes back further than Newton's testimony, *nanos gigantum humeris insidentes*, which on one hand initiates a dreadful respect for the-dead-teacher and on second hand represents a passive-aggressive ambition to achieve scale. By talking about giants we are in the dossiers of climbing, riding, and ascending the landscape of knowledge from the viewpoint of the *Anthropos* (the one who looks up from the Earth), a discursive anatomical relationship invoking an impossible address, recognition, fantasy and cry, towards and by the-one-who-sees-more. Parallel to that reading, bowing-before-the-master has intrigued long and scandalous communications between the cultures in the last millennia. Aristotle to the *Bildung* of the boys of gymnasium and Farabi's translatorial nightmares of Aristotle's unconcentrated thinkings, is one of many interesting relationships that the early philosophers called upon each other involuntarily.





Installation view of the lecture performance 'Standing on the Shoulders of Giants' at ACADEMYSPACE Köln 2015







[from the transcript of the tour in Wallraf-Richartz-Museum 2015, part of the video installation of the project **“Standing on the Shoulders of Giants”**]

*“Who has been here in the museum?*

*[in the elevator]*

*You are part of a tour and we’re just gonna explore some ideas, some artifacts, some architectures.*

*Right now you are in the museum.*

*And I would like you to think about the material conditions of existence and also think of the museum as a compilation of representations that seemingly produce meaning.*

*And that’s for this room... follow me.*

*[going out of the elevator]*

*We are going to start in the other room so if you please follow my body.*

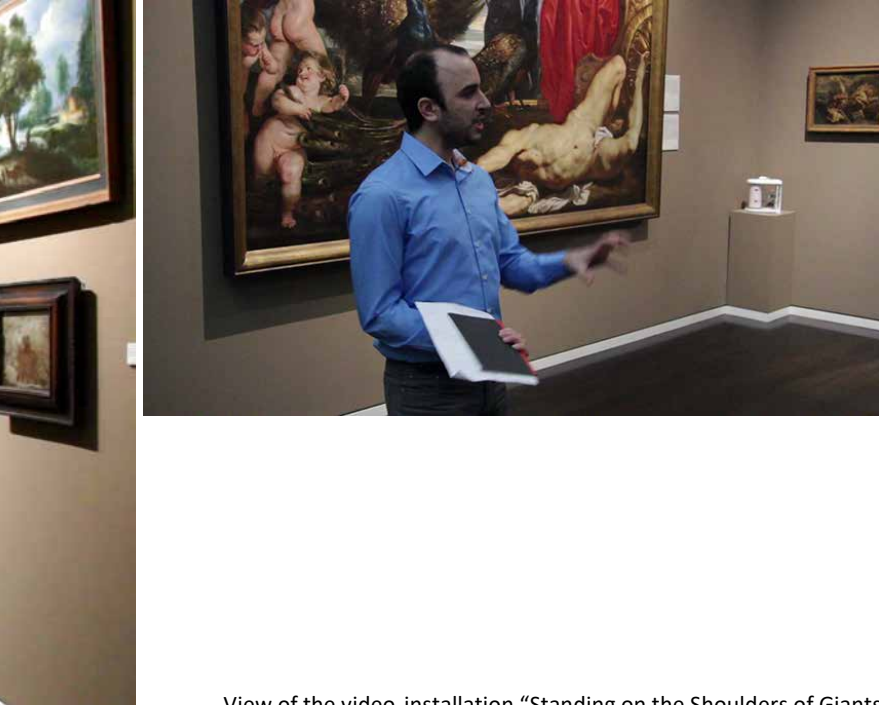
*Thank you everyone for coming, and I’m Sina and I hope you had a nice arrival, a nice day, you are free to move around. to look around and you don’t have to turn to me and stay in a circle around me and I (???) you can hear me (?) you can just do whatever you like in the space.*

*I will take my time to talk, to think, and to move in the space and these gentlemen and lady are going to film it for later use in another performance. So I hope the presence of cameras and my notebook doesn’t distract you and it’s not really theater so...*

