afleggen. Hij wil zijn tafel schrijven met wat natuurlijk tot hem komt (het ding buiten het woord om en het woord buiten zijn gangbare betekenis om). Een tekst die net als de tafel pas zijn matte toonloze geluid laat horen als je er krachtig op klopt.

De door mij geselecteerde en vertaalde fragmenten geven een indruk van zijn thematiek en schrijfwijze. De nu volgende oefening De Laptop zou ook een oefening kunnen worden genoemd in Ponge worden.

De Laptop

Om tafel te worden voor de laptop hoef je alleen te gaan zitten. Toch staat hij meestal op tafel. Alleen in de trein zie je hem wel bij mannen of vrouwen op schoot, hun knieën bij elkaar.

(Anders dan hoe ik mij mijn moeder herinner: in de keuken, de knieën uit elkaar, de aardappels, bonen, peulen op schoot (slip), de vingers onophoudelijk in beweging bij het schillen (schellen), toppen (rengen), doppen (polen).

Ik zit aan de tafel. Niet schrijlings maar rechtop, eerder als een kind in de school-bank, handen boven de tafel, klaar voor de les. De laptop staat voor me, loodgrijs, het deksel gesloten. Als ik het open doe kan ik me er niet achter verschuilen.

(Zoals achter de geopende klep van de lessenaar van de schoolbank, ik herinner me de namen en de vieze woorden met een scherp voorwerp in het hout gekrast).

Mijn laptop komt zelden het huis uit. Hij komt niet naar me toe om op schoot te springen. Als ik hem verplaats draag ik hem niet met twee handen voor me uit. Ik neem hem onder de arm als een map of een ordner.

Maar ik open hem niet als een ordner. (Niet zoals Storm in Debiteuren Crediteuren:

wijdbeens, het lichaam voor-over, heen en weer zwaaiend, de rechterhand onder de rug van de ordner, de linker driftig bladerend).
Ook niet als de employee die zijn diplomatenkoffer voor zich op tafel zet en het opent met een dubbel pistoolschot.

Als ik hem open (open breek, hij biedt weerstand) moet ik het deksel in de juist stand zetten, schuin, in een hoek van ongeveer 135 graden met het horizontale vlak.
  Alleen dan laat hij zien wat ik schrijf (typ), tegen een loodgrijze lucht. Meer naar voren of naar achteren veran-dert het scherm in een donker vlak. Mat spiegelend.

Ik zet hem voor me op tafel en open hem als een schrift dat een kwartslag is gedraaid. De linkerpagina wordt scherm, de rechterpagina toetsenbord.
  Ik breek hem open en hij breekt wat me het meest eigen is, mijn handschrift.

Tastzin/schrijfzin. Van belang is ze in de juiste hoek te breken. Ik zie hoe mijn vinger-toppen op de tast de letters vinden. Feilloos meestal, als er fouten worden gemaakt zijn het vaak dezelfde. Artes in plaats van Arets.

Onbeschroomd leg ik mijn hoofd in de wijdopen bek. De afdruk van (in) mijn rechterwang: Fgvt cdy5ry.

De tafel deelt me in tweeën: de benen onzichtbaar onder de tafel, de handen boven de tafel, de klep gesloten, het schrijfgerei op tafel. De wet, de regels, de les, de som, het dictee, dalen neer in mijn schrift.
  Ze zijn het voedsel voor mijn routines. Binnenin roepen de onfatsoenlijke woorden: 'Doe open'.
  (Zoals bij Nathalie Sarraute, die over haar laatste boek Ouvrez ('Doe open', 1997) zei: 'Ik wilde vorm geven aan een spel tussen fatsoenlijke,

gangbare woorden en woorden die onbehoorlijk, ongepast zijn. Deze twee groepen worden van elkaar gescheiden door een doorzichtige wand. Die wand symboliseert de barrière die er is wanneer je tegen een vreemde spreekt. Je zegt dan immers niet zomaar alles wat in je opkomt. De onbehoorlijke woorden willen achter die wand vandaan, ze roepen voortdurend "Doe open!", maar de deur blijft dicht'.).

