

## **Everyday Archives II (Flyers 1998 – 2008)**

Transcript, Malin Pettersson Öberg, 2013

Quodlibet: a form of Trompe-l'œil painting practised by Dutch artists between 1655 and 1675. In these compositions, small objects such as letters, sketches and work tools were suspended with ribbons against a wooden background. They were depicted in three-dimensional, illusionist ways, often to convey a story of the artist, in coded form.

*The German word museal [museumlike] has unpleasant overtones. It describes objects to which the observer no longer has a vital relationship and which are in the process of dying. They owe their preservation more to historical respect than to the needs of the present. Museum and mausoleum are connected by more than phonetic association. Museum are the family sepulchers of works of art.<sup>1</sup>*

In the film "Notebook on Cities and Clothes" Wim Wenders reads the following: *You live wherever you live, you do whatever work you do, you talk however you talk, you eat whatever you eat, you wear whatever clothes you wear, you look at whatever images you see... You're living however you can. You are however you are. Identity... of a person, of a thing, of a place. What is it, identity?*

*Because of the ability of material things to speak to us about who we are, there exists a continuous urge to control, classify and interpret them. In effect, we use objects as a sophisticated means of making both ourselves and our world knowable.<sup>2</sup>*

Just the act, the gesture, of gathering and arranging, of constructing a world, an archive, out of something that would otherwise be lost... *Lateness is a specific form of the work of mourning, its temporal mode; we might call lateness the mourning of time, the paradoxical manner in which an artist or artwork takes leave of their time, moves on or away from the now. [...] As opposed to the relinquishment of time, what of the contrary dynamic? What about those who won't let go? Does lateness occasion a sibling, a sister dynamic involved in holding on to the past, a desperate clinging to time itself? Is there, in other words, a melancholia of time?<sup>3</sup>*

Walter Benjamin writes about book collecting in his essay "Unpacking my library". He writes: *My most memorable purchases were made on holiday – when I happened to be passing. [...] What a quantity of cities have revealed themselves to me through those marches undertaken in search of books to conquer! [...] Now, with the last packing case still only half-empty, it is already well past midnight. Other thoughts fill me than those of which I have spoken. Not thoughts; images, memories. Memories of the cities where I found so many of these things: Riga, Naples, Munich, Danzig, Moscow, Florence, Basel, Paris... Little has changed in how we encounter the world at different points of our lives. But the vastness of the gaps inbetween these points; the enormous difference of angle and view point, continue to surprise.*

In the book "Looking at the Overlooked" I read: *Taxonomy is the name given to the branch of knowledge that deals with classification; the taxonomist takes a body of phenomena (plants, animals) and groups them into species and genera, according to criteria which the taxonomist creates for the purpose of analysis.<sup>4</sup>* By placing objects side to side we can compare them. We can discover their differences and similarities. By isolating them we can study them. How is this black color different from this black? How can form speak about content? What is this interface between the interior and the exterior, the substance and the surface, our concepts and the material world? Can we even separate them?

By 1971 there was a good chance that the subject Walker Evans chose would be some kind of sign. Signs had always been part of his subject, but by 1971 they had become almost his artistic obsession. Frequently on his excursions he would photograph a sign and then remove it, if possible, and take it with him. The photograph had always been his way of making clear exactly what it was that had significance. How do we know what has significance?

*A comb, a traditional painting, a sewing machine, an umbrella, a table may find a place in the museum in different sections, depending upon their classification. We see sculpture in a separate space, paintings in another, ceramics and porcelains..., stuffed animals... Each space is in turn compartmentalized, perhaps intended to be a section – snakes, insects, fish, birds – susceptible to being divided into departments – parrots, gulls, eagles.<sup>5</sup>*

My grandparents were true collectors. They knew about the ability of objects to transmit knowledge and transform the world. When they died a large auction was held at their courtyard, in the pouring rain. Everything they had gathered over the course of a lifetime, was shattered and sold.

*Please leave all shiny objects behind, you won't need them where we're going. Relax, take a deep breath and concentrate now, we really must be gone. There's a risk in everything we undertake, but now you must trust me more than anyone. 'Cause I've seen things, that you could only dream about. I've been to places that you'll never find. And I've had dreams that you couldn't even fit inside your head. All the places I wish I could find.<sup>6</sup>*

*Ephemeral.* Lasting for only a short time, transitory, short-lived. *Ephemeral pleasure.*

1. a short-lived organism, such as the mayfly
2. a plant that completes its life cycle in less than one year <sup>7</sup>

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**With quotes from**

1. Theodor W. Adorno  
Wim Wenders
2. Marysia Lewandowska & Neil Cummings
3. George Baker  
Walter Benjamin
4. Norman Bryson
5. Marcel Broodthaers
6. Flotation Toy Warning
7. Wikipedia