*but it might turn to, later, to something, to other signs (?).*

*Ok. let’s start somewhere. Milton. when he wrote paradise lost....”*





View of the video-installation “Standing on the Shoulders of Giants” in AKADEMIESPACE







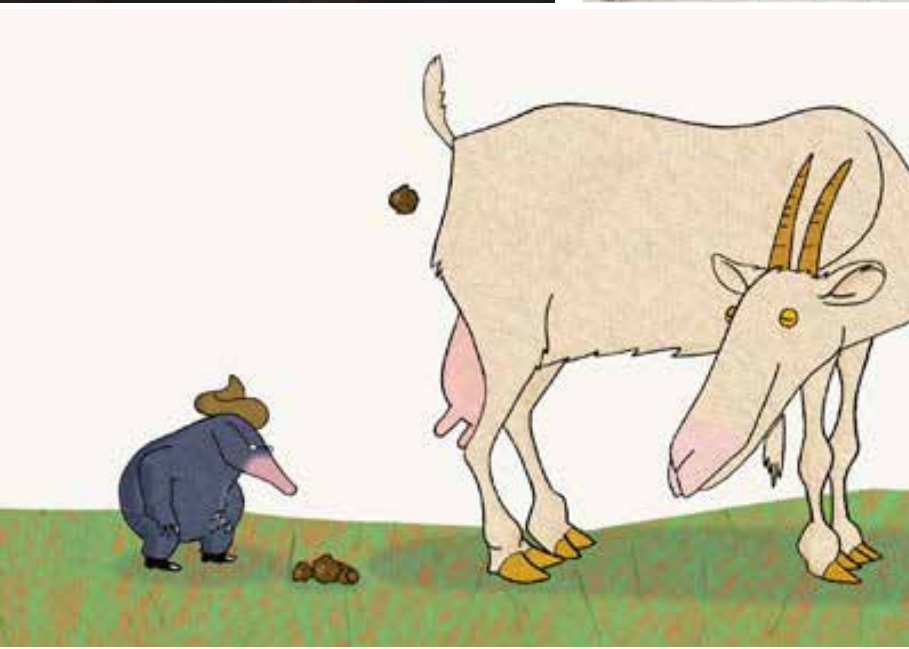
**(#2) Vom kleinen Maulwurf, der wissen wollte, wer ihm auf den Kopf gemacht hat**

lecture performance (food, vomit, story) in  
collaboration with Linda Franke - conceived for  
*Blauen-Haus puppet theatre*, part of PLURIVERSALE  
II produced and curated by Akademie der Künste der  
Welt, Köln April 2015.

The performance is a talk about an illustrated short children story,  
where series of deconstructive readings of the children's literature  
*Vom kleinen Maulwurf, der wissen wollte, wer ihm auf den Kopf  
gemacht hat* (1989, author: Werner Holzwarth, illustrator: Wolf  
Erlbruch) are pushed to different contemporary phenomenons of  
social justice.



view from the outside, the Blauen-Haus puppet theatre



The Maulwurf in the story answers the call of a random occurrence of fecal matter on his head. As we go with him through the check-ups of all the animals' anuses, ass-to-ass, we are demonstrated by unique transmission, utterance, text and indigestible work of each animal. The rectum, in the story, is the channel of productive energy; it has always been also the space of pleasure and rape. This channel can be jammed or raped by pedagogy, projects of others, parasite, noise, or superego's institutional plunders. The story is about revengeful projects, cognitive capacity of not-knowing, over-dosing, and more. The story and its pervert reading open up an interdisciplinary thinking on cultural, literary, and political aspects of 'taking action,' and aims at the people who work with their creativity.







