

# COMFORT ISOLATES

newspaper by nüans for the preview of the artist book Apogee and exhibition at JB Jurve, Los Angeles, Saturday, August 6, 2011



Ana Barrado



Ana Barrado

***"I don't like formal gardens. I like wild nature. It's just the wilderness instinct in me, I guess."  
Walt Disney***

## **V. Vale: Your Future Diet: Stork and Baby Alligators...**

The Very Rich are buying islands, \$250,000 guard dogs and super-yachts capable of navigating the oceans from the North to the South Poles. Why? They intend to survive the apocalypse.

But what about the rest of us? Are we doomed to a Ballardian Concrete-Island-style "not with a bang but a whimper" slow death? Are we capable of existing on a diet including "stork and baby alligator" (which desperate SouthEast Asians resorted to eating during the wars there)? Dmitry Orlov's advice is essentially to start your own gang of survivalists, buy essential tools including tools you can make a living with, and make sure you live where arable land, plenty of water, and oil-free transportation are available. He doesn't blatantly advocate stockpiling brown rice, beans, lentils, spices, coffee (not to mention water purifiers, batteries, guns, ammunition, gunpowder, primers, reloading presses, et al) but the implication is there. After all, he lives on a boat equipped for instant flight (or at least used to).

Those of us who fancy ourselves "artists" may consider starting art-and-technology collectives like Survival Research Laboratories and Seemen (San Francisco), the Madagascar Institute (New York), or the Crucible and the Shipyard (Oakland).

Those who fancy themselves loners, cynics, cranks and eccentrics would do well to consult Ballard's Concrete Island and aim to survive via intense navigation deep into Inner Space, whose limitless territory includes Poetry, Metaphor, Dreams and the Imagination. After all, who's to say that the Buddhist notion that "All is Illusion" may not finally be proven verifiable. Perhaps the ultimate freedom is throwing off one's body and all notions of physicality, and imaginatively, at least, becoming one with the Need to be Freed from the Past...

**nüans**

**August 6, 7 pm  
JB Jurve - Los Angeles**

8.00 pm reading

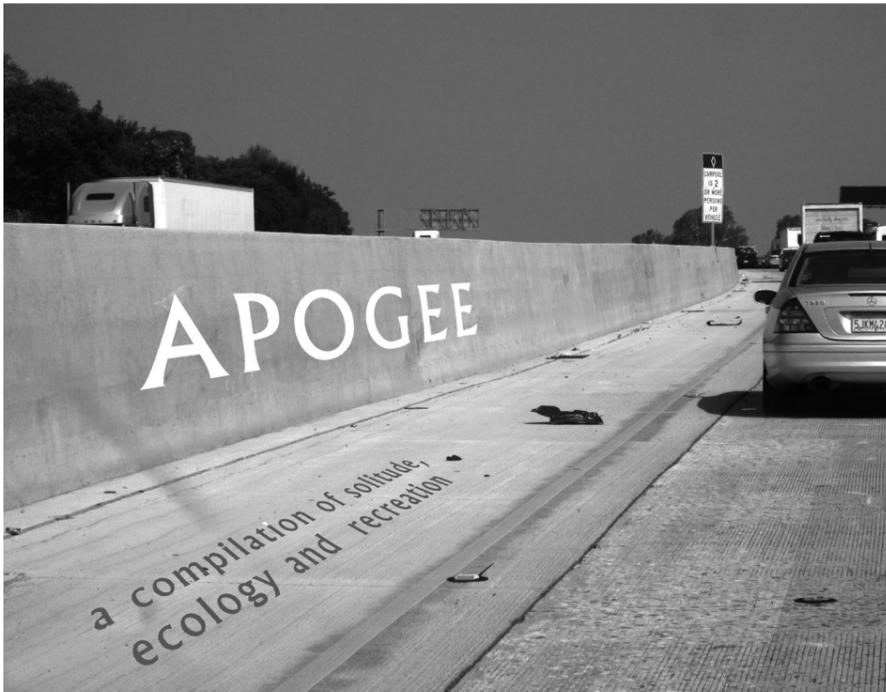
9.00 pm music performance by Joe Baiza  
video installation on the roof by Matt Sheridan

