

29 scripts of new experiences based on historical exhibitions of the past. Written by Sofia Hernandez Chong Cuy, Angie Keefer, John Menick and Robert Snowden. To be experienced under hypnosis or in one's favorite reading state.

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# Hypnotic Show

2011

7.  
You're on stage,  
kneeling, in a black  
dress

9.  
You smell treason. And  
as you walk closer to

11.  
You really shouldn't be  
here, you know. Your

13.  
You lie on your back in  
a clearing. Treetops

15.  
You enter an empty  
courtroom. Just to your

17.  
You arrive at the house  
you've been looking

19.  
You are wandering  
through an old house.  
After

20.  
You are walking down  
a crowded sidewalk

23.  
You are in a world of  
information, language

25.  
You are in a hotel,  
lying wide-awake  
in one

28.  
You are in a derelict  
wharf building.  
Rusting

29.  
You are abandoned in  
the Archaeological

30.  
What you are looking  
at is not a perfect

32.  
This square room is  
not quite a room, more

33.  
There's a whirling  
sound coming from the

35.  
There are many rooms  
here, and many

36.  
The pianist enters the  
room. David—

38.  
The moon is spread  
out below, its surface

40.  
The building is huge,  
painted white and

43.  
Some weeks ago,  
you spoke to a man  
camping

46.  
Some things you see  
you can never forget.

48.  
Soft pink walls. A  
dimly lit bathroom  
barely

50.  
Pedestrians, men,  
women, are milling,  
Through

51.  
On an escalator  
moving upward  
through a

53.  
Mommy took you to  
work today. It's your

55.  
It's dawn. The sky is  
pale. You tread across  
a layer

57.  
It's a mess. You can't  
see anything clearly.  
The

59.  
Beneath the horizon, a  
chariot or sleigh, a

61.  
An austere white  
building crowned by a

7.  
John Menick

9.  
Sofia Hernandez  
Chong Cuy

11.  
John Menick

13.  
Angie Keefer

15.  
Angie Keefer

17.  
Sofia Hernandez  
Chong Cuy

19.  
Angie Keefer

20.  
Sofia Hernandez  
Chong Cuy

23.  
Angie Keefer

25.  
Sofia Hernandez  
Chong Cuy

28.  
Angie Keefer

29.  
Angie Keefer

30.  
John Menick

32.  
Angie Keefer

33.  
John Menick

35.  
Angie Keefer

36.  
John Menick

38.  
John Menick

40.  
Sofia Hernandez  
Chong Cuy

43.  
Sofia Hernandez  
Chong Cuy

46.  
Robert Snowden

48.  
Angie Keefer

50.  
Angie Keefer

51.  
Angie Keefer

53.  
John Menick

55.  
Angie Keefer

57.  
Sofia Hernandez  
Chong Cuy/The

59.  
Angie Keefer

61.  
Angie Keefer

**Y**ou lie on your back in a clearing. Treetops come into focus above you. You are surrounded by small wood-frame houses with porches, neatly arranged along the square perimeter of a thinning green crossed by concrete walking paths. The grassy soil under your body is warm, but the wind and the uneasy demeanour of the trees bode autumn. Stand up. Notice the top of a brick steeple just beyond the houses to your left. Hear the crash and hush of ocean waves. Follow the path through the green, in the direction of the church. A horizon comes into view. You are on an island.

The church appears little more than one meeting room, plus a vestibule and the spire you first saw from the green. A red door the shape of a bishop's hat is ajar. Climb three steps and enter the building. The vestibule is dim, but you see by afternoon light from the half-open door. You face a heavy velvet curtain. Reach forward. Grope for an opening in the folds. Slip through, into pitch darkness.

You are blind. The room is blank. Smell damp bricks. Hear ocean static, indistinguishable now from the din of a highway. Gradually, your eyes adjust. Become aware of thin lines creeping through the blackness, sunrays straining to reach the bottom of a

lagoon. Where light touches the floor, see geometric shapes: a circle; an X. Move closer to the lines. Discover the edges of slender panels of light. Step through one panel, as if through a sheer waterfall. Stand in the centre of the circle. It slides away from you. The angled cone of light rising from the shape's edge moves across your body like a saw.

