THE STUBBORN LIFE OF OBJECTS

YUKA OYAMA
THE STUBBORN *LIFE OF OBJECTS*

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Reflection on an artistic research project 2012 – 2017
Oslo National Academy of Arts, Department of Art and Craft
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Fig. 1
Bag of Flour, 2015

Fig. 2
Logos

Fig. 3
Helmet, 2014
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Fig. 4
Project mind map, 2013
Once, while I was sitting in a car with the window down, my sunglasses flew out. We stopped the car to look for them, but they were gone. “It’s just a thing,” my grandmother, who was also in the car, said, trying to make me feel better. The sunglasses were an important item that formed how I wanted to represent myself, and they also carried many years of summer memories. After this incident, I heard several other stories about strong emotional ties to objects that we own.

Artifacts can sometimes grow beyond their intended function. Some objects can demand from us a different set of rules in order to handle them. In some way or another, they take on a form of life within our minds, cause inconvenience, and make us behave differently. I thought, if commodities could evoke these various types of emotionality in us and construct fictions, then let them also become agents that help enhance our ability to imagine and dream.

In his book *The System of Objects,* Jean Baudrillard discusses two different types of objects: The first type is a commodity, such as a refrigerator, serving a practical function. The second type is an object that enters into subjective relationships with the owner, and in this sense no longer serves as a commodity. It gains persona and thus people wish to possess it.

In 2013, I asked myself, of everything I own, which domestic objects would I enter into subjective relationships with? Of these objects, which are the five most special ones? What do these objects reflect? I chose a bag of flour, a handbag, a headdress, a key, and a piano. These were objects that I had strong emotional ties to – so strong, in fact, that I sometimes had difficulty keeping them under control.

My artistic research project, *THE STUBBORN LIFE OF OBJECTS* investigates intermediary relations between objects and people. It aims at exploring and understanding the following issues:

- With which type of domestic objects do owners begin subjective relationships, and which fantasies do they project onto their objects?
- How can the physical and psychological impact of objects be transformed into wearable sculptures and how can they be set into motion?
- How can my stories of and investigations on objects be communicated through photography, film, and multi-media installations?

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The following aspects were also of great importance to the overall research:

- Developing an understanding for materials, as well as methods to construct wearable sculptures
- Developing choreographies that include these wearable sculptures
- Investigating the importance of participatory projects for the participants
- Interdisciplinary collaborations with artists working in the following fields: dance, choreography, film, and photography

**DEVELOPMENT OF THIS RESEARCH**

At first, I sought to find out with which type of domestic objects owners develop stronger emotional ties, and what kind of fantasies they projected onto these objects. I conducted a mix of workshops, public interventions, as well as interviews with diverse participants in order to collect images and stories relating to domestic objects. I then developed a method to construct wearable sculptures that are enlarged versions of objects. These wearable sculptures allow people to enter the interior of the objects, where they can examine their emotional responses to the objects; they can physically and metaphorically interact with the objects, and even become them.

Later, I implemented various formats of interdisciplinary group research to investigate a possible choreography of the sculptures. I then explored methods of documenting these movements using film. During the final process, I examined how to include multi-media components - wearable objects, drawings, photographs and films to create an installation. I focused on examining the following aspects: How to present the sculptural objects so that the audience can interact with them, how to incorporate live performance, and how to project my video works using various formats of projection and digital devices?

**ARTWORKS**

During the research fellowship I have produced the following new body of work: *Encapsulation Suits, Collectors, Cleaning Samurai, Helmet – River, Modern Ballet Duo & Trio, and Stubborn Objects Psychodrama.*

*Encapsulation Suits* is the core project that I developed over three years, and which at the final stage morphed into the piece entitled *Stubborn Objects Psychodrama.* *Collectors* was the first artwork to be completed. *Cleaning Samurai* marked a major turning point. Working ideas for *The Weaver* lead to the development of *Helmet – River* and *Modern Ballet Duo & Trio.*

**ARTISTIC POSITION**

My artistic practice spans contemporary art, contemporary art jewellery, sculpture, performance, film, costume, and material based art. I received my training as a jewellery artist at the Akademie der bildenden Künste in Munich. For me, art jewellery is an artistic medium that consists of two intertwined components: an object and a person, with the intrinsic proximity and direct contact of jewellery with the human body being an essential quality. It is an artistic medium that can be touched, used, and worn.
Wearable sculptures could therefore be considered as exaggerations of art jewellery. They are enlarged versions of jewellery that show more dramatic physical and visual impacts.

In recent decades, the protagonists of contemporary art jewellery have encouraged the use of alternative, non-metal materials, unconventional work techniques, and unusual scale. Ultimately, they attempted to provoke the conventional visual and aesthetic representations of jewellery, however, often in my view without fully succeeding to renounce traditional formal archetypes.

Additionally, the rigid structures within the protective environment of a singular discipline have been reluctant to accept new approaches; consequently, the field has evolved internally. Most critically, many jewellery artists still treat jewellery as an exclusive substance, whilst excluding the people – the wearer (user), the viewer (receptor), and the public – who are not seen as part of their medium.

In my research, I have aimed to further develop the artistic language of jewellery as a wearable object by bringing the wearable object even closer to people. In particular, I sought to elaborate the integral and intermediary relations between the wearable object and the subject. Furthermore, the aspect of transforming respectively being activated to behave differently whilst under the influence of (worn) objects has been another of my core interests. Above all, I have examined the post studio aspect of jewellery: What happens to jewellery after its production?

I hope this research will introduce new modes of thinking about jewellery art as an artistic media that spreads out into everyday life and involves and activates people. Also, I hope to share my experiences of creating a cross-disciplinary research environment with art students and the general public.

STRUCTURE OF THIS REFLECTION TEXT
This written reflection of my artistic research is structured in three parts. The first part addresses my research, my artistic position, methodical and theoretical approach, the writing process, and the overall handling of material. The second part describes each artwork that I produced during the research period. The third part explains relevant theory that I have applied, along with my reflective thoughts.

In the introductory as well as in the reflection sections, I tried to give the objects a written voice and experiment with different forms of text. Some of the texts take the form of an interview conducted by the various objects, where they ask me questions that underline relevant aspects of my research. Other chapters take the form of a letter or a conventional essay.

The extensive use of footnotes served as an additional space in which I could not only give present details of my references and sources, but also further unfold my thoughts. It seemed to be an appropriate solution – and relevant to my artistic process – to present non-linear thinking and working methods outside of, yet parallel to, the main body of text.
Key and Yuka have just finished the rehearsal of Yuka’s viva voce (public defence).

**Key:** If someone asks you tomorrow about how important objects’ functionality is, how would you answer?

**Yuka:** Functionality mattered initially. As Key I researched your object biography—how you evolved, how your future looks like, and so on. But I noticed a need to limit rational thinking in order to enter an imaginative dimension and experience your life force.

**Key:** If people would ask you about fetishism, how would you answer?

**Yuka:** My focus is on magic and emotionality in objects. I am not at all interested in any abnormal and perverted fixation on objects. I am searching for an imaginative and hallucinatory realm within which objects invite me to participate. Also, I did not regard Key or Piano in terms of their commodity value.¹

**Key:** You told me that you were working on an artwork at Konstfack in Stockholm in 2009, before undertaking this artistic research.

**Yuka:** Yes. Around 2008, I began reading books written by Patrick Lafcadio Hearn.² Patrick Lafcadio Hearn (b. 1850 in Greece, d. 1904 in Japan) was a Greek/Irish journalist and a writer who lived in Japan. Hearn’s translations focused on traditional Japanese folktales and Buddhist tales that were old-fashioned and unattractive for many Japanese scholars at that time. He was especially interested in themes like duality of dead spirits and real life.³ Retelling the folklore and religious tales and placing them in a modern context, they became more like lived experiences. His creative input provided profound details and images that allowed English readers to better grasp a sense of Japanese culture.

In the process of reading, telling, understanding and translating, and despite language and cultural barriers, the final tales in English went through many transformations and mutations.⁴ Regardless of whether they were completely accurate or not, Hearn actually

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¹ Karl Marx and his theory on the fetishism of commodity addresses how commodities start to generate their own market value in the market after they leave the hands of the producer. “I call this the fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labour as soon as they are produced as commodities... production of commodities.” Karl Marx, *Capital Vol.1*, (London: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 165.


³ Ibid., pp. 350–367.

⁴ Hearn collaborated with his wife, Setsu Koizumi, who researched antique books for him. Since Hearn could not read Japanese and Setsu in turn could not speak English, she told him the stories from these books in simple Japanese. Based on these tales, Hearn retold the tales in English. Satoshi Kida, “ラフカディオハーンの再話文学西洋との葛藤の縮図として [Lafcadio Hearn’s Retelling literature as a microcosm of the conflict with the West],” translated by Yuka Oyama, (Ph.D. diss. Kobe University, 2013), pp. 93–95.
rescued a number of Japanese folktales that might have otherwise vanished.\(^5\) His intervention was so important, that in fact Japanese people retold and rewrote Hearn’s stories, translating them back from English into Japanese.\(^6\)

I related to his work, because I was investigating how to create work derived from someone else’s stories, essentially retelling and merging them with my creative ideas. Furthermore, in Japan, humans, objects, animals and nature are treated as equally important elements that show no hierarchy. Souls reside in everything, and they slip in and out of various entities. As being brought up in a Japanese family, I believe in reincarnating into different entities and that humans are not the ultimate supremacy.

The objects that appeared in Hearn’s tales also fascinated me. For example, soldiers made of toothpicks appear and dance at night; as a result, a woman suffers from lack of sleep. It turns out that these toothpicks are telling her to stop stubbing used toothpicks into a tatami mattress. In another story, the voices of two children are heard coming from a used futon duvet. The duvet had once been used by two orphans as a shelter, protecting them from the cold after they had lost their home. They were found dead in the morning, and the duvet was sold on afterwards. The story condemns the greed of the people selling the duvet for profit.

In these tales, common and mundane domestic objects gained agentive qualities and are employed to communicate messages rooted in the culture of the past. I was curious to find out what kind of object I, or other people, might select for the same means, and how relevant these objects are in current times.

Deciding to use this as a premise for the artwork, I made *Heroes, Helpers, Enemies, and Magical Medicines at Work* (2009) (fig. 6 / p. 13). I interviewed people of various backgrounds and vocations,\(^7\) asking them to select five objects that, for them, displayed various human characteristics. I also asked them to make drawings of these objects, and from these drawings, I constructed sculptures. However I was not satisfied with the results. The static sculptures that I made brought the stories’ evolution to a halt. The active, fluid, and dynamic nature of the objects described by my collaborators also became sterile. Ideally, these sculptures should have had the ability to move, to perform narratives – and essentially to keep on living.

This was the point of departure of my artistic research.

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6 Ibid., p. 7.

7 During my residency at Konstfack in Stockholm in 2009, I interviewed software developers working for Nokia, taxi drivers, artists, students, cleaning workers, and school’s administrative staff about objects that they need at work (fig. 6-8 / p. 13).
Fig. 6  
Heroes, Helpers, Enemies, Temptations and Magical Medicines at Work, 2009  
GUIDANCE (post-it), 2009  
COMPETITOR (lamp), 2009  
TEMPTATION (cigarette), 2009

Fig. 7  
Heroes, Helpers, Enemies, Temptations and Magical Medicines at Work, 2009  
Installation at Kunstraum Bethanien, 2009

Fig. 8  
Drawings of participants, 2009
Fig. 9
Headress, 2015
Dear Headdress,

I wish I could meet you in person and speak to you about how I view my visual art in relation to contemporary art jewellery. There is still a few weeks to go before I visit you, so I have decided to write you a letter instead.

A genuine attribute of craft is the production of art objects that provide (thoughts on) function, facilitate interactivity and performativity.\(^1\) These ideas run throughout my practice.

Already towards the end of my studies in Munich,\(^2\) I became more conscious that jewellery could foster dialogues among people and encourage a group of individuals to engage in collective activities.\(^3\) As a continuation, after many years of working as an artist, I investigated the physical and psychological interrelations and mediations between jewellery (in the sense of a wearable object) and its wearer during this artistic research. Wearing a piece of jewellery can alter a person’s feelings. I questioned how this ‘influence’ could be intentionally applied in order to activate the wearers and their audience.\(^4\)

In terms of how to approach the creation of such works of art, the topics of my investigation first shifted back and forth between looking at a person and an object and questioning the conventional boundaries that separate these two. Topics of investigation include the following questions:

How does a person perceive an object?
How does an object influence the person?
How does a person move and/or interact with the object?

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3. a. *Schmuck Quickies* (2002 – ongoing) is a jewellery performance project. I worked in parks, streets, train stations, hospitals, schools, museums, private homes, where I fashioned jewellery made from recycled materials onto the bodies of volunteers according to their wishes. My objectives were to encounter the wearers, investigate the universal meanings of jewellery, and to discover further potential forms and dimensions of jewellery on a human body. “Schmuck Quickies,” accessed March 25, 2017, http://dearyuka.com/sq1.html


c. *Berlin Flowers* (2007) is a series of community collaborations among 500 participants who were residents and neighbours of the shown buildings and were asked to produce ornaments to beautify three architectures in Berlin with garlands. “Berlin Flowers,” accessed March 25, 2017, http://dearyuka.com/bf1.html

4. Jewellery wearers are inherent performers since there is a constant audience of beholders.
What can a person learn from the object?
How does an object preserve a person’s memory?
How does a person wear the object in the future?

Secondly, I considered the manners in which objects and people can be interpreted sub-
jectively and objectively.

Thirdly, I experimented with format and scale, going from life size, to larger than life and
body size, and then back to miniature.

When asked about where my practice is situated in terms of genres of art (sculpture,
performance, contemporary craft, art jewellery), I begin to experience a similar, personal
dilemma – like the one I have concerning my national identity. My typical answer is that
my art spans many disciplines, languages and cultures.

Jewellery is situated between many different fields: contemporary art, contemporary art
jewellery, contemporary craft, fashion, industrial design, and costume design. Most im-
portantly, jewellery as an object is positioned between the self and the external world.

I used jewellery and accessories as an alternative language to overcome any linguistic
inadequacies and to claim individuality in any new group I entered. Gradually I became
interested in exploring the magic of jewellery, its effect and results.

Jewellery comes in all different forms and acts as signifiers for a range of attributes.
From stars on officer’s uniforms to a major’s chain, specific types of adornment dem-
onstrate the wearer’s social position and power: medals signify a reward and honour a
person for her/his achievements; friendship bands, wedding rings, Claddagh rings announce and promise love and friendships privately and publicly; memento mori jewellery
is a powerful means to remind us of a deceased person and that we will also all die.

5 I am a Japanese citizen, even though I only lived in Japan for seven years in my life. From childhood until my
early 30s I moved from one country to another (Malaysia, Japan, Indonesia, USA, and Germany) in a seven-year-
cycle. Many visa documents have changed, geographical locations have switched, many languages and cultures
have been added, but I have been brought up in a genuine Japanese family.

6 In the work The World of Jewellery (2002) I sought to present culturally varying stereotypes to demonstrate a
person’s social power. I made three pieces of jewellery for Japanese, American and Bavarian men. The Japanese
necktie pin holds a business card in the front and I embroidered images of colourful secrets in the background.
The bolo necktie with a miniature gun represented an American man, and the pin made out of deer’s horn was
made for a Bavarian man.

7 Memory of Youth (2001) is a series of four medals that honour women for the experiments with the way in
which they want to appear and be in their youth.

8 A Claddagh Ring is an Irish ring that depicts two hands holding a heart and a crown. When the heart is
pointing up, it means that the person wearing it is in a relationship. When the heart is pointing down, then it is a
sign that the individual is single.

9 My Treasure (2000) is a charm bracelet made of silver. Kind messages by people who love you are engraved
on wax and cast in silver. These plates dangle from a piece of silver chain.

memento-mori/
For example, Victorian hair jewellery\(^{11}\) expressed affection towards cherished persons, and sometimes mourned a deceased person.\(^{12}\) Even now, well into the digital revolution and virtual reality, many people still wear or carry amulets\(^{13}\) and charm bracelets\(^{14}\) that they believe to protect them and bring them good luck. Finally, the price and rarity of the material used, personal sentiments, supernatural power, and secrets add to jewellery’s value.\(^{15}\)

I consider myself to be genetically manipulating the art jewellery field by selecting what appeals to me artistically in jewellery and magnifying these qualities by adding foreign genes. The first stage of genetically engineering jewellery involved exaggerating its scale to that of a person in order to dramatize its impact and thus began creating wearable sculptures. I wanted to break the image of jewellery as being something ‘small’ and ‘cute’. I felt that the charm of wearable sculptures helped to bridge the diverse artistic fields I was involved in.

In the second phase, I animated these sculptures through performances and made films of them that on the one hand documented the performance, and, on the other hand, also functioned as independent pieces.

During the third stage I added more intimacy to the works by bringing the sculptures even closer to the wearer.\(^{16}\) In other words, I investigated domestic objects\(^{17}\) and paid attention to how some of the objects could establish a more emotional relationship with their owners.


\(^{12}\) Lady Di (2002) is a brooch that is made of hair. It illustrates the typical curl of the late Lady Di’s hairstyle. I exhibited this piece next to her portrait among relics in Dom Frankfurt.

\(^{13}\) Talismans and amulets are as old as human history. A talisman was believed to bring good luck, while amulets protected their wearers. In prehistoric times, necklaces made from animal teeth, bones, shells and stones were worn. They signified the person’s social position and at the same time protected the wearer with their magic. Arno Watteck, Amulette und Talismane (Oberdorf: Verlag für Kommunikation Dominikus Guggenberger, 2004), pp. 1 – 15.

\(^{14}\) In prehistoric times, charms had religious functions and protected the wearer from evil spirits. Gods, humans, and animal forms were carved out of gemstones. Later, charm bracelets became popular jewellery items. In the 1920s, Tiffany introduced a heart dangling from a chain. Even today, charm bracelets are still popular. Many miniature charms represent hobbies, good-luck symbol, and life events. It has become a tradition to keep memories by adding more charm elements. Frank Hague, “History of Charm Bracelet,” accessed January 5, 2017, http://jewelry-making.com/_history-charm-bracelets.html

\(^{15}\) Real Fake (2000) is a series of enamelled brooches made from silver. I borrowed confiscated coral necklaces from German customs. It is forbidden to merchandise these jewellery pieces in Germany due to the near extinction of coral. Strangely enough, the original natural materials were perfectly curved so that they looked utterly artificial, like candies. I then produced self-made coral jewellery brooches that look incredibly natural, as if they were real.

\(^{16}\) During my experiments with choreography, I sought to set objects in motion, as if the wearer (myself) and the worn object appear as one entity. The characters that ‘appeared’ reminded me of personal memories and important matters in my life.

\(^{17}\) See: Portraiture, pp.99–100.
Seeking to bring the wearable sculptures even closer to the person, to make them more intimate, and to highlight the psychological relationships the person had with the original object, I created my double in a dramatically smaller size. I wore the sculpture Piano, scanned myself with a digital 3-D scanner, and printed out a 3-D version of us that is 5 cm (height). This was an avatar of myself with my special object, and therefore the ultimate memento of my investigations during this research (fig. 10–11/p. 19).

I am currently planning future gene manipulation processes and presentations of the wearable sculptures to take place both on the street and in (art) institutions: this includes self-organised artistic carnivals, masquerades, processions or flash mobs in public space. I will also continue experimenting with choreography that anyone can perform, and include larger groups of people as audiences of events and activities involving the sculptures. I would use wearable sculptures during workshops as I regard them to be suitable educational tools that allow people to step out of their conventional roles as well as pre-given hierarchies, and reflect upon certain matters from a new perspective. Furthermore I plan to continue working in partnership with diverse (liberal) art fields. Currently I am in talks with partners from educational institutions, corporate business and museums about conducting workshops that incorporate the wearable sculptures.

Sincerely,

Yuka

Berlin, February 14, 2017

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18 “We find the miniature at the origin of private, individual history, but we find the gigantic at the origin of public and natural history.” Susan Stewart, On Longing (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), pp. 74–76. Susan Stewart, b. 1954 in New York (USA), is a poet and literary critic.
MATERIAL
The material that I used predominantly during my artistic research to construct the wearable sculptures is Polyethylene (PE) sponge. It is a substance used to isolate heat, sound, and to dampen shocks.¹ It comes in varying thicknesses of 1cm and 2cm, and is available as sheets (1m x 2m). PE sponge comes in many colours, white, green, black, and pink.² The temperature of the material is always close to the body temperature when you touch it.³ It is flexible and soft. The surface is smooth and uncoated, with pores.

Before using this material, I made wearable sculptures by constructing basic skeletons using rectangular wooden beams. Subsequently, I covered them with chicken wire, plaster bandages, kitchen towels soaked in wallpaper adhesive, and textile. The work processes were very slow and laborious. Often the final sculptures were too heavy and dangerous to wear, and I had trouble finding ways to express subtle emotional properties through the bulky and stiff material.

Creating volume and form with PE sponge is simple – it can be easily cut and assembled with hot glue. Because several layers can be glued together to strengthen the form, it was no longer necessary to construct skeletal support structures. The technique is similar to working with metal sheets, so I was able to apply my knowledge gathered from goldsmithing and welding.

Maintaining the contrast between playful modelling processes⁴ and reified, finalised forms is important and PE sponge turned out to be ideal for both. As I liked the rawness conveyed by the shiny, glued seams,⁵ I started to integrate this as a design element and used it to draw lines into the sculpted forms.⁶

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¹ To work with the meanings that certain materials embody is an important aspect of my work. I focus on the issue of society’s perception of material by choosing to work with recycled materials, for example, in Schmuck Quickies (2002 – ongoing) and Berlin Flowers (2007). Through using these discarded ready-made objects as materials I understood that many messages can be communicated through their forms, history, conditions, and colours: Material brings with it its own story.

² It is used to pack computers, for Yoga mats, swimming noodles, as insulation material underneath roofs and floors.

³ Metal is cold when you touch it. It is a challenge to stage metal as a warm and soft material in finished jewellery pieces. During my apprenticeship under Heinz Siebauer, I studied various surface treatments and alloys to change the colour and hardness of the metal.

⁴ Since constructing wearable sculptures is a time-consuming process, I examine forms extensively before starting to construct the final piece in human size. Thus, model making takes high priority in my production. I choose to work with inexpensive materials that allow me to work easily, so I can play around and make mistakes.

⁵ PE sponge is matt, while the glued seams are glossy. When wearable sculptures are worn and enacted, these seams shine and reflect the light.

⁶ I was often studying lines that accentuate forms in African masks, Pre-Colombian vases, and Cubist paintings.
I intended that my sculptures should welcome the wearers to engage in motion experiments, free from concerns such as injury or breaking the sculptures. The way in which the wearers feel about the (exterior) objects, as well as the impact of interior space and distribution of the sculpture’s weight, were primary issues; therefore, I tried my best to reduce unnecessary weight\(^7\) and obstacles in wearing them. All the sculptures were made to be extremely robust.