Mijn atelier: op de tast dwaal ik er in rond, ik moet er op de tast in ronddwalen om van de muur (het deksel, de lessenaar) een raam te maken. Schuin.

The Oxford Dictionary
    t o p : to assume a slanting position

Ik zie het spel van mijn

    routines/gedachten
    (tasten/lezen)
    (fatsoenlijke/onfatsoenlijke woorden)

Het geluid waarmee het deksel zich sluit. Sympathiek. Een gedempte klap.
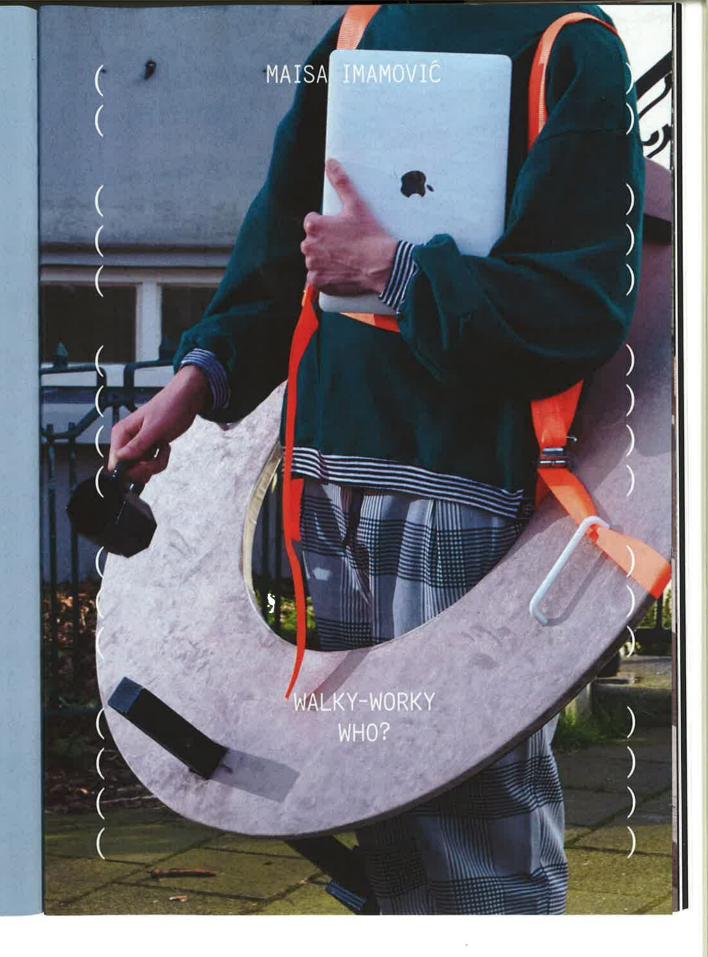
The Oxford Dictionary
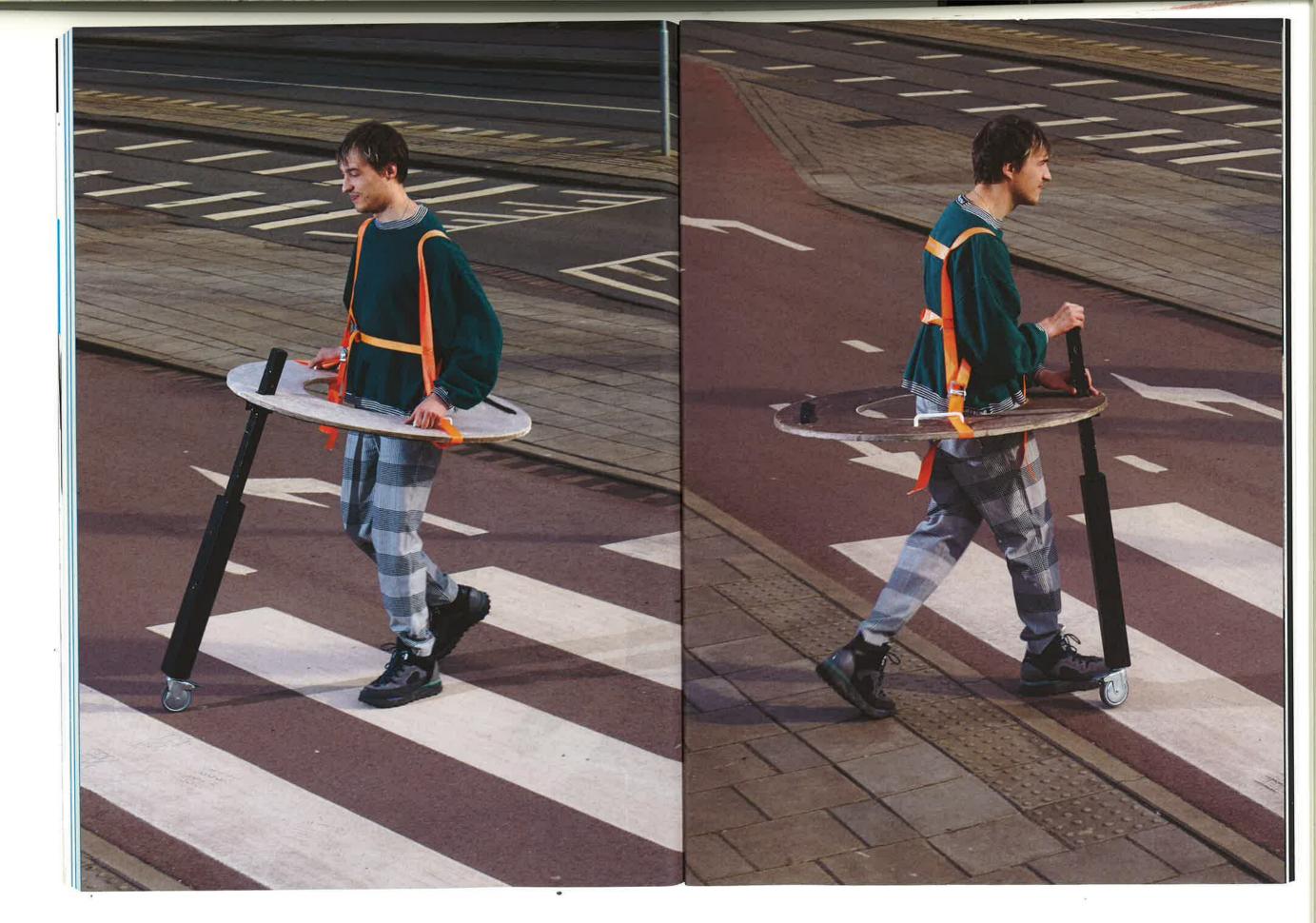   l a p : 1. klap, slag;
    2. uitroep ter nabootsing van
    het geluid door een klap veroorzaakt