## **content.**

Ana Barrado	1
V. Vale	1
Michael Tomasello	3
Gregory Mohr	3
Michael H. Shamberg	4-5
Turtle Salon	4
Joe Baiza	4
EC Large	5
Matt Sheridan	6
Klara Adam	7
Dan Graham	7
Gökce Suvari	7
WJM Kok	6
Aaron GM	8

published by nüans :	
Elmar Hermann	3
Maki Umehara	6
Anna Heidenhain	3

APOGEE -a compilation of solitude, ecology and recreation-  
Artist Book of nüans, published by revolver in August 2011  
Order a book now!! [nuans@gmx.net](mailto:nuans@gmx.net)



APOGEE refers to the point in the universe, that is the most distant to the earth. A mathematical quantity and allegory for the absolute seclusion and temporal relativity. APOGEE is the retreat to privacy, confidentiality and relaxation - a productive time out. Your public life begins as soon as you leave the island and get in touch with other people, Only absolute solitariness offers political asylum and a comfortable space for inconsistency.

The desire for isolation and social borderline experience is not new but fascinates humans for millenia. Some of the most fabulous works have been created far away from civilisation; for instance in the seclusion of medieval cloistures. A retreat like a commitment for a residency demands clear decisions: Waywardness or creative power? Robinson Crusoe or the Holy Scriptures? Romanticism or madness?

***"The lesson is that resilience is about flexibility. It's not just about exercising your strengths; it's also about exercising things which aren't your strengths. (...) It had nothing to do with logic; it was about the sensation, the feeling of the bone just bending in a really weird way. Then it became a thought: 'I can break my own bones.'"***  
**Aron Ralston, "127 hours" (2011)**

The author and extreme athlete Aron Ralston found himself in a morbid situation: During a mountain hike he fell and his arm got stuck in a crevice. It is difficult to reconstruct what was going on in his brain during the 127 hours. You can check your own flexibility: when I make an effort and bend my upper part of the body down as far as possible, I can touch my toes with my fingertips. By tightening my muscles my body creates some kind of a loop, a circle, self-contained and isolated, as in this position my head is level with my knees and I cannot hold a normal conversation at the same time. Sometimes - if my state of mind allows it - I can hold this position for one minute.. Thus I realize once again how limited my physical flexibility really is despite all possible types of mobility.

It is my infinite fantasy though, that allows me to continuously overlook my corporal limitations. Again and again I become high-spirited and driven by flamboyant ideas. In extreme situations the mental potential boosts and the power of imagination excel itself. There's an idea, a curiosity and a necessity that pops up inside my head; electric impulses spread throughout the nerve tracts, chemicals are released and finally motoric processes are activated. The body functions, stays flexible and in turn motivates the mind to go on, not to give up. Circulating around its own center the body finds its own individual turning point.

***"My everyday life was temporarily but majorly restricted due to a broken leg from an accident. Suddenly I perceived a totally new, constructive world at home. My body, with a heavily stitched leg, an infinitely simple way of living and a change of space; a chair in the bathtub, a table under the table. It was a poetic experience."***

**Maki Umehara (2011)**

***"My greatest wish -besides escape- was a book. A large book, with an unending story. A book which I could read again and again, on and on with new eyes and new understanding."***  
**Yann Martel, "Life of Pi" (2001)**

The individual again requires cultural goods that are compiled collectively compiled. The power of imagination wants to be fed. In isolation the wasteland may overwhelm, civilization may fade. The castaway depends on acquired knowledge because from now on he relies on himself in all aspects of life. Withdrawn from his environment the worst case scenario is to fall into mental isolation, to stray all along his own brain squirms, without finding the exit himself. Everyone is responsible in maintaining contact with the outside world either via observation and interest, or rather via love and passion.

No matter how far one has removed himself, and where and how one has shipwrecked; at the latest, at that point, a strong interest arises to find a way back from the offside into society - if not direct, then at least by traces, letters, artworks, contributions....that one leaves on the island or that one sends away. With ease and excitement at the edge of different worlds, with love for art and friends.