**Y**ou enter an empty courtroom. Just to your right, on one of the counsel's tables, a slender metal object balances delicately on end, upright in the centre of a squat marble base. Its polished surface is tawny, not quite amber.

Look down. See a paper tag attached to a frayed piece of shipping twine. Lean in. Read 'Exhibit One. US Customs. Kitchen Utensils and Hospital Supplies'. Hear a voice from the object.

Will you look at Exhibit One and tell the court whether in your opinion that is a work of art? Step back to survey the courtroom. There is no one else here.

The voice: You might enlighten the court as to whether you would think object – Exhibit One – a bird?

Regard the object in profile. It *is* like the breast of a bird, especially on one side.

All breasts of birds are more or less rounded?

Any rounded piece of bronze then, could represent a bird?

Looks more like the keel of a boat, no?

And a little like the crescent of a new moon?

If Mr Brancusi called this a fish, would it then be to you a fish?

If he called it a tiger, would you change your mind,  
and call it a tiger?

You continue listening, but the object is mute.

**Y**ou are wandering through an old house. After passing ordinary rooms, along ordinary halls, leading to still other ordinary rooms, you stand before a bricolaged grotto of intersecting planes and volumes. You stand under splintering beams and plywood stalactites. You step forward. Gravity lags.

Light from the adjacent room flows through glass openings around the door now closed behind you. But your compass is inscrutable. There are too many surfaces here.

Shuffle sideways through a narrow passage of slanting walls made from jumbled scraps of fence and plaster rhomboids. Come to a door. Enter another room configured the same way that is not the same at all.

Continue past several doors, until you reach the last room. No further door. Thumb an open notebook with various scribble, mostly affections and deceptions, one fragment written in English:

Oh thou, beloved of my twenty-seven senses,  
I love thine! Thou thee  
thee thine, I thine,  
thou mine, we?  
That (by the way) is beside the point!

**Y**ou are in a world of information, language and numbers and systems and evidence and grids, ephemera. You see photocopies, printouts, black-and-white photographs, words under penitential light. Look hard. Squint. Your eyes are dry. You are lost, but why should things be easy to understand? Someone named Weiner has removed a square of the lathing or support wall or plaster or wall board from a wall. You know because this is explained in a text on the wall next to the hole. You put your head in the hole. It's cold. Feels good. Pull back. Cross the room. Pass 50 or 60 adult-sized tennis shoes, big photographs of bread mould, 30 pictures of sky, some guy burying himself. Find yourself now in front of a large vinyl wall text. Read aloud:

1. to assume a mental set voluntarily.
2. to shift voluntarily from one aspect of the situation to another.
3. to keep in mind simultaneously various aspects.
4. to grasp the essential of a given whole; to break up a given whole into parts and to isolate them voluntarily.
5. to generalise; to abstract common properties; to plan ahead ideationally; to assume an attitude

toward 'the mere possible', and to think or perform symbolically.

6. to detach our ego from the outer world.

To detach our ego from the outer world, to see, to look and not see, to forget you've seen. There is a grey photograph of a room with a parquet floor. See rectangles overlapping rectangles. See a jangle of straight lines. See through several doorways to a window in the back of the house. See outside – spindled winter trees, trunks, branches, dendrite lines the same thickness as those traced on the walls and floor. See contours of shadows and light you do not see but can imagine seeing. You can imagine seeing a careful history of almost nothing written with a ballpoint pen in a memo book. You can imagine assuming an attitude toward the mere possible, shifting from one aspect of the situation to another.

**Y**ou are in a derelict wharf building. Rusting walls and roof of corrugated steel are supported overhead by rows of trusses and underfoot by beams peeking through rotten floor planks. Hear the river. Consider the building's size. Consider a river's size.

At the far end of the building, an arced portion of wall is cut away, leaving a pared rosary window the shape of a scant three-quarter moon.