Als platte loodgrijze doos onder mijn arm heeft hij een zekere zwaarte.

* Francis Ponge, La Table. Présentée par Jean Thibaudeau, Paris (Gallimard), 1991.

De Tafel en de laptop is eerder gepubliceerd in Gebaren, Ton Verstegen, Artez-press, 2009

MAISA IMAMOVIĆ

WALKY-WORKY
WHO?

We find ourselves in a studio called Maisa Imamović. It's a legit studio, which surely has a KvK number and an address registered to it. We are here to talk. The reason why we chose this location specifically, is because Walky-Worky grew into these walls of the studio the moment it decided to become an adult. Before launching the conversation, it's useful to mention that, as some of you may know, Walky-Worky was idealized in 2018 in an educational institution; in a Graduation Situation. This fact shall serve as a base and a wrapper of the context, as well as the idea's evolution into its current shape. I, Maisa Imamović, am interviewing myself, also Maisa Imamović, with an aim to revive the semi(forgotten) subject of Walky-Worky. I am very happy to have myself in the studio and get a chance to talk to myself on this matter. We don't have so much time, so let's begin.

[Characters: Maisa is the interviewer and Maisa is the victim of both, the interviewer and the interview]

    Maisa: Nice of you to join us. We have gathered here to discuss your graduation project called Walky-Worky. All we know about it is that it was being materialized into a 'legit' work during the final year of your studies. Would you be so kind to briefly tell us what Walky-Worky is?