Even though this material is absolutely not biodegradable, the sculptures have a shorter life than sculptures made from bronze. The forms start to be misshapen or even reshaped by the wearers’ movements, much like shoes made from leather change their form according to differences in wearers’ feet and gaits.\(^8\)

The elasticity of PE sponge is a vital component. Like a person’s facial expression that changes constantly while being engaged in a conversation, many sensitive emotional properties could be expressed and articulated through movements using the sponge. I also observed that the changing and flexible forms added agentive quality to my sculptures.\(^9\)

**COLOUR**

During the initial development of my research project, I prioritised form. I reduced colours to monochrome, as if I were making charcoal drawings. I chose to work with plain-coloured materials such as white plasticine, canvas, paper and black PE sponge.

During model-making, I made notes about the final colour, while simultaneously collecting coloured textile and paint samples. After I completed the work on the models, I photographed them and then used Photoshop to add colours and experiment with them. After this, I mixed my own colours and made tests by painting a single colour on a large sheet of PE sponge (50 x 100 cm). I also filmed these painted test sheets with a film camera under various light setups to check how they appear on screen. Once I chose the colour, I painted it on the surface of variously shaped PE sponge pieces.\(^10\) After the paint had dried, I glued and assembled them.

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\(^7\) PE sponge is light. Therefore, even the heaviest sculpture, like *Vacuum Cleaner* used in *Cleaning Samurai*, weighs less than 5 kg (fig. 71/p. 123). The weight is a crucial factor for wearable sculptures – if the sculptures are too heavy the wearers cannot enact them for longer durations, which is necessary when working on experimental choreography.

\(^8\) Therefore, I was searching for the ‘next step’ to preserve the wearable sculptures even more permanently. Respectively, I produced photographs, films and 3-D digital prints of figures.

\(^9\) Dancers always preferred to wear *Bag of Flour* (fig. 1/ front cover), as it had most potential to change its forms dramatically.

\(^10\) Each sculpture is made up of many pieces, like a puzzle (fig. 13/p. 25).
I chose black for Encapsulation Suits (fig. 1/front cover, fig. 5/p. 10, fig. 9/p. 14, fig. 14/p. 26, fig. 57/p. 98, fig. 59/p. 102, fig. 76/p. 124) to represent fear and mysticism that were vital in this artwork. Black PE sponge looks like a sheet of matt granite. I liked this effect, as it resembled pieces I had done based on Mayan stone sculptures.\(^\text{11}\) I was inspired by the duality of death and life, mass and airiness in these sculptures.

For a while, I deliberated over whether to paint the Encapsulation Suits sculptures in black gloss, as I sought to give them a similar surface as their original objects – a shiny black handbag and a piano, for instance. Later, the movement experiments demonstrated the importance of retaining the softness. Thus, I left the surface unpainted.

For the artworks Cleaning Samurai (fig. 35–36/pp. 72–73), Helmet–River (fig. 40–44/pp. 83–87), and Modern Ballet Duo & Trio (fig. 45/p. 91), the choice of colours in all the pieces refers to the emotional properties, as well as the stories the artworks should tell. I sought to enhance the robotic characteristics by covering the surface with high gloss acrylic paint.

The sculptures in Cleaning Samurai were painted yellow to make the act of cleaning more visible.\(^\text{12}\) I searched for a colour that is alarming, shows a sign of protest, and thus casts light on the act of cleaning. My first choice was flashing pink, which changed to neon yellow, then to the final colour, yellow of the the Deutsche Post.\(^\text{13}\)

I used black helmets in Helmet – River to convey the sense of groups of people turning into mechanical ants and soldiers. The blue acrylic paint used for the canvas in the performance\(^\text{14}\) was meant to establish the association to a river, and to Yves Klein’s Anthropometrie body painting performance series.\(^\text{15}\)

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\(^{11}\) I frequently visited the Ethnological Museum of Berlin to study the expressions of the Mayan sculptures.

\(^{12}\) The act of cleaning often goes unseen, both in public and in private spaces.

\(^{13}\) Personally, I associate neon pink with psychedelia and suffocation. Many magazines aimed at teenage girls in Japan introduced ideal behaviours for girls and sported neon pink covers. Most of the lessons to be learned from them were about how to become objects of desire for men. As I coloured the puppet models in neon pink, I realized that pink was simply not the colour to express aggression. After undertaking a film test of neon yellow, I found out that this colour was washed out in the recorded footage. Coincidentally, I found a gymnastic cube at the location where I conducted the test filming. This colour suited the emotional intensity that I had aimed to express, so it became the final yellow.

\(^{14}\) Through wiping blue paint on canvas, a group of mechanical people painted a river. At the end it looked like the people were swimming in the river.

\(^{15}\) Yves Klein’s Anthropometrie performance was first conducted at the Gallery of Contemporary Art in Paris in 1960. In this performance three naked women painted their bodies in Klein’s blue and pressed them on sheets of white canvases that were placed on the floors and walls of the gallery, while male musicians dressed in suits played Monotone Symphonie that Klein had composed. A.D.A.G.P., “Yves Klein Archives,” accessed February 16, 2017, http://www.yveskleinarchives.org/documents/bio_us.html
Red, used in Modern Ballet Duo, is the colour of the thread that is traditionally used to sew the rags that are used to wipe floors with.\(^{16}\) For Trio, I chose yellow, red, and blue because they are primary colours. Three people start out, each with their separate primary colour. Through the intermixing of their (colour) paths/tracks they produce brown/green/purple colours. Acting like automatons, the three colours perform their task and a process of mixing the colours occurs. This was the first piece where I mixed various colours in one artwork, which is something I intend to continue in future pieces.

FORM
In Encapsulation Suits, the first three objects Handbag (fig. 60 / p. 106), Bag of Flour (fig. 1 / front cover, fig. 59 / p.102), Closet, and Fire Alarm belonged to the earlier stage of enlarging simplified forms of existing objects (fig. 20 / p. 36). Through conducting the first performance test on the street for Encapsulation Suits in 2013, I realised that mobile enlargements of existing artefacts had a comical and caricature-like effect. In the search to increase their mysticism and power, I sought to visually express how I feel about each commodity by focusing on their forms instead of their function. That is why I added more abstract formal elements to the pieces that I developed later: Key (fig. 5 / p. 10), Piano (fig. 57 / p. 98), and Headdress (fig. 9, 14 / p. 14, 26).

For the artwork Collectors (fig. 26–30 / pp. 55–62), I built the wishes of the collectors, the stories that they had told me, and my interpretation of the persons into the forms. After roughly constructing wearable structures, I altered their sizes in correspondence to the wearers and fixed connections permanently.

For Cleaning Samurai, I integrated automatic writing to study my emotional relationships with each cleaning utensil, as well as associations that they trigger, to gather ideas about the forms. These forms reflected my experience, or feelings, or attitudes towards each piece of cleaning equipment, as well as highlighting formal characteristics of the originals.

For Helmet – River I began a repetitive process to produce a series of intricately fabricated helmets out of PE sponge that all look exactly the same, with the meditative manual activity actually defining the final forms.

\(^{16}\) The sound of sewing wiping rags on sewing machine became the soundtrack. See: Modern Ballet Duo & Trio, pp. 89–91.
Fig. 13
Templates used for Piano and Headdress, 2014
Fig. 14
Headdress, 2015
**APPROACHING THEORY**

*Key* and Yuka attended a lecture by the art critic, Jan Verwoert on a Sunday afternoon.

**Yuka:** I enjoy seeing how the speakers behave in real life in lectures, and hearing their voice relating their thoughts. Jan’s lecture created an atmosphere that enchanted and enthralled the audience. I had a similar experience whilst attending William Kentridge’s stunning lecture at Humboldt University: I was impressed by his dramaturgy and ability to orchestrate light, images and sound in the lecture room. After a lecture by Richard Sennett I thought about what it means to create participatory projects that have open frameworks, so that participants are emancipated to act within them. Ulrike Ottinger’s artist talk explained how she manages the issue of time and work – one piece demands over 10 years of research, followed by filming that takes another 10 years, and then 10 more years of editing.

It is a challenge for me not to undervalue the tacit knowledge that I have when considering how to relate to my own work in a theoretical sense. I tend to care about the aesthetic property of artworks slightly more than I care about conceptions. Through making work, I arrive at a clear self-understanding as to why I created these artworks, i.e. the impetus behind it. The process opposes the notion of beginning a production only once the concept is clear. My engagement with craft has shaped my working process.

Peter Dormer discusses that tacit knowledge in craft is “a body of knowledge with a complex variety of values, and this knowledge is expanded and its values demonstrated and tested, not through language but through practice.” He then explains that words cannot describe the practice of craft: “The reason for calling craft a practical philosophy is that almost nothing that is important about craft can be put into words and propositions.”

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2 “When you talk theory to an audience you feel it. It won’t work if you don’t somehow manage to seat everyone on your tongue as you speak.” Jan Verwoert, COOKIE! (Rotterdam and Berlin: Piet Zwart Institute, Sternberg Press, 2013), pp. 243–244.
7 Ibid., p. 219
8 Ibid., p. 219
My knowledge derives from actual processes, from thinking or doing something, physically touching art materials and forming them by using hands, from collaborating with others to produce things. The results are important, but when I look at the finished pieces, I have mixed feelings – the joy of completing and the sadness of witnessing that the sculptural objects have found a static form. This tells me that physicality and processes are a high priority in my art.

**Key:** Let me just point out that tacit knowledge is free of language barriers. When words failed you, you relied on your passion for creating artworks. This is probably why you began investigating objects in the first place. You were depended on material as your communication tool. Then you must also explain your intentions through tangible assets, i.e. something that you have made or seen. Perhaps you can refer back to your work to realise a relationship between theoretical observation and reflection. By the way, how do you develop your artworks?

**Yuka:** My subject matter often arises from everyday issues and I begin by making models and forms. Simultaneously, I read problem-solving books, visit exhibitions and watch films. I talk to all sorts of people about my ideas and note their immediate reactions. Then I shut down and let my ideas cocoon a little, after which I produce the artwork, running full speed ahead and contacting collaborators who then help give shape to my ideas. This process is very exciting. Completing an artwork answers many questions and generates new sets of questions. As the artwork is completed, I discover the meanings and intentions of seemingly intuitive decisions.

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9 Throughout my childhood, I moved from one country to another. Each time our family moved, I learnt a new language and became familiar with a new culture.

10 While my ideas are still unclear, I ‘play’ with material such as clay, paper, paints, cardboard, plastic, wooden sticks, and PE sponge. I cut and glue these materials without having any concrete plans, waiting to see what becomes of them. I also use objects that have concrete volume and form, such as Ping-Pong balls, yoghurt tubs, and children’s plastic toys. I glue and tape them together, add clay around them to modify their forms. At this stage, I prefer working in a scale of 30 – 40 cm. It is important to be playful at this stage. Then I create patterns that support to expand these forms to human body size.

11 For me, problem solving books are artists’ books and books on art theory that include descriptions of the process and production of various artworks, suggesting possible solutions to problems I might encounter; but also self-help books on psychology, gender roles, etc. At exhibitions, I study how to create spatial installations to present multimedia artworks, how other artists approach similar subject matter, presentation formats for film works, and techniques of teaching. I watched many silent films made in the Weimer Republic (Fritz Lang, Ernst Lubitsch, Robert Wiene, etc.) to study the impact of spoken language, stage sets, lights and camera setups.
In limited relationship between subject and object.

Uncanny phenomenon of person being attached to objects and objects become personified.

Person being unnecessary like object as objects become, unmitigated, all dynamic.

- Person becomes object
- Object becomes dynamic

Life of objects made into available superstars.

So who's in control, you iPhone or you?

- How do things, everyday objects, start gaining power over a person?

I seek to investigate how the life of objects can be expanded through mass media — a person using objects can become inspirational.
WRITING AS A CREATIVE METHOD

Yuca: In August 2014, after attending the creative writing course tutored by Jennifer Allen at the Salzburg Summer Academy, I decided which stationery I would always use. I found these robust and ergonomic fountain pens for school children, A5 notebooks with thick paper, and the tiniest Van Gogh watercolour set in a plastic etui.

This is not the only thing that I learnt there, however. What I eventually learnt was to use writing as a method to expand creative thought. It was a turning point in terms of how I work as an artist.

Key: What did Jennifer teach you?

Yuca: She spoke about how your unconscious knows much more than you might be aware of, and that this is where your creative resources reside. She introduced us to a book by Dorothea Brande, *Becoming a Writer*. Brande argues that to become a good fiction writer, you have to separate the conscious and the unconscious, training them both simultaneously. The challenge here is how to control the unconscious.

Jennifer introduced us to automatic writing: set a timer, write freely, and let your conscious thoughts disappear. Do not plan. Let your ideas flow. Do not stop writing. Before starting to write this way, I was writing about what I had done in the studio, or plans I had, proposals, grant applications, and so on. But I had rarely written this freely. At that time, I planned my sculptures to move and act, but I felt the narrative was missing.

I actively set up a training program to write, as the book instructed, and stuck with this every day over the course of a year. Writing and drawing became a habit. I wrote for ten minutes about my sensual observations of an object, any object in my vicinity. Over the next ten minutes, I would write down associations sparked by the object.

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3 Ibid.

4 "Most of the methods of training the conscious side of the writer – the craftsman and the critic in him are actually hostile to the good of the unconscious, the artist’s side; (...) you must teach yourself not as though you were one person, but two." Ibid., p. 44.

5 "The unconscious is shy, elusive, and unwieldy, but it is possible to learn to tap it at will, and even to direct it. The conscious mind is meddlesome, opinionated, and arrogant, but it can be made subservient to the inborn talent through training. By isolating as far as possible the functions of the two sides of the mind, (...) is self education." Ibid., p. 48.
After some time, I found out that I am most creative at 5.30 am. I called the texts I wrote “twilight zone writing”.\textsuperscript{6} I started to look forward to this time of day.

During the “twilight zone writings”, a plethora of random associations surfaced: a ceramic base jumped to a memory of my grandfather’s visit to Indonesia in the 1990s, to Dutch East Indies soy sauce trade, to inflating balloons and fake eyelashes. These objects had no logical or contextual relations. They were full of illogical connections, sexually charged, an unconventional chronology in terms of time, and showed irrational and dynamic changes in locations. The world in which this writing was unfolding revealed many fragments of my very personal biography – free of prejudice, control and evaluation.

Many of these thoughts were so strange and absurd that I felt immediately compelled to make sketches of them. I did not feel confident enough to draw with a pen, so I started to use watercolours. This way I could concentrate on the three-dimensionality of things. I could draw as I would sculpt materials. I then began to draw outlines with a thin brush, similar to calligraphy, which I had practiced intensely as a teenager. The artistic quality of these sketches was secondary. More significant was the accessing of my unconscious through these activities, which, in turn, led to developing the contexts, the stories, dramaturgies, and movements for the sculptures.

\textit{Key:} Yuka, let’s take a break here.

\textsuperscript{6} “... in the twilight zone between sleep and the full wakening state, simply to write. (…) Forget that you have any critical faculty at all; realize that no one need ever see what you are writing unless you choose to show it.” \textit{Ibid.}, p. 73.
ENCAPSULATION SUITS
**ENCAPSULATION SUITS**

*Encapsulation Suits* consists of four wearable sculptures depicting objects, entitled *Piano*, *Bag of Flour*, *Key*, *Handbag*, and *Headdress*. They are slightly larger than life size and made from black polyethylene. Five performances were conducted using these sculptures, and these were filmed in 4K HD, black and white, with sound.

The video pieces have the following durations:

- **Key** (6 Min),
- **Bag of Flour** (2 Min),
- **Headdress** (3 Min),
- **Handbag** (9 Min), and
- **Piano** (3 Min).

This project represents the core of my artistic research, which I worked on during the entire research period from October 2012 until October 2016. *Encapsulation Suits* evolved subsequently into the work, *Stubborn Objects Psychodrama* (2016).

My artistic research developed as follows:

I. **Phase 01** (10.2012 - 02.2013): Fieldwork, public interventions, and workshops
   - Phase 02 (03.2013 - 08.2013): Constructions of wearable sculptures
   - Phase 03 (08.2013 - 09.2013): Two test performances

II. **Phase 04** (09.2014): *SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE* workshop
   - Phase 05 (10.2014 - 01.2014): First choreographic experiments with a mime dancer and filming of *Encapsulation Suits I*

III. **Phase 06** (04.2015): Second choreographic investigation with a figure theatre actress
   - Phase 07 (04.2015 - 06.2015): Third choreographic investigation on my own
   - Phase 08 (06.2015): Filming and photographing of *Encapsulation Suits II*
   - Phase 09 (08.2015): Presentation No. I at Oslo Kunstforening

IV. **Phase 10** (08.2015 - 04.2016): *Stubborn Objects Psychodrama*
   - Phase 11 (04.2016): Presentation No. II at the Receptions Gallery, KHiO
   - Phase 12 (09.2016): *Clothes and Choreography* Workshop
   - Phase 13 (04.2016 - ongoing): *Piano-and-I*
Fig. 20
Street and Studio tests, 2013
ENCAPSULATION SUITS I  
(OCTOBER 2012 – SEPTEMBER 2013)

PHASE 01 FIELDWORK, PUBLIC INTERVENTIONS, AND WORKSHOPS  
(DECEMBER 2012 – FEBRUARY 2013)

I undertook interventions in three public spaces, asking passersby to select one object from home that embodied the following characteristics: grounding, beautiful, most special, junk with sentimental value, and heavy.\(^1\) The volunteers drew their selected object with similar expressions on paper. This way I observed the person’s spontaneous choice of object, what the object represents, and could begin to imagine how they would look in an animated condition.\(^2\)

To gather stories about objects I organised two workshops, one for adults and a second one for children.\(^3\) An additional element, compared to the public interventions, was that I asked the participants to make paper puppets with which I encouraged them to improvise stories about the objects (fig. 77 / p. 128).

The answers garnered during public interventions were short and simple, mainly due to the short-time interactions with participants.\(^4\) In general, the tales of the adults were more complex and associative compared to those of the children. In most cases, associations made or memories that these objects triggered had more to do with the context of the object’s use, i.e. either during an occasion or relation with another person, rather than their actual function. For example, it was the family dining around the table that made the table special. Also, there were feelings of relaxation, comfort, desire, frustration, nostalgia, security, and sexual fantasy connected to these objects.

One child worked alone and created a very intricate and imaginative narrative, which made me realize the benefit of the participants’ working alone rather than as a group.

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\(^1\) The locations were Oslo National Academy of Art’s (KHiO) campus on January 7, 2013, Oslo Central Station (Oslo S) on January 8, 2013, and The Museum of Decorative Arts and Design Oslo (Kunstindustrimuseet) on February 3, 2013.

\(^2\) Five BA students from Metal and Jewellery Art at the Art and Craft department of KHiO supported me in carrying out these interventions in public space during The Coolest Corner (http://www.coolestcorner.no). It was an international symposium and an exhibition for contemporary art jewellery, which was hosted at KHiO and Kunstindustrimuseet. I was invited to present my artwork in an artist talk.

\(^3\) The workshop for adults was carried out from December 18–20, during the symposium When Conscious Listens to Unconscious (http://www.konstnarnamnden.se/default.aspx?id=16030), organised by Jelena Rundqvist and IASPIS in Dalarna, Sweden. The participants were artists, designers, psychologists, curators, and a neuroscientist. The workshop for twenty children in the 8th grade was conducted December 11, 2012 at the Wilhelm-Hauff-Grundschule in Berlin.

\(^4\) I became acquainted with the difficulty of site-specific setups. At Oslo S, I was more concerned with finding volunteers than collecting stories and drawings. Since KHiO is an art academy a project of this kind blends naturally into the pre-given setup. The quality of both the drawings and originality of the tales was high. Kunstindustrimuseet was an even better location, since the audience was much more diverse and this kind of a participatory action was a welcome weekend activity.
SOFT SCULPTURES AND SMALL FIGURES
In an attempt to enhance the drawings’ story-telling ability, I made small textile puppets and Fimo (polymer clay) figures. After several experiments, I decided that I needed human-sized objects in order to present objects as having an equally important scale as a person. I then examined how incorporating a person’s whole body would influence the construction of the narratives.

PHASE 02 CONSTRUCTIONS OF WEARABLE SCULPTURES (MARCH 2013 – AUGUST 2013)
I constructed wearable sculptures using wood and textile, but they were too heavy and even dangerous to wear. I visited the costume departments at KHiO and Oslo Opera House. Unfortunately the costume departments only work with garments, not with sculptures. Thus, I asked Markus Kalkbrenner for a technical consultation. The tutorial led by Kalkbrenner was eye-opening and expanded my artistic outlook. He introduced me to polyethylene sheets, black hot glue, and demonstrated how to create life-size sculptures from smaller models. Consequently, I constructed the first three sculptures: Hand Drill, Fire Alarm, and Bag of Flour.

STAGE 03 TWO TEST PERFORMANCES (AUGUST 2013 – SEPTEMBER 2013)
I tested the visual impact and choreography of my wearable sculptures out on the street and in my studio.

STREET [VIDEO: #1 REF]
Two friends and I wore Hand Drill, Fire Alarm and Bag of Flour, and slowly entered a courtyard where an unsuspecting audience was eating. We proceeded to shake and make loud noises, and then abruptly left.

5 I had hoped that the similarity to soft toys would enhance creative involvement and imaginative reactions, since the act of playing with toy animals is familiar from childhood. This experiment failed, since although it was nice to touch the soft surfaces, they did not increase creativity. It was also extremely time-consuming to sew them. In April 2013, I visited Stiftung Kunst Palast in Düsseldorf to see their Netsuke collection. The minute detail and intimate scale of the Netsuke and depictions of humorous yet mundane scenes from everyday life fascinated me.

6 Markus Kalkbrenner (http://www.maskottchen-germany.de) is a professional mascot costume builder in Karlsruhe. He worked as a wearer of mascots during his college years. Today he runs a company creating mascots and costumes for Hollywood film production, soccer games in Europe, and various businesses in Japan.

7 Kalkbrenner’s work methods share material-based and technical approaches that are similar to mine, which meant I was able to follow his instruction quite naturally. He uses low-cost tapes and glues to cut and paste for modelling. He also works with diverse media such as sewing, metal (welding and soldering) and leather work, and basic Photoshop editing. Thus, Kalkbrenner’s studio was equipped with more sophisticated machines, but was as a whole very similar to my own studio.