Walk across a steel beam over a channel in the floor. Beneath this narrow bridge, a spotlit swath of black water shows velvet green.

Approach the window. See the industrial crags of Hoboken and Jersey City, one half a set of worn-out zipper teeth between river and sky.

**Y**ou are abandoned in the Archaeological Museum at Delphi, which is defiantly cool and calm, despite the late summer heat and hustle of the tourist trade outside. You have just descended a stair into a small gallery with a dark concrete floor and high walls. Your footsteps resonate as if re-composed for a movie version of your life.

In the centre of the gallery, a slate-coloured bronze statue of a young man in a long robe stands on top of a concrete cube like a Doric column. The man is almost twice natural size. His posture is regally assured, although he is missing his left arm. Even blighted, he is an archetypal beauty. High cheekbones, almond eyes, Greek nose and full lips. A placid expression that betrays no calculation. Androgynous. He holds bent fragments of metal reins in his only hand, offering them for someone to take.

The top of the concrete base is the height of your knee. You stand close to it now, looking down at the robed man's perfectly formed feet and fine ankles, just visible beneath his long dress. A shiny coin lies heads up next to the statue's left pinky toe.

**T**his square room is not quite a room, more an idea for one. Imagine a cutaway view, like a doll's house. Three walls of temporary partitions held in tension between a concrete floor and ceiling. A fourth wall made entirely of glass. No door.

Near the top of the wall, above your left shoulder, is a long, horizontal painting proportioned like a bumper sticker. On one end, the watery shadow of a deflated bicycle wheel. On the other, a wrist and hand in black outline, flat colour, a forefinger pointing directly to your right. In the centre, an array of carpet tiles next to a large wire pipe cleaner shot through from the other side of the wall.

Turn right. Follow the pointing finger. Approach the glass wall. Peer out over a collar of groomed treetops trimming an open courtyard. The bulbous form of a grotesque metal woman is arranged on a stone plinth below. She floats or tumbles, as if she might have fallen from the very spot where you are now standing, suspended half a breath before touching the ground.

In the corner gap between the glass and the nearest partition wall, reach an illuminated button. A muffled hum and click, the workings of an old-fashioned, pulley-drawn something, emit from deep within the building. Otherwise, the room is quiet.

**T**here are many rooms here, and many objects: life-sized figures; taxidermy; waxen decomposing limbs; doubles; dolls; models; fibreglass corpses; hair and muck; hundreds of comic books; 47 ordinary household spoons; squeeze toys; coat hangers; homemade signs; piles; props; plastics; difference without variation; things that make your scalp itch; too much to tally. This is a slicken, nowhere land. This is a mirrored hall. This is horror. There is no logical emotional link. The outburst is over, as if nothing has happened. The man-sized boy in the diaper lurches forward half a step. Move away. Wander into increasing anonymity. Float among objects. You are almost recognisable. You are taken over. Without warning, safety, comfort are ruptured. Without warning, the object. Without warning, the presence. Without warning, the memory of the event. It is as if none of this has taken place. It is as if seduction. It is as if shock. The limb is lifted. The limb is broken. The limb is static. The limb is bent. The limb. The intensity. The residue. The zombie stuff.

**S**oft pink walls. A dimly lit bathroom barely larger than a coat closet. Look down. Observe a diminutive toilet scaled to suit a short sink. Where a mirror would be, see an illustration of two rosy-cheeked children jumping rope on top of a grassy hill. Bend over slightly to reach a low door-knob situated for a child's grasp. Exit the bathroom.

Enter what was a bustling classroom, now empty of students. Small tables and chairs arranged in clusters smell faintly of chalk dust and wax crayons. To your left, above a stack of cubbyholes, dancing paper corncobs with faces and arms and first names: Marcus, Julia, Bea, Miguel, Sarah, Andreas.

To your right, a dusty, haphazardly erased blackboard. In its centre, an empty chalk circle the size of a life ring. Above the board, lowercase letters, each cut from a different coloured paper, mounted to the wall: red-a; blue-e; green-i; yellow-o; orange-u.

