

Explorative Research and Praxis

Creative Experimentation

For creative experimentation it is necessary to challenge our habitual ways of thinking.

Introduction

To truly think creatively it is necessary to embark on a journey where we leave behind everything that is familiar to us behind.

Why?

Creative Experimentation is an opportunity to discover new research methodologies and practices.

It allows for the acquisition of experiential as well as cognitive knowledge.

This is knowledge gained through experience and observation, as opposed to just the mental process of just thinking to acquire knowledge.

The results

Creative experimentation is undertaken in order to promote discovery. It is designed to widen creative potential, to generate dialogues across critical practices, and to explore and test the range of research methods available to practitioners in the visual arts, independent of individual creative practice.

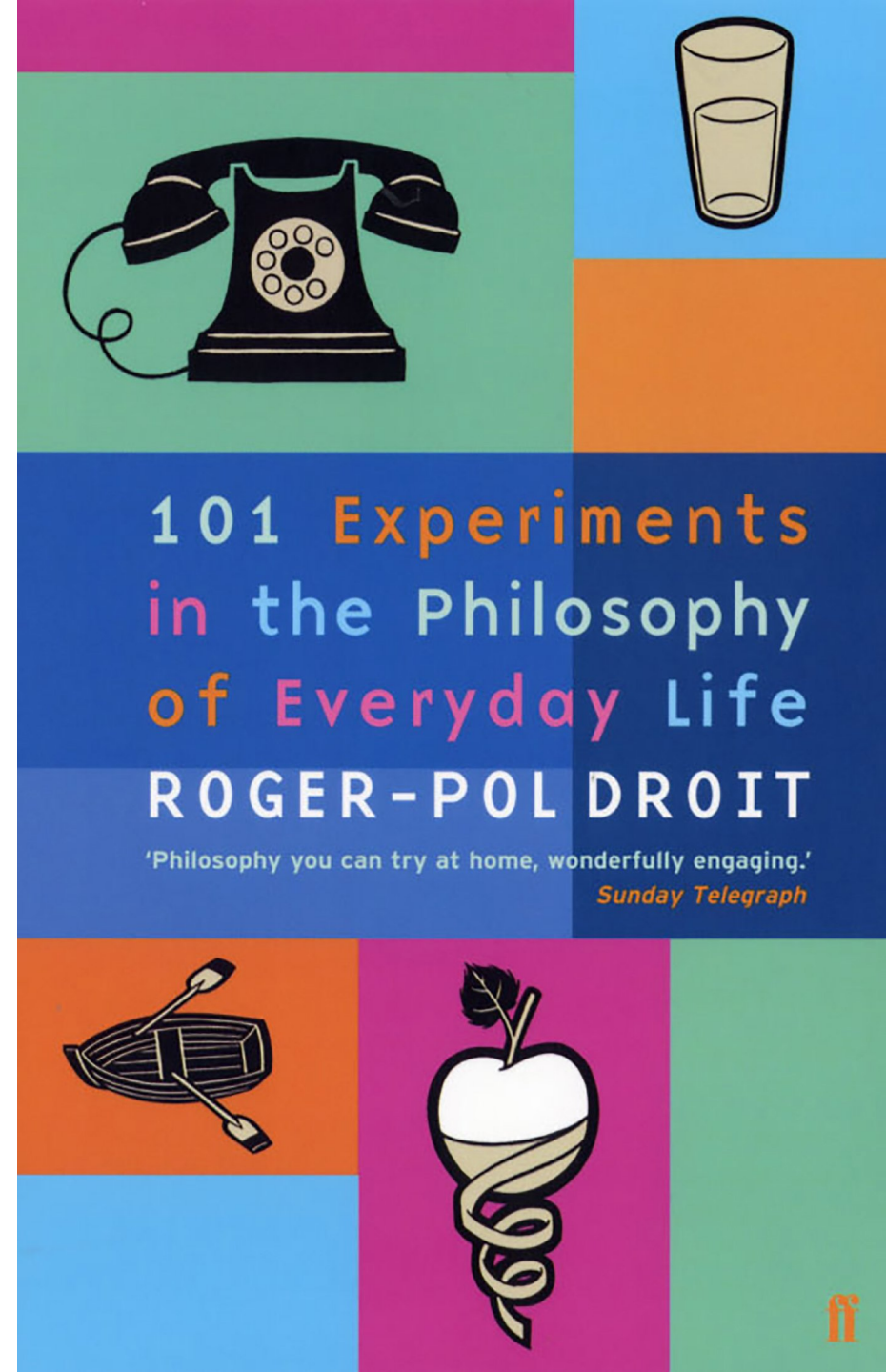
Research methodology is integral to postgraduate study.