## GREGORY MOHR 35MM LONELINESS (excerpt)

The female loneliness in film often results from marriage. When women move to Stromboli or Manderley, feel misunderstood by their partner and begin to distance themselves emotionally, loneliness and delusion are close with each other. Even if the wish to participate in a game show starts dominating one's life or if one dedicates oneself to the life of East-African mountain gorillas; if one is an aging actress or visits one's sister in New Orleans. Men also become lonely and desperate in film, but their delusion often culminates in more violent and explosive acts. The skulls of lonely mathematicians get to know power drills if they are unable to decipher the dark secret of the number Pi; Vietnam-veterans, who realize that they have fought and risked their neck for a degenerated society, massacre a pimp; traveling automobile company employees try to subvert the maintenance of order by blowing up buildings that contain credit card companies' records. Abnormal creatures are lonely like the Beast, neglected wives, musicians, garbage robots, vampires, scientists, the bear, Dr. Kimble, Jason Bourne, Roger O. Thornhill, fathers and sons in dystopian McCarthy-adaptations, comatose patients within a zombie-populated London, Precogs, long shots, close shots, misanthropists, ghost towns, silent screams, characters in freeze-frames, voice-over-narrators, gangsters- who love their mother -, cut-off ears on the lawn, long distance runners, female pianists, subliminal pictures, blondes behind radiators, film projectionists, the audience – the cinema apparatus.

Other parts are still haunted by loneliness through unsystematic thoughts. Order a drink from Lloyd, pin Wilson against the wall, fix the hanging-down wallpaper, visit the weird hermit next door, dress up like his mother and pull down his shower curtain, wrap yourself up in it, think about what three things you'd like to ban to an deserted island, calculate Apogee and tell Jack Torrance the result. All work and no play makes Greg a dull boy!



Anna Heidenhain



Elmar Hermann

## Was ist der Mensch(enaffe) ? Michael Tomasello

Being a primate means being social. Being a human means being ultra-social, that is, cultural. Nonhuman primates, including our nearest relatives the great apes, live in social groups that cooperate in a general way ; but most of their social life is dominated by competition for food and other resources. Great apes and other nonhuman primates communicate regularly with one another ; but it is mostly manipulative, not altruistically informative. Apes and other primates engage in various forms of social learning, but not intentional teaching. If an ape individual does something anti-social, no one punishes him or thinks badly of him or gossips about him to give him a bad reputation or attempts to exclude him from the group.

In contrast, humans live in cultures comprised of social practices, norms, and institutions whose very fabric is cooperation and division of labour toward a common goal. Humans communicate with one another altruistically, simply to share information freely. Humans not only learn from others, but in addition they feel the need to teach others to make sure that they learn. If a human individual does something anti-social, others invoke supra-individual social or moral norms that justify punishment or even exclusion from the group. Overall, human beings simply engage with one another in a much more deeply interpersonal, intersubjective way than do other great apes, and this manifests itself in every aspect of their lives.

Finally, although apes' social life is important for their survival and reproduction, it is not absolutely necessary for their normal cognitive development. In contrast, normal human cognitive development relies on children being born with skills of cultural learning in the midst of human cultural practices, symbols, and artefacts. A human child born outside of human culture would not invent for herself normal human cognitive skills involving language, symbolic mathematics, complex artefacts, and on and on. Cultural life is thus necessary for normal human cognitive development in a way that it simply is not for other primates. To be a human is to be a participating member of a culture. I remember is the air conditioning turning off for some reason....



