

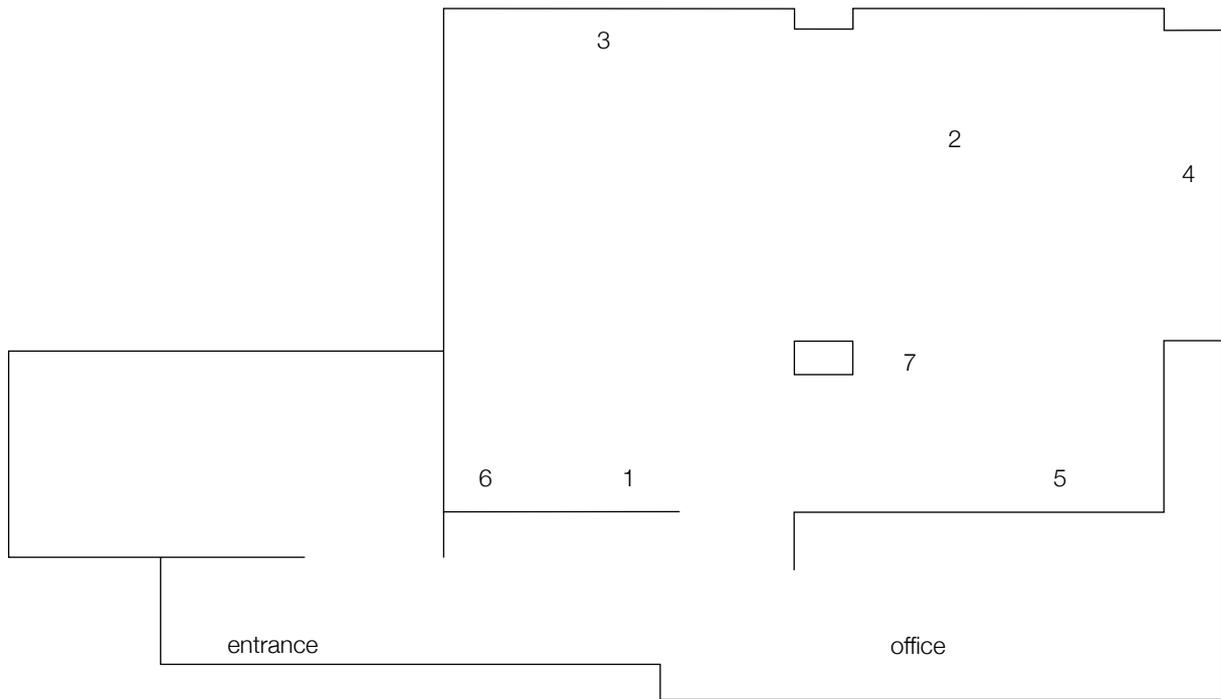
## Varying Degrees of Ajarness **gerlach en koop**

*Oh please, don't say this will continue like it does. These things I see around me. Every day, again and again. Some people remark how remarkable it is to find everything in exactly the same place when they wake up. I just feel repugnance. Seriously, it won't stay like this forever will it? Resistance wells up. We can't give up on the idea of progress, can we? The upward movement inside is contrary to the downward movement I get from these objects. They've given in to gravity. They show me nothing but their appalling weight. True, both movements balance each other. That's an equilibrium I suppose. We're not moving.*

**Ellen de Bruijne Projects**

02 November—21 December 2013





Varying Degrees of Ajarness  
**gerlach en koop**

02 November – 21 December 2013

1  
*Of French-Finnish Origin*, 2013,  
 unworked dumbbell

2  
*Lourde et dure comme de l'acier*,  
 2013, worked dumbbells

3  
*tapi-  
 jten*, 2013, two sheets of plywood

... (obstructed windows)

4  
*Untitled (Scatter Piece)*, 2013, string  
 of pearls without pearls

5  
*Elle descend (deuxième tentative)*,  
 2013, gift wrapping paper, glued  
 and removed

