

Current Issue
Cabinet No. 57 | Catastrophe including
 Stassa Edwards
 Adam Morris
 Sasha Archibald
 Matthew Spellberg
Anson Rabinbach
 Maria Golia
 and more

<> January 2016 >>
 M T W T F S S
 1 2 3
 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

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Events & News

Book Launch, Talk, and Performance: "The Ancient Phonograph," with Shane Butler and Joseph Keckler (21 January, 7-9 pm).

News: Copies of *The Conflict Shoreline*, a new book by Cabinet editor-at-large Eyal Weizman, with photographs by Fazal Sheikh, available through our shop.

News: Fundraiser editions by Vik Muniz and Terry Winters available.

News: Second edition of *Curiosity and Method: Ten Years of Cabinet Magazine*, almost sold out.

News: *Spaghetti Junction* is now available. Ernst Falzeder's chart depicts who analyzed whom, mapping the history of psychoanalysis in the twentieth century.

Contact Us

Directions to our event space

How to send us mail

Out of Site

This Truck Makes Wide Right Turns

"An incomplete look at the role of variation in capitalist society." Or...a big collection of those signs on the right rear bumpers of big trucks.

Aviation Museums
 A whole summer vacation's worth of virtual tours, all gathered together in one handy site. Check out the Aviation Armaments Museum.

The Origins of Modernity
 Reproduced plates from classic books—check out the Francis Bacon.

Hollywood Babylon
 The Kenneth Anger tour of Los Angeles

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The Meaningful Disappearance of Germaine Greer

CARMEN WINANT

One great thing about the feminist revolution of the 1960s and 1970s was its ability to make a scene.

Take the unforgettable "Dialogue on Women's Liberation," a panel that took place in New York City in 1971 in which four female delegates were tapped to speak in discussion moderated by Norman Mailer, who had just published the decidedly un-feminist *The Prisoner of Sex*. Billed as a dialogue, the result—documented in filmmaker D. A. Pennebaker's *Town Bloody Hall*—more closely resembled a riot. The teeming crowd became unruly even before the event had started, with one heckler yelling out above the din, "Women's lib betrays the poor! Norman Mailer betrays the poor!" The audience, which included Betty Friedan and a soft-spoken Susan Sontag, came to hear about the burgeoning revolution. They came to see Mailer publicly attack, and be attacked by, the women's liberators about the politics of sex. But most of all, they came to see Germaine Greer.

MORE



Episodes in the Life of Bounce

CARLIN WING

1.
 All cultures engage in some form of ball play. Ball games are a basic way for us to hone what computational neuroscientist Beau Cronin calls "the quotidian spatiotemporal genius of the human brain," and over the past two hundred years, they have come to dominate the popular imagination, with huge swaths of airtime and large volumes of ink given over to the dramas of soccer, basketball, baseball, American football, tennis, golf, rugby, cricket—the list goes on.¹ All ball sports are aleatoric structures organized, to greater or lesser degrees, around bounce. Aleatoric structures—structures of planned chance—produce a reliable kind of uncertainty. We don't know who will win and who will lose, but we know that at the end of the day, there will be a winner and a loser. A ball introduces a second, more uncertain, kind of uncertainty into the fray. Its bounce dances along the edge of our predictive capacity, always almost but never fully under control. At least in the Anglophone world, this second kind of chance—the chance of the ball—seems to be especially important to our contemporary understanding of play.² While other kinds of contests are raced, run, rowed, and swum; wrestled, fenced, fought, and boxed; timed, weighed, measured, and judged; ball games are *played*. And only an athlete who contends with balls (or pucks, or shuttlecocks, or other third objects) earns the title "player." We become players in and through bounce.

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Wings of Desire

DOMINIC PETTMAN

Over the past twenty years or so, Nikola Tesla has become a folk-hero for the millennial tech-generation, who consider him the godfather of all visionary scientific mavericks, and thus a key precursor to their own "disruptive" aspirations. But during the twilight years of his life, Tesla was a much more withdrawn shadow of his former dynamic self, when he had been equal parts inventor and showman. At the end of the nineteenth century, during the battle for standardized electrical currents, Tesla found that his alternating current (AC) model put him in direct competition with his former boss, Thomas Edison, who favored direct current. Despite the fact that AC systems eventually emerged the winner, Edison's standing continued to rise while Tesla was relegated to a footnote in history books, at least until the resuscitation of his reputation toward the end of the last century.