Lecture performance 'Vom kleinen Maulwurf...' with Linda Franke in  
Blauen-Haus Puppentheater Köln 2015

[http://www.sinaseiffee.com/  
VomkleinenMaulwurf.html?UfKwc](http://www.sinaseiffee.com/VomkleinenMaulwurf.html?UfKwc)

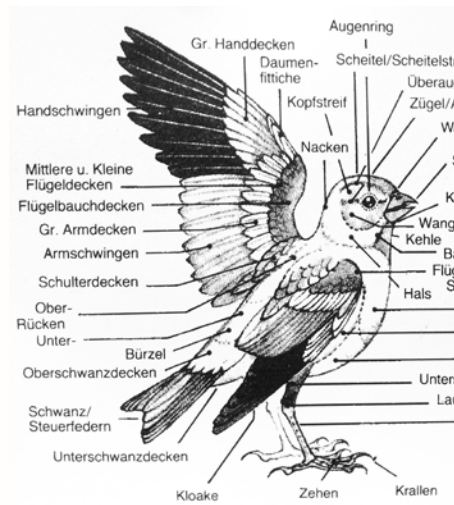
### (#3) Reading Mantîq-uṭ-Ṭayr

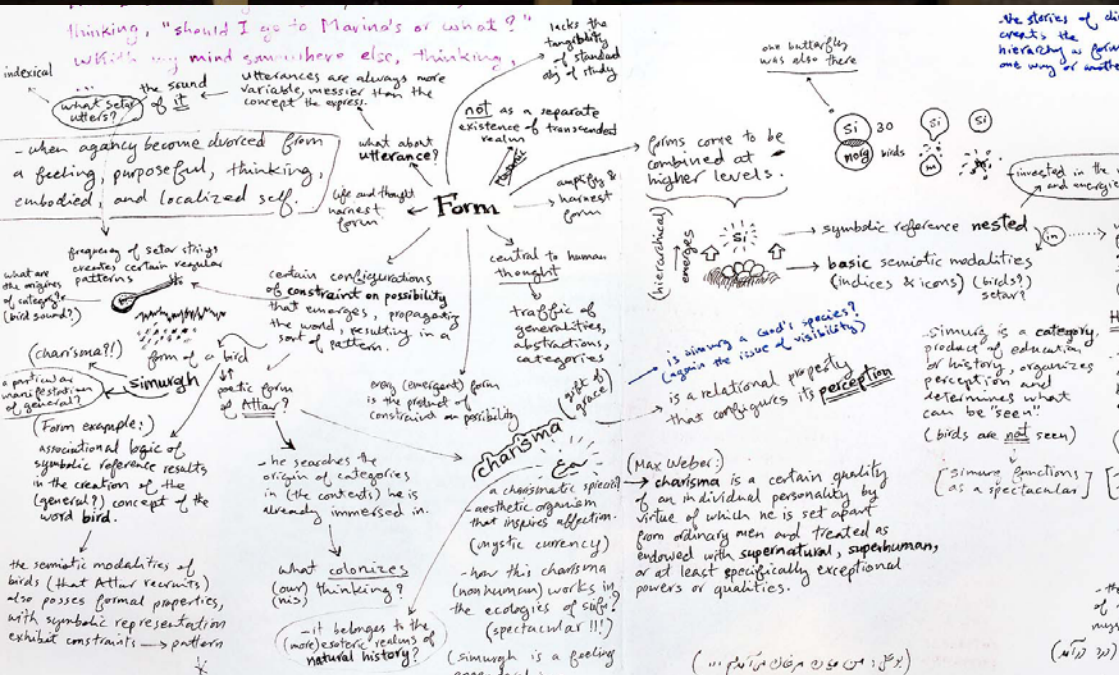
#### —the Conference of Birds

lecture performance in English, in collaboration with Alexander Borisovich Gurko - conceived for *Sufi Zentrum Köln*, in the context of PLURIVERSALE II produced by Akademie der Künste der Welt, Köln May 2015

**The performance, accompanied by occasional playing of Setar (musical instrument) traditional improvisation on Iranian traditional scales, speaks about the metaphysics of animal formal imagination in the context of Muslim-Iranian-lyrical traditions, with concerns of “nature” in narratology in a specific mystic cultural context and symbolic thought in general.**