6  
*Reducer*, 2013, anti-theft container,  
 plywood

7  
*Loos' Ass*, 2010/13, book put aside

in the hallway:  
*No two things can be the same*,  
 2012, double-sided poster, offset  
 print (framed)





*Cut to close-up of whole door. Smooth grey rectangle. Imperceptibly ajar. No knob. Faint music.*

This is a stage direction for the tv-play *Ghost Trio* by Samuel Beckett who was famously exacting, also regarding stage directions. When shooting this play the director and set designer laboured at length over this direction, painstakingly experimenting with varying degrees of ajariness. Beckett himself watched the struggle in disgust from the back of the studio, in the shadows. Eventually he got up, stormed onto the set and slammed the door shut. 'But it says ajar!', the director gasped in protest. 'It also says', Beckett snapped, 'imperceptibly'!

Question: What is imperceptibly ajar?

Question: So, who's right?

Question: Yes, but with whom do you sympathise?

...

When I step into the gallery, I'm not yet in the exhibition but in the hallway, next to the office. Someone working behind a screen doesn't look up. I prefer to be ignored. It's a not uncommon preference to be absent in public, I guess, especially in the presence of strangers. This could be linked to the desire to look without being perceived, in order to see things as they really are. The people in the gallery were happy not to disappoint me. I am transparent.

1

I take a few more steps. Not many things around me. I glance over my shoulder. A 5k dumbbell unusually high up the wall. I imagine the sound that rang through the gallery announcing my present presence. Must have rang, as I, for obvious reasons, did not hear it myself. A dumb bell. I do have a general mistrust of etymological explanations, they always seem made-up, even if genuine.

2

Something heavy and hard as steel. I know without trying that these cones made from half a dumbbell can't be lifted. But it's not just something physical. Without suitable words you can't lift anything off the ground. It's unavoidable: revulsion.

3

Two sheets of plywood suited to make a corner now shape a wedge, a tiny wedge in negative, because one is placed behind the other.

... (obstructed windows)

4

A display case that looks like a regular jeweller's cabinet or like one showing artefacts in an Ethnological Museum for instance, or Natural History. Pearls start as tiny pieces of dust inside an oyster. Hardly something, an irregularity in the oyster's system. A white cube can be like a shell. The little knots in the thread, used to isolate the individual pearls, look almost like the beginnings of new pearls. Around somebody's neck the knots would slowly grow, building layer upon layer of grease, skin particles and small fibres of clothing until they produce something that could resemble pearls. It's a fault in the system, a mistake that is not eliminated or ignored, but intensified, amplified.

5

I once saw a girl in a blue polka dot dress hiding behind a block of concrete, full of shame. The block was too small. She flattened herself —and flatter still. She was unable to disappear.

6

Now this resembles an object one can do without. The container is not empty but doesn't seem to contain anything either. A fragment of the space isolated. The title says reducer, which is the opposite of an amplifier. Remember how people tend to place their empty soda or beer cans in the corner of a window-sill, a shop window, a doorway. Mostly on the right side, just where the trashcan is on the computer screen. What came first?

My mind wanders around the space in a state of not understanding, something that is difficult to convey. I try to look at incomprehension differently. By nature all minds tend to shape things, see analogies, discover rules, often independent of what is real. It's a very private thing. I consider my own incomprehension as something that can be made to shine, by polishing it, again and again. Like a piece of jewellery.

7

A book has been put down for a moment (when the doorbell rings, for instance). It resembles something else. Weight again. Belittlement.

...

An exhibition always begins before it begins, sometimes long before, sometimes just at the door handle. When I went in I barely noticed a small strip of pills. Birth-control pills, unused, placed on the step of the stairs. I only saw it on my way out. Immediately recognisable, with small arrows and the days of the week printed on it. Deposited there deliberately, to catch the eye of the one who forgot. But connecting this to the exhibition is my own mind at work. Definitely. I know.