- Descriptive — survey, historical, content analysis, qualitative (ethnographic, narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, and case study)
- Associational — correlational, causal-comparative.
- Intervention — experimental, quasi-experimental, action research.

A useful creative challenge

Roger-Pol Droit's (2002) illuminating book *101 Experiments in the Philosophy of Everyday Life* is a short, esoteric, yet instructive collection of experiments for your own personal investigation.

It provides philosophical challenges as a springboard for creativity.



Creative not scientific

As Droit (2002: ix-x) states “The idea is to provoke tiny moments of awareness. Invent things to do, to say, to dream, that produce astonishment or the unease generated by certain questions. It’s about fabricating microscopic starter devices, minimal impulses. Playing on the level of objects.”

Introduction

Everyday adventures

‘But you must really apply yourself if you are to feel the unsettling of reality that they seek to produce. For that has always been the end in view, since philosophy began: a systematic discrepancy, a step to one side, a change of viewpoint – perhaps a very slight one to begin with – which can reveal the landscape under quite a different angle.’

Droit (2002: ix-x)

‘If the entertainment proves useful, it’s because it offers such points of departure. Deliberately strange. Even crazy, if need be. But intended always to shake a certainty we had taken for granted: our own identity, say, or the stability of the outside world, or even the meaning of words. What happens afterwards will be different for each individual. Different conclusions will be reached. And so much the better. It is enough that the journey has been started.’

Droit (2002: ix-x)

The aim

Creative experimentation is useful in all areas of study.

By breaking the dependency of the student on the tried and tested ways of working brought with them from undergraduate study, or past experience, creative experimentation allows the student to look at everyday life through new eyes or a different lens, and to take an imaginative leap into the void.