Michael H. Shamberg, Mito Songs 2003-05

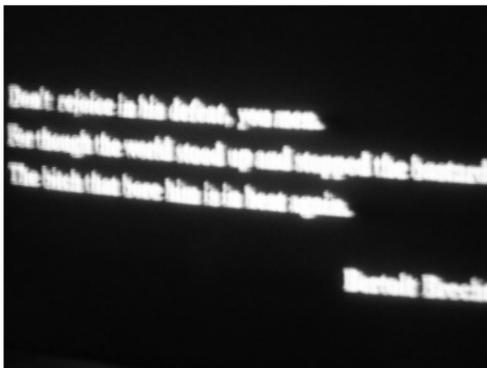
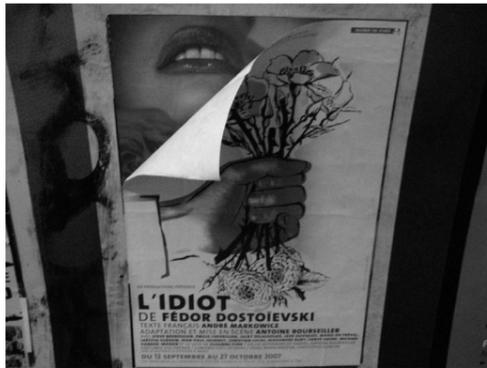
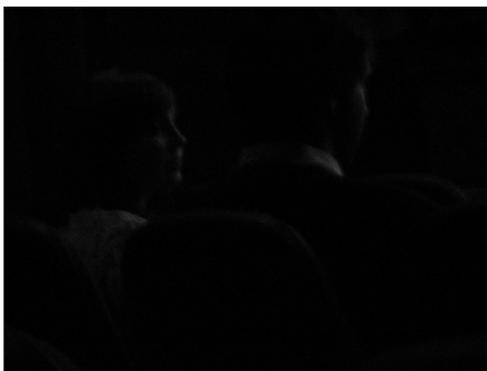
**Get at-shirt with Chris Marker logo from NEST** nest.berlin@gmail.com

Film producer Michael Shamberg is best known for his work with New Order, Lawrence Weiner. He has been organizing turtle an anarchic salon - an open and chaotic network of diverse but interconnecting ideas, people, projects, events, and venues. Following an imposed period of inactivity and relative isolation, Shamberg reconnects with an international coterie of artists, writers, filmmakers, actors, musicians, dancers, architects... see [www.turtlesalon.com](http://www.turtlesalon.com)

**music:**

Joe Baiza is a punk rock and jazz guitarist who lives in Los Angeles. Baiza is a founding member of the bands Saccharine Trust, Universal Congress Of, and The Mecolodiacs. He also performed guest guitar spots on several Minutemen tracks and played alongside Black Flag's Greg Ginn and Chuck Dukowski. At JB Jurve Baiza is going to perform a solo setup during the opening night.





## **EC Large Hypnagogic Hallucinations (excerpt)**

It is sometimes possible to trace the components of a remembered scrap of dream back through hypnagogic appearances to events in waking consciousness. Thus: I once dreamed that I was cast into prison and tortured in an Iron Maiden. My mode of escape and my complacent explanation of it belonged entirely to the province of the dream: the spikes entered my body but could not harm me because I was spiritual. But the Iron Maiden was in imagic succession with a pair of boots, that I had observed in the hypnagogic state: boots that had long upstanding nails and were hinged down one side like shell fish. And these in turn were clearly related to a solid pair of boots, into whose soles I had actually driven climbing nails the day previously.

Hypnagogic hallucinations tend to be more numerous and perhaps more vivid than usual when one is in a feverish or nervously excited state, when the neural mechanism of vision is disturbed; it is recorded that it is in such circumstances that the appearances have first forced themselves upon the attention of persons not previously given to observing them. When, for example, during an attack of influenza, scene after forgotten scene in the countryside drifts within the closed eyes as though projected by green light from a cinema photographic film. But the undisturbed, soft, and often beautiful succession of these images, which occurs in normal health at the threshold of sleep, is as natural as the song of birds or the drifting of clouds across the sky.

There has been much controversy whether these hypnagogic appearances should properly be considered hallucinations or illusions. Within the terms of reference of physical science it is ultimately an exceedingly fine issue, and the keen instrument of French prose has been used to divide the single hair of distinction lengthwise into a multiplicity of parts. The favoured explanation appears to be that the mere shapes and movements of entoptic light, the 'illusion' of light due to electrical or pressure excitation of the retina, suggest patterns of things to the half-conscious mind, and that these imaginings are then projected back as an optical hallucination. Alfred Maury's pronouncement is that the visions have as substratum an illusion and it is only when the mental disturbance is complete that the hallucination appears, apparently spontaneously.

Whatever the scientific definition, the visions remain, a universal, but infrequently considered part of human experience. Their role in the psychophysical mechanism of human creativeness – by whatever force that functioning may be inspired – has received all too little consideration in the literature of the West. Chiron, the Phoenix and Siva of the Seven Arms have visual forms that may well have been first fixed so significantly, from depth associations in the field of les visions du demi-sommeil.