Maisa: I have an automatic learned-by-heart reply to that question, which I often practised during, and, for my discussions with the educational authorities. For this occasion, however, I'd like to discard the automation of my reply, and explain the idea with my blunt guts. Walky-Worky's first shape was a joke, which I took very seriously. It was sparked by several amazing discussions about classic graduation topics on labour, leisure, exhaustion, burnout, post-graduate anxieties awaiting, and whatnot. Walky-Worky's next shape was a prototype of a working table with a very specific function: to distract the worker (which I called a user, and to which I will switch), from working. It's a very brief definition, which, unfortunately, doesn't exist in UrbanDictionary, so let me take the responsibility to elaborate further. Walky-Worky imitated the production process of a professional product, but not with means to make its users happy - a scenario we usually see happen on the market. The reason for this was to track what happens when the consumer's expectations are not met, and to, somehow, bring about more awareness around current level of consumer's dependability on the marketing language shaped around the product which guides us into buying the product. Walky-Worky also had a strong promotional language to charm the user, but its function was not true to its representation. By this, we can say that Walky-Worky did not aim to

become a desirable product which would increase a continuous public demand for it, but rather wanted to destroy its potential growth to become desirable. Therefore, it always wanted to be a sample product. It was inspired by the context of graduating itself, meaning that, as an observer, I felt that too much aesthetic effort was being put for the graduation event. The event's success is marked by making year-long ideas presentable, therefore what is presentable already has a standard. Creating according to this standard is what students experience throughout the year and before the happening of the event. I found it problematic and limiting to the potential of great ideas produced during the studies. So, as an observer, and a disagreer of an aesthetic form only and without the beauty of its depth, I decided to make a tool which would slow down the production of such projects. I literally wanted to make students' work harder before graduation. I invented Walky-Worky and offered it to graduating (and not only) students, who I wanted to be the main users of the table. I called this gesture of experience-offering, research.

Maisa: Ok wow, that's a lot of information to digest. It looks like we have to stir things a bit here. Why did you want to distract the workers/users/students from working?

Maisa: First thing I need to make clear is that I didn't want them to not work aka graduate at all. As a graduating student myself, I felt like there was a lot of 'injustice' happening in the criteria management. Of course, the year is meant to be painful by default,

and perhaps even designed to be such. So, I thought, let's not make this too heavy and proceed towards a solution. In order to make it pleasant for myself and presentable for the authorities, I should design a tool (fits the criteria of an expected architectural work), which has this activist function applied to it. In this way, I'd feel like I'm putting a smile on all our faces: myself, other students, and the authorities. So, during that year, I lived in a reality in which Walky-Worky is super available on the market, everybody wants it (aha), and it's getting ever better. A lot of paradoxical terms (design, algorithmic expectations, users…) strengthened my story during its growing articulation, and made it sound convincing. The consumers were listening.

Maisa: So, when you say that you were following the standards of the market, do you mean in terms of production and rates?

Maisa: Absolutely not. Nothing about the product was legit besides its idea. I strongly believed in it. The production itself was cheap, ACTION kind of style. The main goal for the product was to have pleasant aesthetics and visually attract the consumer. That's why I decided that Walky-Worky will be a working table which one must enter and wear, almost like a garment with which you choose to define your public image on a daily basis. Poetically speaking, if you are what you wear then you are the kind of person whose first thing to do in the morning is to want to distract yourself from work, until eventually, you don't want to work anymore. This also applies that work is the main part of our daily reality.

So, Walky-Worky was an outfit too. This possibility to wear the table was illustrated during the graduation show. The table was hung on an archaic clothing rack and all hangers were customized according to its shape. Poetically and more specifically speaking again: the first thing you want to do in the morning is to want to distract yourself from the work which you don't want to do until you decide that you don't want to do it anymore.

Of course, this doesn't technically work that simple for everyone. But I like to think that it can be that simple and that this 'mathematical' solution of Walky-Worky's dictational design should make life dreams come true. Also in my head, everybody's life dream is to not work.

I see that the audience is getting confused a bit, so maybe you'd like to ask me to elaborate on this negation of work which I keep talking about.