The lecture is inspired on one hand by the mystic poems of Attar, a prominent figure in *Tasawwuf* (Iranian Sufism) died in 1221 AD, and on another hand by a parallel reading from *Kalila wa Dimna* (Sanskrit: Panchatantra), an iconic transcript and witness for an old language hybrid of Middle Persian and Arabic written in the form of animal fables. The performance reads a canonical moment in Iranian literature: *Simurgh*—that is a mythical bird, once in Attar’s poetic epic *The Conference of the Birds* and second in one of the *Kalila wa Dimna*’s stories *The Bird Pair and the Sea*. The Simurgh in Attar’s work is a holy intuitive and a transcendental recognition of the nature of humanity towards the supremacy of sublime forms, while the same “Simurgh” in *Kalila wa Dimna* is a metaphor of abstract power and social hierarchy—challenged, raged, and raid scandalously by small political birds. This project functions as a reflection on an ancient narrative and an intervention into a mystic symbol. Two depictions of an important imaginary creature and metaphor in Sufi mysticism, when read side by side, poke and irritate each other’s structure. The performance is accompanied by traditional music, played by the speaker, in the same musical scales that have been evolving together with the vast body of mystic literature, including Attar’s writing, in the last millennia in Iran.









#### **(#4) Retracing the Steps of the Wolf in the Story of the Three Little Pigs**

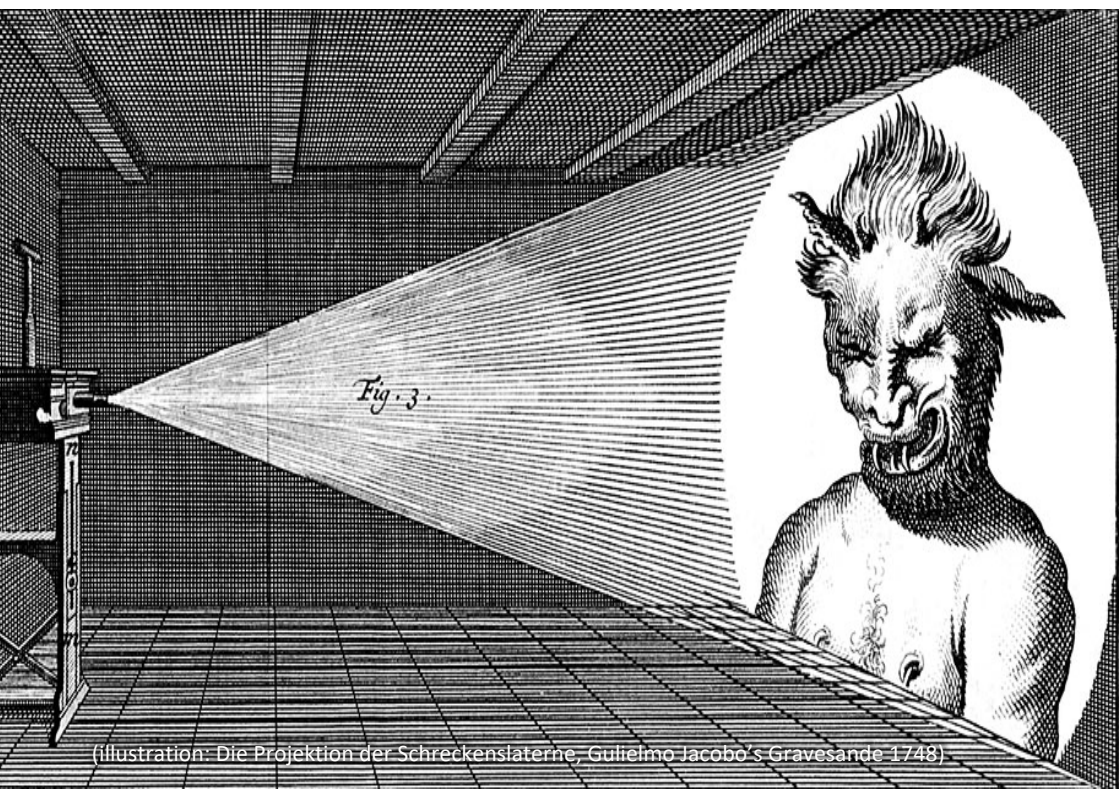
lecture performance, with Marat Beltser, location: shores of Köln, duration: 4 hours - in the context of PLURIVERSALE II produced by Akademie der Künste der Welt, Köln June 2015.