Approach the board. Notice a row of solemn rectangular canvases hung on either side of it, slightly above adult eye level. Sizes vary, hovering between cigar box and chocolate sampler. The paintings are dark shades, nearly black gravestones in a circus tent.

In the centre of each painting, a date, bright white in a staid, modern typeface, the name of the month –

January – abbreviated in all capital letters. See JAN. 5, 1997; JAN. 6, 1997; JAN. 7, 1997. Beyond arm's length, the dates appear machine-printed. Only when you are directly below the paintings, do you discern brushstrokes.

**P**edestrians, men, women, are milling. Through green lights, through red lights, down the middle of the street, over white lines, over arrows, they mill. This isn't how you pictured Japan: signals gone haywire, neon koans, stacks of posters, death-star posters, red posters, rock posters, posters hung on walls, posters with lines like *The colour of reflection is pink*, people milling through jokes and riddles and salsa music and a broken family of abandoned office chairs on roller wheels. Here, now, a folding table piled with animal masks, the plastic-y, rubber-y, full-face variety. We have tiger, horse, bunny, rooster, poodle, frog, lamb, goat – all making their respective animal noises. Take a mask. Take some posters. Check the time. Check the time again. Enter a room. It's a white room. On the ceiling, see a bevy of speech bubbles, the kind with a tail hanging down to connect to a cartoon mouth. Blank, white, helium bubbles are bobbing. And your goat mask is bleating. Bobbing. Bleating. Bobbing. Exit. Face a wheatpaste poster rainbow. Read: *For or Against. True or False. Is one thing better than another? Where should I go? What should I do? Are you crying? No, I've got something in my eye. Who's Afraid of the New Now? Nobody. Nothing. Adults Only. Good Luck.*

**O**n an escalator moving upward through a glass chute, to your right, the low skyline of Paris subdued by dusk. Below, a sloping concrete plaza, empty of people, receding from view as you ascend. Hear the click rhythm of the mechanical stairs flatten and turn back under the conveyor as they reach the top of their climb.

Step off the escalator. Turn left. Wander away from the glass skin of the building towards the darkened core. Enter the first gallery, a poorly lit racquetball court. A film loop of a Hollywood production company's logo is projected on one wall. From a gilded porthole in a field of flat red colour, a lion emerges and lets out a loud roar, then departs, returns, repeats, repeats, relentlessly. The roar becomes rote. The quivering light of the projector and the white noise of the cooling fan grow more intense.

On the adjacent wall, a half-finished painting. A battle flag. '20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox' in dramatic perspective against a black background. Letters hurtled forward through deep space from a single point on the horizon.

Behind you, a red-lacquered slab against the wall, the exact gloss and shade of a starlet's fingernails, exactly your height and shoulder width. Approach

the slab. A candy-red version of yourself approaches you. A wall card next to the object falls on cue, lands face down on the floor. Small type reads: 'Don't tell me when to stop'.

**I**t's dawn. The sky is pale. You tread across a layer of unbroken snow, leaving a wake of footprints along a walking path in a planned forest. Ever-green trees. Boots on powder.

The path leads to a clearing, up a small hill, more of a mound, and ends at a doorway in a stone wall. Adjunct, is a cylindrical stone reservoir with a flat roof.

Through the arched door, follow the tunnel to the main volume. Inside, the same, thin dawn dusts the room through a circular excision of the ceiling. Directly beneath this opening, a plate of snowfall on the floor withdraws as it melts, leaves a dark, wet ring around a shrinking rug of white ice.

A concrete bench emerges seamlessly from the surface of the wall, circles the perimeter. Take a seat. Feel an even, dry chill spread over your back and thighs. Look up. The opening in the ceiling appears solid, like a milk-glass lens, if not for the trim of snow overlapping its edge. Look long at this circular field of light. Your pupils contract. The ceiling and room darken. Slowly, the hue of sky turns from grey to lavender. Some minutes later, citric tones of morning bleed into view, though you seem to notice this only long after it has happened, as if the physical connection between your eyes and your thoughts had

been extended by an age while you were sitting only a short while. Golden pinks give way to a depleted blue urge slightly more emphatic around the edge of the circle, but only just so.