8 During production, I usually conduct many tests before making final decisions.

9 Together with my studio mate, Diane LaVoie, I organised an event called Cook Up! on June 14, 2013. This event was aimed at testing prototype artworks in front of the audience. We rented a community kitchen on the same street as our studio. We cooked food and invited thirty guests. On August 30, 2013, I organized a Salon in my studio where I invited seven women to wear and enact seven wearable sculptures. I examined how a group of sculptures would look when they are worn and in motion.
AFTERTHOUGHT
No passers-by took notice of our street performance. The object sculptures seemed too quiet and small when put in the chaotic context of the street, and enlarged domestic objects were unrelated to the location, and thus making them look more like a fashion show of cute and comical object costumes. While marching down the street, I’d added a drumming sound and exaggerated motions to increase our presence. However, these elements evoked their association to carnival, clown, and comical theatre. Afterwards, I re-made all three sculptures. I then proceeded to create another four sculptures: Wardrobe, Key, Handbag and Piano.

STUDIO [VIDEO: #2 REF]
A group of seven women walked around in a circle, went towards the centre of the circle, and walked outwards. Later, they danced freely to music and also without.

AFTERTHOUGHT
This test was a failure, since the movements seemed disconnected to the sculptures. Later, a participant (who is a ballet dancer) performed classical ballet movements while wearing the sculptures. It became evident to me that the inner psychological state of the wearer should be synchronised with the outer form of the sculpture. Also, the ballet movements highlighted the liveliness of the wearer and the lifelessness of the sculptural objects.

10 I constructed the three new sculptures, Hand Drill, Fire Alarm and Bag of Flour 120% larger than the human size. I discovered that any size larger than this became like a house, making it impossible to enact the sculptures using subtle motions. I eliminated the colour white and used the original colour of the PE material, black. I covered the faces and abstracted the forms so that the original objects were still recognizable, but visually expressed emotions.

11 I wanted the wearers to have a similar physique so that sculptural forms, rather than physical features of the wearers, could be compared.
Fig. 21
SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE Workshop, 2014
PHASE 04 SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE WORKSHOP (SEPTEMBER 2014)
Professor Karen Kipphoff\(^1\) and I conducted the workshop SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE at the Norwegian Theatre Academy together with a group of BA 03 Scenography students. Over the first three days, I instructed them how to construct wearable sculptures. On the following two days, Kipphoff taught basic techniques on how to choreograph a group wearing wearable sculptures.\(^2\)

I was surprised how quickly the students completed their sculptures. Some of the results looked rather simple, but when set into motion they gained enthralling expression. During the design of the choreography, Kipphoff repeatedly told us that we had to ‘listen’ to the worn object and to find out how it wanted us to move it. She said, “Surrender to the worn objects, give up your ego, and listen to them.”

AFTERTHOUGHT
It all made an attractive series of performances, yet I felt the original stories about the objects were more unique.\(^3\) I questioned why her choreography method neglected inclusion of the original narratives. Kipphoff explained that it was a fundamental rule to express the liveliness of the worn sculptures. At this time I did not agree with her argument entirely.

While I was there, I had a chance to participate in a workshop led by Phil Minton.\(^4\) Minton demonstrated various improvisational methods that brought a group of students into a creative collective body. We composed a piece of music together. This experience gave me insight into important methods\(^5\) of instilling meaningfulness into inclusive projects, on sharing knowledge, yet still maintaining the subjective position of the artist.

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\(^1\) Kipphoff has advised me on choreography and scenography during this artistic research; she is an expert puppeteer and scenographer.

\(^2\) I instructed the students to pick one object that represented the notion of their home(s) where they grew up, and asked them to make them into a wearable sculpture using white cardboard. The workshop took place on September 1 – 5, 2014.

\(^3\) In the final presentation, an apple toy and a large bow jumped around and played like two mittens; a scarf danced like a wind; a grandmother’s sewing machine marched like a powerful warrior. See: Appendix 01: Stories of Objects Archive IV, pp. 128 – 129.

\(^4\) Phil Minton is a British singer. Feral Choir consists of a three-day workshop and performance, not only for singers but also for anyone who takes a delight in the freedom to experiment. He encouraged participants to take a vocal leap and explore all vocal possibilities through exercises and improvisations, over the workshop period, leading to a concert. “Phil Minton,” accessed February 06, 2017, https://www.philminton.co.uk/feral-choir/

\(^5\) Like work in a circle and integrate improvisation technique to challenge each person, where Minton also joined the improvisation and performed.
PHASE 05 FIRST CHOREOGRAPHIC EXPERIMENTS WITH A MIME DANCER AND
FILMING ENSCAPULATION SUITS I (OCTOBER 2013 – DECEMBER 2013)
I gathered collections of gestures for the Encapsulation Suits sculptures. I collaborated
with Oliver Pollack, who is a mime dancer, as I considered mime a relevant technique,
since it communicates stories through the use of physical gestures and props – and
without words.

I observed Pollack’s motions as a wearer, and saw the fundamental need to work in
pairs, as the actor inside cannot see what s/he is doing from the outside. This way I
could carry out experiments with choreography quicker than if I had worked from video
footage. I then filmed the experiments, took notes, and sketched movements that ap-
pealed to me. Gradually, particular characteristics and genders in the sculptures ap-
peared. I then combined expressive movements and designed a dramaturgy for each
sculpture. I felt ready to document the collaboration with Pollack on video.

FILMING ENSCAPULATION SUITS I [VIDEO: #1 SLO]
While preparing to film Encapsulation Suits I, I closely watched video works of John
Wood and Paul Harrison. Their sterile laboratory-like and systematized stage design had
an archival quality. I felt it would be appropriate to make an archive of my motion experi-
ments, treating the series of performances like a database of movements.

Encapsulation Suits I was filmed in December 2014. I worked with the same camera
team as for Cleaning Samurai. The filming took one day. During the first half, Pollack
performed one object after another. During the second half, I conducted the group
choreography.

The filming in the morning went smoothly, and the whole scene was reminiscent of
Bauhaus and their stage experiments. I loved the atmosphere. The group performance
went well, but the story created was purely bizarre.

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6 Oliver Pollack is a mime dancer who teaches at the Mime Institute in Berlin.
7 John Wood and Paul Harrison are a British artist duo. In the late 1990s, they made a series of video clips that
depicted scenes of them interacting with objects in a white-cube-studio. The colour tones of their video pieces
ranged from white, grey and black. “TateShots John Wood and Paul Harrison,” YouTube video, 3:44, posted by
8 Florian Lampersberger served as the first camera, Gil Bartz as lighting, and Maja Tennstedt as editing.
9 Before this filming I invited Pollack and his colleagues to my studio to test the group choreography method
that I had learned from Kipphoff. I sought to conduct an improvisational story-telling method, but the actors
wanted a more concrete plot. Spontaneously, I suggested that it should be a tragic love story.
10 The outcome was very violent and pornographic.
During the first phase of editing in spring 2015, I adjusted the beginning and ending of each performance. We erased the sound of my voice instructing the choreography. During the second editing period in spring 2016, I edited each performance down to half its original length, as some sequences were too long.\footnote{During both editing sessions, I decided not to edit the group choreography piece due to a personal conflict with the overall outcome of the piece.}

\section*{AFTERTHOUGHTS}
Reflecting upon the \textit{Encapsulation Suits I} films, the craftsmanship of the film was fantastic. However, the film itself felt inconclusive. It was not clear what kind of message the artwork sought to communicate. As an archive of motions, the narrative elements were strong; as a narrative performance, the story was ambivalent.

For the soundtrack, I had tried putting Frederic Chopin’s \textit{Polonaise No 6 in A Flat Major Op.53 Heroic} over the \textit{Piano} piece.\footnote{For the soundtrack, I had tried putting Frederic Chopin’s \textit{Polonaise No 6 in A Flat Major Op.53 Heroic} over the \textit{Piano} piece. I did not like the results as the sound made the piece appear entertaining like a comical ballet. It failed to communicate the mysterious life force in objects. Furthermore, the gestures and the sound were not in sync.} I did not like the results as the sound made the piece appear entertaining like a comical ballet.\footnote{I did not like the results as the sound made the piece appear entertaining like a comical ballet. It failed to communicate the mysterious life force in objects. Furthermore, the gestures and the sound were not in sync.} It failed to communicate the mysterious life force in objects. Furthermore, the gestures and the sound were not in sync.

In addition, the mime choreography techniques felt limiting. I wanted to find more ‘unprofessional’, natural movements that were closer to gestures from real life. Thus, I decided to work with non-professional actors and dancers.

During our tutorial, Jennifer Allen told me her interpretation of the group choreography. The genders and roles that I had in my mind were perceived by her as being exactly the opposite. The scale and forms of the sculptures, especially when they were put in relation to many objects, generated an identity for each object. I envisioned the \textit{Key} to be a woman, but she interpreted it as a male gender due to the form. Also, because of its smaller scale, she perceived \textit{Handbag} as a child.

When I reflect upon this group choreography piece today, the story held some real truths. This unexpected slipping out of some hidden truths that were made evident in the artworks reminded me of the installation at the SPACES Gallery in 2013.\footnote{The installation that I made at the SPACES Gallery consequently communicated the cabinet of objectified men. See: \textit{Collectors} (Fig. 27 / p. 61)}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Key}, https://vimeo.com/125620876;
\item \textit{Piano}, https://vimeo.com/187889827;
\item \textit{Headdress}, https://vimeo.com/125620875
\end{itemize}

\begin{itemize}
\item In the group choreography piece, \textit{Bag of Flour} who appeared as a woman who was repeatedly abused by two men: \textit{Key} and \textit{Piano}. And her child \textit{Handbag} was observing all the violence. Neither the story, nor the gender roles had anything to do with my private life. In fact I had sought to depict the opposite: weak men and strong women.
\item I grew up listening to this piece of music almost every day.
\item \textit{Piano} with music (2014), https://vimeo.com/187889616
\end{itemize}
Fig. 22
Filming Encapsulation Suits I, 2014
ENCAPSULATION SUITS III
(APRIL 2015 – AUGUST 2015)

PHASE 06 SECOND CHOREOGRAPHIC INVESTIGATIONS WITH A FIGURE THEATRE ACTRESS (APRIL 2015)

Having worked on Helmet – River and Modern Ballet Duo & Trio, I returned to work on Encapsulation Suits with more clarity.

I took part in a tutorial with Ulrike Kley who is an object theatre actress. I asked her to show me how to express my feelings towards each object through movements. Before meeting with her, I revised my emotional relationships with each object.

Kley demonstrated techniques to enact various emotional properties. While reviewing the filmed footage made during the collaboration with Kley, I finally understood what Kipphoff had been saying when she challenged us to surrender to the worn objects. If a wearer controls the movement of what she/he wears, i.e. to demonstrate their psychological relationships with the objects, the worn object appears to be passive. Therefore, you have to work in collaboration with the worn pieces. This revelation made me feel ready to design my own choreography for the wearable sculptures.

PHASE 07 THIRD CHOREOGRAPHIC INVESTIGATIONS ON MY OWN (APRIL 2015 – JUNE 2015)

[Video: #3 REF]

I carried out motion experiments by myself, creating movements that appeared to make the wearable sculpture and me merge. I set up a video camera to ‘see’ myself. It was curious and fascinating to see that the causes of fundamental psychological struggles (like fears, desires, and even external advice) were apparent in the resulting characters.

PHASE 08 FILMING AND PHOTOGRAPHING OF ENCAPSULATION SUITS II (JUNE 2015)

I aimed to capture the somewhat uncanny experiences I had had with my sculptural objects during the last experiments on film. I wanted to present the new characters one after another, and also decided to perform all the pieces myself.

1 “Object theatre (sometimes referred to as object puppetry) uses found objects to create a story with characters. Instead of objects and/or puppets specifically designed for the narrative, object theatre deliberately uses everyday objects, either as is or transformed into other things, requiring the skill of the performer and the imagination of the audience for its success.” Justin Cash, last modified December 5, 2013, “Object Theatre,” accessed February 23, 2017, http://www.thedramateacher.com/object-theatre/
2 We worked for two days in April 2015.
3 See: Appendix I – Stories of Objects Archive, pp. 129–133.
4 Kley and I started the experiment with making each object breathe. Then, we examined how these objects are in contact with body when they are used, and how to render subjective expressions in these actions. We put on music with different emotive qualities to investigate their impacts on motions. Kley also put subordinating objects in relations, to visually explicate their meanings. For example, if the Piano holds the essences of my mother as a pianist, then we should set up roses on the floor as props. I immediately felt the idea was kitsch.
5 See: Encapsulation Suits II, pp. 41–43.
After filming *The Weaver*, I learned that it was more efficient to film several scenes at one location. Thus, I filmed the following pieces *Helmet – River, Modern Ballet Duo & Trio, Encapsulation Suits*, and *Stubborn Objects Psychodrama* at the same location in the course of one week.

Seen from the contextual side, the neo-classical architecture of Studio One suited the surrealism inherent to this performance. I aimed to make the same location look completely different through the use of lighting and by choosing various angles from which to film within the space. I visited the film location many times prior to the filming.

**FILMING [VIDEO: # 5 SLO]**

*Encapsulation Suits II* was filmed using only one camera and with the same film team engaged for the previous films. Kley took on the role of observer, correcting my positions and telling me when I strayed from the camera frame. It was a physically exhausting day for me, moving non-stop for eight hours, but I was happy with the results.

The editing was similar to *Encapsulation Suits I*. During the colour correction phase, I decided to reduce the colours to black and white, as I felt it would enhance the ambiguous and mystical realm that bridges the physical and psychological worlds.

**AFTERTHOUGHT**

I was pleased with both the inclusion of narrative and the films. The films support to communicate my perceptions of the irrational and imaginary dimension that nevertheless holds some truths, and conveys the merging of objects and humans into one. For me, the visual impact of the films as well as the purpose was more precise and clear than in *Encapsulation Suits I*.

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6 See: *The Weaver* (Fig. 37/p.76)

7 *Modern Ballet Duo & Trio, Helmet-River, Encapsulation Suits* and *Stubborn Objects Psychodrama* were filmed at Studio One of Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin.

8 Florian Lampersberger was in charge of the camera, Gil Bartz responsible for the lighting, and Uli Kley for the choreography (like eyes from outside), Maja Tennstedt did the editing, and I was the director. Black Magic, HD, 4K was used.

9 Especially the scene with *Handbag* was exhausting and challenging to perform. I kept on crawling in the wrong direction. I wanted to avoid using a piece of thread or tapes to mark my path since they would be visible in the film.
PHASE 09 PRESENTATION ENCAPSULATION SUITS OSLO KUNSTFORENING (AUGUST 2015)

Encapsulation Suits was presented for the first time at Oslo Kunstforening (OK) in August 2015 (fig. 47/p. 92). I had planned to show the wearable sculptures as freestanding sculptures using simple wooden constructions. I wanted to present the wearable sculptures as sculptures, not as props.

The exhibition space was big enough to present four sculptures, so I chose to exhibit Key, Handbag, Headdress and Piano. I projected the films in smaller formats to dramatize the monumental quality of the sculptures. Furthermore, the small scale, as well as the black and white moving images evoked similarities to black and white silent films from the 1920s.

While moving my sculptures around in the room, I finally decided to place the sculptures on the floor to give the impression that they were resting temporarily. I deliberately used the natural light in the room to allow the visitors to observe details of the sculptures more clearly. I was satisfied with the presentation, but I still felt further variations were possible.

10 I visited many exhibitions to study the most appropriate digital equipment to present my video pieces. I found Acer media tablets, which provide high resolution and show no company logos on the display frame. I mounted them directly onto the walls.

11 The exhibition was in August, during which Oslo has, on average, 16 hours of daylight.
ENCAPSULATION SUITS IV
(AUGUST 2015 – SEPTEMBER 2016)

PHASE 10 STUBBORN OBJECTS PSYCHODRAMA (AUGUST 2015 - APRIL 2016)
[Video: #6 SLO]

Encapsulation Suits evolved into Stubborn Objects Psychodrama, a 13-minute HD video in colour and with sound. The video is a documentation of a psychodrama that was conducted with five anonymous participants, each wearing one of the five wearable sculptures.

The movements that appeared during the performance of Encapsulation Suits II made me aware of many past and current personal issues and matters in my life that I had paid little attention to. I was curious to see how the sculptures could invite other people to explore and experience something different to everyday life. I studied various methods that lead to collective explorative activities involving physical movement. I investigated and spoke to dance therapists, group fitness moderators, mediums, channellers, instructors who improve communication and teamwork skills of business leaders. Finally I came across the concept of psychodrama.

WHAT IS PSYCHODRAMA?
Psychodrama is also known as family constellation. It is a form of psychotherapy in which a group of unknown, non-professional actors called ‘protagonists’ engages in an improvised acting-out of specific situations. Each player receives her/his role and develops a role-play based on the story that the ‘client’ proposes about her/his concerns. A ‘director’ facilitates the session. Someone else acts the role of the ‘client’ who is called the ‘stand-in’.

The striking element of this approach lies in the enabling of the client to see her/his life objectively through being re-enacted by other people.

I especially felt the psychodrama technique was relevant to my work, because it adds another twist to the already complicated object and subject relationships in Encapsulation Suits II. In the Encapsulation Suits II performance, my objects revealed things about my life. By letting other people wear and interpret my special objects, I objectified my life. Furthermore, the protagonists/actors told me stories that somehow related to me and people I know.

FILMING STUBBORN OBJECTS PSYCHODRAMA
Malwina Durkalec, a professional psychodrama leader, understood my intentions and was open enough to agree to conduct a psychodrama with me. Since I should remain anonymous, she promised to provide the participants.

Two women in their early 60s, one man at the beginning of his 50s, a young man in his late 20s and a woman in her mid-30s came to the session. There was no preparation before filming this piece. I used the film solely for documentary purposes. Everything was improvised and spontaneous, and I had no control over the consequences.

**CONDUCTING A **STUBBORN OBJECTS PSYCHODRAMA**

I positioned my sculptures Headress, Handbag, Key, Piano, and Bag of Flour in a circle. Durkalec invited the protagonists to touch and feel the sculptures first. She then introduced me to the protagonists, also explaining that I was the artist who had created these sculptures. I introduced myself as the client and asked the following questions:

- What do they [objects] think about who they are?
- How do they relate to me [Yuka]?
- How do they relate to each other?

The protagonists walked around the sculptures once again and chose one. The oldest, most fragile looking woman became Yuka. She selected Key as the sculpture she would wear. Other people put on their sculptures and then the session began, lasting one hour. I sat on the floor and observed the proceeding drama.

**AFTERTHOUGHT**

In fact, this artwork marked a major turning point as I discovered how my personal relationships with emotionally evocative objects could lead to self-exploration, made possible through a group intercreative activity. Furthermore, I had discovered a method to bring people together and even engage them to perform for one hour. The whole experience was surprising, humorous, and confrontational.²

Somehow the framework convinced the participants that they should not be scared to make mistakes while performing. A clear framework allowed the amateur participants to play, act, and create artworks together. This is something that I would like to achieve in my artwork in general. I also enjoyed the fact that this performance seemed to have been acted out according to a synopsis.

**PHASE II PRESENTATION II THE STUBBORN LIFE OF OBJECTS AT THE RECEPTIONS GALLERY – KHIO (APRIL 2016)**

When I exhibited the Encapsulation Suits sculptures at the Receptions Gallery (fig. 51/p. 93), I hoped to present an improved version of the installation at Oslo Kunstforening. In this show, the final work Stubborn Objects Psychodrama was very new and I did not yet know how to best incorporate this piece. I needed ample time and distance to work out how to present this artwork. At the time this piece was highly intimate and presenting it felt awkward. Therefore, it is the work that will be presented in the final show in May 2017.

² Confrontational, since I also discovered some reasons for private problems.
In the exhibition at the Receptions Gallery, I sought to highlight the participation of an audience, just like the film piece *Stubborn Objects Psychodrama* invited the protagonists to explore the sculptures. I studied presentation methods in artworks by Franz West and Franz Erhard Walther. Consequently, I built wooden structures around each sculpture so that viewers could slip inside the sculptures.

Another new development was adding live performance. Even though the audience sees the sculptures being enacted in the video pieces, witnessing the sculptures being worn in real life is much more powerful. During the rehearsals, I was alone in the room with three actors, all of whom were standing still, which had an enigmatic effect. That convinced me that the performance would be powerful enough if the actors would simply wear the sculptural objects and then stand still.

**AFTERTHOUGHT**

The live performance was conducted at the opening and once again on the following day. Three actors entered the exhibition room, put on the sculptures, stood still for ten minutes in silence, took off the sculptural objects and left the room again.

I wanted the audience to imagine the vitality of the objects, and where this might come from. I also wanted to prove how the life of objects could be translated into a creative activity. In addition, the past investigations were filmed so that the present viewers could view them. Furthermore, the intention of this more interactive installation was to create an exhibition that actively informs the audience about objects’ effect on people. In fact, these points were already answered in the film pieces. Therefore, conducting a live performance by three people was no longer necessary.

As I witnessed the sculptural objects being photographed on body of the audience in motionless selfies, I was convinced that the sculptural objects embodied less mysterious qualities. My desire to create a ‘different kind’ of exhibition compared to the exhibition at Oslo Kunstforening had set me off track.

**PHASE 12 CLOTHES AND CHOREOGRAPHY WORKSHOP (SEPTEMBER 2016)**

In September 2016 I lead a four-day-workshop during *Clothes and Choreography – an interdisciplinary research* conducted at KHiO organised by Prof. Christina Lindgren (Costume Design) and Prof. Anne Grete Eriksen (Choreography). On the first day and in the evenings during this week I had an opportunity to work with some students from the Choreography and Dance department. I offered my sculptures to the dancers to wear and to perform. Using them, they constructed their own stories, wore them in different ways, and made movements that I had not tried out. By observing these experiments, I could imagine future projects. For example, there could be many more *Handbags*, all the objects could be scaled to exactly the same size as their originals, or the sculptures could be much larger.

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During the evening rehearsals, a choreographer who is also a composer for improvisational jazz piano joined us. He played the piano and improvised while the dancers were moving. For the purpose of expressing my ideas about Encapsulation Suits, a musical soundtrack took away the quietistic and mythical life of the objects. However, music, especially when it was composed to accompany the performance, might add strength to the narrative of the forms and affect the mood of the wearers.

Kaia Lund, who is a light design technician at KHiO, joined the workshop to demonstrate the impact of lighting. Lund lit the sculptures using warm and subtle lighting from the side of the sculptures, also using various colour filters. The lights emphasised the sculptures’ presence. In the shadows, the wearers and the sculptural objects appeared even more unified, thus enhancing the oddness of identifying objects and persons. Moreover, some objects seemed much larger or smaller than they actually were. Sometimes the sculptures would suddenly appear from the darkness. I could not artistically relate to different coloured lights, as this seemed to dominate the stage rather than the story. After all these experiments using motion, music and light I had more ideas about developing and presenting my wearable sculptures in the future.

PHASE 13 PIANO-AND-I (APRIL 2016 – ONGOING)

Before the exhibition at the Receptions Gallery, I wore Piano and Trond K. Mikkelsen, working at the 3-D Digital Lab at KHiO, used a hand-held digital scanning device to scan the surface. He then processed this data using a 3-D sculpting program and printed out in white plaster as an object, 5 cm height (fig. 10–11/p. 19).