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The Bonds of Catastrophe

D. GRAHAM BURNETT

It is perhaps not widely understood (outside the specialized domains of risk modeling and property insurance) that the last twenty years have seen the relatively rapid growth of a new kind of financial instrument: the catastrophe bond. I aim in what follows to offer the reader a brief introduction to these innovative money-things, which sit at the precarious nexus of mathematical modeling, environmental instability, and vast sums of capital. Techno-legal creations of considerable complexity (and some genuine elegance), "cat bonds" circulate in the Olympian air of global high finance, where they afford investors an opportunity to place large bets on the occurrence (and non-occurrence) of various mass disasters: earthquakes, hurricanes, plagues, suitcase nukes. The lengthy, turgid, and highly confidential specifications that make up the prospectuses of these investments might be said to represent a special and entirely overlooked subgenre of science fiction: what we discover, turning the pages of such deals, are fanatically extensive metrical descriptions of countless doomsday scenarios, each story told in lovingly legalistic and scientific detail. Unlike most dystopian fantasizing, however, the worst-case scenarios played out in the appendices of cat bond issues come with very real-world prospective paydays, precisely priced and proper to the consideration of an imaginative portfolio manager looking to diversify her investments.

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Buster Keaton's Cure

CHARLIE FOX

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have really something of great interest to the public!" The former vaudevillian Ed Wynn is providing the introductory patter to a segment in an episode of his eponymous comedy show, broadcast live in primetime on 9 December 1949. Wynn, who would later voice the Mad Hatter in Disney's adaptation of *Alice In Wonderland* (1951), is a jolly host: he looks like a horned owl in a clown costume, plump and bespectacled with a rubbery excitement to his expressions that suggests he's already half-cartoon. His speech has an avuncular warmth, tumbling with a ringmaster's glee through his slightly pinched sinuses. The other treats on the show have included a special guest appearance from the famously deadpan actress Virginia O'Brien, nicknamed "Miss Ice Glacier," who sang "Bird in a Gilded Cage," and blubbery Ed's attempt to dance a ballet overture. The curtains behind Wynn that hide the set from the audience are fuzzy, gray, and monstrously thick, looking like nothing so much as a carefully graded spectrum of various sorts of domestic dust; the studio has the acoustics of a damp attic. Wynn tells the audience that they are about to have "the great privilege in seeing for the first time, certainly on television, and alive, *almost!*"—an odd thing to say, don't you think?—"one of the greatest of the great comedians of the silent moving-picture days. Mr. Buster Keaton!"

MORE



For the Simple Reason Is

BRIAN DILLON

It is getting on toward autumn, and this is what she must do with her day. Up early, switch off the alarm, unbolt the doors, and out into the garden in slippers, dressing gown, overcoat. Low sun on her flat dusty curls as she passes along the back of the house, and against the windows, which are shuttered still inside, behind the net curtains. The birds mad at this hour. Starlings. The young ones from the spring, reared and grown, little hooligans now. She has got a bag of seed out of the shed. From here the feeder looks like a small, startled red man, hung from that second stretch of clothesline she had one of the boys put up this time last year. It's empty now, the feeder, light and swinging in the breeze.

MORE

All books published by Cabinet Books unless otherwise noted. Click on each title for more information.

The Conflict Shoreline: Colonization as Climate Change in the Negev Desert (2015)

This book, with text by Israeli theorist Eyal Weizman and photographs by American artist Fazal Sheikh, investigates the long history of the use of climate change as a political tool along the threshold of the Negev Desert and its effect on the region's Bedouin population. *The Conflict Shoreline* brings together a wide array of materials, ranging from documents, maps, and contemporary photographs to historical aerial imagery, remote sensing data, state plans, court testimonies, and nineteenth-century travelers' accounts. Published by Sheikh in association with Cabinet Books.