**Without falling easily into naive notions of infantile separation anxieties, the lecture goes through the genealogy of the formal wall and space-making in the story of Three Little Pigs and explores the ways we might interrupt the automatic narrative of architecture, animality, civility, and sublimity.**

The *...Little Pigs* project is a long talk about the beginning of settling, metaphysics of architecture, being at home, narrative animals, and the story of building in general—a gesture of reading that carefully transforms “a” story into “set” of stories. The contradictions between dwelling humanity and nomadic grave-hunting are symbolically structured among other sub-narratives in the story of *Three Little Pigs*. The lecture goes after the origins of architecture in this story as pure metaphysics and asks for the animal without narrative. Are primitive origins of metaphor lying in the figurative realm of fables? By reverse metaphorization of the presented concepts the performance listens to that which is readable and not-readable in the story of inventing architecture and how the space of the home suppresses its own addressability...







(Illustration: Die Projektion der Schreckenslaterne, Gulielmo Jacobo's Gravesande 1748)

## **An Intro to Islam [2014-2015] - Performance-lecture series in different locations:**

Biozentrum Köln, KHM-Rundgang, SCHALTEN UND WALTEN (*Undesirable Decidability -the Indecisions and Insanity of Sanctity in Early Islam*), and King Georg club-bar Köln (*Bodies of the Prophet and the Celestial Self*)

The performance-lecture aims at the relationships between the different voices in Islam: the prophet, the reciter, and myself—as someone who has grown up in Iran during the development of country's educational and religious transformation to Islamic doctrine after a revolution. By speaking like an Imam and electronically enhanced singing, the performer acquires the tools of the prophet of Islam to examine how a prophet sounds to his listeners at his time and after fourteen centuries.

By drawing, on one hand, a personal picture of the history of Islam, the story of voice, and reflecting on a life-experience of growing up in its realms, the lecture brings up the meaning of being a child in that certain society marked by the Islamic scholarship and cosmology, and that which happens in the classroom structured by the ideas that were adapted from Islam and its traditions. On the other hand, the performance is an elaboration on the issue of memory, as something that is real but not actual. Memory is the space where art and love can be called into being, and—in a Deleuzian term—belongs to the virtual domain. The recalling of the past in the vortex of written or spoken propositions of Islamic textualities also entails its forgetting—a talking conciseness that tries to catch up to a contemporary image of science and art, but it fails to reach a therapeutic whole.

The public official of religious representative in Islam talks in the sacred space, the hyper-mosque. This is a mental space more than an architectural space. To perform the religious text in a place reserved for science or artistic tests, is an experiment with the sacred space that lacks the ritualistic and symbolic actors which construct it. The symbolic necessity and cultural significance of the mosque where the *Khutbah* happens, is of undoubted importance, however there have been no relationship between the artists and that which goes on within the mosque—there have been no dialogue between creativity and the demands of worship. Wherever there are cultural traces there are religious ones too.





Lecture in English by Sina Seifée at Biozentrum Köln Insect Lab2, Köln 2014

<https://youtu.be/P3uslirxjEs>

## GOD NAME PRAY KINGGEORG

layout completed on 10 items



Performance **Bodies of the Prophet and the Celestial Self** sermoned and sang by Sina Seifee at King Georg club-bar, July 2015. *Khutbah* (short-lecture) on the fantasies of transformation in the body of prophet in Islamic teaching and the imagination of call with few recitations of Quran.

divine myth

God's secret name, as proposed in the mystic tradition of Islam, remains an impossible stand for the believer. A word that he will never learn. The issue of the articulation of belief is opened by the many mystics that charged the religion by radically mystifying the God they had to believe in.