***“The sun and the moon and the stars would have disappeared long ago ... had they happened to be within the reach of predatory human hands.”  
Henry Havelock Ellis (1923)***

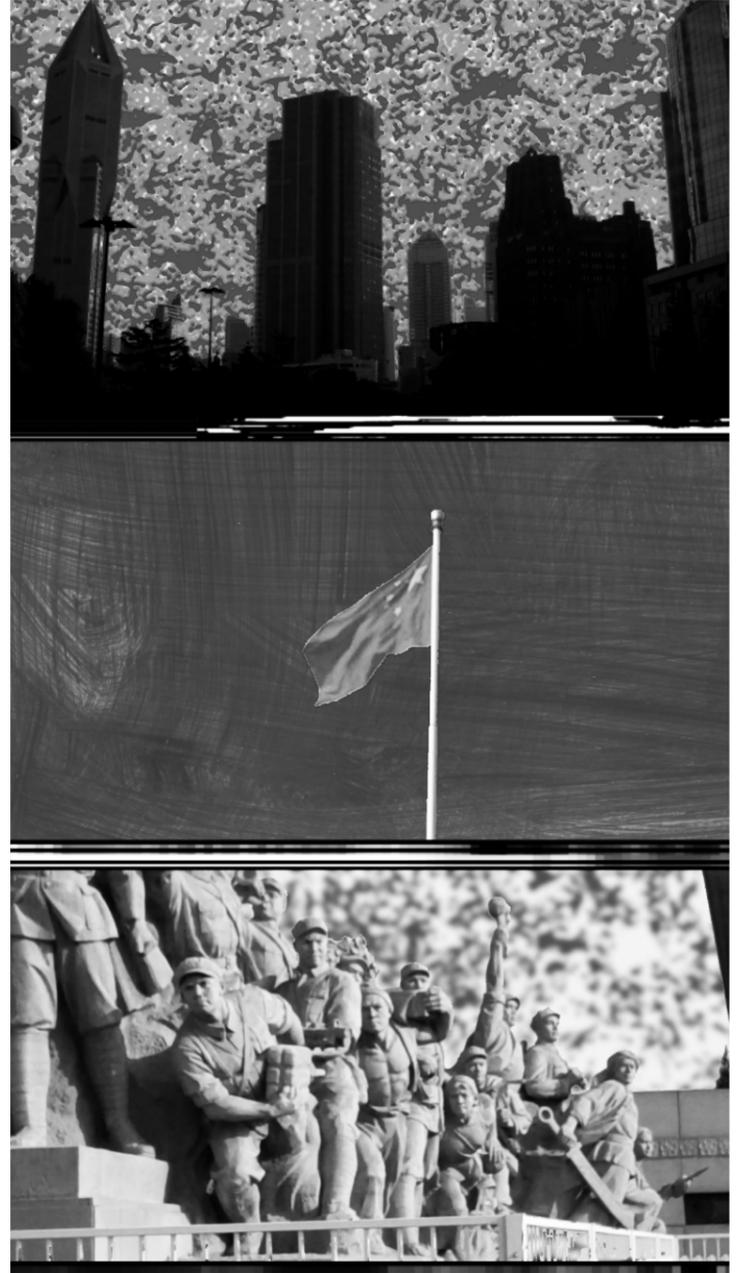
## **WJM KOK: iLand (excerpt)**

The elements it has to deal with: earth (repetition for itself), water (difference in itself), air (indiscernability in movement), fire (the light, the dark)

I, the first letter in I sland is still an unwanted letter to begin a letter with when it simply means I. The word "Island", with its silent "s" was once spelled iland in Middle English. "Island" is often mistakenly thought of as being derived from the Latin insula. However, idiosyncratic etymologies have it that iland developed from earlier Germanic aujō = 'object on the water', whereas in today's German 'Insel' is used straight from the Latin 'insula'. The Dutch, being somewhere in between Old England and New Germany were able to limit the confusion by sticking to their Germanic roots. By leaving out the 's' in their writing of eiland, the Dutch word remained phonetically similar to its English translation. Iland[i] from the old world, would in the new world of computer and internet language simply be transformed to iLand. It would proudly take its place next to iPod, iGoogle, iPad in the brave new iWorld. In this world, an individuality shares quite some similarities with an island: you alone with your music, you alone with your personalized Google page, you alone with the rest of the world through your iPad. It always seems more comfortable when we can think of the I as the other, in this case the closest other: you. To tune with iLand we would better repeat with: I alone with my music, I alone with my personalized Google page, I alone with my iPad. However, the difference in the globalized world seems marginal; the difference between YouTube and iGoogle is close to none.

