

DEAR DEAR DEAR PARALLEL SCHOOL OF ART

I'm eventually sending you this application and proposal for a parallel project, after a couple weeks of following your activity online and wondering about that thing I'd like to propose you. First I'd like to say I'm very excited by the project you're setting up and would be happy, even if it's not in the form I will eventually start talking about, to contribute to it.

1 I probably haven't read that many things on the subject but since I ran into documents from the Invisible University **1** and a friend — who I believe some of you know too — advised me to read the Manifesta 6's *Notes for an Art School*, about
2 two years ago now, I've been trying to get into a room with a conversation in the middle **2**. The first step in that direction arguably was to get into an art school,
3 which have been increasingly exciting so far, but this seems to also ask for a continuation, conditions under which prolongate the ignorant schoolmaster's **3** class after he's gone. To create these conditions, I very much agree on the importance Laure Giletti gave to non-authority in the "Discussion about the exchange between ENSAD and RCA" entry.

I really enjoyed your association triggering conversations - manifestos - as-libraries, let alone the witty writing, for that subjective account they gave of one's readings and how they start to make bonds and sense as a whole, no matter how that sense is constructed. The only thing I found myself a little frustrated with was in their very referential nature: the fact they mostly worked for me as recommendations, and thus as a form of authority, capitalizing to a certain extent on the books', or content's absence. But I realize as I write this is quite out of point for a (non-)manifesto.

4 What I'd like to propose is to continue what you all started with the texts, quotes, videos, transcripts and images by simply sharing accounts of texts, films, lectures, works we've been exposed to in our different cities or schools, simple "fiches de lecture" (I guess "reading report" means something alike), notes written along the reading of a text to remember it better. Those could be anything, from sketched associations with single words and arrows to linear writing, from a meticulous chain of concepts summing up everything to a personal interpretation, they would only have to avoid showing the original material directly and become autonomous texts **4**. This way, and I think by relative anonymity, I hope we could break loose from a good share of authority and set an extra base for dynamic research, discussion and, in the medium - to - long run, probably edition of this knowledge/content produced into a collectively authored reader - as - library. I enclose to this Pdf document reading reports of sorts from works writing this letter brought to my mind and would like to invite you all fellow students to make this into a conversation of mediated content!

5 The idea of creating a Wikipedia editing group was brought up earlier, maybe this could be another way of dealing with collaboration than cross-checking and consensus, leave room open for re-interpretations, sides-taking and curiosity **5**.

Hope to read re-composed knowledge from you!

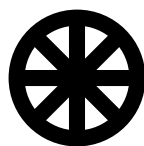
MET VRIENDELIJKE
GROET & KINND
REGARDS, JULES E.

DEAR DEAR DEAR PARALLEL SCHOOL OF ART

- 1 — *The Prospectus of the Invisible University*, David Greene & Samantha Hardingham
- 2 — “A Room With a Conversation in the Middle”, Walid Sadek, in *Notes for an Art School*
- 3 — *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, Jacques Rancière

- 4 — *The Artist in his Studio*, Miltos Manetas & David Barbarino

- 5 — “I [crossed heart] Information”, Anthony Huberman



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OPEN CALL FOR A PARALLEL READING REPORT

I realized after I downloaded the Pdf here mentioned I actually hadn't read it but only the I.U. Newspaper spreads designed by John Morgan and reproduced in a couple issues of *Dot Dot Dot*.

If you read this document or are about to, I'd be very happy and curious to read your parallel reader of it!

WALID SADEK A Room With a Conversation in the Middle

NICE PROSE

Corridors— functional component of domestic architecture we casually forget after childhood’s plays.

→ inhabited as refuge if “a war happens to visit your city” —family grouped
[Lebanese civil war]

“Survival, it seems, is nothing more than
hearing much and knowing very little” → Desire for speech: First brutally, then articulated
always endangered by events outside

↳ Q: “Locate a structure and a libidinal drive able to
provoke and warrant the making of a place of
conversation, one we can perhaps call an art school.”

>Q: Why an art school?