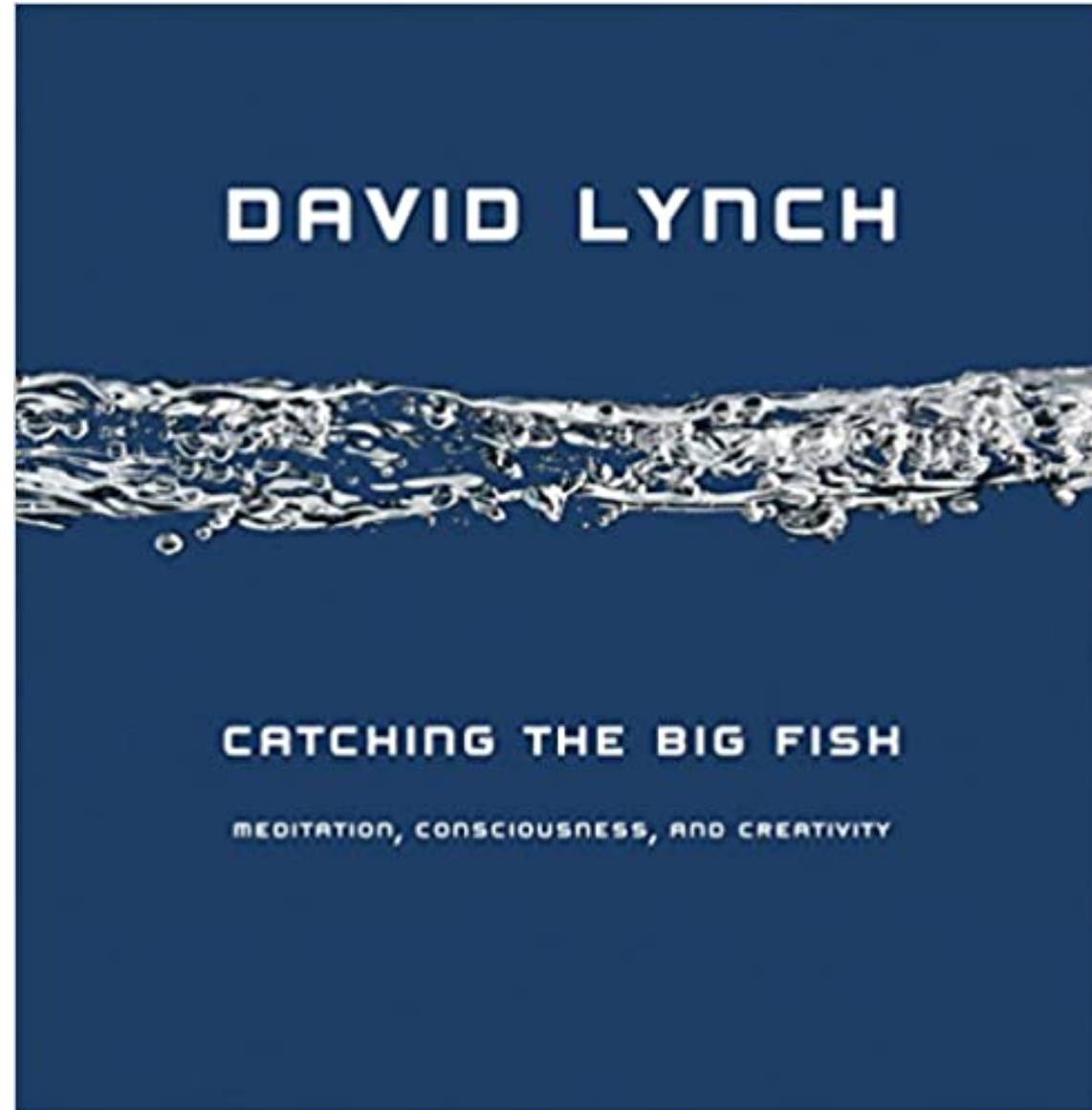
Yves Klein

Leap into the Void. 1960.

Gelatin silver print.

Photographed by Harry Shunk and Jean Kender

25.9 x 20 cm | 10 3/16 x 7 7/8 inch



Lynch, D. (2006)
*Catching the Big Fish:
Meditation, Consciousness
and Creativity.*
New York: Penguin.

INTRODUCTION

Ideas are like fish.

If you want to catch little fish, you can stay in the shallow water. But if you want to catch the big fish, you've got to go deeper.

Down deep, the fish are more powerful and more pure. They're huge and abstract. And they're very beautiful.

I look for a certain kind of fish that is important to me, one that can translate to cinema. But there are all kinds of fish swimming down there. There are fish for business, fish for sports. There are fish for everything.

Everything, anything that is a thing, comes up from the deepest level. Modern physics calls that level the Unified Field. The more your consciousness—your awareness—is expanded, the deeper you go toward this source, and the bigger the fish you can catch.

Lynch references the 'unified field'.

This is often referred to as the 'Theory of Everything':

'the long-sought means of tying together all known phenomena to explain the nature and behaviour of all matter and energy in existence.'

'A unified field theory would reconcile seemingly incompatible aspects of various field theories [e.g. gravity, electricity, etc.] to create a single comprehensive set of equations. Such a theory could potentially unlock all the secrets of nature and make a myriad of wonders possible, including such benefits as time travel and an inexhaustible source of clean energy, among many others.'

(Rouse, 2005)

In essence the theory is important as a potential possibility.

The power of imagination

Philosopher Emmanuel Kant considers the imagination as an omnipresent faculty that contributes to all aspects of our lives that operates on empirical (experienced) and transcendental (presupposed) levels.

‘The imagination (as a productive cognitive faculty) is, namely, very powerful in creating, as it were, another nature, out of the material which the real one gives it’

Emmanuel Kant (1724-1804)

It seems we make things up as we go along. However, this can be problematic.



The Guardian
Points of View TVC
1986
28 secs.

This 1986 Guardian TV commercial '*Points of View*', relies on our suppositions around intention, impression, implication, observation, experience, bias, perspective, evaluation, context, sociology and culture.

The writer Frank Budes and director Paul Weiland exploit this human tendency to make a powerful point.

It is for this reason we need to beware of habitual thinking.

Philosophy helps us question what we know

‘Philosophy offers you a chance to explore fundamental questions and to see what thinkers in different periods have had to say about them. This in itself is valuable, because it frees you from being limited by the unquestioned assumptions of those around you.’

(Thompson, 2003)

The willingness and ability to think differently, experimentally, courageously and uniquely, has been the foundation of many thought-provoking artefacts, artworks objects and concepts by artists, designers, filmmakers, photographers, image makers, writers and musicians.