I like to look behind me, imagine how the place will look after I've left. Did any of the proverbial mud stick to my shoe soles?





ADOLF LOOS  
COMMITMENT AND  
CONSEQUENCE





3  
*tapi-*  
*jten*, 2013, two sheets of plywood





2  
*Lourde et dure comme de l'acier*, 2013, worked dumbbells







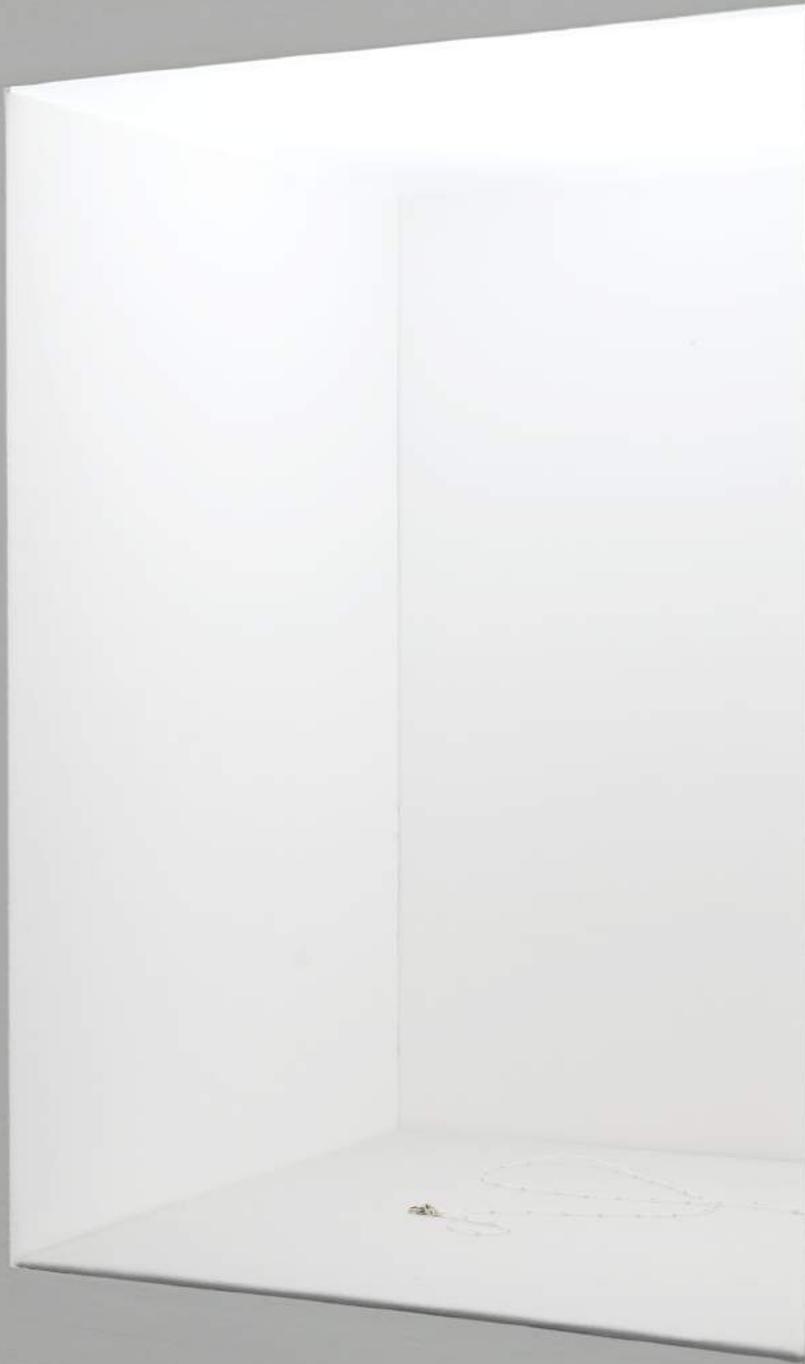


2  
*Lourde et dure comme de l'acier*, 2013, worked dumbbell





... (obstructed windows)