When it comes down to something like music, an iPod reverses the sensations of the large and the small, the virtual and the real, the outside and the inside, the bodily and the body without organs. Unlike the last century, where a limited amount of gramophone records reproduced the music in a domestic environment – that is in a room, a space, with or without others – the iPod brings an almost unlimited amount of music in a very limited and exclusively individual space that is: inside ones head. The body becoming a kind of shell, an island closed off from its spatial surroundings, dealing only with the comparatively very small space inside the head in which the music is reproduced. Music, no matter how invisible the waves that transport it may be, is one of the most three-dimensional and sculptural art forms we know of. What is more, music is produced by sculptural bodies which, when put in resonance act as musical instruments. The simplest way to do this is to hit an object.

Once sound is generated, tones that share proximity in frequency, produce in turn beat tones, creating intermodulation. New tones are produced that have nothing in common with the ones that hit each other through being close enough in frequency, as if they were objects themselves. Sound waves are similar to the visible waves of water. An island, as an object in the water, catches all the waves from all sides simultaneously.



Matt Sheridan



Maki Umehara: Homes in Mum-Bay

***"The island brought us here. This is no ordinary place, you've seen that, I know you have. But the island chose you, too. It's destiny."  
(LOST Exodus, Part Three [1.25])***

***A free America... means just this: individual freedom for all, rich or poor, or else this system of government we call democracy is only an expedient to enslave man to the machine and make him like it.  
Frank Lloyd Wright***

**Klara Adam**  
**If you don't have anymore,**  
**maybe you don't need it**  
**anymore.**

A famous yoga teacher once said: „If you don't have anymore, maybe you don't need it anymore.“ - a sentence that inspired Berlin based artist Klara Adam to titel a very fragile modell of a shipwrecked villa.

Going by bike around the Berlin countryside I discover a lot of faded mansions, trees growing out of the roof and you start to trace the remains of the garden architectur. Once you are in these imagination, you can bring it more and more back. I like the lightness of this moment which makes me to an immaterial occupant. It's easy to share this unobstructable view, I mean there can be thousands of immaterial occupants.



Ansicht des Herrenhauses von Südwesten. Aufnahme 2004

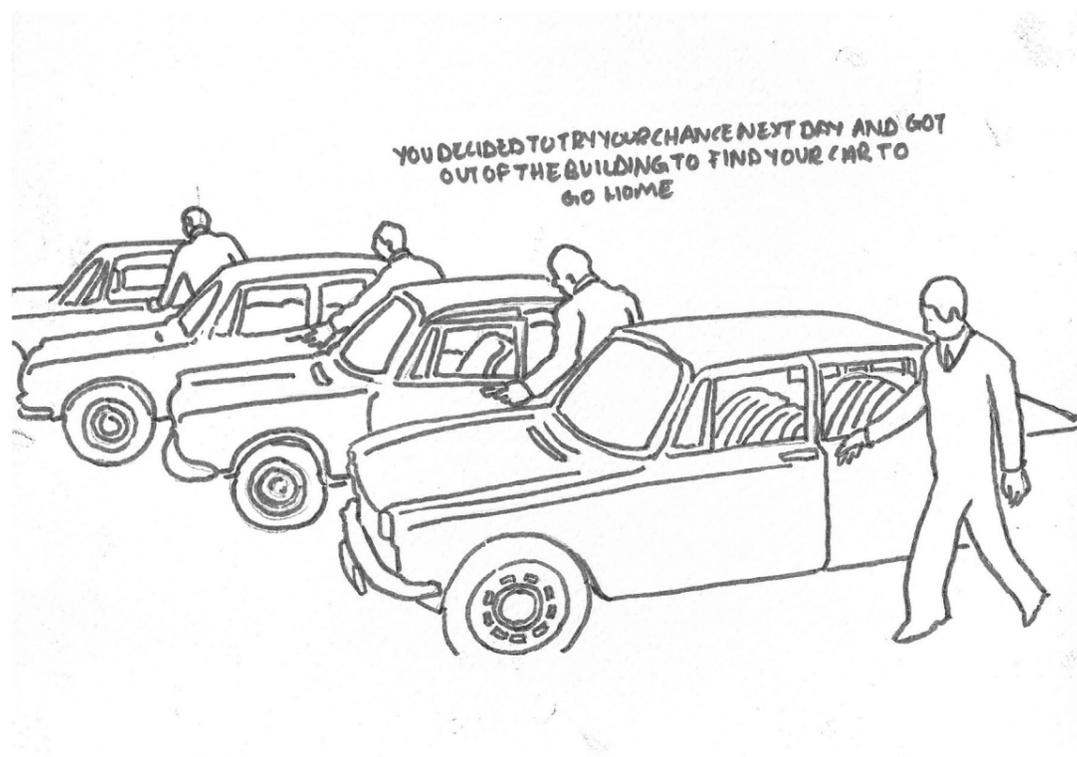
Leider läßt der gegenwärtige Eigentümer nur wenig Initiative