I wanted to explore how to document the Encapsulation Suits sculptures in a medium that somehow maintains their emotional effect. This small figurine reminded me of memento mori and charms, since such jewellery pieces are a souvenir of the past that triggers memories. It made me to re-evaluate the unique quality of jewellery.

The Piano-and-I is currently too time-consuming to produce. I need to learn the skills to process 3-D data. I am currently investigating how I will be able to document performances with wearable objects using 3-D technology and produce jewellery pieces.
Fig. 26
Stubborn Objects Psychodrama, 2015
COLLECTORS
Collectors is a series of photographic portraits created during an artist’s residency in 2013. I sought to articulate the compulsion to own and collect objects.

Acts of collecting and hoarding are similar in that they both involve possessing a number of objects. What clearly distinguishes collecting from hoarding is discipline. Hoarding is an endless accumulation without selection, and it shows a lack of care for content, quantity and quality. Collecting, by contrast, demands the updating of knowledge, archiving, consideration of structures/systems, and maintenance of the items’ condition. In some situations, a collection can consist of several sub-series, each of which has a conclusion. From there, the collector can resume acquiring other items that fit in further series.

The value of a collection is therefore not determined only by the purchase and sale price of the objects, but also by all the activities related to the collection: the time spent searching, accumulating, and maintaining it, not to mention the patience and generosity required to share one’s living space with the objects. A collection may even restrict its owner’s mobility, and oftentimes such a predicament appears awkward and senseless to others.

The Search for Collectors

My original intention was to interview collectors and to create masks. I was interested in finding a way to express their uncontrollable gravitation towards particular objects. I searched for local collectors via the residency’s network, on the Internet, and by posting announcements on Craigslist and observing local auctions on eBay. I also posted flyers in local thrift shops.

Through this, I met seven people who collect the following: teapots, typewriters, sewing machines, moon-shaped shelves, space age furniture, works of art from northeast Ohio from the period 1910–1920, and carrot products. If the collection had been accrued over many decades, and if the collector expressed an overwhelming emotional involvement with the collection, then I deemed it as being relevant to the project.

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1 From October 1 until November 15, 2013, I was invited to be an artist-in-residence in Cleveland, Ohio as part of The SPACES World Artist Program (www.spacesgallery.org). SPACES is an art space that funds international artists to produce participatory-based artworks together with the local community. There is also an exhibition space in SPACES, where I exhibited Collectors from October 15, 2013 to January 17, 2014, in the framework of an exhibition entitled Faces to Hide.
INTERVIEWS

I asked each collector the same set of questions:

- What are these objects?
- How did your interest in these objects begin?
- When did this collection start and how long has it been going on?
- What is so appealing about these objects?
- Which features/aspects/qualities are important?
- What are the rules of this collection?
- Which piece in your collection represents you most?

THE DOPPELGÄNGER

On the one hand, it seemed that every collector had a rational, individual system to evaluate each object. On the other hand, there were many irrational forces, like quantity or the compulsion to have a collection.

I was oftentimes curious as to whether the house or apartment was there to house the collector, or rather the objects.

The objects created an environment within which the person could experience joy, pride, comfort, and rejuvenation; it appeared to function as a means of escape from the conventions of the everyday.

I also recognised something significant about the relationship between a set of objects and a collector. The collector’s assemblage of a several objects in one room begins to reveal something about the owner. They act as the doubles and multiplied extensions of the person who acquires them, from which this same person can learn more about her- and himself. If the search for the self is related to the act of collecting, then what the assemblage of objects shows is the inner, multifarious faces of the person. In other words, the collections appear to help construct and reassure the collector’s sense of self.

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3 I visited the homes of collectors who showed a general interest in taking part in my project, despite not being sure if I would feel comfortable working with them. I arranged further meetings with them. Most of the interviews lasted average four hours, usually one afternoon. Some of them I met over the course of many days. All the interviews were documented as written notes.

4 "Why do I feel a need to have more? ...there is no end, really.... I cannot say... I had to stop buying them... I am sorry to not be seeing them, but they were taking over... until I get my museum... which I don’t know if it will ever happen.” The collector of moon shelves in an e-mail message to the author on July 24, 2016.

5 The collector of space age furniture also answered that her collection represents an attempt to create another world, one that is more open and accepting. Interview with the collector of space age furniture, conducted in October 2013.


7 “Its absolute singularity, on the other hand, arises from the fact of being possessed by me – and this allows me, in turn, to recognize myself in the object as an absolutely singular being.” Ibid., pp. 96–97.
Most importantly, the collections continue, because the collectors were waiting to be surprised by the self and the world through discovering a new item that they had never seen before or, challenge their rational system to evaluate it.8

After seeing how the construction of identity is reinforced through and influenced by collecting, I was inspired to make individual portraits9 that would somehow turn the collectors into one of their special objects. By placing them amongst the objects, I sought to display similarities and affinities between the collectors and their collection.10

METHOD
After interviewing the collectors, I sketched images that extracted and depicted the essence of the collectors’ passion to the collected objects. I then transformed these drawings using white polyethylene to construct a mask for each person. During the previous artwork Encapsulation Suits I, I had often thought about using white polyethylene and black glue – this was based on preliminary charcoal drawings I had made. Furthermore, in Japanese culture, spirits are depicted in white. The essence of allurement felt to me as an attempt to portray spirits; thus, I considered it appropriate to use the colour white. This time, I skipped the step of making precise models and instead focused on manifesting my interpretations in raw forms. I referred to Phyllis Galembo’s artworks in her book Maske to study raw forms that seem to portray spiritual forces. Galembo photographed masks extensively from West Africa and Haiti from the mid 1980s until today. After the masks were finished, I returned with Becky Yee to photograph each of them.11

DOCUMENTING WITH A SLIGHT FICTION
Initially I wanted to photograph the sites as they were. Yee, however, suggested removing the objects from their boxes, cabinets, shelves, and creating swarms of things arranged around the collector to make the objects more visible. Indeed, these constructed stages communicated the stories behind the collections and owners more directly. Through slightly modifying the original surroundings, I aimed to visually present how something inner about the person extends on to objects, and how the assembly of these objects builds a seemingly sacred space around the person.

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8 “Moon shelves that also represent a quest! There is something about a theme that has endless variations that is so appealing, also... I love the novelty of finding a new version.” The collector of moon shelves in an e-mail sent to the author on July 24, 2016.


10 From Phyllis Galembo’s photographs I learned the importance of presenting the surroundings of the masks. Her subjects were posing in front of houses made of rusted tin, mud, the ocean, and a dumpster with discarded car tires where you can also see palm trees growing in the background. These surroundings added a description of the location, scale, and meanings of the materials in their culture. Phyllis Galembo, b. 1952 in New York City, artist. Author of Maske (London: Christ Boot Ltd, 2010).

11 Becky Yee (www.beckyyee.com) is a photographer with whom I have worked since 2003.
PRESENTATION
Photographs of Collectors were printed out (inkjet, 43 x 56 cm each), framed in silver frames, and mounted on the walls in one corner of the exhibition space at SPACES.

In the centre of the exhibition space, I created a discrete space separated by white curtains. The interior of the space was dimly lit in red, and I installed seven mannequins wearing seven masks in an attempt to emphasize the hidden dimensions of people (fig. 27 / p. 61). However, I was not happy with this final exhibition as it alluded more to sexual desires and perversions than I had originally intended. After this, I looked for alternative modes of presentation, including prints of the photographs in various sizes, sometimes shown together with the masks, and sometimes without.

CONCLUSION
This work exposed me to diverse social values, surroundings, and lifestyles. I intended to continue developing this artwork throughout the research period. However, I was troubled by a moral conflict – I was essentially revealing other people’s secret worlds while still concealing my own. This led me to apply my study of a person’s relationships to objects to myself. Furthermore, I read in a passage on Yoruban masks: a curved mask is just an object. It reaches its totality along with the wearer who sings and dances. This thought provoked me to move on to the next step – to perform the wearable sculptures.


13 “[Soyinka] uses the word ‘egungun’ to refer to the mask and its wearer, together, in various stages of possession. The mask by itself, when not being worn by its true wearer is simply the ‘mask’, a thing, a carved object. When the only man who can rightfully wear it puts it on, together they become the egungun.” Gilbert Taka Fai, “Soyinka and Yoruba Sculpture: Masks of Deification and Symbolism,” accessed March 31, 2017, http://rupkatha.com/V2/n1/SoyinkaandYorubaSculpture.pdf, p. 46.
Fig. 31
Collectors – carrot products, 2013

Fig. 32
Collectors – artworks from northeast Ohio from 1910-1930, 2013
Fig. 33
Collectors – sewing machines, 2013
_CLEANING SAMURAI_

_Cleaning Samurai_ marks one of the biggest turning points of my artistic research. This artwork opened up two new directions within my artwork: performance and film. The four wearable sculptures resemble the following cleaning utensils: a vacuum cleaner, a spray, a mop, and a toilet brush (fig. 35/p. 72). The three staged performance pieces were filmed, (HD colour, multiple-channel sound), and treated as one video work that lasts for 2:04 minutes, played in a loop.

I started to work on this piece in March 2014. It was performed and filmed in the Theater am Kreuzberg (TAK) on August 27, 2014, edited in February 2015, and presented at Oslo Kunstforening (OK) in August 2015.

**MOTIVATION**

I was often struggling to balance studio work and household duties. Cleaning one’s home is a somewhat invisible and a magical labour. Thus, I thought about how to allow the act of cleaning to gain more respect and visibility. I started to imagine how to demonstrate the importance of cleaning utensils.

While practicing karate with my karate group, I realized some of the most basic movements in karate training are done without even thinking about the motions, because the body knows them. It suddenly cast a new light on how cleaning should be.

I carried out 10-minute automatic writing sessions on a daily basis to gather my thoughts on forms/shapes, atmosphere, intensity, and colours. After I could identify the general atmosphere of my idea, I started to construct rough models. While constructing the sculptures, it made most sense to film the performance. When the sculptures were in the final production phase, I worked on a choreography and further prepared the film shooting.

**CHOREOGRAPHY [VIDEO: #4 REF]**

I asked my karate team to perform the artwork. For the whole month of July 2014, our karate training was extended by 15 minutes every week to rehearse for this project (fig. 34/p. 71). I filmed all the rehearsals and developed the choreography through viewing the filmed footages after the trainings.

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1. The sculptures are made from polyethylene sponge material that was first painted with white acrylic paint as a primer, and then in yellow acrylic paint. See: _Material, Colour, Form_, pp. 21–24.

2. It is normal for many people that their rooms are kept clean.

3. I joined this karate group when I moved to Berlin in 2003. The same day I proposed to work on _Cleaning Samurai_, our trainer announced that he was leaving. So this project became our farewell project.
Meanwhile, I was watching karate world champion competition recordings and karate kata\(^4\) tutorial clips on *YouTube* to study formal aesthetics, compositions, atmosphere, lighting, and the placing of the cameras. I also examined a film made by Oskar Schlemmer, *Triadisches Ballet (Triadic Ballet)*, to study the stage set and compositions.\(^5\) Axel Ruoff, who is a filmmaker, shared his knowledge of working with the depth of the stage for filming with me. I divided the stage in four horizontally separated rectangles, positioning the smallest sculpture in the front, and instructed the actors to travel diagonally towards the front of the stage.

The following three scenes made up my final choreography: repetitive movements of *Tuski* in the scene 1; emotionless *Heian-Shodan* to express orderly ritual in the scene 2, and a free-style fighting that reveals the rage against cleaning in the scene 3.\(^6\)

**FORMS**

I studied my emotional relationships with each cleaning utensil, as well as associations that they triggered in me. For example, I added a set of thin, slanting eyes to enhance the uncooperative attitude of a vacuum cleaner.\(^7\) *Cleaning Spray* speeds up cleaning and the removing of dirt, therefore I decided to use sporty, slick and futuristic forms to highlight this feature, and then simplified the conventional forms of spray bottles and adjusted it to the form of a human body. The *Toilet Brush* (fig. 36 / p. 73) that I created had to have strong and long bristles that would clean better.

**FILMING [VIDEO: #2 SLO]**

I sought to keep the camera running, as if it were capturing the scenes live instead of incorporating distortions, zooming-in and pulling-back, and exaggerated colours. One camera was set up in the centre of the stage placed on a tripod to film the full shot from a fixed view; another camera was positioned at the left corner of the stage on a tripod to film close-ups that followed the movements of the actors.

I chose to film this piece in a black box after considering two other location options; for instance, in an apartment or at the gym where we were practicing.\(^8\) My original plan was to light the stage evenly from the top and front, but since it casted strong shadows onto the wearable sculptures, we changed the light to be set from the back. Built-in microphones in the cameras were used to pick up the sounds.

\(^4\) In karate there are varieties of set-choreographies that combine offensive and defensive movements. They are called *kata*. In order to attain higher-ranking levels in karate, one is tested for corresponding *katas* for each level.

\(^5\) Schlemmer employed basic geometric forms (square, circle and triangle) for the placing of the figures and for the composition of the stage. The size of his sculpture-like figures determined the positioning of the actors: most frequently, the biggest figure was placed in the middle where it was accompanied by two smaller and similar sized figures. Squares were persistently used to frame the floor of Schlemmer’s stages. In some scenes grids (i.e. a square divided into many squares) were drawn on the floor to enhance the depths.

\(^6\) *Tsuki* is a form of attack. This exercise is frequently used to ‘stretch’ before starting karate. *Heian Shodan* is the first and most basic *kata*.

\(^7\) I imagined that a couple would wear this piece, which I then developed as a photograph. (fig. 79 / p. 145)

\(^8\) I had two ideas on locations for filming: at home environment or at the actual gymnastic hall where we were practicing karate. I considered renting an apartment to film, but disliked the added social connotation. At the gym, the background was almost too chaotic to highlight the sculptural forms and performance.
The filming went smoothly without any major technical hitches. Scene 1 was performed three times. The filming of scene 2 had to be repeated three times. Scene 3 was shot twice. By that time everyone was exhausted.

Four months after the filming, Maja Tennstedt⁹ and I worked together on the editing. At our first meeting, Tennstedt asked fundamental questions such as: should each performance be treated as an independent piece; should the pieces be projected on walls or in screens, one after another or next to one another; if one screen is showing one performance, what are the other screens showing; how much of the synchronicity should the three pieces share; which sound should accompany which part.

I decided that all the three films should be the same length and that they should start simultaneously on separate screens. The longest scene with Tsuki, scene 1, determined the length of other videos. Scene 2 was half the length of scene 1, so it was paused to wait until the end, while scene 3 was looped.

During experiments for the soundtrack, I recorded the sound of a vacuum cleaner, spraying and other cleaning-related sounds. However, I did not like the mismatch of sound and the visual rhythm of the movements. Moreover, the actual sound of cleaning no longer made sense. Finally, I used recordings of the trainer’s voice instructing the next movements and counting, of materials being dragged on the floor, and of the performers punching and kicking.

PRESENTATION
I exhibited this piece as part of the solo exhibition Encapsulation Suits at Oslo Kunstforening in August 2015. Cleaning Samurai was a dramatic first piece situated in the entrance of the exhibition (fig. 48/p. 92). I darkened the room to allow the three scenes/films to be projected directly onto the walls using three separate projectors. I placed the vacuum cleaner sculpture in the middle of the room and lit it with a dimmed spotlight.

On the central wall, I projected scene 2 (Heian Shodan). The composition of this piece was based on a square, and it appeared to gain a boxed-in feeling. On the right wall I projected the scene 3 (Free fighting), and on the left wall the scene 1 (Tsuki).

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⁹ Maja Tennstedt is a film editor and worked on all the films I produced during this artistic research.
AFTERTHOUGHTS
Through this artwork, I experienced the dynamics of being alone whilst being surrounded by many people at various stages of an artistic production. I really enjoyed this balance.

Now, looking again at world champion video clips that I had viewed to study the choreography, I am still fascinated with how karate masters can make their body move almost like computer-generated, virtual figures. This aspect of indistinguishable digital-analogue realms is something I intend to continue researching in future pieces.

At the OK installation, I presented the vacuum cleaner sculpture so that the spectators could calibrate a sense of the physical scale of the actions in video images. However, it surprised me that the films could also be presented as independent pieces without the sculptural object.


11 When I was a child, karate was a sport that belonged to men and boys. I started practising karate in my early 20s, when I felt an urge to find answers about my national identity. I was surprised how the karate movements suited my physique. It encouraged me to see Japanese female karate champions in YouTube that break the image of Japanese women as fragile persons.
THE WEAVER
MOTIVATION
With this piece I aimed to emphasize the merging of an object into a person and vice versa. For instance, musical instruments almost become a part of musicians’ bodies, jewellers and their tools create jewellery pieces, and weavers and looms cooperate to weave.

My idea was to show a man weaving materials that are sourced from his body, as well as the beauty of his hand’s manoeuvres creating a piece of textile. I hid the actor’s face behind a mask, since I was only interested in the body and his hand gestures.

FILMING [VIDEO: #6 REF]
I made a simple wooden construction suggesting the shape of a loom (fig. 37 / p. 76). After a two-hour delay, filming commenced. While filming, the material ran out. I had made a test performance to calculate the material: cotton had more volume, but I’d decided to use cotton jersey. Thus, at the filming the materials did not pile up. A solution had to be found immediately. Instead of depicting the whole scene of the weaving, I decided to change the focus and only film the details. I built the loom differently and finished filming the piece.

AFTERTHOUGHT
The finished artwork The Weaver indicated a different and fresh area of research. It was the first video clip that needed to be supported by a number of other clips compiling object-subject partnerships as seen in musicians, handcraft, athletes, functional prosthetics, etc. From this experience, I learnt to create accurate timetables, calculate the required amount of materials, and figure out a concrete dramaturgy prior to filming. Furthermore, filming many scenes at one location for several days would reduce stress and work better than filming one idea over one day at one location. I reflected on these issues prior to working on Helmet – River, Encapsulation Suits and Modern Ballet Duo & Trio, for which I carried out meticulous film tests, as well as a thorough scheduling and planning of material and scenes.

1 Franz Petter Schmidt and I had both planned to have our final presentations at Oslo Kunstforening in 2015. We decided it would be good to connect our exhibitions, since we had both worked on research associated with the word “suits”. We had an idea about presenting one of our own artworks at each other’s exhibitions to demonstrate the relevance. Franz Petter Schmidt is a research fellow and colleague, from Arts and Craft Department of Oslo National Academy of Arts. “Franz Petter Schmidt: Weaving Fabrics for Suits,” Norwegian Artistic Research Programme, last modified, March 9, 2015, accessed March 01, 2017, http://artistic-research.no/franz-schmidt-weaving-fabrics-for-suits/?lang=en

2 I changed my idea for the background (from black to white) of the filming studio at the last minute, which delayed the start. After setting up the loom, the space looked much better with a white background compared to a black one. I booked a photo-studio for seven hours, so this delay caused additional time pressure.

3 I fastened a piece of wood horizontally across the loom much like a tabletop and so that the cloth could be piled up.
Fig. 37
Production view of *The Weaver*, 2015
through a particular style of explicating 'societal' theoretical positions (such as Goffman’s or Bourdieu’s), to well-defined conclusions. These reviewers’ reactions touch the core of the very enterprise that this collection is about. The volume introduces issues of masquerade, identity construction and identity critique through a range of styles and narrative forms. All contributors (some of whom are not native English speakers) mask their original voice with an English performance that is certainly an integral part of an accomplished academic identity. While some authors adhere more closely to the masquerade of ‘proper academic style’, others mask by adopting less formal public presentations, offering more idiosyncratic, suggestive, offensive, implicit voices. Coming from ten disciplines and five cultures, some are expansive and others terse; style, some experiences are skin-tight and others more loose; finally, some narratives are open-ended, while others lead towards a clear closure.

Identity and mask: a brief history

Already in its earliest sources in Western civilization, the mask as closely connected to the notion of the person. In the classical rhetorical tradition of Greek and Roman, the idea of a mask was used as identification of change, not as a description or disguise. Indeed, mask in the ancient world should be taken at face value (Joshi, 1994). The Roman ‘persona’ was a legal entity, a mask and name conferred individual rights over others and privileges. The concept added a moral dimension (obligation) to the judicial category of the person (right). The idea of the soul behind a mask and data record of personal accountability and moral obligation has always been a key element of the ancient Western tradition (Joshi, 1997). But it was Protestant Christianity which made the soul, in terms of social and bodily identity, a metaphorical category (Klink, 1996).

At the beginning of the Middle Ages Augustine, who is credited with introducing the Christian notion of the person as a mask, was in opposition to the idea of the mask. He claimed that the mask is not the soul but symbolizes the soul. His concept shows the mask as a symbol of the soul, as a way of expressing oneself. The approach views the masks as symbols or metaphors, and not as an attempt to disguise the true self. The other approach maintains that every manifestation is authentic, and that the mask reveals the multiplicity of our identity. The fundamental question is: Is there an essence to cover? Is a mask a way or a real self? Does it hide or liberate the real self?

This dichotomous model of personhood is evident in a long tradition of identification of dramatic identity. In a society as a work, the mask is an image, a costume for the performer. In the ancient society, the mask is a way of speaking, defining a role, or a costume for the performer. In recent times, the mask has been used as a way of speaking, defining a role, or a way of speaking, defining a role, or a way of speaking, defining a role, or a way of speaking, defining a role. However, the mask of the Other is not a manipulative or impression management. It is more of an ‘ideal’ than the real self.

The paradox of the masquerade appears to be that it presents truth in the shape of deception. Like a symbolic synthesis it reveals in the process of concealing.

Discourse of difference and the fantasy of coherent identity

As we have seen, the view of the mask as an abstraction is a simplification of the Middle Ages. However, concern with difference as a basis for personhood or identity in a pre-modern context is evident. According to Reissman (1990, 1995), the word, cultural and social groups in the Middle Ages were characterized by the existence of a number of social and cultural differences. The existence of these differences was considered essential for social and cultural identity. The concept of the Other is not a manipulative or impression management. It is not the Other (as the stranger) and not the enemy who is the real problem for the nation-state. The enemy is
HELMET – RIVER
HELMET – RIVER

Helmet – River was a staged performance that was filmed in HD (4K), in colour, and with sound. It was edited as a 3-minutes-long film. During the performance a painting (4m x 8m) was produced (fig.44/p.87). Helmet – River was exhibited at Oslo Kunstforening (OK), at Steinkjer Kunstforening, at easy!upstream Gallery, and at the Receptions Gallery (KHiO).

MOTIVATION
While working on my daily automatic writing, a dream from more than ten years ago reappeared. In the dream, I was witnessing the following action from a distant location: I saw many samurais swimming in a blue river. Each person swam at their own individual pace. After I woke up, I thought the dream was utterly strange and that it did not make sense, but the poetic quality stayed with me for a long time.