(=place we congregate in rather than pedagogical structure from which we graduate,
no distinction made between artist and art teacher)

>Dominant scenario: Loyalty to the figure of the artist:

Great artist adored in a renown art school/temple

→ wish for death and resurrection: One day, a student will transgress and exceed the
curriculum —join the patron saints in the gallery, become a singular artist.

>Alternative:

Art school not concerned with the making of artists
School= Place of conversation unburdened by loyalty
to the figure of the artist —————
= Structure recollected from the times of war,
shared experience, “phenomenological situ-
ation, by which we can begin to understand
the making of language and the desire that
motivates it”.

ITS STRUCTURE IS THAT OF A ROOM WITH A CONVERSATION IN THE MIDDLE

NICE | Story of a Lebanese model for sculpture and drawing in a traditional art school, situation was one of a
room with a model in the middle, her image multiplied and centre of creation.

>(Normal) Art school: Points at the genius’ figure “but can provide lessons
in the pictural grammar of yesterday”, for this grammar becomes more and
more antiquated with every transgression (birth of a singular artist).

→ Enforces vision of the artist as a “tireless and expansive emitter of ideas”,
“guarantee against proliferation of signification”

“A Room With a Conversation
in the Middle”, Walid Sadek, in
Notes for an Art School

Pdf, 6 pages:
[http://www.manifesta.org/
docs/07.pdf](http://www.manifesta.org/docs/07.pdf)

—Michel Foucault in “What is an Author?”:

The author [artist] “fulfills a functional principle by which ‘one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short, by which one impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, and re-composition of fiction’.”

→ Artist = “figure through which we avoid the often daunting task of looking at an image, of reading a text and assuming the responsibility of interpretation.”

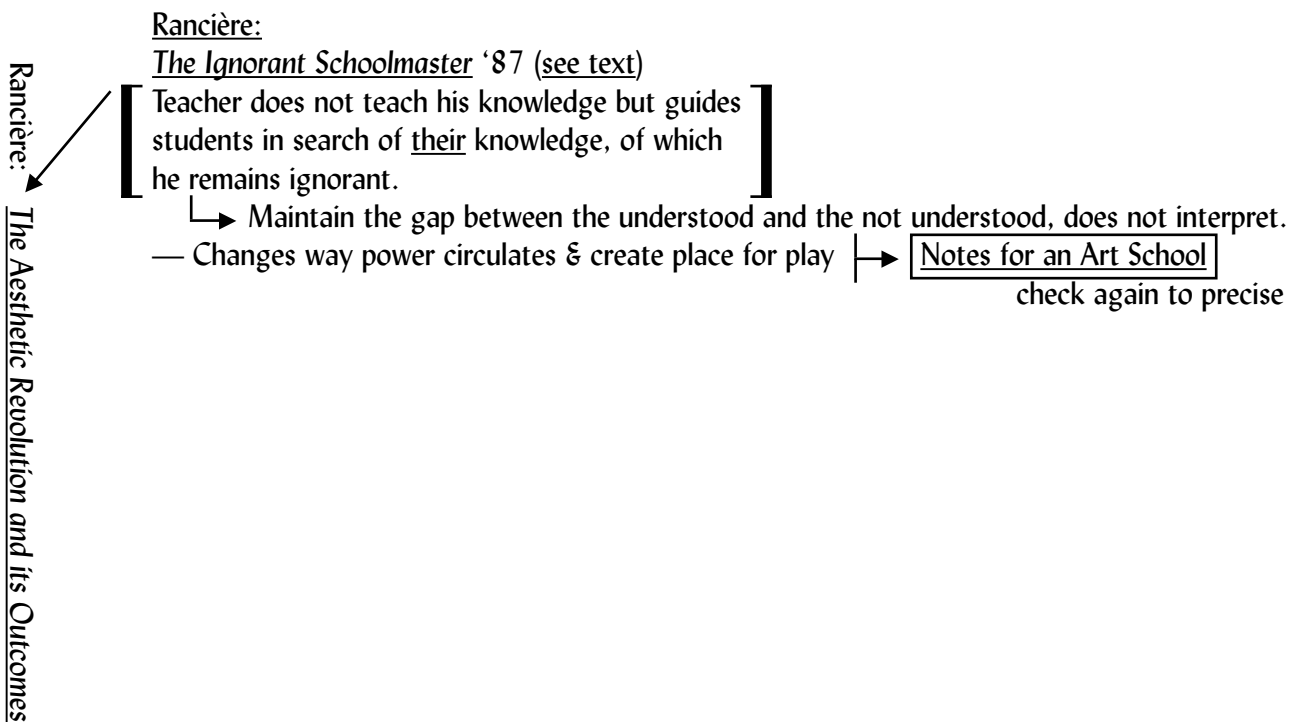
→ We relegate onto the artist/author rather than engage with the making of signification.