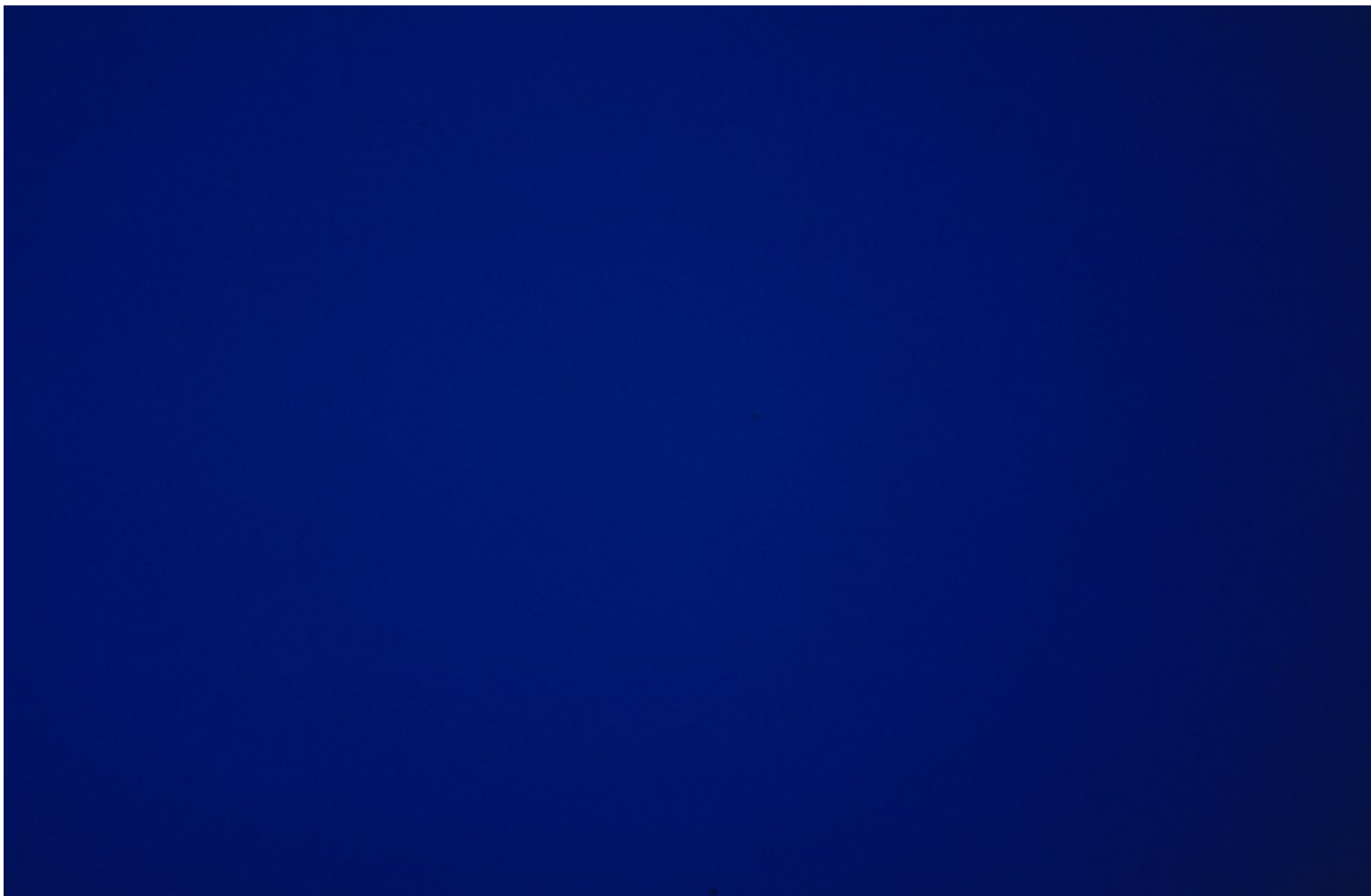
Here are some examples ...

Derek Jarman (1942 – 1994)

In 1993 filmmaker and artist Derek Jarman completed *Blue*, four months prior to his death from AIDS related complications. A narration and soundtrack make up the 79 minute film which displays a static blue screen throughout.

Originally conceived as a film about Yves Klein paintings and underlying philosophies, it became 'the admirable austerity of the void' (Jarman and Sutherland quoted in Peake 1999, p.477).

'to produce an atmosphere of calm and joy. A world to which refugees from that dark space may journey.' (Derek Jarman, 'proposal for *Blue*', August 1987, quoted in Peake 1999, p.398.)



Derek Jarman
Blue 1993
79 mins.