Maisa: Yes, you're confusing them indeed. So, why not work?

Maisa: Thank you very much for asking that. I have entered a lot of unpleasant discussions because of this, and the answer is getting clearer for me too. What I mean is that we should have educational institutions providing and teaching more agency to say: if I don't want my work to be produced only for the means of contributing to a spectacular graduation show, then I should have the right to not contribute. If I feel like my process of art-making is sped up by an event I more or less don't care about, I should be granted the right to produce with my own rhythm, unaffected by organizational turmoil and in close compromise with the authorities.

Art producing is an extremely vulnerable process to be involved with and it should not be defined by the limitations of an institution, especially educational institutions. Works that come out of such acceleration later enter the market and shape the monotony of artistic expression. We are expected to become predictable artists who make no presentable mistakes during the process, unless of course, it's part of our artistic statement.

Please don't ask me to elaborate further on institutional issues and if participation is necessary. I don't want to get all heated up with the fire which will burn the celebration of Wakly-Worky's existence.

Maisa: You knew we were going there, didn't you? But ok, I agree, we don't want our audience to leave thinking: "What was all that about?"

Maisa: Yes please, not today.

Maisa: Let's continue celebrating Walky-Worky. Earlier, you mentioned that the project was also a research of some sort. I'm curious about the reactions of brave users who accepted the challenge and if there is any concluding analysis according to collected material?

Maisa: Well, I definitely convinced them to wear it. That was already an accomplishment. I promoted it with a little lie. I told them that the table is meant to improve their work efficiency, because it's round and they can invite other devices on it. They can travel places altogether. And it was all of that, but clumsily. As mentioned earlier, I worked a lot on the

aesthetics of the product, so that it hides the product's clumsy function. The velvet surface successfully distracted the users from its dysfunction and charmed them to touch it. But, once they had an average of a 1h long experience with it, they complained that the product was not meeting their expectations. I loved it. It was a success! I got a lot of remarks on how to improve the product so that it eventually becomes functional. I discarded all those advises and decided that the dysfunctionality should be radicalized. You can finish the rest of your story yourself.

Maisa: Actually, I'd like you to finish it. It's clear that the product was not meant to be a legit product but, like you said, a sample. Although it was successful in not meeting the user's expectations, the sample didn't succeed in its seriousness of being a sample. You didn't actually offer it as a sample which might be followed by its production line. Instead, you wanted it to collect a more serious material, which was the user's reaction. When looking at Walky-Worky from far away, and not just its physicality, but also the process of how it was delivered to this world, how would you classify it?

Maisa: You are right, in most of what it promoted itself to be, it was a scam. The whole process to me, seems like an on-going attempt to give a visual shape to a critique of everyday life in an educational content and within a duration of one year. I could have finalized it more seriously, could have given it the just form: textual, performative, or other predictable media where critique belongs. But I wanted to break that expectation too.

I wanted to get close to the responsibility of having to act within these margins, but responsibly choose not to choose an expected medium of expression. That's why there's many extensions of Walky-Worky which shape its representation: product, text, video, prints, charisma. Is this art? I think in the end, it's a very complicated story.

Maisa: That's kind of cute. I totally empathize with the necessity to not dwell in the imposed restrictions and trust the fragmented reality where spontaneity can still exist. How do you feel about the product now?

Maisa: I still love it. I think the concept behind it is amazing, but the product itself... You'd have to be a really patient learner to get involved with it. The authorities told me that I'm a great designer and that I should really focus on my design career. I sure'd do that, but also walked away from the advice. I think it's good that I didn't continue designing the physical. I don't think I'd engage myself in designing something similar to Walky-Worky again, unless it's for a good story (written or told).

Maisa: What's the current shape of the Walky-Worky?

Maisa: Walky-Worky continues to exist in its documentation, just like most art projects.

(UIT EIGEN ARCHIEF

Een doorlopende serie van foto's uit de archieven van vijf fotografen. Dit keer rond het thema De Werkkamer.

(Daria Scagliola/Stijn Brakkee) (Jeroen Musch)
(Kim Zwarts) (Luuk Kramer)
(Bas Princen)