↳ We must search for a libidinal drive that makes the proliferation of meaning an utter necessity and not a threat.

[to impede: to ob-
struct the progress of]

If art school cannot avoid institutionalisation, necessary to be constantly an institution in crisis.
“An art school with a conversation in the middle is a place for dispersion of language, for weaving sentences; it’s a place for making fictions.”

I haven't read Rancière's
The Ignorant Schoolmaster,
I only know about its subject
from an allusion in an essay
by Anthony Huberman.



I first saw this video work in the show the collective Vvork curated in MU, Eindhoven, somewhere in 2009. It's shot from just above a glossy book entitled *The Artist in his Studio* laid on a table. One can hear, as the pages are being flipped from the end of the book on, comments from a middle aged man on the artists (mostly pre-modern and heroic modern ones) whose pictures pass by. He's addressing a younger man and telling him in very definitive, often cliché and sometimes sexist terms general things about how to be a great artists and the things one needs to know to become one.

I found it a really nice work in the sense it seemed to demonstrate the primacy of oral form and the way it can very simply override and re-orientate the content printed matter, be it to dub it with the worst nonsense. It also happens to be very funny to watch.

"I [crossed heart] Information",
Anthony Huberman

Latter, shorter version of the
same text, entitled "Naive Set
Theory". Pdf, 8 pages:
[http://www.dextersinister.org/
library.html?id=126](http://www.dextersinister.org/library.html?id=126)

ANTHONY HUBERMAN

"I ~~X~~ INFORMATION", 2005 *About Nothing*

[// with "Naive Set Theory"
in DDD 15, 2007
- shortened version]

Th: we need info to understand the world
but it has become a poisonous system
- addiction, after use "to grease the wheels of freedom"

SUDDENLY EVERYWHERE

Warhol turned painting, sculpt, form, into wonderful informant
↳ Conceptual artists dig into its system, drawn into the blankness
of info., as a powerful opponent to the "tyranny of content" [art matters because
it is, not because it
is about someth.]
→ less about celebrity & popular culture:
Wittgenstein, rawness & blankness of language, percept, knowledge
• info = tool, in 60s & 70s, artists used to move beyond the modernist project
↳ has become the enemy, contemp. artists address it.
"nothing in the wake of post-fordism" → ways to compromise information

AGAINST UNDERSTANDING

Pedagogy: ignorance → understanding
sciences, power structures & educational; funct. this way — art wants us to be mystified by the world &
museums → critically aware of our assumpt's.
→ understand art is missing the point.

↳ Art sparks & maintains curiosity
aesthetic experience = one of speculat., experiment & departure
it is located in the distance btw art & life

Susan Sontag '64: against interpretation
↳ to interpret = "the modern way of understanding smth."

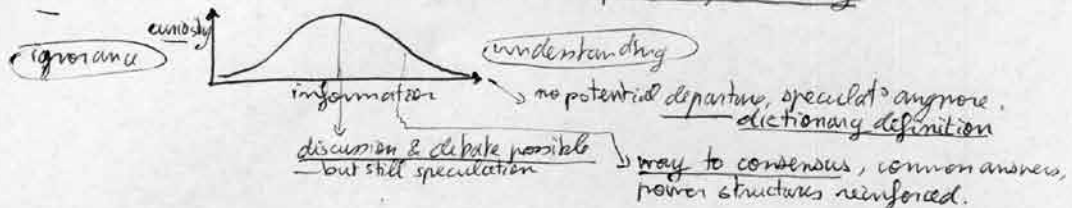
Rancière: "The Ignorant Schoolmaster" '87 (see text)

Teacher does not teach his knowledge but guide students in search of their knowledge, of which he remains ignorant.