Suffering from partial blindness caused by the disease, the film is an audible and transfixing evocation of Jarman's day-to-day life. A daring and brave statement that not only challenges cinematic expression at its' core, but encapsulates an artistic expression founded on authentic experience.

‘... by fleeing what the film calls "the pandemonium of the image" Blue raises questions of visibility and invisibility, of sound and vision, which are central not only to AIDS and homosexuality, but to cinema itself ... Switching between politics and metaphysics, Blue serves as a vital link between activism and abstraction. With his cinema of love, his cinema of limits, Jarman's triumph is to have projected this vision with uncompromising clarity and brilliance.'"

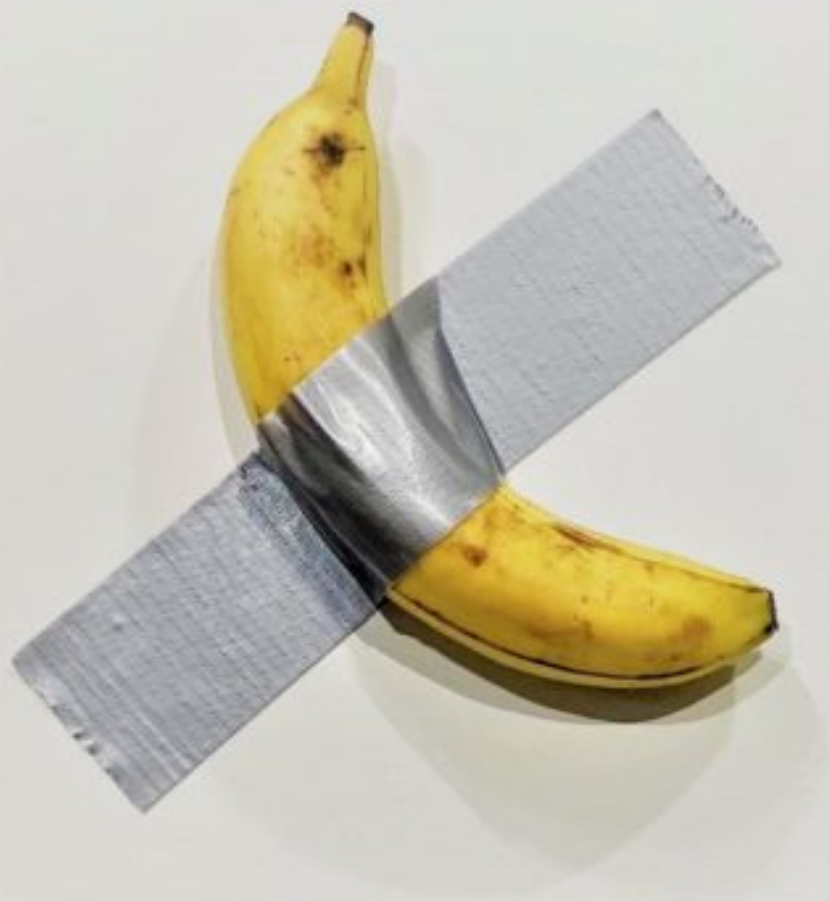
(Smith, 2019)

Maurizio Cattelan (born 1960)

Provocative, humorous, defiant and sometimes morbid, his gestures, materials and objects that make up his artworks defy art and its' institutions by continually challenging the nature and value of the art itself.

Hitler, a suicidal squirrel, JFK, Pope John Paul II, pigeons, horses, have all featured in his artworks. His transformations have been observed as a contemporary expression of Marcel Duchamp's subversive practice.

“My aim is to be as open and as incomprehensible as possible,”