specific ta



Qiblah is the direction that should be faced when a Muslim prays during Salat. It is fixed as the direction of the Kaaba in Mecca. In April 2006, Malaysian National Space Agency sponsored a conference of scientists and religious scholars to address the issue of how the Qiblah should be determined when one is in orbit. The determination of the direction of the Qiblah is now necessarily the convergence of unholy disciplines. The diagram shows the shortest distance between any point on the retroazimuthal map projection centered on Mecca, the projection produces a pseudo spatial horizon somewhere in the middle of Pacific Ocean, a location that directionality is lost for the unity of prayer, this point is accidentally on the Atoll of Mururoa a nuclear weapon testing site for France undertook between 1966 and 1996.

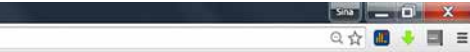
The lecture **Bodies of the Prophet and the Celestial Self** is performed in Cologne. The translation of this bar in Farsi matches the *میکند*, which is a technical term in Tasavof (Iranian Sufi) an important trope of the Sufi's dwelling.

Islam is foremost about one's relationship with God. In this relationship, one interacts, overlaps, and overwrites one's extensions of interpersonal relationships.

Material economy is hard-coded in the value of prayer and haram in the currency of believe in calculation of its own destiny. God is present in this in his Faust, in the beginning when God and Devil gambled for the human soul.

'Undesirable Decidability—the Indecisions of Sanctity in Early Islam', performance at release-event of 'Shilly Shally #2' at SCHALTEN UND WALTEN, Köln 2014.





Online interface for the lecture series on Islam containing the notes, thoughts, and relationships

<http://www.sinaseifree.com/notes.html?islam>

the (Islamic) God has many names, almost endless as long as the language can withhold adjectives. Does he means to have no name? By that can he be at all identified or located in prayer? Unnameability of the God deconstructs every attempt of pray to a target. He will not let himself to be addressed by the theist.

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The mysticism deviated from Muhammad's original Islam was developed by those who wanted to "feel" their faith. There a great **passivity** rose in the few century after the beginning of Islam. However soon it developed enormous intellectual interests that took them to structured and directed contemplation. This new form of relation to the Absolute was away from the calculated pray. They practised to learn the associational logic of gnosis and learned to harvest the imaginative power of subconsciousness.

**an intro to islam** at **KHM 2014** promoted by **openlab**. Performance lecture in English with occasional singing verses of Qur'an in Arabic; By speaking like an Imam and electronically enhanced singing, the performer acquires the tools of the prophet of Islam to examine how a prophetic character sounds to his listeners at his time and after fourteen centuries.





SEIFEE, Sina

\*1982 Tehran, Iran

## VITA

[2016-2017]—post-master at *a.pass* (Advanced Performance and Scenography Studies), Brussels, Belgium.

[2011-2014]—master diploma in Media Arts (postgraduate degree Diplomstudiengang II) at Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln.

[2006-2009]—theater studies with Reza Ravanbakhsh, Tehran.

[2005-2010]—practical study of the Iranian traditional music with Soroush Dabiri, Setar based on *Radif*, Tehran.

[2004-2008]—studied Visual Arts in *Charsoo Institute of Art* with Saeed Ravanbakhsh in Tehran.

[2000]—undergraduate Applied Mathematics in *Shahid Beheshti University* in Tehran.

## PRIZES AND GRANTS

[2016]—Auslandsstipendien für hochbegabte Künstlerinnen und Künstler - MFKJKS

[2016]—Artist residency at MAM16 - *Maroc Artist Meeting*, a partner project of Marrakech Biennale 2016, Morocco.

[2015]—Projektförderung from Kunststiftung NRW.

[2015]—Förderungspreis at Akademie der Künste der Welt, Köln.

[2014]—Arbeitsstipendium in „ÜberSetzen“, *Die zeitgenössischen Künste als fremde Sprache(n)* of Europäische Akademie für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Montepulciano Italy.