↳ maintain the gap btw the understood & the not understood, does not interpret.
- changes way power circulates & create place for play

↳ Notes for an art school
↳ check again to precise

Dinge, die wir nicht verstehen, 2000, show curated by Roger M. Buergel & Ruth Noack
(things we don't understand)
→ idea that art we don't understand enforces political questioning



Rancière: The Post-Political revolution & its outcomes

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STOPPING INFORMATION

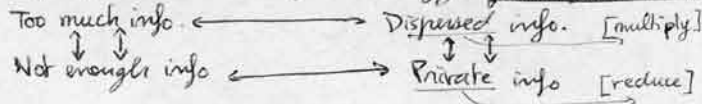
In Buergel & Noack's perspective, good art keeps us on top of the bell curve
→ need to stop information.

where we have to
change smth in
ourselves as a thought
to understand, sustain
curiosity.

Now curiosity is being castrated by efficient, quantity & immediate informat°

Somday saw lots of 60s art flipping from interpretat°.

strategies by artists to address "content" & interpretat°: become parody, abstract, 'merely' decorative, non-art
good art stops info w/out artist making it a strategy. four ways artists are doing so:



1. NO

"No info" missing from diagram

↳ no info through secrecy or refusal

no curiosity from
viewer because
doesn't know

↳ "fuck you, I'm doing my thing"
punk strategy
withdrawal, never work - situat° not
non-participat°

Vermeert
"yes, no & other
options"
in
Exhaust° &
Exuberance

↳ co-opted by capitalist
machine as marketable fashion.

↳ is its own kind of informat°, & ++ unmodified
[= complexity]

Learned from it: Saying yes as way of saying no

2. TOO MUCH

↳ too much info. makes identifiat° more complicated.

- Artists multiply identities (Mallarme, Richard D. James, Duchamp ...)
Kippenberger

- John Armleder, too much info → remain out of reach: book "About Nothing" 1268 p.
(Wahlheim lesson)

- attention to signature styles, "multi-tasking artists"

3. NOT ENOUGH

- 60s & 70s Conceptual artists: info is there but it has nowhere to go
(Ed Ruscha's photos of small' fine art gas stations, Bruce Nauman jumps for his piece jump ...)

- recent unobtrusive practices: Bob Nickas creating Red, show w/ red works
theme too small & revealed to get in the way of looking at art.

4. DISPERSED

Dispersed info is spread too thinly [telephone mabe]

→ generating a slippage of meaning & welcoming process of mistranslat°

Seth Price, Dispersion

"interferences puncture info."

"throw information off-course,
making it leak & compromising
its authority"

ex: Rumor = punctured information

• Rikrit Tiravanija @ Serpentine Gallery, 2005: for retrospective, replaced his
artworks by radio broadcasts of
[WORK in MU] ← ppl. remembering their own
experiences of his artworks

• David Hammons leaves unanswered
questions about presence of ugly Miles
Davis painting @ Whitney Biennial 2006 or
a weather forecast at a Sculpture show.

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S. PRIVATE

- Smaller quantities, isolated audiences
demands real action, as opposed to the internet.
- Guy Debord & Situationists = good, early example [contrad. w/ "NO" ?]
↳ would exclude more & more members
to avoid compromises, until he only remained.
 - Artist-run spaces → standing for product rather than reception;
↳ artists taking matter in their own hands.
 - aren't always intentional, & often out of constraints: response to post-fordist capitalism.
work at slowed down, smaller scales [slow movement ?]
↳ out of info's superhighways, preventing info to go into "the understood"
artists have opportunity to "deeply pursue an obsession and find an invested audience"
→ "Post-post-fordism"
↳ "info. after dispersion"

POLITICS AND PEDAGOGY

↓
loosen information's grip on art

→ towards smaller & more isolated networks