**B**eneath the horizon, a chariot or sleigh, a water mill, a small gear engaged with a large wheel, a trapdoor to the basement, a pulley. Not shown: the revolution of the bottle of Bénédictine. And Sandow. A blown-out kinoscopic vision of mustachioed Prussian bodybuilder Eugen Sandow performing his stunted dance – flexing, swelling and preening – is not shown.

At left, nine floating moulds, a chess player's cemetery of uniforms and liveries, organs, shells, containers for gas. The priest, the delivery boy, the gendarme, the cavalryman, the policeman, the undertaker, the servant, the busboy, the stationmaster, intersected, crossed and bound by lines, fissures, remedies and capillary tubes. Adjacent to these, sieves tossed off in an arc, successive moments in the trajectory of a single sedge hat thrown over a hurdle.

A pair of open scissors, sharpened on both sides of the hinge – no handles – hovers laterally above a triad of variegated bass drums anchored to a tiered Louis XV table, or what could be a chocolate grinder. Immodest – lewd, even – the machine gnashes and churns. Forensic evidence, a body bereft. His three dimensions to her four. You remove all items from

your pockets. You strap into the seat. You put your money in the slot. You press start.

On the upper pane, The Bride – joints, curves, axles, a beak – is suspended at farthest remove from the region of the Butterfly Pump and the path of the illuminating gas. Her instructions flow through the draught pistons in the Milky Way out to the nine shots, then back again, eluding the Handler of Gravity, the trivet, the rod, the weight, the horizon beneath.

**A**n austere white building crowned by a filigree dome of golden laurel leaves. A pallor that intensifies the blue of sky behind it. Two windowless, rectangular masses on either side of a central stair. A black door. Around the door, gracefully stylised tree trunks. A blanket of more gilded leaves.

Up the stairs, through the door, an unmanned ticket counter and coat check. A vertical black and gold poster. Entrance to an exhibition hall.

An octagonal platform at the far end of the room supports a marble sculpture of a naked man. He sits cross-legged, high on a throne, with a salmon-hued marble blanket over his lap and a marble eagle at his feet.

The man is cut from gleaming white stone. He hunches. He clenches his right fist over his thigh. His brow is furrowed. The corners of his mouth turn down.

You stand below the sculpture, in the eye line of one of four miniature child's heads pilloried behind the seated man. The child points a pudgy, implicating finger in your direction.