[2012]—DAAD-Preis for outstanding performance of foreign students at German universities.

[2012]—KHM Förderpreise for outstanding artistic achievements.

## WORKSHOPS

[2019]—“The Streaming Hypothesis: Hacker Pedagogy” with *constant*, hosted by *RITCS school*, January 2019 Brussels

[2018]—“MONDAY READINGS: DATABASES” with Femke Snelting, hosted by *a.pass*, April 2018 Brussels

[2017]—“Little Fables of Practice” hosted by *a.pass*, July 2017 Brussels

[2017]—“Possible Bodies, iteration I” with *constant*, hosted by *Akademie Schloss Solitude*, February 2017 Stuttgart

[2017]—masterclass on lecture-performances for *Sint Lucas Antwerpen & Royal Academy of Fine Arts* Antwerp, May 2017

## SELECTED ARTISTIC EXPERIENCES

[2018]—“Stranger Within” multi-media performance and domestic intervention, with Mia Habib and Jassem Hindi, produced by TrAP and Black Box Theater, presented in Bastard festival Teaterhuset Avant Garden 2018 Trondheim and Interkulturelt Museum, October 2018 Oslo

[2018]—“Four Eastern Cartographies of Entrapment” multi-media installation and lecture-performance, in the context of the exhibition *A Tripoli Agreement*, curated by Renan Laru-an, produced by Sharjah Art Foundation with the support of Air Arabia, July 2018 Sharjah

[2017]—“Antlitz des Paradieses” video installation, in collaboration with Sana Ghobbeh, hosted by and exhibited in Künstlerhaus Eckernförde and Galerie NEMO, November 2017 Eckernförde

[2017]—“Minbar of translation” exhibition, performance, site-specific mediation, presented in *The Artist and the Social Dreamer* curated by Renan Laru-an, part of the *Forecast* festival hosted by Haus der Kulturen der Welt, October 2017 Berlin

[2017]—“Fingured Questions” lecture performance, presented in *Auditorium For Distracted Intelligence* curated by Ekaterina Kaplunova and Richard Venlet, in the context of *Biennale Louvain-la-Neuve*, November 2017 Louvain-la-Neuve

[2017]—“St. Open” multi-media site-specific event, installation, public intervention with Selma Gueltoprak, May 2017 Köln

[2016]—“The way of the pig” lecture performance in the group exhibition *From Bandung to Berlin: If all of the moons aligned*, curated by Renan Laru-an and Brigitta Isabella, at SAVVY Contemporary, September 2016 Berlin

[2016]—“Von der Seltsamkeit der Feststoffe” installation and sound-performance with Ali Chakav in the context of *new talents - biennale cologne*, in Museum Schnütgen (St. Cäcilien Kirche) Köln

[2015]—“Exercises in Storytelling and Other Cheats” performance series consisting of four lectures in different locations in Köln (Sufi Zentrum Köln, Blauen-Haus puppet theatre, akademiespace, and outdoor location by the Rhein) - commissioned and produced by Akademie der Künste der Welt in the context of PLURIVERSALE II

[2014-2015]—“An Intro to Islam” performance lecture series in different locations: Biozentrum Köln, KHM-Rundgang, SCHALTEN UND WALTEN (“Undesirable Decidability -the Indecisions and Insanity of Sanctity in Early Islam”), King Georg club-bar Köln (“Bodies of the Prophet and the Celestial Self”)

[2016]—“NATURE, 404 / Difficult Forests in the Digital Flux” multi-media solo exhibition and book publication, in Nevertheless Gallery, Köln.

[2013]—“Double Feature\_ Artist Talk mit: Sina Seifée & Spezialgast” solo exhibition (video installation and performance lecture), GOLD + BETON, Köln.

[2012]—“Sketch For A Modular Construction With Cellular Automaton” models made of cardboard and plexiglas installation, exhibited at *Architekturteilchen - Modulares Bauen im digitalen Zeitalter*, Museum für Angewandte Kunst Köln. Published in *off topic* journal of media arts issue 4.

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