On the first day in my elementary school in Japan, my teacher handed me a bucket and a piece of rag and told me that I should go get some water and wipe the floor. Other children fetched water, went on their knees and wiped the floors, as if it was an absolutely normal thing to do.

In 2014, I noticed that the fear of not belonging to a group was reoccurring in my private life. I sought to communicate the feeling of observing a ritual conducted by a group of people from the standpoint as a foreigner. The activity should be absurd, almost banal, in which mechanical humans were solemnly working in a group.

I completed the construction of twenty identical helmets. Almost one year later, I finally started to work with the performative element of this artwork and filmed the results. I combined the story of the swimming samurais and the experience in my school.

1 The solo exhibition at Oslo Kunstforening was entitled Encapsulation Suits and took place on August 13 – September 13, 2015. The group exhibition at Steinkjer Kunstforening was entitled Dansen gjennom skuggeheimen, October 31 – November 22, 2015. The group exhibition at easy!upstream Gallery in Munich was entitled (IM)PRINT, February 25 – 28, 2016. The solo exhibition at Receptions Gallery in Oslo was entitled The Stubborn Life of Objects and was on view, April 15 – 23, 2016.

2 My family returned to Japan from Malaysia, when I was seven years old. Even though it was the country of my origin, it was a new and foreign country for me. I did not like anything about the new school. There were forty classmates, everything took place indoors, and it was loud. In the previous school in Malaysia, there had been only a handful of students.
PREPARATION

I developed construction techniques for the helmets and stretching canvases that allowed many people to wipe the floor and simultaneously paint a large painting. I conducted a test performance two months prior to the filming with four actors. In this experiment, I investigated the type of the canvas materials, the amount of the paint needed, a possible choreography, the duration of the performance, and the most suitable filming angles.

I then started to look for a film location. When the location was booked, I calculated the size of the canvas needed to allow eight people to wipe the floor/canvas. Then I searched for nine athletic actors of a similar physique and about 170 – 175 cm.

To study group choreography, I watched films by Busby Berkeley [Video: #5 REF], video clips by the Petshop Boys, and mass dances that take place in public spaces in Asia such as Taichi and interpretations of Michael Jackson’s Moon-Walk, as well as a number of opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympic games [Video: #5 REF]. To gather ideas about apparently foreign rituals, I investigated Japanese sports such as Sumo wrestling, Kyudo [Video: #5 REF], Kendo, calligraphy [Video: #5 REF], and floor-wiping competitions, and dances at temples for ceremonies. It fascinated me to see how Japanese people could control their faces to show almost no emotions.

I sketched a number of storyboards in watercolours, used coins to think of the directions where people should move, and filmed myself enacting the planned ritual.

To study the set design, I watched the video documentation of Wassily Kandinsky’s visual theatre, Pictures at an Exhibition (Bilder einer Ausstellung). The footage is a digital reconstruction, which looks like Tetris.

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3 I undertook a test filming at Theaterhaus Mitte, Berlin.
4 The canvas placed on the floor is made from polyester, primed with a gesso surface, and attached to a thin carpet using staples in order to keep the stretched surface wrinkle-less. The carpet layer helped to prevent the canvas from curling upwards, once the paint was applied. The canvas and carpet were taped on a black plastic sheet using duct tape. Ultramarine acrylic paint was applied for the painting.
5 The actors should perform a ritual before they start wiping. The act of wiping as well as its finish should be coordinated. Furthermore, they should look up once in a while to show their helmets better to the camera that would be suspended from the top.
6 After eight times of wiping back and forth the painting started to lose footprint markings. So, the duration became eight times of wiping.
7 It should be filmed from above.
8 After fixing the choreography it became clear that I had to look for someone to act as lead performer, a ninth person.
9 This piece was performed on April 4, 1928 at the Friedrich-Theater in Dessau using the music of Modest Mussorgsky. “Mussorgsky Kandinsky,” YouTube video, 36:03, posted by “spirkart,” January 24, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9dJJ7_3nrk
10 Tetris is a computer game that was developed in 1984 by Alexey Pajitnov (formerly the USSR). It is a game where puzzle pieces fall from the top of the screen. The user then arranges the forms so that they pile up as a block. “Tetris,” accessed on March 14, 2017, http://tetris.com/about-tetris/
The original performance was installed on a stage that employed cranes.\textsuperscript{11} I was inspired by the disorientation in terms of scales in this piece, which lead me to film my performance from two different heights: from above and from the ground level.

**FILMING [VIDEO: #4 SLO]**

_Helmet – River_ was filmed in the Studio One of Künstlerhaus Bethanien.\textsuperscript{12} The space had the sacred, over-hygienic, and postapocalyptic quietness that I was looking for. This neoclassical building used to be a hospital’s chapel. The colour tones of the space were black and white, just like my white uniforms and black helmets. The room is 10m (length) x 7m (width) x 8m (height). It was equipped with a lift from which a camera could be hung, and I was allowed to use water and duct tape on the floor.

After finishing the storyboard, Florian Lampersberger\textsuperscript{13} and I discussed the most efficient order and manner to film, set up lights, cameras and trolleys.

A few days prior to filming, I asked nine actors to come to my studio individually and try on the helmets. I explained what would happen, the time schedule and the condition of their participation. The day before filming, we undertook rehearsals in Studio One. The actors came for four hours to learn the choreography. We started with actions listed in my storyboard. The choreography was more difficult to teach than I had thought, mainly because the actors could neither see nor hear well due to the helmets. It was impossible to instruct the actors to line up, walk straight, and synchronize. Additionally, there were too many scenes to remember. I then reduced many of the scenes and actions. One person was a professional actress, whom I asked to take a directive role and instruct the next actions in English.\textsuperscript{14}

In the morning we filmed all the ritual scenes. After lunch, the main wiping scene was filmed. Everything went perfectly and I was pleased with the captured images, showing the exaggerated foreign ritual, and a hygienic, crisp and airy atmosphere.

\textsuperscript{11} “The production was rather cumbersome as the sets were supposed to move and the hall lighting was to change constantly in keeping with Kandinsky’s scrupulous instructions.”

\textsuperscript{12} Künstlerhaus Bethanien at Mariannenplatz is located in the Berlin district of Kreuzberg. The building was constructed as a hospital in the mid-19th century, was transformed into a contemporary art space in 1974 and served in this function until 2010. Today the building houses music and performance schools, studios for artists, and an exhibition space. “History,” Künstlerhaus Bethanien gGmbH, Accessed March 14, 2017, http://www.bethanien.de/en/kunstlerhaus-bethanien/history/

\textsuperscript{13} The filming team consisted of Florian Lampersberger as the first camera man, Gil Bartz as the second camera man and set photographer, Christoph Schwantuschke as a camera assistant and a lighting technician, Maja Tennstedt as an editor, Roberta Di Martino as a project manager, and myself as a director.

\textsuperscript{14} I asked her to speak English with Japanese inflection to reflect personal associations with languages.
The first editing phase was scheduled for the following week. I made rough selections before meeting the editor, Tennstedt. The first draft was 10 minutes long. This was the version that I exhibited at OK in August 2015. Whilst making a 1:30 minute trailer, I saw that the piece gained more energy if I drastically reduced the entire duration. After the second editing phase in February 2016, the final piece ended up being four minutes long.

Since the wiping scene felt very long, I looked for a suitable sound or music to accompany this scene. I used Torben Snekkested’s work, Plateaux 3 as a soundtrack. This piece reminded me of the water buffalos I heard in rice fields during my childhood, and an imagined sound of radioactive waves.

PRESENTATION
At the exhibition at OK, I presented the original canvas (4m x 8m), five helmets and the video piece on a flat screen (fig. 46/p. 92). To transmit sound, I installed a set of speakers behind the canvas.
In the exhibition at KHiO, I presented nine helmets as a totem in front of the canvas. I showed only the half-sized painting 4 x 2 m (hanging from the ceiling). The video piece was shown on a DIN A5 size pad that was mounted on a wooden construction imitating a stone-setting technique in jewellery. A pair of speakers was installed behind the canvas, and the soundtrack filled the space.
At the exhibitions at Steinkjer Kunstforening and easy!upstream Gallery, the video piece was presented on a flat screen without the helmets and the painting.

AFTERTHOUGHT
Helmet – River was well produced, and I am happy with the results. The strength of this work is the nexus of unrelated elements such as samurais, wiping floor, painting, strange rituals, and awkward combinations of the spoken language and the visual images. I also discovered my ability to direct a group of many people.

Much more time could have been spent on the rehearsal and actual filming of this piece to get certain scenes, like the lining up of buckets, to be more perfect.

For future presentations of this work, I will project the video at a height of around 2.5m. The painting is an accompanying object that reveals and documents the scale of the actions, as well as the original colour. Furthermore, I now understand that the film can also exist as an independent piece, without the canvas.

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15 Snekkested was a fellow of the Norwegian Artistic Research Fellowship Programme. He composes and builds sound archive of multi-phonics saxophone. Multi-phonics on Saxophone sound like the Japanese wind instrument shakuhachi with additional metallic echoes. http://torbensnekkestad.com.
16 Cleaning up contaminated water in Fukushima after the nuclear power plant disaster in 2011 is a perfect example of purely pointless and absurd group labour.
Fig. 40
Production view of Helmet – River, 2015
Fig. 41
Néstor - River, film stills, 2015
MODERN BALLET DUO & TRIO
MODERN BALLET DUO & TRIO

*Modern Ballet Duo & Trio* is made up of two staged performances that were filmed in HD (4K), in colour, with sound, and were edited as a two-split-screen video (2:30 Min), and played in a loop. *Modern Ballet Duo & Trio* was exhibited at Oslo Kunstforening (OK), easy!upstream Gallery, and at the Receptions Gallery (KHiO).

**MOTIVATION**
I sought to depict how humans in various scales of teamwork were mechanizing. One is single, two makes a couple, three is a group, and more than three is a larger group. In the previous work, *Helmet – River*, I depicted the team of more than three people. In *Modern Ballet Duo & Trio*, *Duo* is a metaphor for partnership and the *Trio* stands for family.

My grandmother taught me how to use a sewing machine by sewing a particular cross pattern on rags. This was the first sewing machine I learnt to use. I combined the act of wiping/painting the floor and the pattern she used to teach in this artwork. I was looking to convey the comically hectic atmosphere often seen in silent films.

**REPARATION [VIDEO: #7 REF]**
To plan the choreography, I first drew a diagram, using coins and small figures to consider the paths the *Duo/Trio* should move along. I then carefully considered how the actors should enter and leave the stage, as well as how to start and end the performance. I also studied the dramaturgy of Oscar Schlemmer’s *Kunstfigur (Figure in Spaces).* I conducted a test shoot two months prior to the final film shoot.

**FILMING [VIDEO: #4 SLO]**
The canvas was 4 x 7m large, sized in a way to fit to the 16:9 proportion of a screen. It was important to have a black frame surrounding the white canvas in order to add contrast and highlight the vivid colours of the pieces. *Duo* featured white and red, *Trio* featured white, red, blue, and yellow.

We rehearsed the choreography two days prior to filming. Again, the actors’ hearing was impaired due to the helmets.

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The actual performance of *Duo* and *Trio* lasted thirty minutes each. Several issues arose whilst filming this piece. The most critical one was that the colour yellow during the filming of *Trio* was not visible on the monitor.\(^2\) After considering the budget, technical capabilities and the following schedules, I decided not to re-film. Instead, I prioritized filming *Stubborn Objects Psychodrama* in the afternoon, as it involved a larger crew, in particular five volunteers I was yet to meet. During the post-production process I was relieved to discover that the *Trio* material could be rescued by increasing the colour saturation.\(^3\)

Similar to other film pieces like *Helmet – River* and *Encapsulation Suits*, I edited this piece at two different stages after examining the viewers’ reactions. At the OK, the film’s duration was 10 minutes. I presented *Duo & Trio* on one screen and in loop, whose order was: *Duo – Trio – Duo*. At easy!upstream Gallery the length of *Duo & Trio* was also 10 minutes, but here I presented them on two separate screens.\(^4\) Having observed the audience’s concentration span I re-edited the final piece down to 2.5 minutes and I combined both *Duo* and *Trio* to fit in one screen. Some viewers also mentioned the immediate association of this artwork to the logo of Gmail.\(^5\) Thus, in order to intensify the connection with my grandmother’s sewing lesson, I operated a sewing machine whilst watching the *Duo* footage, and recorded the sound to use it as a soundtrack. The music scores, pieces of wiping rags, also became additional artworks (fig.50/p.93).

**AFTERTHOUGHT**

With this artwork, I sought to address the critical issue of balancing work, partnership and family life – however, it was not perceptible as such and only became apparent to spectators after I explained it. Regardless, since the story is extremely personal and has a challenging theme, I felt it was acceptable to keep the underlying motive open to various interpretations. The two pieces of rags that I produced while recording the soundtrack have narrative values. I am now considering how to integrate these pieces of sewn rags as a part of *Modern Ballet Duo & Trio*.

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2. I changed the choreography the night before, but forgot to reflect the effect of this change on the amount of the paint needed. Thus, the paint/pigment, especially the yellow was almost invisible.

3. I had taken a risk by not repeating the *Trio* filming, but in the end it turned out to be the right decision.

4. They were screened on two identical screens, each 11 inches wide.

5. Gmail is a free email service provided by Google.
Fig. 45
Modern Ballet Duo & Trio, film stills, 2015
Fig. 46
Helmet – River, 2015
Installation, Oslo Kunstforening, Oslo, 2015

Fig. 47
Encapsulation Suits, 2015
Installation, Oslo Kunstforening, Oslo, 2015

Fig. 48
Cleaning Samurai, 2014
Installation, Oslo Kunstforening, Oslo, 2015
Fig. 49
Archive room, 2016
Installation, Receptions Gallery, Oslo, 2016

Fig. 50
Wiping Rags from Modern Ballet Duo & Trio, 2015
Installation, Receptions Gallery, Oslo, 2016

Fig. 51
Encapsulation Suit, 2016
Installation, Receptions Gallery, Oslo, 2016

Fig. 52
Collectors, 2013
Installation, Receptions Gallery, Oslo, 2016
Fig. 53
Act One: Stubborn Objects Psychodrama, 2017
Installation, Akademirrommet at Kunstnerhus, Oslo
Fig. 54
Act Three: Encapsulation Suits, 2017
Installation, Akademrinnet at Kunstnerhus, Oslo
Fig. 55
Piano-and-I, 2017
Entrance to the installation, Akademirrommet at Kunstnerhus, Oslo
Fig. 56
Act Two: Intermission – Enactments of the Sculptures, 2017
Performance, Akademiarommet at Kunstnerhus, Oslo
**PORTRATURE**

*Yuka:* The anthropologist Daniel Miller visited and observed people’s households, carrying out interviews with them in their homes. From this, he compiled thirty essays that were named after the first names of his interviewees, which he then called ‘portraits’. Each story underpins the general notion of the person’s apartment, pointing out specific objects the person has unique relationships with, the person’s biography and her/his personal philosophy towards life, dreams, and so on. By assembling these essays, Miller claims that we can see “a bigger portrait that starts to emerge as an image of the modern world.”

In *Collectors*, I applied a similar process: I visited collectors’ homes, conducted interviews, created masks and made portraits. Susan Stewart’s words explain my activities precisely: “(...) fantastic—an enlargement in the exterior of an “interior” emotion.” I am looking to identify and recreate at least one of a person’s many faces: The face of the self that bares neither control to act in given roles nor is put on for other people.

The interior can indicate a person’s private realm, i.e. the domestic realm; or home, where they guard personal secrets and emotions to which only they, themselves, are privy. This is the reason I wanted to work with objects found in a person’s house – objects from the inside.

*Key:* When talking to collectors you did not know, did you find that people felt awkward speaking about their objects?

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2. “But this is what is special about London, and what this book is about: thirty portraits which pay respect to whoever these people happen to be and which, between them, paint a bigger portrait that starts to emerge as an image of the modern world.” Ibid., p. 5.
3. “Instead I focus on what seems to matter most to the people themselves: their ability to form relationships, and the nature of those relationships. Relationships that flow constantly between persons and things.” Ibid., p. 6.
4. “In the conclusion I return to my more familiar academic style and consider the wider picture that emerges when you take the array of portraits as an entry into understanding modern life. (...) Anthropology is the discipline which tries to engage with the minutiae of everyday life while retaining a commitment to understanding humanity as a whole.” Ibid., p. 6.
5. Ibid., p. 5.
7. “In that theatre of life of people who engage in situation-appropriate behaviour are playing ‘roles’ or wearing masks.” Ibid., p. 5.
8. “But, increasingly, people’s lives take place behind the closed doors of private houses. How can we gain an insight into what those lives are like today: people’s feelings, frustrations, aspirations, tragedies and delights? (...) We could try and knock on doors and ask to talk with them, to hear their stories.” Miller, pp. 1–2.
Yuka: No, in fact it was a relief to have a clear topic of conversation, precisely because we did not know each other. Interestingly, the ‘talk about objects’ often became a camouflage used to speak about something very serious and personal. Sometimes, issues that I could not imagine sharing with a stranger just slipped out during these sessions. The objects established situations where the participants and I could meet and gain proximity.

Key: Are you interested in people’s relationships with objects, or rather in finding out their secrets?

Yuka: I am more interested in people, the side that is kept within oneself. At first, I was fascinated by the kind of issues that these meetings generated. Later, the kind of information I was looking for became clearer and I could focus on extracting that during the sessions. I realised that I wanted to come up with ‘a bigger portrait’, as Miller had done.

Parallel to this discovery, I examined another approach to portraiture and objects taken by the painter Utagawa Kuniyoshi (fig. 63 / p. 122). He created portraits of people as objects and animals, simply because the portrayal of human faces was forbidden during his time. Thus, objects were sublime and acted as metaphors for people and social critique.

One of my future projects will highlight the aspect of speaking about sensitive topics through objects. I will investigate issues surrounding the home more directly, e.g. how a person constructs a sense of home. Based on this I plan to create emotionalized sculptural objects that embody the answers.

Key: What about your previous statement, where you mentioned the moral conflict in revealing other peoples’ secrets?

Yuka: I am, in fact, revealing my own secrets: issues surrounding the topic of ‘home’ and constructing identity matter to me, as do issues like family, gender roles, time, and life/work balance. I am especially interested in these issues, since many of them have no ‘answers’ or role models. Everyone must find their own way to deal with them.

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9 Miller points out the artificiality of languages: “Language is often defensive, restricted and carefully constructed as narrative. You can ask people about themselves, but the results are often much less informative than one would like.” Ibid., p. 2.

10 Utagawa Kuniyoshi, b. 1797 in Japan, d. 1861 in Japan. Kuniyoshi was popular in Japan for his woodprints that belonged to the genre of Kyoga (狂画), translated as ‘mad pictures’.

11 Towards the end of the Edo era (1603 – 1868) a number of laws were passed to ban many forms and expressions in art such as Ukiyo-e (浮世絵 beauty portraits of actors and actresses of Kabuki Theatre), pornographic imagery, and contents that criticise the Shogunate. Kuniyoshi depicted animals and objects with human facial expressions that resembled faces of popular actors and actresses. He also added socially critical commentaries through projecting politically significant figures over animals. Inagaki, Shinichi and Isao Toshihiko, eds., 国芳の狂画 [Kuniyoshi’s Kyogak] (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki Co.Ltd., 1991), pp. 195–203.
“Forget that commodities are good for eating, clothing and shelter; forget their usefulness and try instead the idea that commodities are good for thinking; treat them as nonverbal medium for the human creative faculty.”

Fig. 59
Bag of Flour, 2015
Bag of Flour: You often asked me about my ideas about living as a female, about gender roles and family life. I am Bag of Flour, I am almost one hundred years old. I was born in 1920 after WW1 and gave birth to my first child just a few months before the end of WW2. I was a housewife and raised three children. – So, Yuka, now it’s your turn to speak about your view on the themes of work, life, love, family, time, and being a female artist.

Yuka: Carl Jung says that there is an ideal female living within a man called anima, and an ideal male residing within a woman called animus.1 Anima has the potential to tempt men in order to destroy their imagined masculinity. For instance, anima hinders their ability to make decisions and makes them do things that are in contradiction to the male way of doing things. Thus, many men ignore their anima. However, women cannot ignore their animus the way men ignore their anima because our society is constructed by systems and values defined by men. Women must act out their animus in order to achieve something in this society.2

Many couples consist of a man who lives his anima to the full, and a woman who also lives her animus to the same extent: Take the example of the so-called “new fathers” and the “new mothers.” 3 This was a necessary development as women are participating in the paid workforce just like men. But still some working mothers feel that they have many more tasks to fulfill.4 The challenge here is how to share domestic labour and child-rearing tasks exactly fifty-fifty. The “new fathers” and the “new mothers” struggle with their own private/working/family time management, whilst seeking to maintain and nurture their emotional ties.5

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1 “Every man carries within him the eternal image of woman, not the image of this or that particular woman, but a definite feminine image. This image is fundamentally unconscious, an hereditary factor of primordial. (...) The same is true of the woman: she too has her inborn image of man.” Carl Jung, "Marriage as a Psychological Relationship,” in Collective Works 17: Development of the Personality (New York: Princeton University, 1980), pp. 187 – 204.

2 “In our contemporary society, masculine qualities are valued more than feminine qualities. Thus, the animus has much more meaning to women. Many men live disconnected to their anima, but for women, it is impossible to ignore their animus. They strive to be 'equally competent as men'.” Hayao Kawai, 動きざかりの心理学 [Psychology of Working People] (Tokyo: Shincho Bunko, 1981), pp. 112 – 119.


4 Women in paid workforce are set under higher pressure since the inner family workload is shared unfairly at the cost of women. Parenting couples expect to have harmonized and subjective relationships but these frustrations concerning the delegation of work emerge into internal conflicts. Rosemarie Nave-Herz, Familie heute 6. Auflage, trans. By Yuka Oyama (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2015), pp. 142 – 144. Rosemarie Nave-Herz, b. 1935 in Berlin, family sociologist.

5 “An exploratory study shows that only the fewest couples have explicitly and prospectively decided on the expected new everyday time and work organization, thereby pre-programming future conflicts or the retraditionalisation of the family division of labour.” Ibid., p. 74.
There is a new trend in families that young children are exaggeratingly centralized and treated as mature decision-makers. Perhaps we, the adults, are out of practice when it comes to behaving emotionally, while trying to navigate life in limited time to 'function'.

_Bag of Flour: _Could you explain this in more detail?

_Yuka:_ Jan Verwoert showed a YouTube clip of Tom Cruise running, spanning all the phases of his acting career. He ran from the moment he woke up. "This is expected in our modern life," Verwoert concluded. We are running around in a circle, in the orbit of something Verwoert calls ‘The System’, because we want to be the part of it. Our paranoia of failure, of no longer being a part of ‘The System’ is the “drug that boosts the performance of all players in the game alike.” He then explains that the centre of ‘The System’ is empty. This idea made me think of the relevance of work in my life.