Tempelgarten und Maurische Villa in Neuruppin



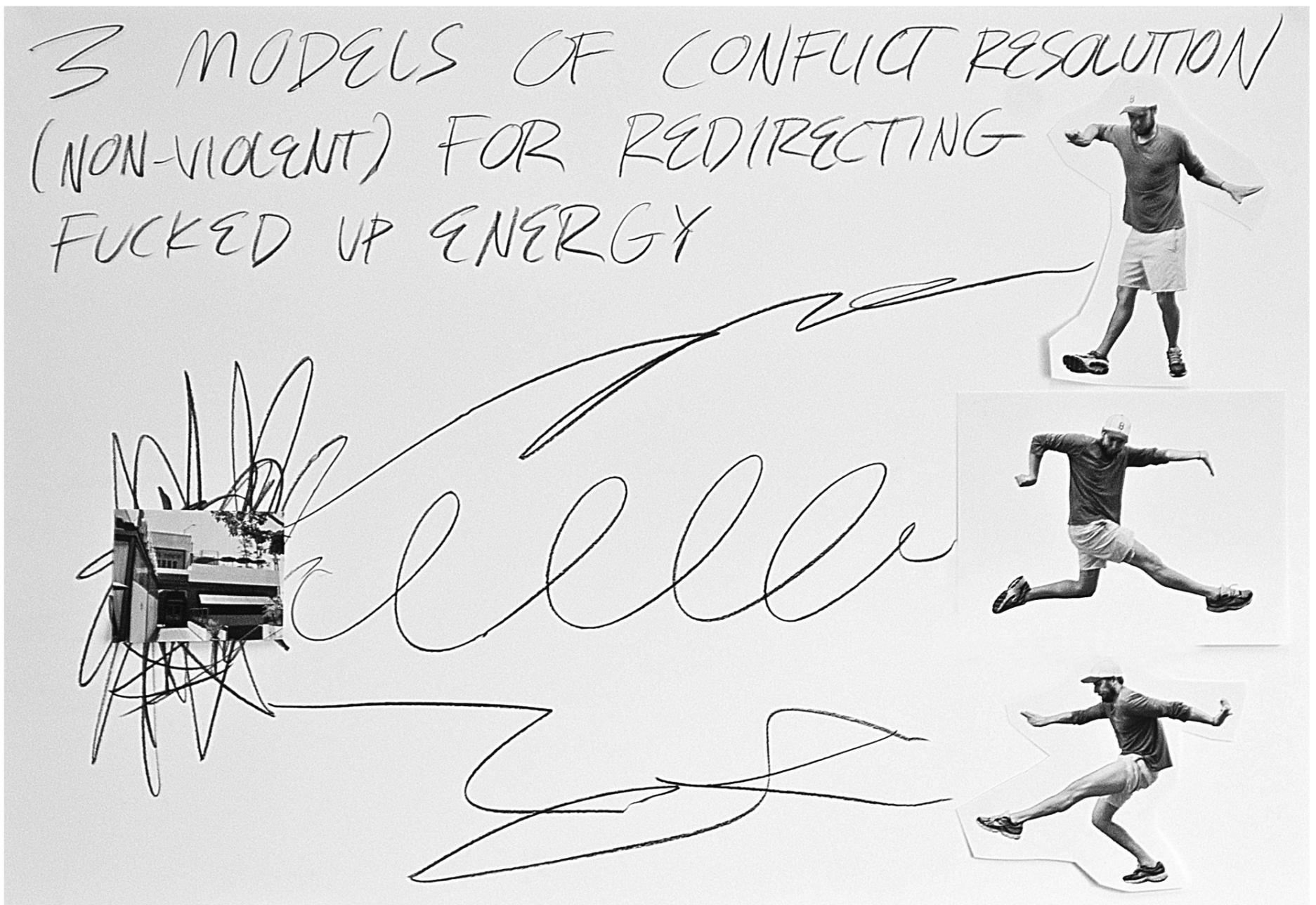
Dan Graham

**“By acquiring exclusively made products designed by renowned creators/designers who support more tree's activities , you can offset your CO2 without too much of an effort.”**  
**Ryuichi Sakamoto & more trees**



Gökçe Suvari

**“It's a job that's never started that takes the longest to finish.”**  
**J.R.R. Tolkien**



Aaron GM

### **some general info/ contributors:**

nüans is an artist collective organized by Anna Heidenhain, Elmar Hermann and Maki Umehara since 2006. Instead of being fixed to one place, nüanS looks for locations that fit the context of each specific intention. Their projects are interdisciplinary in order to bring about an exchange of ideas between a wide array of collaborators.

Utilizing minimal editing techniques, repetition, and corporal action to engage the observer, Aaron GM (LA) uses his body, voice, minimal studio props, and a single lens to create a whimsical and compelling oeuvre.

Ana Barrado photographed the rockets in Cape Canaveral in 1988 and created futuristic images that have appeared in J.G. Ballard's story collection "The Atrocity Exhibition" published by RE/Search. Her visions of skyward-pointing missiles perfectly complement Ballard's apocalyptic landscape as well as claustrophobic scenarios of isolation in general.

The monotonous and alienating effect of isolated housing is a main theme in the whole exhibition. American artist Dan Graham is going to present "Homes for America" (1966-67) - a series of amateur-seeming snapshots of suburban architecture, published in 1966 in Arts magazine.

The American Felling Axe that Elmar Hermann uses in his installation at JB Jurve is an icon of American wildlife romanticism. A perfect example for taking cultural evolution radically serious. Every feature of this axe was meticulously designed for uselessness which turns a woodland tool into a general symbol for snobby weariness.