4  
*Untitled (Scatter Piece)*, 2013, string of pearls without pearls

2000









*No two things can be the same*, 2012, double-sided poster, offset print (framed)

It Also Says Imperceptibly  
**curated by gerlach en koop**

*Sometimes you don't know what you're going to say, when you open your mouth. In fact, not just sometimes. Thoughts are often being shaped in the mouth, like their wording. Many a good speaker does not know in advance ... maybe the greatness of a speaker can be measured from the quality of the emptiness preceding the words, and by the length of this emptiness. It takes nerves to wait, and knowledge to know that you can.*

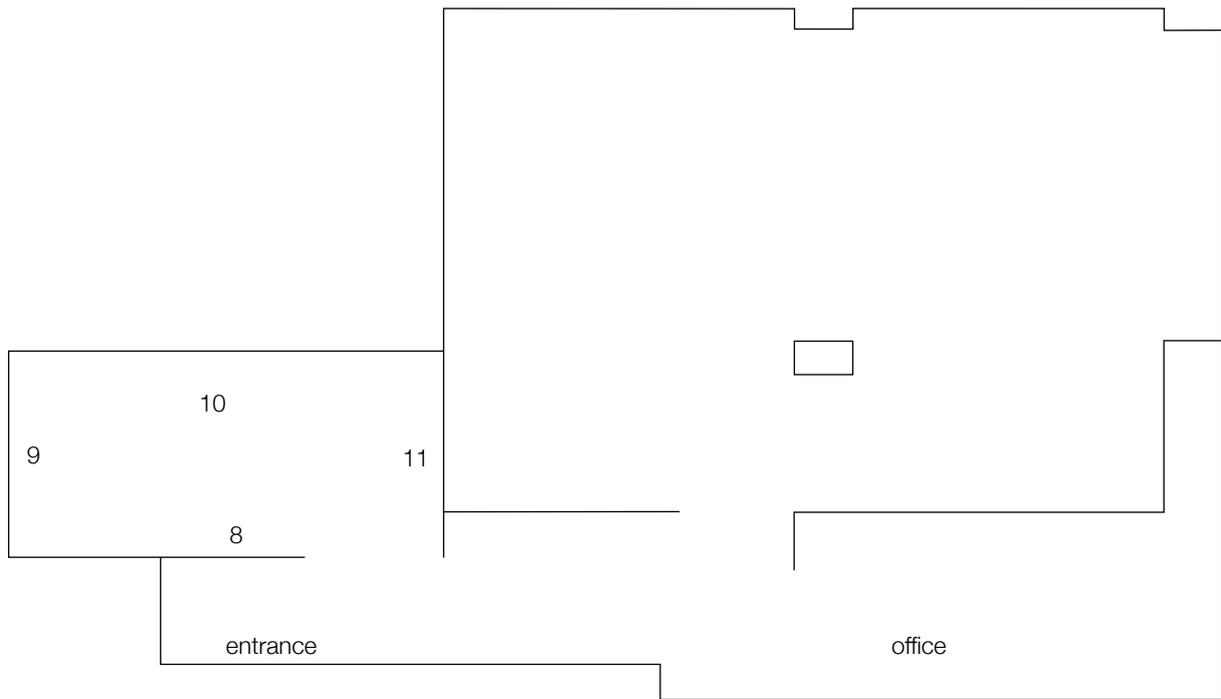
*Take a breath, not a 'deep' one, that's automated talk, remember: you don't have to swim your way to the last rows in the auditorium —no, just breathe in.*