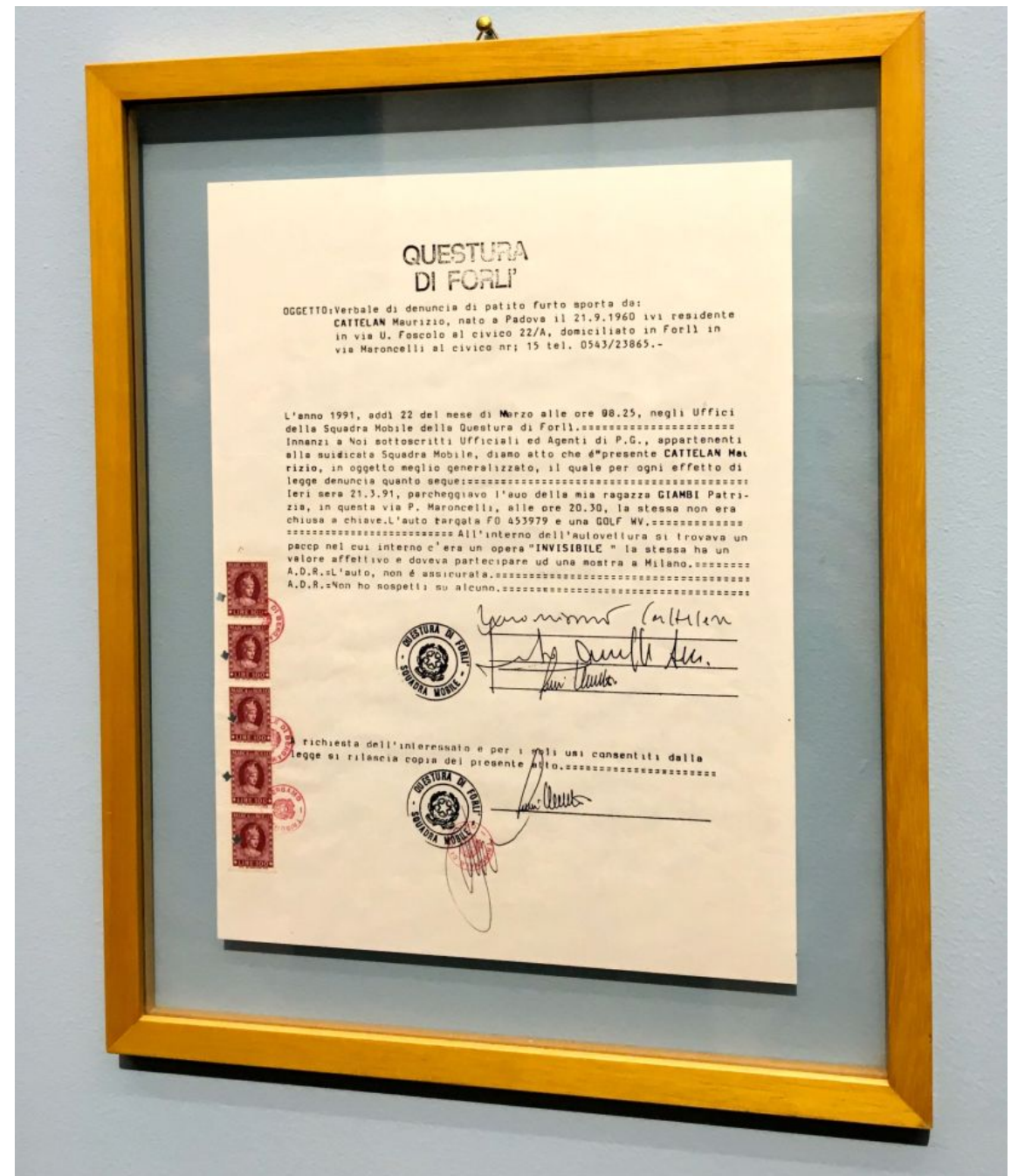


Maurizio Cattelan
Comedian 2019
Banana, duct tape.



Maurizio Cattelan
America 2016
18-karat gold.

Maurizio Cattelan
Untitled, 1991
Police report of stolen invisible artwork
29.2 x 21 cm | 11 x 8 1/4 inch