11.  
Vito Acconci

53.  
Dore Ashton

43.  
Wim Beeren

46.  
Arnold Bode

15.  
Constantin Brancusi

57.  
André Breton

36.  
John Cage

25.  
Mel Chin

53.  
Joseph Cornell

9.  
Suzanne Cotter

32., 57.  
Marcel Duchamp

25.  
Gala Committee

51.  
Jack Goldstein

50.  
Dominique  
Gonzalez-Foerster

51.  
Catherine Grenier

20.  
David Hammons

17.  
Jan Hoet

48.  
On Kawara

35.  
Mike Kelley

61.  
Max Klinger

28.  
Gordon Matta-Clark

13.  
Anthony McCall

51.  
John McCracken

23.  
Kynaston McShine

7.  
Yoko Ono

30.  
Jasia Reichardt

51.  
Ed Ruscha

9.  
Rasha Salti

19.  
Kurt Schwitters

59.  
Harald Szeemann

33.  
Jean Tinguely

55.  
James Turrell

36.  
David Tutor

29.  
Charioteer of Delphi, 474 BC,  
Delphi Archaeological Museum,  
Delphi, Greece
61.  
Max Klinger's Beethoven monument,  
1902, XIV Exhibition, Secession,  
Vienna
32.  
Marcel Duchamp, *Tu m'*, 1918,  
permanent exhibition, Yale  
University Art Gallery, New Haven,  
Connecticut
15.  
Constantin Brancusi, *Bird in Space*,  
1923 (with excerpts from trial  
transcripts, New York City, 1927)
19.  
Kurt Schwitters, *Merzbau*, c. 1923-37,  
Hanover (with an excerpt from Kurt  
Schwitters' original translation of his  
own poem 'An Anna Blume')
57.  
'First Papers of Surrealism', 1942,  
curated by André Breton and Marcel  
Duchamp for the Coordinating  
Council of French Relief Societies,  
Whitelaw Reid mansion, New York  
City
36.  
John Cage, *4'33"*, 1952, performed  
by David Tutor, Woodstock, New  
England, 29 August 1952
46.  
'Documenta 1', curated by Arnold  
Bode, Kassel, 1955
33.  
Jean Tinguely, *Homage to New York*,  
17 March 1960, Museum of Modern  
Art, New York City
38.  
'Futurama II', New York World's Fair,  
General Motors Company, Flushing  
Meadows, Corona Park, Queens,  
New York, 1964
7.  
Yoko Ono, *Cut Piece*, 1965,  
Carnegie Hall, New York City
40.  
'VIII Bienal de São Paulo', São Paulo,  
Brazil, 1965 (scripted following a  
conversation with Guy Brett)
11.  
Vito Acconci, *Following Piece*, 1968,  
New York City

30.  
'Cybernetic Serendipity', curated  
by Jasia Reichardt, Institute of  
Contemporary Arts, London, 1968

43.  
'Op Losse Schroeven (Situations  
and Cryptostructures)', curated by  
Wim Beeren, Stedelijk Museum,  
Amsterdam, 1969

23.  
'Information', curated by Kynaston  
McShine, Museum of Modern Art,  
New York City, 1970

53.  
'A Joseph Cornell Exhibition for  
Children', curated by Dore Ashton,  
The Cooper Union, New York City,  
1972

28.  
Gordon Matta-Clark, *Day's End*,  
1975, downtown Manhattan, New  
York City

59.  
'Bachelor Machines', curated by  
Harald Szeemann, Biennale di  
Venezia, Venezia, 1975

20.  
David Hammons, *Bliz-aard Ball Sale*,  
1983, Cooper Street, New York City

17.  
'Chambres d'amis', curated by Jan  
Hoet, organised by Museum Van  
Hedendaagse Kunst, Antwerp, and  
presented in 58 houses and locations  
around the city of Ghent, 1986

35.  
'The Uncanny', curated by Mike  
Kelley, Sonsbeek, the Netherlands,  
1993

25.  
Mel Chin and the Gala Committee  
inserted 'artworks' as 'props' into the  
US television programme *Melrose  
Place*. The episode referred to here  
is '101 Damnations', originally  
aired on the Fox network on 3 April  
1997. This art project was part of an  
unconventional and now defunct arts  
commissioning programme run by  
the Museum of Contemporary Art,  
Los Angeles.

48.  
On Kawara, *Pure Consciousness*, 1997,  
installed in 19 kindergartens, globally

50.  
'Moment Ginza', curated by  
Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Le  
Magasin, Grenoble, and Färgfabriken,  
Stockholm, 1997

55.  
James Turrell, *Cat Cairn: The Kielder  
Skyspace*, 2000, Kielder Forest,  
Northumberland, England

51.  
Jack Goldstein, *Metro-Goldwyn-  
Mayer*, 1975; Ed Ruscha, *Large  
Trademark with Eight Spotlights*,  
1962; John McCracken, *Don't Tell  
Me When to Stop*, 1966-67 in 'Los  
Angeles 1955-1985 - The Birth of  
an Art Capital', curated by Catherine  
Grenier, Centre Pompidou, Paris,  
2006

13.  
Anthony McCall, -; *Ploto9: This  
World and Nearer Ones*, curated by  
Mark Beasley, Governors Island,  
New York City, 2009

9.  
'Plot for a Biennial', 10th Sharjah  
Biennial, curated by Suzanne Cotter  
and Rasha Salti, Sharjah, United  
Arab Emirates, 2011



## Hypnotic Show

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