### **"Comfort isolates, solitude limits solidarity, solidarity corrupts solitude." Susan Sontag**

Gökce Suvari is a Turkish artist who lives and works in Istanbul, at the gallery Gökce is going to realize some impossible maze wall drawings which combine modernist architecture and dead-end possibilities of finding your way in this pre-organised systems. Somewhat a humorous approach to isolated and close circuit living / working structures.

A famous yoga teacher once said: "If you don't have anymore, maybe you don't need it anymore." - a sentence that inspired Berlin based artist Klara Adam to use it as a title for a very fragile modell of a shipwrecked villa.

Maki Umehara: "I've decided to live and travel in foreign countries during my life, to be dislocated and represent myself as a performer and as a moving object, which would bring a new meaning and communication to the communities in which I live." An installation "Homes in Mum-Bay" is going to be presented at JB Jurve as decoration of villa in India, where private and public spaces seemed to be often placed together.

Matt Sheridan's "Curse of The Paper Tigers" is a multi-channel animation video installation projected across a Chinatown rooftop wall which questions dissonance between Chinese and American cultures with animated signs and actions of travel, economics, conflict and redaction.

WJM Kok is a Dutch artist who lives and works in Amsterdam. "Untitled (As Long As The Grass Grows)" is out of a series video pieces in which difference is provoked by using visualisations from a standard computer software music player, to generate a non-repetition of sorts in which everything is continuously on the move. The video also seems to act as a screen-saver, which appears when a computer falls to sleep mode due to a lack of interaction.

### **Next presentation of the book Apogee:**

September, artweek Istanbul 2011