Home > Culture > Music > Artists

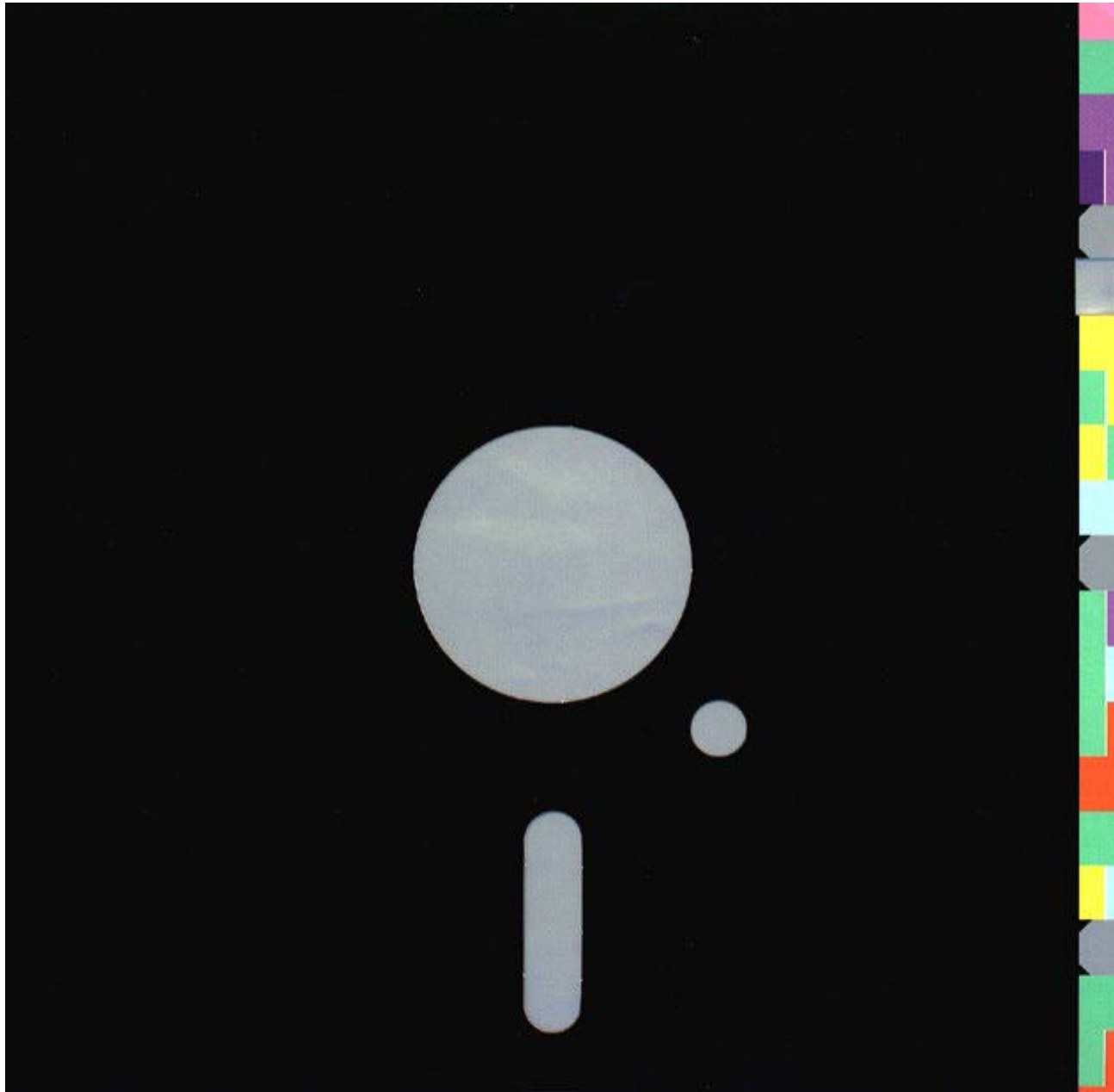
Blue Monday: how the New Order hit 'broke every single law' of record sleeve design – and changed music forever