In my case it can be explained through my being Japanese, and Japanese people put work first. In Japanese culture, the act of “working and being busy” is praised. Working hard relates to receiving more affection. Yet, this work-centered mentality leads to a negative spiral of hiding true desires and emotionality. There is a danger that by suppressing the primary desire, many other wishes may die, too.

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6 "Today... children are already expected to make many decisions at early age (...) given greater freedom of action and right to have more decision-making power about their own living conditions.” Nave-Herz, p. 143.

7 Moreover, problematic emotional expression means the so-called romantic love between couples becomes challenged, as the emotional relationship is influenced by measuring whether the partner is supportive. Ibid., p. 57.

8 Jan Verwoert, _No new kind of duck — would I know how to say what I do?, _Lecture, Grüner Salon/Volksbühne, Berlin, October 23, 2016


10 “When it reaches a certain level of social and institutional complexity, power appears to be more than merely the sum of its parts—it acquires the presence of a meta-subject: as such, it has been called ‘The Leviathan,’ ‘The Machine,’ ‘The System,’ or simply ‘The Man.’ It works like a mystical proof of God: you need a force that is bigger than you—i.e., The System—to validate the life you are living. Without it, you would be lost.” Jan Verwoert, _Cookie!_ (Berlin: Piet Zwart Institute & Sternberg Press, 2013), pp. 49–50.

11 Ibid., p. 60.

12 Verwoert refers to a film of Michelangelo Antoninoni, _L'Eclisse_ (1962) to describe The System. The protagonist Piero (Alain Delon) is a successful broker on the stock exchange and therefore a metaphor of The System of money. Vittoria, the female main character’s mother, is addicted to stock exchange. Vittoria tries to seduce Piero, who then eventually betrays her mother and intentionally causes her to lose money. Vittoria recognizes emptiness in Piero who gets “unaffected by the ebb and flow of money, commodities, and lives within it” because his centre is empty. “But since nothing is all there is, there’s not very much to hold on to. And, as the circulation of stocks is what he is about, she acts like proper stocks do and goes on to further circulate.” Ibid., pp. 58–63.
The image of running around the empty circle of ‘The System’ made sense to me. We are not trained to speak out and express our desires, but rather operate like mechanical robots. And because our desires are given no space, we stop thinking about them. We run. We work. But we do not know what we want.

Pronouncing the desires clearly and experiencing fulfilment encourages a person to become better at articulating what she/he wants. Once becoming aware of this, it generates a different motive to run and fills the empty centre with joy and satisfaction.

I’ll go back to where I started before I drifted off: the issue of emotionality. Our child screamed, cried, moved his legs and arms, and essentially used all of his energy to address what he wanted. This always happened at inconvenient times and we had to stop what we were doing, interrupt our plans to deal with him. These direct interruptions and emotional challenges were new to us. This woke us up and we realized that perhaps functionality had masked many of our human emotions and relations.

It is true that humans are easily overwhelmed these days. There are too many things to do and too many tasks to fulfil. Our expectations of excellent performances tip the balance of work-family-love-time.

Bag of Flour: In your case another challenge is added. You are an artist. Your occupation is not typically seen as being family-friendly.

Yuka: Delegation and gender roles, anima, animus, hiding emotions behind functionality and fixed roles, time pressure, mechanical humans, ‘The System’, group identity, work... These very personal and everyday issues became the impulse to create Cleaning Samurai, Helmet – River, and Modern Ballet Duo & Trio.

There are many contradictions when it comes to sustaining nuclear families, a family structure that was constructed at the time of the industrial revolution. However, why cannot we find solutions to sustain them? These family/couple conflicts are not only private problems, as often perceived in public. They are social problems and need restructuring.

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14 “40% of fathers and 42% of mothers of children under 18 years old have answered that they are under time pressure. This increases to 51% of single mothers and 61% to single mothers with occupation. (BMFSFJ 2012:41)” Nave-Herz, p. 75.


16 The concept of a nuclear family was constructed at the time of industrial revolution. It was believed to be the most efficient social structure to operate industrial society. Kerreen Reiger, “History: The rise of a modern institution,” in Family, ed. Marilyn Poole (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2005), pp. 43–65.

17 Nave-Herz claims that the public often treats family conflicts as problems within private life. But they are important social and political subject matters. Better solutions for them will bring enormous financial prosperity to our society. Nave-Herz, p. 144.
Fig. 60
Handbag, 2015
Key: The last time we met, you told me that you wanted to find out more about the lively side of objects.

**Yuka:** Statistically a person in the USA owns approximately 300,000\(^1\) things, and around 10,000\(^2\) in Europe. In his book *Vom Eigensinn der Dinge* (*The Obstinacy of Objects*), Hans Peter Hahn\(^3\) outlines objects as being stubborn (*eigensinnig*). At first he introduces how artefacts make humans commit to almost auto-suggestive gestures. For example, we see a chair and we sit down. These repeated experiences with artefacts establish habits, so people act almost automatically.\(^4\) Vilém Flusser adds that objects are also capable of triggering information rather than just gestures. Flusser discusses that some objects become ‘special’ and appear to have a strong effect on their human owners\(^5\) because they evoke familiar memories. People remember what happened when they paired up with you (object), because objects are the co-actors of our everyday life.\(^6\) Hahn explains that objects do more than just reminding people of something or someone. They absorb feelings and awareness that we do not consciously recognize.\(^7\) They show us the side effects of past events and a “surplus of perceptions.”\(^8\) Therefore, objects may appear to allow or restrict people to conduct intended actions in daily life, communicate desires and feelings.\(^9\) Because objects evoke such unconscious, surprising perspectives of personal experience, relate to surprising messages, and make the owners look at daily life differently, it could be said that they have a life of their own.\(^10\) This makes objects appear as if they were stubborn: they

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8. “Es geht um eine Phänomenologie, die den Dingen ein eigentümliches Leben zuweist und damit der ‚normalen‘, unreflektierten Wahrnehmung widerspricht.” Ibid., p. 11.
have agency and act on people. Interestingly, these objects are not always frequently used in everyday life. Rather, they are good for crystallising stories and meanings. This line of thought is similar to Baudrillard. He states that people ‘possess’ certain objects, and that when objects are possessed they are decommodified. Objects mirror the owner’s ideal and desired self-representation. Objects give people self-assurance. Objects act as a ‘solace’, because they can be easily multiplied and categorised. We invest emotions in objects and they regulate our neuroses. This, in turn, makes the objects enter into subjective relationships with their owners.

**Key:** Do you think that objects can make their own decisions – or even have intentions?

**Yuka:** I believe that objects cannot actively generate actions and thoughts as dramatically as humans can. Yet, at the same time, I do not think that it is only due to the feelings that people project onto objects that engender agentive quality in the objects. Making artwork is a good example. Jeanne Randolph elaborates on the relationship between transitional objects that are known as ‘smelly blankets’ and the production of artwork,

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12 Hahn refers to Edward Shils, who was a sociologist. He claimed the importance of material culture as carrier of memory and gave as an example public monuments that crystalize cultural memory into history. Hahn, p. 12.
13 “A utensil is never possessed, because a utensil refers one to the world; what is possessed is always an object abstracted from its function and thus brought into relationship with the subject (…) a private totality.” Jean Baudrillard, *The System of Objects* (London, New York: Verso, 1996), pp. 91 – 92.
14 “The object is thus in the strict sense of the word a mirror, for the images it reflects can only follow upon one another without ever contradicting one another… but desired ones.” Ibid., p. 96.
15 “Its absolute singularity, on the other hand, arises from the fact of being possessed by me—and this allows me, in turn, to recognize myself in the object as an absolutely singular being.” Ibid., p. 97.
16 “Nothing can be both ‘personalized’ and quantified so easily as objects… classified and assigned to a place.” Ibid., p. 95.
17 “That is why everything that cannot be invested in human relationships is invested in objects.” Ibid., p. 96.
18 “This is what makes them ‘ours’… equilibrium that is itself neurotic.” Ibid., p. 95.
19 “[The] pure object, devoid of any function or completely abstracted from its use, takes on a strictly subjective status”. Ibid., p. 92.
20 “After all it is the people who have chosen the objects. And are thereby given the agency. Mobile phones are made to disturb us. We feel obliged to touch and interact with the mobile phone. You can however switch it off. This means that you have an option to mute out.” “IASH Winter School 2014, Hans Peter Hahn on the agency of things,” YouTube video, 1:55, posted by “Walter Benjamin Kolleg,” March 25, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FVAzswlrw
21 Jeanne Randolph, b. 1943 in Canada, cultural critic, author, performance artist, psychiatrist.
22 “The transitional object is neither inner nor outer, but rather partakes of both, is that it is necessary “for the initiation of a relationship between the child and the world.” The child has chosen some thing that can accompany him or her in the external world. Winnicott considered this to be the first use of a symbol, the first instance of using an illusion to aid in experiencing what is real.” Jean Randolph, “The Amenable Object,” in *SightLines: Reading contemporary Canadian art*, Jessica Bradley and Lesley Johnstone eds. (Quebec: Artextes Information Centre, 1994), pp. 325–326.
23 “The smelly blanket is that particular, usually soiled, object from which the child hates to part. Winnicott observed that such ‘transitional objects’ were important, precisely because they may appear to the infant as not fully part of the external world, and therefore not entirely separate from the child’s own body.” Daniel Miller, *Material Culture and Mass Consumption* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1987), p. 95.
stating: “The capacity to use objects as a temporary, illusory definition of the boundary between the subjective and objective is dependent on the creative impulse.”

She goes on to argue that, “Winnicott would see the creation of artworks, in this context, like play, where subjectivity and objectivity overlap, not as regression to the toddler’s level but instead as an adaptive relationship with the mysterious world. It is not that the adult artist reverts to a baby-like state when he or she is artistically inventive; it is as though to play were one of the first adult modes that the child acquires.”

My artworks concretise my ambiguous and hidden feelings. My wearable sculptures are soft and do not take their functions into account: “The transitional object, which is physically malleable and whose shape responds to manipulation, does not have a utilitarian function dominating its form.”

My art objects intermediate my unknown inner and outer discourses, if I work and play with them. Through these activities, I understand more about myself. Another agentive quality objects have is that they bring people together.

Key: In the Middle Ages in Germany, Holland, Iceland and other Nordic countries, the place where people met and discussed important rules of their community was called ‘thing’. It is a well-known fact that objects enable people to think and talk in collective surroundings.

Yuka: Yes. And even more interestingly, ‘stories’ are called ‘monogatari’ in Japanese. The word consists of two Chinese characters such as ‘mono’ (object) and ‘gatari’ (telling/language). Stories are told with, and through, objects.

24 Randolph, p. 326.
26 Randolph, p. 326.
27 Ibid., p. 325.
28 Randolph questions the motive and roles of art making for an artist. At first she mentions about Freud’s idea that art making is reactionary: “Primary process is intrinsically reactionary; that resorting to symbol for wish fulfilment is the antithesis of taking action; and that, regardless of what the work looks like, the psychic impulse from what it arises is the need to conserve the intrapsychic status quo.” She then discusses her idea about art making in relation to Winnicott’s transitional objects, in which the artist restructures and thinks through making art instead of only releasing his libido: “The model of art object is of an object amenable to an interaction with the viewer, reflecting the hypothesis that in some way the materials and methods with which it was made have been rendered by the artist into something amenable to his or her subjective interventions– a subjective very like primary process yet exploratory, not reactionary.” Ibid., p. 342.
29 “Thing, in medieval Scandinavia, the local, provincial, and, in Iceland, national assemblies of freemen that formed the fundamental unit of government and law. Meeting at fixed intervals, the things, in which democratic (...) settled all legal questions.” “Thing Scandinavian political assembly,” in Encyclopædia Britannica, last modified February 7, 2007, accessed March 25, 2015, https://www.britannica.com/topic/thing-Scandinavian-political-assembly
Fig. 61
Piano, film still, 2015
THE FOLLOWING EXTRACTS ORIGINATE FROM A LECTURE ENTITLED
WEARABLE SCULPTURES IN PERFORMANCE THAT I GAVE ON AUGUST 29, 2016
TO MA STUDENTS IN THE INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH CLOTHES AND
CHOREOGRAPHY, OSLO NATIONAL ACADEMY OF ARTS

During this lecture, I will present examples of other artists who have used wearable sculptures in performance. This research of other artists’ approaches aided and developed my own artistic practice whilst constructing wearable sculptures, struggling to choreograph them, and investigating how to improve participatory activities by using them. I paid particular attention to how the artists made their sculptures, what their intentions were, why the attribute ‘wearable’ was vital, how they found their participants, when and where they performed, and how they worked with their collaborators.

At first, I was researching wearable sculptures with exceptional sculptural qualities in the categories “Self-Propelled Mannequins” and “Theatrical Costumes/Props”. As my studio practice developed, I started to notice discrepancies between the articulated feelings of the wearers and the external, formal expressions of the objects. Consequently, I focused on strengthening the inner as well as the outer connections between the wearers and the sculptures. I studied how to integrate private life into art, much like the artists in the category “Art and Life”. Concurrently, I became inspired to investigate the impacts of transforming. I then examined the artworks that I introduce in the category “Explorations”. Towards the end of my artistic research, I searched for artists whose work with wearable sculptures aims at activating people and strengthening community ties. I condensed my findings in the category “Social Events”. While researching this aspect, I also discovered the artists of the last category, “Political Actions”.

Primarily, it is the aspect of humour in wearable pieces that fascinates me; in many respects, the unfamiliar and silly aesthetics and/or movements allow a loosening of conventions, rules, and logic. Throughout human history there is a tradition of covering faces and bodies with masks and costumes. However, the performances that I mention are not bound to any traditional rituals, religions and cultures. Thus, the audience is unprepared when they encounter these actions.
I. SELF-PROPELLED MANNEQUINS

The first artist is Franz West (b. 1947 in Vienna, d. 2012 in Vienna). Franz West created *Adaptives,* \(^1\) (*Passstück* in Austrian German) (fig. 64/p. 122) from the mid-1970s until the 1980s.

Franz West’s basic statement is that his sculptural objects should be touched and experienced.\(^2\) The audience is invited to wear, carry and move his *Adaptives.*\(^3\) West’s interactive and performative element is subtle, if compared to his fellows from the circle of the Viennese Actionists.\(^4\) In the exhibition *Where is my Eight* (2014) at the Hepworth Museum in Wakefield, the *Adaptives* objects were placed on pedestals. Situated next to them there was a screen with a black–and–white video showing how these pieces had been worn.\(^5\) The visitors could decide if they would like to participate; the exhibited sculptural objects and the video footage were clearly supposed to trigger their interests. Separate cabins containing a mirror were also installed, to protect their privacy.\(^6\)

This non-moderated participatory setup is similar to the approach of Franz Erhard Walther who had experimented with art objects to be reshaped by human interaction in the early 1970s.\(^7\)

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1 "If viewers take up the invitation to handle the sculptures, they soon find themselves adopting unusual, almost absurd bodily poses." Robert Fleck, "Sex and the Modern Sculptor," in *Franz West,* Robert Fleck, Bice Curiger, Neal Benezra, Franz West (London: Phaidon, 1999), p. 27.


3 "But West’s work was not – as in happenings – …instead he wanted viewers to use his sculptures, although the viewer was only invited (not required) to do this, …the ‘performance’ often existed only as a possibility." Robert Fleck, “Sex and the Modern Sculptor,” in *Franz West,* Robert Fleck et al (London: Phaidon, 1999), p. 39.

4 “This 1960s movement was known for being iconoclastic, provocative and self-destructive.” Ibid., p. 36.


6 “Man fühlt sich gestört, auch gehemmt, wenn einen jemand betrachtet...Deshalb wurden Zellen aufgestellt, damit man sich allein zurückziehen konnte.” Ibid., p. 82.

Franz Erhard Walther (b. 1939 in Fulda, Germany) is a German artist who lives and works in Fulda. Between 1963 and 1969 Walther created 1. Werksatz (First Work Set) (fig. 66 / p. 122), a work complex consisting of 58 objects made from textile. Through presenting variously formed sculptural objects, black-and-white photographs, texts and watercolour sketches, Walther suggests to his audience possibilities to activate these objects.

Compared to Franz West’s Adaptives, Walther’s 1. Werksatz instructs specific actions to be carried out in order to interact with each art object, even though Walther disagrees with this argument. Walther’s drawing-like diagrams that accompany every sculptural piece resemble manuals. In comparison, Franz West presents the performative aspects in loosely styled black-and-white film images and photographs, where actors pose with the Adaptives. The visual aesthetic of this documentation is surreal; thus, they appear less didactic.

Meschac Gaba (b. 1961 in Contou) is a Beninese artist who lives and works in Rotterdam and Contou. Gaba is known for his Museum of Contemporary Africa, which is a nomadic museum. Gaba’s work Tresses Series incorporates artificial hair extensions. As a part of Bibliothèque Résidence of his Musée de l’Art de la Vie Active (MAVA) in Contou, Gaba constructed sculptural objects that depict icons like hammer and sickle, books, a Dollar sign, and a cross to represent significant persons in history such as Martin Luther King, Kwame Nkrunda, Jeanne d’Arc, and Fela Kuti (fig. 67 / p. 122). These sculptural objects were presented as a procession on the street. Gaba’s sculptural objects look fantastic, but the wearers appear to me to be disconnected from what they were wearing. Gaba intentionally avoided incorporating the aspect of transformation by having people wear his sculptures; instead, he aimed to present his sculptures in a way they can be seen by a greater public. From this work, I learnt to avoid staging a catwalk.
Nick Cave (b. 1959 in Missouri, USA) is an African-American artist. Cave's background as a painter/sculptor and a trained dancer merged to develop wearable sculptures called Soundsuits.\(^\text{14}\) Cave’s reactions to the Rodney King Incidence in 1992 and the subsequent LA riots implored him to create his Soundsuits (fig. 68/p. 122).\(^\text{15}\) Cave’s full-body masks protect the wearers from being judged by their gender, race, or class.\(^\text{16}\) Unlike other artists that I have introduced in this group, Nick Cave investigates spiritual transformations through wearing masks.\(^\text{17}\) In my view, Cave’s sculptures are still to be seen as borrowed elements for his wearers. The forms tell Cave’s stories and the wearers come to meet and collaborate. I questioned whether the proximity to sculptures would increase if the form would rather reveal the wearers’ stories than the artist’s.

II. THEATRICAL COSTUMES/PROPS

The second category is called “Theatrical Costumes/Props”. In these works, the artists constructed the stage, sound, light, and directed the pieces. Oskar Schlemmer’s visual theatre was performed in theatres,\(^\text{18}\) while Claes Oldenburg’s performance was carried out as happening where his sculptural objects were exhibited.\(^\text{19}\) The artists are the sole authors of these hybrid artworks (Gesamtkunstwerke) and the actors are just means to generate gestures.

Oskar Schlemmer (b. 1888 in Stuttgart, d. 1943 in Baden-Baden) is known for his multi-disciplinary artwork, like Triadic Ballet (Triadisches Ballet) (1916–1922) (fig.61/p. 118). During my production phase, I often examined Schlemmer’s stage compositions, materials, colours, forms, and use of soundtrack documented as video.\(^\text{20}\) However, after watching the re-make of Triadic Ballet on stage in Berlin in 2016\(^\text{21}\) I felt disappointed.

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14 “FreePort [No. 006]: Nick Cave,” YouTube video, 2:18, posted by “peabodyessexmuseum,” April 8, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mx1_zBkqcUM


16 Art Talk: An Interview with Nick Cave at the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, YouTube video, 13:17, posted by "ICA Boston,” May 21, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndvl8L_a72A

17 “It (Suit) allows the wearers to work outside of the norm, the comfort zone. You have to have the willingness to go through the transition to becoming the other. You have to step into the unfamiliar.” Art Talk: An Interview with Nick Cave at the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, YouTube video, 13:17, posted by "ICA Boston,” May 21, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndvl8L_a72A


The vivid colours and gestures removed the mysticism transmitted by the black and white documentation from the Bauhaus period. I wished there had been different ways used to express artificial humans, by adding more psychological components, for instance, expressions of emptiness, hysterical speed and eeriness.

**Claes Oldenburg** (b. 1929 in Stockholm) is a famous Pop Art artist who created sculptural objects in textile and metal which depict giant-sized commodities that were constructed as monuments in public spaces. He also worked on performances to animate objects. *The Ray Gun Theater* (fig. 69/p. 123) is a narrative theatre performed by non-professional actors, including himself and his friends. The first act *Room I* in his *Ray Gun Theater* performance was inspired by a theory written by Wilhelm Stekel regarding subjects’ exaggerated fixation with commodity and by an etching by Max Klinger called *The Glove* (1881). Oldenburg prioritizes sculptural objects – the performance/performers are ‘subordinate’ to the sculptures.

On the one hand, Oldenburg’s works inspired me to give the final works a certain rawness and maintain a creative flow. On the other hand, I recognized stereotypical divisions between objects/persons and props/actors.

### III. ART AND LIFE

The next group is called “Art and Life”. These artists produce artworks and present their artwork in their real-life environments.

**Gilbert and George** are two artists – Gilbert Prousch (b. 1943 in San Martin de Tor (Italy)) and George Passmore (b. 1942 in Plymouth) – who have been working as an artist-duo since 1967.

“Art and life became one, and we were the messengers of a new vision. At the moment that we decided we are art and life, every conversation with people became art, and still is.”

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25 Hochdörfer, pp. 81–82.

26 “Theory 1. the main interest is form. 2. Everything is merely a pretext for form – there is no relationship or meaning except form. My use of form 3. the properties of the objects + persons + situations are removed for my purposes.” Oldenburg, p. 8.

“The day we realized we were living sculptures, that was it. We gave ourselves to the viewer, instead of keeping ourselves as artists separated from the people. The moment we were on that table, singing, then, we were making a life gift.”

Gilbert & George present themselves as ‘living sculptures’ (fig. 71 / p. 123). They become artworks themselves, to be viewed by the audience. In this sense, they do not wear sculptures, but their bodies are the sculptures that wear them. Thus, the inner (wearer) and the outer (wearable sculptures) dimension are synchronized.

Tatsumi Orimoto (b. 1945 in Kawasaki (Japan)) is a Japanese artist who intentionally demonstrates the disconnections between worn sculptures and the wearers (fig. 68 / p. 122).

Orimoto’s photograph, Art Mama appears as absurd as the images of Erwin Wurm’s One Minute Sculptures. Orimoto neglects individual wills of his model in his quest to create his artworks, since the subject is too old to be entirely aware of his intentions. However, if anyone questions the ethical aspect of this work, we should also consider the fact that while many younger generations abandon the seniors, Orimoto takes care of them.

From these artworks I learnt that the inclusion of wearers’ personal stories and lives might transform the wearable sculptures from borrowed ‘costumes’ into pieces that have an expressive voice. Furthermore, when it comes to enacting the worn sculptural pieces, the individual content helped develop movements, on contrast to performing in wearable sculptures that are made for someone else. This was a valuable discovery, especially when working with amateur actors and dancers on choreography.