*And only after the last word you learn if what you said was worthwhile.*

**Jay Chung, Yann Sérandour, Lisa Holzer, Maurice Blaussyld**

**Dolores / Ellen de Bruijne Projects**

02 November—28 November 2013



It Also Says Imperceptibly  
**curated by gerlach en koop**

02 November—28 November 2013

8

**Jay Chung**

*Nothing is More Practical than Idealism*, 2001, C-type print

Courtesy the artist and Cabinet,  
London

9

**Maurice Blaussyld**

*Opsis ou Voix de Femme*, 1994, poplar

Courtesy the artist and Galerie Allen,  
Paris

10

**Yann Sérandour**

*Guided Tour*, 2013, MacBook box,  
shipping label, clothes, *Nought as  
Object* by gerlach en koop, 2013,  
ed. 5/8

Courtesy the artist and gb agency,  
Paris

11

**Lisa Holzer**

*(objet petit a / monochrome white)*,  
2011, pigment print on cotton paper  
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Ema-  
nuel Layr, Vienna



8

**Jay Chung**

*Nothing is More Practical than Idealism*, 2001, C-type print

Jay Chung explains that for his action *Nothing is More Practical than Idealism* (2001), which took two years to complete, he 'produced, wrote, and directed a 35mm film to be shot without film in the camera. Each stage of the film's production was carried out exactly as if it had been for an ordinary short film. Cast and crew included a sound and boom operator, cinematographer, assistant cameraman, production assistant, prop master, assistant producer, still photographer, and approximately ten actors and actresses. Of these, only those who absolutely had to know were told that there was no film in the camera. (Sound was recorded, but without tape.) There were no spectators, except those directly involved in the production of the film. After the shooting of the film was completed, the cast wasn't informed that film was not used. Only one still image was produced during the shoot, a group photograph of the cast and crew, taken by the still photographer during lunch break.'

9

**Maurice Blaussyld**

*Opsis ou Voix de Femme*, 1994, poplar

*Opsis* is used to describe the *mise en scène* of a performance or theatrical event. There is however nothing spectacular to be found in this work. 'While not calling into question the actual existence of Maurice Blaussyld, some might judge his art as indistinct, suspecting in its midst the power of what is not art.' (Bernard Lamarche-Vadel, exhibition catalogue Météo Gallery, 1992)

10

**Yann Sérandour**

*Guided Tour*, 2013, MacBook box, shipping label, clothes, *Nought as Object* by gerlach en koop, 2013, ed. 5/8

Invited by gerlach en koop to make a guided tour of their exhibition *Varying Degrees of Ajarness*, Yann Sérandour has proposed a third party named Magalie to 'wear' his proposal. Magalie's clothes are folded in a used MacBook box and exhibited before the scheduled guided tour (November, 30th). A multiple by gerlach en koop *Nought as Object* (2013) previously bought by Yann Sérandour is also included in the box. This edition consists of a rolled leather belt bound by a tie-wrap, cancelling each other out. The day of the guided tour, Magalie will have to cancel the work by gerlach en koop in order to fasten her jeans.

11

**Lisa Holzer**

*(objet petit a / monochrome white)*, 2011, pigment print on cotton paper

H. – Ich werde versuchen a zu sagen, und Sie werden versuchen b zu sagen...

L. – ?

H. – a.

L. – b.

(from: *Die Hose paßt wirklich ausgezeichnet*, Lisa Holzer, Westphalie Verlag, 2007)

The work displays a hole of a lower-case 'a' in Bitstream Vera Serif, like a stain on an almost identical white surface. The a-hole-stain nearly disappears into the white monochrome picture. Pigment prints are 'extra flat', that is, the colour totally penetrates into the paper. The hole-stain of the little 'a' represents the objet petit a, which Lacan suggested stands for the object cause of desire.

10

**Yann Sérandour**

*Guided Tour*, 2013, MacBook box, shipping label, clothes, *Nought as Object* by gerlach en koop, 2013, ed. 5/8







9

**Maurice Blausyld**

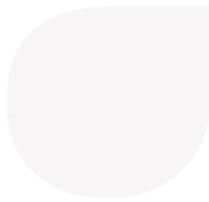
*Opsis ou Voix de Femme*, 1994, poplar



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photography Kristien Daem

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