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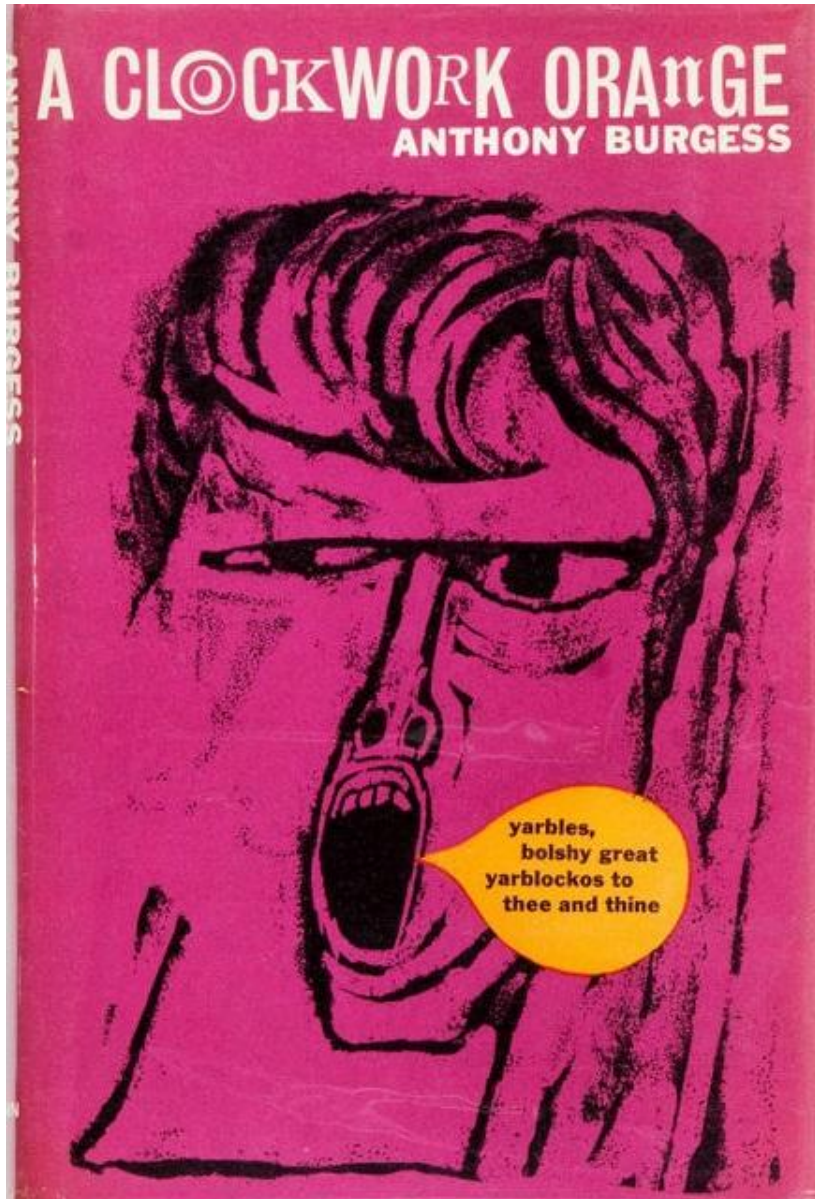
'No-one expected it to sell': New Order, the band behind Blue Monday



Peter Saville
New Order, Blue Monday, 1983
12" Vinyl Cover artwork
30 x 30 cm | 12 x 12 inch



Anthony Burgess (1917 – 1993)



Nadsat

A Clockwork Orange by Anthony Burgess is a milestone of literary, musical and visual culture. It is concerned with the individuals' relationship with the state. Crime, punishment, redemption and determinism are central themes and amongst many things it is the linguistic content that makes it memorable and remarkable. The central protagonist, Alex, communicates through Nadsat - a vernacular argot. Burgess partly created it to future proof his novel by using a timeless linguistic approach that could not be identified as coming from a particular era. The novel is written in a retrospective, first person, subjective narrative.

The novel begins in the Korova Milkbar, Alex tells us:

‘They had no license for selling liquor, yet there was no law yet against prodding some of the new veshches which they used to put into the old moloko, so you could peet it with vellocet or sythemesc or drenchrom or one or two other veshches which would give you a nice quiet horrorshow fifteen minutes admiring Bog And All His Holy Angels And Saints in your left shoe with lights bursting all over your mozg. Or you could peet milk with knives in it, as we used to say, and this would sharpen you up and make you ready for a bit of dirty twenty-to-one, and that was what we were peeting this evening I’m starting of the story with.’

(Burgess, 1962)

The language of *A Clockwork Orange*

‘In a letter to Heinemann, the first publishers of *A Clockwork Orange*, Burgess claimed that “it will take the reader no more than fifteen pages to master and revel in the expressive language of ‘Nadsat’” (Biswell, personal communication, 2016). It is clear Nadsat was designed to be intelligible to a reader within a short period of encountering it without the need for further help. Burgess (1972, 1990) also said that his intention was for the reader to be in some sense ‘brainwashed’ in this process of acquiring the Russian elements of Nadsat.

(Vincent et al, 2017)

Burgess' work highlights the uncertainty and suggestibility of language, and how quickly our terms or reference can be adopted, modified, influenced or skewered. It highlights the fragility of language.

This in turn should inspire us to question logic in the face of true creativity.

To be creative it helps to challenge the logical, and follow your intuition.

There often is no right answer

‘What then is truth? A movable host of metaphors, metonymies, and; anthropomorphisms: in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, and embellished, and which, after long usage, seem to a people to be fixed, canonical, and binding. Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions - they are metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force, coins which have lost their embossing and are now considered as metal and no longer as coins.’

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 – 1900)

From 1873 essay: *On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense*.

Be comfortable with your own ideas.

Roger-Pol Droit's (2002) illuminating book *101 Experiments in the Philosophy of Everyday Life* concludes:

‘Where are you headed? – Wherever you get to!’

(2002: ix-x)

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Next lecture:

Western Typography