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29 “Gilbert & George have, probably more than any other artist, defined what it means to be a living work of art.” Jens Hoffmann and Joan Jonas, Perform (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005) p. 62.


31 One Minute Sculptures (1980) made by Erwin Wurm (b. 1954 in Bruck an der Mur (Austria)). In this work, Wurm treats human bodies and everyday objects as sculptural elements separated from their individuality and functionality. Wurm draws instructions for gestures, how a person should place ready-made objects on their body for a moment. For instance, people stick their legs out of a window, sleep over oranges placed on the floor, stick pencils and pens in the ears, mouth, and nostrils, and do a headstand in a bucket. These meaningless gestures are photographed and recorded in video.

32 Orimoto focuses on old age, illness, and dementia – the ageing and unattractive generation who have been neglected by their children. Orimoto takes care of his 86-year-old mother, who has dementia. Matthias Harder, ”Tatsumi Orimoto,” DNA Galerie, accessed December 17, 2016, http://www.dna-galerie.de/en/artists/tatsumi-orimoto/tatsumi-orimoto--text.php

33 “They are a symbol of garbage. The young generation forgets about garbage, and also about my mother’s generation — both are the same: People are not interested now.” Jennifer Purvis, “Bread man not quite off his loaf,” The Japan Times Culture, June 25, 2000, accessed February 21, 2017, http://www.japantimes.co.jp/culture/2000/06/25/arts/bread-man-not-quite-off-his-loaf/#.WKxw8mUFVBs
IV. EXPLORATIONS
The next category is called “Explorations”. What I mean by this is that wearable sculptures extend the senses and emotionality of the wearers; therefore, they explore something ‘different’.

Lygia Clark (b. 1920 in Belo Horizonte (Brazil), d. 1988 in Rio de Janeiro) is one of the most well-known artists of Brazil’s Neo-Concrete Movement from the 1950s. Clark’s radical approach declared art as process and deployed sculptural (worn) objects as tools to conduct therapeutic activities.

Clark’s artistic practice transformed from creating art objects to generating participatory creative events and to conducting therapeutic practices. In the 1960s she worked intensively with “Objeto relacional (Relational objects)” and “Objetos sensoriais (Sensory objects)”. She used masks, overalls, spectacles, gloves and everyday domestic objects to enhance specific senses. In the 1970s, Clark conducted activities to examine how to fuse many people to create a collective body called Arquiteturas biológicas (Biological Architectures), the fancy of a collective body. Clark constructed an enclosed space using sewn plastic, which two or more people could enter. Through activities Clark aimed to connect divisions between the self and the other. Through teaching a class entitled “The Gesture of Communication” at Centre Saint Charles of the Sorbonne in Paris, Clark realized therapeutic impact of her artistic activities, which she then intensified in the 1980s (fig. 70 / p. 123).

Domestic objects such as a plastic bag that is filled with water, an egg that is trapped in a plastic bag that contains air, fabrics, stones, shells. These rather unspectacular everyday objects supported to study and extend the sensory.

Clark’s work sketched out a path to moving beyond the idea of an autonomous object in an attempt to surpass the subject-object relationship, with the aim of putting the body back at the centre of an art experiment… “Relational objects” as well as the idea of playing which help “move the child from the inside to the outside, from fusion with the mother to the “capacity to be alone,” were direct references to Donald Winnicott.

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35 “[TO] the “living” Objeto relacional, which related to the participant’s body, the body becoming a full-fledged part of the artwork…Objetos sensoriais (Sensory objects), intended to be manipulated by the viewer-participant, … that would allow wearers to experience scents, noises, or tactile sensations, and clothing that would influence motion, as well as breathing experiments and sensory books.” Ibid., pp.254–255.

36 Domestic objects such as a plastic bag that is filled with water, an egg that is trapped in a plastic bag that contains air, fabrics, stones, shells. These rather unspectacular everyday objects supported to study and extend the sensory.

37 Ibid., p.255.

38 “Clark’s work sketched out a path to moving beyond the idea of an autonomous object in an attempt to surpass the subject-object relationship, with the aim of putting the body back at the centre of an art experiment…” Ibid., p.258.

39 Ibid., p.256.

40 “Relational objects” as well as the idea of playing which help “move the child from the inside to the outside, from fusion with the mother to the “capacity to be alone,” were direct references to Donald Winnicott.

Ibid., p.257.
At first I was particularly interested in exploring how Clark demanded subjective involvements of the volunteers, since I had a conflict why I could not challenge my participants more. I had a tendency to be overly careful and to set up participation-friendly frameworks. Later, when my Encapsulation Suits sculptures revealed many forgotten memories and surprising views and aspects of my life, I went back to investigate Clark’s work again and to study how I could share the experience of exploration by wearing the sculptures with more people.

IV. SOCIAL EVENTS
The next group is called “Social Events”. Lucy Orta’s and Marvin Gaye Chetwynd’s wearable sculptures connect many people. They use wearable sculptures as a mean to fight isolation in contemporary urban life.

Lucy Orta (b. 1966 in Sutton Coldfield (England)) lives and works in Paris. Orta includes participations of a community at various stages of her artistic productions and creates artworks that “question art’s social usefulness in new terms”.41

Nexus Architectures42 (fig. 73/p. 123) are whole-body-suits that are connected with hoses resembling umbilical cords. Orta taught her female participants43 how to sew Nexus suits, and they also wore them. They sang Nkosi Sikelel’i Africa (God Bless Africa)44 and marched on the street before entering the exhibition venue of the Johannesburg Biennale. The wearers acted more lively than the people taking part in the procession of Meschac Gaba, as they had spent much more time with the wearable sculptures, having even produced them.45 This level of involvement was the key factor to connecting the inner (wearers) and the outer (wearable sculptures) dimension.

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43 Orta visited Usindiso women’s hostel, located on the other side of the city to the exhibition site. It is the area where no white person should be walking around. Orta sought to connect these two opposite poles of cultures by inviting the women who lived in the hostel to physically walk into the exhibition venue with the Nexus Architecture. Ibid., p. 18.
44 This song was prohibited during apartheid. Ibid., pp. 18–20.
45 “Each woman was able to cut, sew and assemble an entire suit, rather than being a segment in a production line, dependent on the non-existent factories and rampant all-male unions.” Ibid, p. 18.
Marvin Gaye Chetwynd (b. 1973 in London) is a British artist. Her costumes, props and stage backdrops are handmade and have a deliberately amateurish aesthetic. Chetwynd’s performances are performed by her troupe. The rest of the actors are participants who have volunteered to participate or were sometimes brought along by the audience to join the action. Chetwynd gives a rehearsal-workshop to volunteers and teaches some basic theatrical movements called ‘hooks’. These basic tools minimize the participants’ fear to perform. I investigated to create my own ‘hitches’, which led me to examine performance techniques in teamwork training sessions, group fitness moderators, mediums and channellers, before undertaking Stubborn Objects Psychodrama.

Chetwynd’s performances generate a carnival-like atmosphere (fig. 74 / p. 123), where people feel more confident acting outside of their norm. The visual language and the staging of the situations allow something difficult or awkward to take place — they create a sense of community among people who do not know each other. I found the aspect of setting up masquerade situations inspiring.

46 “I make things happen very quickly – this is through a drive that is basically excitement (…) amateurism’ but actually I would explain it as a preservation of the original sense of fun that is natural to me and easy to maintain.” “Interview with Marvin Gaye Chetwynd,” The White Review, accessed March 1, 2017, http://www.thewhitereview.org/interviews/interview-with-spartacus-chetwynd/


50 “I work with aids that are apparently called ‘hooks’ in the theatre word, … The hook / instructed action can also be extremely simple. It can be to ‘stand still’ or to ‘wander about laughing’. “ Ibid.


52 “In the aesthetic construct of the carnivalesque (here in the sense of Michail M. Bakhtin) the question of socio-political relevance always surfaces.” Gygax, footnote No. 14.

53 “What fascinates Chetwynd is how she can amass groups of people into acts of rational absurdity.” Lack, https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2008/dec/10/spartacus-chetwynd-art

54 “In European history the masquerade was a space where people could enjoy fleeting liberty from social, sexual and psychological constrains. Here they could discard their private, sexual, hierarchical identities and choose whichever identity they desired.” Efrat Tseëlon ed., Masquerade and Identities (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 28.
IV. POLITICAL ACTIONS

This last category refers to wearable objects used during “Political Actions”. Continuing from the last two chapters, I am fascinated by how wearable sculptures can empower the wearers to act with heightened self-awareness in order to improve some conditions in their life. I would therefore like to introduce The Yes Men.

The Yes Men are a group of activists and culture-jammers that are led by two members who go under the pseudonyms Andy Bichlbaum (b. unknown in USA) and Mike Bonnano (b. 1968 in USA). The Yes Men disguise as spokespeople of prominent companies and organizations that have included Halliburton, Exxon, and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Their activities reveal the unethical and corrupt conduct of these and other companies.55 Most of the costumes that the Yes Men use are garments, while Management Leisure Suit (2001) and Survivaball (2006) (fig. 75 / p. 123) are sculptural. Bichlbaum gave a keynote presentation, and towards the end of the presentation a golden Management Leisure Suit appeared under his business suit and the employee visualization Appendage56 was inflated. Bichlbaum, who was supposed to represent Halliburton, claimed that Survivaball57 should protect corporate managers to survive under any kind of natural disasters.58 Survivaball involved thousands of volunteers to help to spread a spoof version of The New York Post in New York City.59 On the following day, a group of volunteers conducted a protest action in the river facing the UN building where the UN climate change congress was being held.60

55 Mark Engler, “When they are invited, the Yes Men pose as spokespeople for companies such as Halliburton and Exxon, ... highlight the logic of corporate greed,” Yes! Magazine, accessed March 3, 2017, “http://www.yesmagazine.org/people-power/pranksters-fixing-the-world/
56 Bichlbaum disguised as Hank Hardy Unruh at “Textile of the Future” conference. “Bichlbaum’s business suit (Breakaway Business Suit) was ripped open to reveal a gold, stretch-nylon bodysuit (Management Leisure Suit)...to enable managers to watch their workers in remote locations and give them electric shocks if necessary.” Courtney Smith and Sean Topham eds., Xtreme Fashion (Munich: Prestel, 2005), chapter 2.82.
57 “SurvivaBall is nothing less than a self-contained living system—truly, a gated community for one. If you have a SurvivaBall, even if everyone else is dying, at least you can weather all storms.” Alex Leo, "SurvivaBall: New Yes Men Prank Focuses on Global Warming (Video)," The Huffington Post, accessed March 03, 2017, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/09/16/survivaball-new-yes-men-p_n_288550.html
The Yes Men use costumes as props for their hoax events to get their message across.\(^{61}\) This is reminiscent of the tradition of masking as a means of social satire\(^{62}\) that is staged both in public space, real life, outside the theatrical and artistic architectures as well as inside. It is inspiring to see the potential my wearable sculptures might have for empowering larger groups and instigating political thought for future works.\(^{63}\)

In conclusion, the specific questions that I have investigated on how artists use wearable sculptures in performance have changed over the period of this research. At first, I examined visual qualities such as the treatment of material/colour/form to create extraordinarily shaped wearable sculptures. Later, my investigation moved towards examining how the wearable sculptures and their wearers could become more closely related.

In addition, I discovered wearable sculptures could emancipate the wearers: “The disguise has the advantage of allowing us to leave aside whatever we perceive as irrelevant and emphasising that which seems most relevant to the endeavour we engage in...help the wearer in the process of coming into being, in appearing as him/herself and in projecting him/herself...from the given into the possible.”\(^{64}\) Finally, I came across wearable sculptures that improve our society with wit, provocation, and humour, and through this playfulness, powerful political messages can be skilfully conveyed.

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61 “We go in, we pull a con job, we make people look ridiculous, and we leave. Hopefully, we make the system look ridiculous.” Mark Engler, “Prankers Fixing the World,” Yes! Magazine, accessed March 1, 2017, http://www.yesmagazine.org/people-

62 “Eighteenth-century masquerade provided a model for the civilising process. It was sometimes an occasion for playing out diplomatic and court intrigue; later it became a natural stage for political satire.” Tsėlön, p. 29.

63 “The pranks are about drumming up interest in an issue and giving journalists an excuse to write about important things (...) they are energized and want to do something.” Mark Engler, “Prankers Fixing the World,” Yes! Magazine, accessed March 01, 2017, http://www.yesmagazine.org/people-

64 Mikkel Tin, “A phenomenological look at the dancer’s disguise MA course Clothes and Choreography – an interdisciplinary research.” Oslo National Academy of Arts, Oslo, lecture on August 30, 2016.
Fig. 62
Phyllis Galembo, Bwa Plank Masks, 2006

Fig. 63
Utagawa Kuniyosi, 当ル奉納願お賀久面, 1847 – 1852

Fig. 64
Franz West, Passstücke, late 1970s

Fig. 65
Oskar Schlemmer, Das Triadische Ballet, 1927

Fig. 66
Franz Erhard Walther, Politisch, 1974

Fig. 67
Meschac Gaba, Musée de l’Art et de la Vie Active: Bibliothèque Roulante, November, 2012

Fig. 68
Nick Cave, Soundsuits
Fig. 69
Claes Oldenburg, Store Days II, 1962

Fig. 70
Lygia Clark, Estruturação do self (Structuring of the self), after 1976

Fig. 71
Gilbert & George, The Singing Sculpture, 1992

Fig. 72

Fig. 73
Lucy Orta, Nexus Architecture, 1997

Fig. 74
Marvin Gaye Chetwynd, Hermitos Children 2, 2014

Fig. 75
The Yes Men, SurvivalAffair, 2009
Fig. 76
Handbag, 2015
During my research it was important for me to find a balance between intuitive and investigative creative processes; henceforth, I prioritized my studio practice to articulate my research objectives and arrive at solutions. Today, when reviewing my research proposal from October 2012, I can state my research core has remained the same: To investigate the artistic potential that lies in everyday objects and worn objects, which mediate our psychological and physical realms. Meanwhile, the project title has changed four times: from *Field Tales* (October 2012), *DING Show* (March 2013), *Stubborn Object* (October 2013) to *The Stubborn Life of Objects* (October 2013). I am pleased that my artistic research has constantly been in development respectively on the move, that it has supplied answers and unexpected but necessary surprises.

I have succeeded to visualize the tales of objects through wearable sculptures that are worn and in motion. I discovered new construction techniques as well as new material such as polyethylene sponge, which allowed me to create life-sized, wearable sculptures. I increased the emphasis on the choreography of the wearable sculptures. Incorporating physical gestures gave me the possibility to present the physical and psychological impact of “wearing”. Additionally, my experiments with gestures, motion and movement allowed me to explore a new artistic medium, film, which enabled me to communicate the transactions that took place in front of an audience, which was not present to witness the live events.

Instead of constructing narrative elements together with collaborators through workshops as I had proposed in March 2013, I turned to examine my own object relations in depth. This change in method allowed me to analyse the selection of emotionally attached objects and the owner’s relationships to the chosen objects more precisely. Through physically interacting with wearable sculptures (depicting enlarged objects), I recognized my relationships to specific people, memories and issues that, at the time, mattered to me in terms of my personal life.

Shifting my focus to examine myself did not mean discontinuing interdisciplinary work. In fact this turn gave me an opportunity to work with fewer people repeatedly and more intensively – such as photographers, a film team, choreographers, and discussion partners.

Sometimes the teamwork was conducted to search for unforeseeable solutions, like in the case of the workshop at Norwegian Theatre Academy and *Stubborn Object Psycho-drama*. While in other situations, such as the filming of *Modern Ballet Duo & Trio*, the expected result was defined together with the film team prior to the actual filming.

In my research proposal from March 2013, I also addressed the following questions: how could I establish situations that encourage collaborators to release their creative potential individually and collectively; how could I maintain a clear divide between the creative authorship of participants and myself; and how could I secure time to concentrate better on sculpture-making.
First and foremost, in all forms of interdisciplinary work, I have learnt to be direct, clear and transparent with my collaborators and audience. For example, each person's role needs to be communicated clearly from the beginning. It is also legitimate that I have clear knowledge of my intentions. I have garnered various methods$^1$ to improve my skills in concretizing my plans.

In order to study techniques in organising participatory setups where the participants and the artist could express their creativity, and where the participants would feel that they had gained something, I studied many cases of artistic collaborations in performance that used wearable sculptures. Some of the artists that I studied treat the participants' bodies solely as material for the art, whereas other artists manage to empower the subjects to open up and to act beyond their conventional boundaries. I realised that it was important to link matters in the life of the wearer to the sculpture. Furthermore, I learnt to provide techniques that would make non-actors/non-dancers able to perform without being scared to make mistakes. Thus, I established associations between my emotional reality and movements that can be found in everyday situations: for example, in cleaning, wiping floors, karate, various forms of sports, alternative therapeutic methods including psychodrama, and teamwork training methods.

The aspect of creative authorship also became clear, as I decided to design and construct sculptures on my own. If I involve someone else in the design process, it would then have a different purpose: to gain diverse (visual) answers to the specific questions that I had posed.

Towards the end of 2014/2015 I decided to take a risk and undertake artworks that felt more like a detour from my research subject. Instead of focusing on the 'life of objects', I investigated the objectification and mechanization of people. However, through these diversions, my artistic research gained socially critical elements that allowed me to reflect upon the precarious balance between life/work/family, as well as people's limited time that leads to the priority of functionality and neglect of emotionality, and to the searching for individual opinions and ideas concerning gender roles.

**FUTURE**

In the future, I would like to continue investigating the question of transience, identity and material culture, particularly concerning the question how a person constitutes her/his identity when faced with extremely transient life/work situations and multiple home-locations; research that would connect diverse disciplines and partners such as municipalities, ministries, education (dance, choreography, art jewellery and ethnology) and art institutions, with the aim to share and generate new knowledge.

$^1$ Such as automatic writing, working alone in the studio, speaking with people, and allowing time for things.
The huge political changes in the last half-year have shown that many personal rights and powers we in the West had taken for granted can be drastically and unethically removed and revised, and that we seemingly have little power to prevent these repressive changes.

The current closures of national borders – regardless of our hope not to judge humans according to race, gender, and religious belief – have influenced me to reconsider one (core) point to which I can now return. This does not mean reducing things to a single discipline or a single nation; however, having a better awareness of one’s own origin once again in order to widen one’s horizon.

In terms of my own nationality, I have decided to change my citizenship and become a German national, which will allow me to live and work more flexibly in the West. Nonetheless, Japanese will remain the culture of my origin. For the future research projects, I am much more open and prepared to appreciate my heritage and knowledge of Japanese culture and language.

Furthermore, in this state of global political insecurity, I have repeatedly turned to my art, asking myself which element of my research would help me best move forward: film, drawings, photographs, or sculptures? I then thought about designing a piece of jewellery that I could wear on my body and carry around with me that does not bind me to a certain location. I am pleased and surprised that, in conclusion to this artistic research, I have produced a piece of jewellery, Piano-and-I, an outcome that I had initially not expected. Jewellery piece Piano-and-I has become a piece that relates my original emotional ties to a piano and to my memory of the adventure of this research project. Finally, it has given me an idea for future artworks, in that I plan to document life-size sculptures that are worn and set in motion as wearable jewellery pieces.

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2 This includes the impact of Brexit in the UK and the election of Donald Trump as the 45th American president in 2016, two specific political incidents that, despite being democratic, nonetheless generate fear and uncertainty through their threatening and far-reaching restrictions on immigration. It is as though we are repeating the single-race / single-nation policy from the 1930s. Also for me, the owner of a passport of a country where I have hardly lived, the closure of national borders and the sudden sentiment to racism are devastating.
Fig. 77
Public interventions and workshops to collect stories about objects, 2013
APPENDIX 01: STORIES OF OBJECTS ARCHIVE

I. OBJECT DESCRIPTIONS AND STORIES COLLECTED DURING THREE PUBLIC INTERVENTIONS
Select one object from home that embodied the following characteristics – grounding, beautiful, most special, junk with sentimental value, and heavy.

Oslo S (Central Train Station)
A countryside cottage, a surfboard, a window, beach, a pregnant wife, a thermos, a dumb, useless and ugly Minnie Mouse doll, chocolate, a house, candles, an eye, a bed, a beautiful never ending pattern, an inherited red vase, a cross, a plant.

KHIO Campus
An elegant antique piano, a table where the family dined above and children played underneath, seductive beds and sofas, a bouquet of roses received at a concert, a vacuum cleaner that always breaks down, a stylized toaster from the 1960s that spits out burned bread, a roll of toilet paper that stares at you in toilet, a radio that reports news, a ridiculously horrifying look of a doll bought during holidays, a spider, a boyfriend lying on a sofa, a crappy blender, a plant given by his mom that survives without any care, a Coco Chanel perfume bottle, a heavy washing machine, a teddy bear that is as old as its owner.

II. STORIES OF OBJECTS, COLLECTED DURING TWO WORKSHOPS
I instructed participants to make paper puppets based on their drawings of objects (the questions were the same as above), and then, using the puppets, improvise stories about the objects.

Adults:
1. A plate and a rag talk to each other. The plate asks, “Do you have stories? Can you make any stories?” The rag replies, “No. Do you have any?” The plate answers, “Neither do I. Let’s go talk to Mr Duvet.” Mr Duvet responds, “Of course I have many stories to tell. I can give you many stories. I have stories of heat, sweat and more. I also collect dreams of the whole family. Just lie down, and put me on you.” After the plate and the rag wake up, they were terrified, as they only had nightmares.

2. The drain of a bathtub does not work. It is clogged up with hair. What shall we do? A surfer comes by and suggests that it would be good to use a knife. The knife is sleeping, so another option is to use a toothbrush. Then the hair in the drain and the toothbrush got along very well, and the problem was solved. Afterwards, all of them became friends and took a bath together.

3. At Jelena’s home, the fire alarm beeps. It is beeping because it is out of battery. What can you do? Jelena goes to see a psychologist of objects to get advice. She participates in a group therapy – and many more group therapies, but they do not help her. Then, she comes home. A tape appears and tells her that he could help her. She tapes the fire alarm, so the noise disappears.