Curiosity and Method: Ten Years of Cabinet Magazine (2012)

This anthology gathers some of the most interesting successes, and a few instructive failures, published in the first forty issues of Cabinet. Taking the form of an illustrated encyclopedia, the collection includes idiosyncratic entries such as Addiction, Animal Architecture, Goalkeeping, Micronation, Octopus, Sandal, Worlding, and Zoosemiotics. This hardcover book is over 500 pages long and a must for the intellectually curious!

The Moiré Effect, by Lytle Shaw (with Bookhorse, 2012)

The Moiré Effect tracks Ernst Moiré from his humble Alpine beginnings as the son of a postal clerk to his fateful founding of a Zurich photography studio in the 1890s and his subsequent role in the lives of a number of curious figures.

I Am Sitting in a Room, by Brian Dillon (2011)

The inaugural volume in Cabinet's new "24-Hour Book" series, Brian Dillon's book explores the scenography and architecture of writing itself. Inspired in part by Georges Perec's short fragment in *Species of Spaces* on Antonello da Messina's painting of St. Jerome in his study, Dillon's text is both a personal reflection on the theatics of the study, the library, and the office and a historical consideration of such writerly paraphernalia as Proust's bed, Nabokov's index cards, and Philip Roth's moustache.

An Exchange with Sol LeWitt, catalogue (2011)

Catalogue for the exhibition "An Exchange with Sol LeWitt," which took place at Cabinet and MASS MoCA in winter 2011. Featuring an introduction by curator Regine Basha, the book is printed in black and white on newsprint.

A Little Common Place Book (with Prototypes, 2010)

Part pocket-sized filing cabinet, part indexing guide, this hardcover notebook is a facsimile of a 1797 book that boasts an essay on the art of commonplacing as practiced by John Locke and 144 blank pages for collecting your own thoughts.

The Book of Stamps (2008)

Sumpuously designed and printed, this cloth-bound volume features fifteen detachable, perforated, and gummed full-page sheets of limited edition, artist-designed stamps, as well as an essay by George Pendle on the history of stamps made by artists.

Ilf and Petrov's American Road Trip (with Princeton Architectural Press, 2007)

In 1925, well into the era of Soviet Communism, Russian satirical writers Ilya Ilf and Evgeny Petrov came to the US as special correspondents for *Pravda*. Over the course of two months, they drove cross-country and back, recording their impressions of American life in text and photographs. This is the first English translation of their extraordinary travelogue.

Presidential Doodles (Basic Books, 2008)

An expansion of a project that first appeared in Cabinet no. 12, *Presidential Doodles* is a catalogue of some of the most delightful and terrifying doodles by US presidents. The book features essays by Paul Collins and David Greenberg.

Odd Lots: Revisiting Gordon Matta-Clark's Fake Estates (2005)

In the early 1970s, Gordon Matta-Clark discovered that the City of New York periodically auctioned off improbably tiny and frequently inaccessible parcels of land created by the exigencies of urban development. Fascinated by these eccentric spaces, he bought fifteen of them (fourteen in Queens, and one in Staten Island) for between \$25 and \$75 each, photographed them, and then collated the photographs with the associated deeds and maps. These collected materials are today known as *Fake Estates*. This book was published in association with an exhibition of the same name curated by Cabinet.

Letters from Mayhem, by Roger Anderson and Albert Mobilio (2004)

This sixty-four-page artist book features twenty-six duotones watercolors by Swedish artist Roger Anderson, each depicting one letter of the alphabet, accompanied by text by poet Albert Mobilio. The book is printed on heavy board in the style of a children's ABC primer. Each letter is embedded in a fairytale setting in which teenage boys lie around, occupying themselves with teenagey pursuits such as smoking pot and listening to heavy metal. Full of messages hidden within plants, ponds, and clouds, and tempered by soft-edged romantic decadence, the book evokes a nostalgia for both innocence and its loss.

The Paper Sculpture Book (with Independent Curators International and SculptureCenter, 2003)

Inspired by a project in Cabinet no. 4, this full-color book contains twenty-nine artist-designed paper sculptures to tear out and build yourself. An exhibition, featuring these same sculptures and created on site by visitors, toured to twenty venues in the US between 2003 and 2007.

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