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1 See: Encapsulation Suits I, pp. 37 – 39
2 See: Encapsulation Suits I, pp. 37 – 39
3 The rag is the most beautiful piece in this man A’s house. It is in magenta (vivid pink). And when the sun shines on it, the entire room becomes magenta. The plate was precious to another man B, since it was a gift from his mother. The duvet that B bought at IKEA is appallingly synthetic. It overheats, and you feel unhealthy sleeping in it.
4 At the participant’s house, the drain often has trouble. She believes that a toothbrush is a very useful thing to have.
5 In Sweden, there is a law that you have to have a fire alarm in the kitchen and the room next to the kitchen. You tend not to have these alarms inspected, so they never work. They beep and make strange sounds all the time. But without these alarms, you also feel unsafe. A tape is an excellent tool. It solves problems quickly and easily, but it never solves the real problem.
Children:
1. A dirty man always sleeps on a sofa on a dirty carpet. A rug and a laptop discuss if someone can tell him to vacuum the carpet. The laptop said he could not write to the man to tell him about it. Finally, the sofa throws the man onto the floor. The man sees how dirty his carpet is and vacuums it.  
2. A remote control boy asks a magician to turn him into a dwarf. Then the magician tries. The remote control turns into a board game. In the next try, he turns into a bar of soap. In the third attempt, he turns into a dwarf and becomes happy.
3. Two soaps try to compete to take over the world from a Palmolive soap dispenser. The Palmolive soap dispenser wins at the end.

III. INTERVIEWS WITH COLLECTORS

Collector of teapots
The collector of teapots (T) has been collecting for twenty years. Most of her teapots were found locally, except for a few she bought on holidays abroad. She is interested in the playful ways in which ceramic artists exaggerate elements of teapots, such as the body, handle, spout, and lid. She asks: ‘What is beyond something that is simply good?’

Collector of typewriters
The collector of typewriters (TW) is a writer who produces all his manuscripts on typewriters. He carries one around in the same way others carry laptops, taking them to cafés, even though people complain that his typing is loud.

When evaluating typewriters, the two most important criteria for TW are the shape of the keys – perfectly round – and whether they feature large letters, preferably in fonts like Palatino or Bookman Antiqua.

Typing on typewriters is also part of TW’s creative practice. His daily goal is to write ten pages, and his rule is always to write first and reflect later. This enables him to write from the heart rather than the mind.

Collector of sewing machines
The collector of sewing machines (S) is an engineer who repairs analogue and highly digitalised electric sewing machines. He was trained in the USA and in Europe and has repaired hundreds of sewing machines.

In the 1970s and 1980s, there were twelve sweater factories, two suit factories and two automobile-seat manufacturers in Cleveland, Ohio. These companies employed over 10,000 people who could sew. Then the USA introduced free trade with Mexico and China, which resulted in the collapse of the textile industry in the Midwest. S could not bear to see the abandoned sewing machines from these liquidated factories left to stand outdoors and so he gathered them together and took them home. This resulted in a loft full of sewing machines. Some of his sewing machines are so rare that they are on regular loan to the Smithsonian Museum.

He told me an inspiring story about the dual phenomena of old, experienced needle workers who can embroider perfect fonts by hand, as if done by a high-end digital sewing machine. Meanwhile, there are highly sophisticated automated sewing machines that can produce irregular stitches meant to imitate hand stitching.

Collector of moon shelves
Moon shelves have steps on which small figurines, like angels, can be placed. They are also known as ‘Stairways to Heaven’. They were popular between the 1930s and 1950s and were made in woodwork classes, as exercises for learning how to cut zigzags and curves.

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6 Half of the students in this class are born in Berlin, but their parents have migrated to Germany from Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, and other countries. In their homes, carpets usually play an important role. Carpets symbolise the power structure in a family, where a child normally does not get to make decisions about which carpet to buy.

7 Two of the groups mentioned soap. The children did not understand the word ‘sleazy’ listed in the list of characters, so I answered that it meant something slimy. Therefore, many children started to think of liquid soap.

8 See: Collectors, pp. 57–65
The collector of moon shelves (M) owns about 200 such objects, and approximately 100 of these hang in her living room. The mother of M’s college roommate used to collect moon shelves: they were made of wood and showed a moon with steps leading up to it. Many years after graduating from college, M saw such a moon shelf in a shop near her home. It had many mirrors and was made by the shop owner. M did not buy it, and has regretted it ever since. About 30 years ago, while she was on vacation in Pennsylvania, she bought her first moon shelf. That was the start of her collection.

To M, moon shelves are more meaningful as symbols than as objects. They are metaphors of things such as spiritual journeys and longing, or of hope that something might be different than what it appears to be. The steps are elevations; they move upwards and reach beyond the moon. The stairs remind M that there are different stages and chapters in life.

She has no idea why she collects them. There is simply no end, she replies, as moon shelves represent a quest. There is something appealing about a theme that has endless variations. They are unique handmade objects, and each one reflects a different interpretation. There is always novelty in finding a new version.

Collector of space-age furniture

The collector of space-age furniture (SA) had always fancied surrounding herself with futuristic objects. She discovered space-age furnishings when her parents took her to a furniture store, where she fell in love with a curious chair that was ball-shaped and had a built-in stereo sound system. This and other objects with organic shapes, bright colours and alien-like appearance made her feel like she was living on another planet. Her collection represents an attempt to create another world, one that is more open and accepting.

Collector of artworks from northeast Ohio from 1910–1920

The collector of artworks made in northeast Ohio between 1910 and 1920 (A) describes his practice as collecting ‘art from the teens’. This period, he explains, was the heyday of Ohio and its art, when John D. Rockefeller, the founder of the Standard Oil Company, and other industrial giants were patrons of local artists.

A describes his collection as having value, but not necessarily as an investment. Activities like eating and going out, travelling or going on holiday are of no value to him. His art collection gives him pleasure and can enjoy the items every day.

He mentions that looking for art on eBay is like an obsession: the automatic alert rings constantly, and he knows the people he is bidding against. He enjoys the idea of collecting extremely rare pieces that cannot be reproduced, and thus focuses on works by deceased artists. He will continue collecting as long as he can continue to pay the bills.

Collector of carrot products

The collector of carrot products (C) is known as ‘the carrot man’ in his local community. He has dedicated an entire room in his apartment to his collection.

This ranges from packaging, magazines, cooking recipes, toys, ceramic figures, textiles, clothing, electronic gadgets and handcrafted gifts from his friends. His rule for collecting is that carrots should be the dominant aspect, and no other things such as bunnies. The most precious pieces in his collection, he says, are the hand-made gifts from friends, because they are absolutely one-of-a-kind.

C wants to build a museum of carrot products: going public with his collection would gain him the freedom to collect something else. This is another interesting notion of collecting. Most of the collectors I have interviewed mention that their next step is to build their own museum or to find someone who will offer them a space in which to create a museum.
IV. SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE WORKSHOP

Stories told during the workshop at Norwegian Theatre Academy.9

I instructed the students to pick one object that represented the notion of their home(s), where they grew up, and asked them to make them into a wearable sculpture using white cardboard. (fig. 78/p. 136)

1. A male student went fishing with his father almost every weekend. The space he constructed with cardboard sheets represents a space between a pair of sails. He told me the memories of waking up in darkness an early morning, packing the equipment, going on the sailboat, listening to the sound of the wind, sitting together with his father between two sails was home for him.

2. A male student told me the story of a big red apple made from plastic. His parents picked this toy from the hospital where he was staying because he loved it very much. He still keeps this toy in his current apartment.

3. A female student had to wear an embarrassingly large ribbon bow on her head as a child. It is a Russian tradition for girls to wear ribbons in their hair. Her mother’s hobby was to make ridiculously large balls out of ribbons to wear on her head. The student showed me a photograph of herself as a young girl dressed in a large bow as big as her head—a testimony of embarrassment.

4. A female student explained the story of a poster showing a blue woman, one of Matisse’s cut-outs that hung above the family dining table. While staring at this poster, she wondered why the legs and hands of this woman were so long.

5. A male student told the story of his mother buying him a cashmere scarf in a market in India where he grew up. His mother wanted him to stay warm in Norway.

6. A female student from Estonia told me the story of her grandmother’s sewing machine that created the ‘sound of home’.

V. ENCAPSULATION SUITS

Encapsulation Suits I, notes made in August 2014:

I finally accepted that some of the Encapsulation Suits sculptures, namely Piano, Handbag, Headdress, Bundle of Key, and Bag of Flour were ‘my’ objects, while Hand Drill, Fire Alarm, and Wardrobe represent the stories of other people.

Encapsulation Suits I, notes made before filming in December 2014:

Notes 01: “Handbag – male, slick, funny stuck up, temperamental; Piano – strong, powerful; Headdress – female, emotionless, sad, heavy; Bag of Flour – male; Key – appearing.”

Notes 02: “Handbag is male, a coquetish round chicken, dandy and funny; Piano is frantic like Klaus Kinski, the German actor; the Headdress is a female stretching and shrinking face; the Bag of Flour is a male, a threatening giant skirt; Key is a dynamic figure.”

Storyboard to film each object in motions:

Handbag – clown, boasting, jump, die
Piano – side, front, loud, Kinski, loss, lost, shaking
Headdress – profile, go out, pull in, go out, pendulum, profile
Bag of Flour – drop down x 3, roll towards front
Key – enter, twist, stretch elegantly, slow, hammering, psycho.

9 See: Encapsulation Suits II, pp. 41–43
Group choreography improvisation in December 2014:
*Bag of Flour* gets repeatedly harassed and abused by Key. Handbag, the child cheers her up. Piano appears and protects her from the Key. Yet, as soon as the Key disappears, Piano starts abusing *Bag of Flour*.

Before meeting Ulrike Kley (object theatre actress) in April 2016, I revised my emotionality and relationships to each object:
The forms that I had constructed were simplified and abstracted symbols of the objects, but were not bound to the exact models. For example, *Handbag* does not look like the handbag that I always carry. Many more keys are hanging from the bundle of keys that I use. *Bag of Flour* resembles the paper package that contains flour, but it does not indicate one specific bag of flour. It actually stands for food products made of flour such as bread, noodles, and cakes. *Headdress* combines a hat that a woman wears who works on a rice field, as well as a helmet, and a scarf.

- **Key and Handbag** – either one of them disappearing is an indication to me that something in my mental health is not right. I fear moments when they disappear, not only because of the inconveniences that occur.
- **Piano** – My mother practiced piano and engaged with social events, while other adults took care of us, her children. The memory of my early infant period rotates around many people and special events that the piano brought us.
- **Headdress** – hiding a softness that hardens, a troubled head.
- **Bag of Flour** – a mean voice that questions my confidence as a woman.

The storyboard for filming made in May 2015:
- **Handbag** – A snail that proceeds graciously and slowly. The shell of the snail slides over her back, the woman carries her home, goes back into her shell, and leaps out again.
- **Piano** – An energetic creature that lives by an ocean, a mix of a shell and an animal, probably belonging to the family of lobsters and crabs.
- **Headdress** – A head that nods politely, agrees to all directions and collapses.
- **Bag of Flour** – A tent that tempts a woman and sucks her inside. She hibernates and becomes a strong house.
- **Key** – A battering ram that knocks down a gate at the start of a revolution.

Just before filming, I forgot my handbag on a train. A man contacted me through email and wrote that he had found it. I met him on the platform of the station where I lost the hand bag, where he handed me my bag. I learnt that handbags could return.

VI. STUBBORN OBJECTS PSYCHODRAMA
*Key* became Yuka, which was worn by a woman who is in her 60s and who somehow looked like me. A young man decided to become *Bag of Flour*. Another man in his late 50s wore *Handbag*. A young woman became *Headdress*. A woman in her 60s chose to become *Piano*.

At first *Key* claimed that she wanted to be free. She ran away from the group and stretched her keys in all directions. Then she started to talk, about her desire to become closer to *Piano*. For *Key*, *Piano* was someone who she needed to approach. She played with *Piano*. *Bag of Flour* stood near *Key* and *Piano* and responded that he did not know his relations to Key. He gravitated towards her, but did not know what to do. He would prefer hiding in the *Bag of Flour*. He said that he was a boy and a matured man at the same time. Next to the *Bag of Flour*, *Handbag* was struggling to move around, since the *Handbag* was too small for the wearer. He explained that he felt as though he had been forgotten on a curb, and no one wanted to pick him up. *Piano* offered to become friends with him.

Everyone started to act defensively against *Headdress*. Apparently, she was making everyone’s life difficult. All of a sudden, *Key* suggested taking off the sculpture. *Piano* also got rid of her sculpture. *Bag of Flour* followed. *Headdress* was almost forced by the other members to take off her sculpture. At the end, five people stood in a circle without wearing the sculptures, and embraced each other. *Key* thanked everyone for being there.

10 In German, the word ‘Schnecke’ can have two meanings: first, a snail and second, as an endearing term for a woman.
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APPENDIX 03: LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1 / front cover
Yuka Oyama, Bag of Flour, 2014
Polyethylene (PE) sponge, wood
120 x 210 x 80 cm
Photograph: Attila Hartwig, Inkjet on paper, dimensions variable

Fig. 2 / p. 2
Logos

Fig. 3 / p. 4
Yuka Oyama, Helmet, 2014
Watercolour on paper
21 x 29.7 cm

Fig. 4 / p. 6
Yuka Oyama, Project mind map, 2013
Ink on paper
21 x 29.7 cm

Fig. 5 / p. 10
Yuka Oyama, Key, 2014
PE sponge
280 x 300 x 120 cm
Photograph: Attila Hartwig, Inkjet on paper, dimensions variable

Fig. 6 / p. 13
Yuka Oyama, Heroes, Helpers, Enemies, Temptations and Magical Medicines at Work, 2009
GUIDANCE (post-it), 2009, modeling clay, steel, textile, 15 x 15 x 9 cm
COMPETITOR (lamp), 2009, modeling clay, steel, textile, 35 x 12 x 12 cm
TEMPTATION (cigarette), 2009, modeling clay, steel, textile, 40 x 10 x 6 cm
Photograph: Marlen Bäumer

Fig. 7 / p. 13
Yuka Oyama, Heroes, Helpers, Enemies, Temptations and Magical Medicines at Work, 2009
Installation, Kunstraum Kreuzberg/Bethanien, Berlin, 2009
Photograph: Carsten Eisfeld

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Drawings of participants, 2009
Pencil on paper, 21 x 29.7 cm

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Yuka Oyama, Headdress, 2015
PE sponge
250 x 230 x 230 cm
Photograph: Attila Hartwig, Inkjet on paper, dimensions variable

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Yuka Oyama, Piano-and-I, 2016
Plastic
2.5 x 5 x 2 cm
Photograph: Christine Leithe Hansen

Fig. 11 / p. 19
Yuka Oyama, Piano-and-I, 2017
750 gold, sterling silver
2.5 x 5 x 2 cm (body), 60cm (chair)
Photograph: Ulla Schildt

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Yuka Oyama, Production view in studio
Photograph: Yuka Oyama

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Templates

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Yuka Oyama, Headdress, 2015
PE sponge
250 x 230 x 230 cm
Photograph: Attila Hartwig, Inkjet on paper, dimensions variable

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Yuka Oyama, Notes, 2013
Ink on paper
13 x 23.5 cm
11 x 15 cm

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Yuka Oyama, A Man Behind, 2014
Watercolour on paper
29.7 x 21 cm

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Yuka Oyama, Maternity Yoga, 2014
Watercolour on paper
29.7 x 21 cm

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Yuka Oyama, Up, 2014
Watercolour on paper
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A Danger, 2014
Watercolour on paper
29.7 x 21 cm

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Yuka Oyama, Street and studio tests, 2013
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SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE
Workshop, 2014
Photograph: Yuka Oyama

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Filming Encapsulation Suits I, 2014
Photograph: Öncü Egemen Gültekin

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Yuka Oyama, Encapsulation Suits II, film stills, 2015
Photograph: Gil Bartz

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Yuka Oyama, Encapsulation Suits II, film stills, 2015
Photograph: Gil Bartz

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Yuka Oyama, Stubborn Objects
Psychodrama, 2015
Photograph: Gil Bartz

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Yuka Oyama, Stubborn Objects
Psychodrama, 2015
Photograph: Gil Bartz

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Yuka Oyama, Collectors, 2013
Installation, SPACES Gallery, Cleveland, Ohio, 2013
Photograph: Jerry Mann

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Yuka Oyama, Production view of Collectors, 2013
Photograph: Becky Yee

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Yuka Oyama, Collectors – moon shelves, 2013
Inkjet on paper
66 x 70 cm
Photograph: Becky Yee

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Yuka Oyama, Collectors – teapots, 2013
Inkjet on paper
66 x 70 cm
Photograph: Becky Yee

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Yuka Oyama, Collectors – carrot products, 2013
Inkjet on paper
66 x 70 cm
Photograph: Becky Yee

Fig. 32 / p. 63
Yuka Oyama, Collectors – artworks from northeast Ohio from 1910-1920, 2013
Inkjet on paper
66 x 70 cm
Photograph: Becky Yee

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Yuka Oyama, Collectors – sewing machines, 2013
Inkjet on paper
117 x 139.5 cm
Photograph: Becky Yee

Fig. 34 / p. 71
Yuka Oyama, Production view of Cleaning Samurai, 2014
Photograph: Diego Castellano, Yuka Oyama, and Axel Ruoff

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Yuka Oyama, Cleaning Samurai, film stills, 2014
Photograph: Diego Castellano

Fig. 36 / p. 73
Yuka Oyama, Cleaning Samurai – Toilet Brush, 2014
Photograph: Attila Hartwig, Inkjet on paper, dimensions variable
APPENDIX 04: LIST OF FILMS

SLO VIDEO
The Stubborn Life of Objects #1 SLO
Encapsulation Suits I
Movement experiments with a mime dancer – Headress and Key
December 2014
The Stubborn Life of Objects #2 SLO
Cleaning Samurai
August 2014
The Stubborn Life of Objects #3 SLO
Helmet - River
July 2015
The Stubborn Life of Objects #4 SLO
Modern Ballet Duo & Trio
July 2015

The Stubborn Life of Objects #5 SLO
Encapsulation Suits II
July 2015
The Stubborn Life of Objects #6 SLO
Stubborn Objects Psychodrama
March 2016

REFLECTION VIDEO
The Stubborn Life of Objects #1 REF
Cook Up! Prototype evening
July 2013
The Stubborn Life of Objects #2 REF
Movement experiments with seven women
July 2013

The Stubborn Life of Objects #3 REF
Movement experiments in studio 2013 - 2015
The Stubborn Life of Objects #4 REF
Choreography rehearsal with my Karate team
July 2014
The Stubborn Life of Objects #5 REF
Study materials for filming 2013 - 2015
The Stubborn Life of Objects #6 REF
The Weaver
February 2015
The Stubborn Life of Objects #7 REF
Planning choreography for Modern Ballet Duo & Trio
May 2015
Film Credits

Encapsulation Suits I
Dancers
Oliver Pollak
Karla Knie
Roberta Del Ben
Camera/Post production
Florian Lampersberger
Still photographer
Öncü Egemen Gültekin
Editor
Maja Tennstedt
Lights
Gil Bartz
Assistants
Jane Saks, Yuri Tetsura, David Adoga, Sabrina Bergamini

Cleaning Samurai
Dancers
Andrea Jaschinski
Stefan Langfeld
Christoph Leitner
Henning Rust
Sebastian Szapek
Camera
Florian Lampersberger, Andreas Teuchert
Editor
Maja Tennstedt
Still photographer
Diego Castellano Cano
Assistants
Jane Saks, Yota Okuyama

Stubborn Objects Psychodrama
Actors
Director – Malwina Magdalena Durkalec
Protagonist / Key – Ingrid Spiller
Piano – Astrid Raguse
Handbag – Jürgen Kossack
Bag of Flour – Mateusz Durkalec
Camera
Florian Lampersberger
Editor
Maja Tennstedt
Lights/Still photographer
Gil Bartz
Audio Technician
Jana Irnert
Project coordinator
Robert Di Martino

Helmet – River
Actors
Beatrice del Bo
Serena Gregorio
Laurent Lasselin
Tania Patrilli
Roberto Petazzi
Filippo Tocchio
Hannah Valentin
Igor Verdossi
Markus Zimmerman
Camera
Florian Lampersberger
Lights/Still photographer
Gil Bartz
Lights/Post production
Christoph Schwantuschke
Editor
Project Coordinator
Roberta Di Martino
Assistants
Julie Beugin
Nam Nguyen
Jane Saks
Deacon
Marko Banaia
Music
Plateau #3
Composed and played by Torben Snekkestad, tenor saxophone

Modern Ballet Duo and Trio
Actors
Ulrike Kley
Oliver Pollak
Jane Saks
Camera
Florian Lampersberger
Lights/Still photographer
Gil Bartz
Editor
Maja Tennstedt
Project coordinator
Roberta Di Martino
Assistant
Julie Beugin

Credits:
Cook Up! And Studio Test
Dancers
Jane Saks, Ute Zimmermann, Hiromi Hoshiko, Yukari Tanahara, Leni Dioguardi, Hitomi, Yuka
Camera
Axel Ruoff

YouTube Sources:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vyBm2Ts8Wls
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtIPSS3EP48
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MxzPUEdAVdV
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=40J6OLthsq0
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=druwpau_LcM
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In my family, wearing a hat always symbolised being a part of western culture. Hats are an incredibly classic and elegant part of an outfit. I felt as though I was hiding. It felt as if I was not allowed to show softness and weakness, turning into an object.
Key

We only give keys to trusted that keep our secrets - it is a sign of trust. During the choreography test in 2015, Key started running against the door. It looked like a battering ram that knocks down a gate at the start of a revolution.
When a handbag or a key goes missing, it is an indication that my mind is out of balance. During the experiment with gestures in 2015, I was carrying Handbag on my back, and it slid off me like a snail. It was a struggle to crawl across the floor, yet the external appearance was graceful. It was telling me to slow down and go at my own pace.

Just before filming ENCAPSULATION SUITS in 2015, I forgot my handbag on a train. A man contacted me through email. I met him on the platform of a station. I learned that handbags could return.
Piano is my mother. You have to go to the piano to play; piano does not come to play with you. She followed her passions. After becoming a mother myself, I learned that it was tough to act this way. Piano represents my process of reconstructing my ideas concerning gender roles and equality.
In 2013, I was scared of flour products like cookies, bread, noodles, but I could not help not eating them. It gave me a different body, and I felt like living in someone else's body. *Bag of Flour* tempts a woman and absorbs her from inside.
YUKA OYAMA

THE STUBBORN LIFE OF OBJECTS

EXHIBITION PERIOD
16 – 22 APRIL 2016

OPENING
FRIDAY 15 APRIL, 5 PM – 8 PM

OPENING HOURS
12 PM – 6 PM

PLACE
THE RECEPTION GALLERY AND AUDITORIUM AT KUNSTHÅGSKOLEN I OSLO
FOSSVEIEN 24, 0551 OSLO

PERFORMANCE AT THE KHIO MAIN ENTRANCE
FRIDAY 15 APRIL AT 6.30PM AND SATURDAY 16 APRIL AT 4PM

VIDEO SCREENINGS
16 – 24 APRIL, 2 PM – 5 PM, AUDITORIUM

ARTIST TALK
WEDNESDAY 20 APRIL AT 5 PM, AUDITORIUM
A CONVERSATION BETWEEN YUKA OYAMA AND JØRN MORTENSEN, RECTOR OF OSLO NATIONAL ACADEMY OF THE ARTS
"We may objectify people.
We may humanize objects."
— Mikkel B. Jr.