

JIMI HAPPENING

In questo progetto ho fatto incontrare due mondi lontanissimi che hanno in comune un approccio iperrealistico alla quotidianità.

Ho selezionato alcuni paragrafi da tre articoli di Allan Kaprow scritti negli anni 80 e 90 sul rapporto sempre più stretto tra arte e vita: *The real experiment* (1983), *Art that can't be art* (1986) e *The meaning of life* (1990). Accanto a questi testi scorrono delle immagini che documentano diverse edizioni di *Jimi Halloween*, una forma radicale di cosplaying così descritta in un blog di cultura giapponese:

"Jimi (semplice, banale) Halloween è quando le persone si travestono con costumi così banali da doverli spiegare. La tradizione è stata avviata nel 2014 da un gruppo di adulti di Daily Portal Z che volevano in qualche modo partecipare ai festeggiamenti di Halloween, ma erano troppo imbarazzati per esagerare con costumi da strega o zombie. Così, invece dei costumi vistosi e stravaganti che stavano diventando popolari in Giappone, decisero di vestirsi con costumi banali, di tutti i giorni."

Ogni immagine è corredata di didascalia che riporta la descrizione del costume/maschera scritta da ogni cosplayer sul proprio badge.

Un esempio su tutti, particolarmente interessante nel rendere evidente la frizione tra reale e sua teatralizzazione, è quello del ragazzo con la camicia a quadri: è uno dei pochi che faccia esplicito riferimento al mondo degli anime (come un autentico cosplayer), contraddicendone però subito l'immaginario e capovolgendolo in realtà.

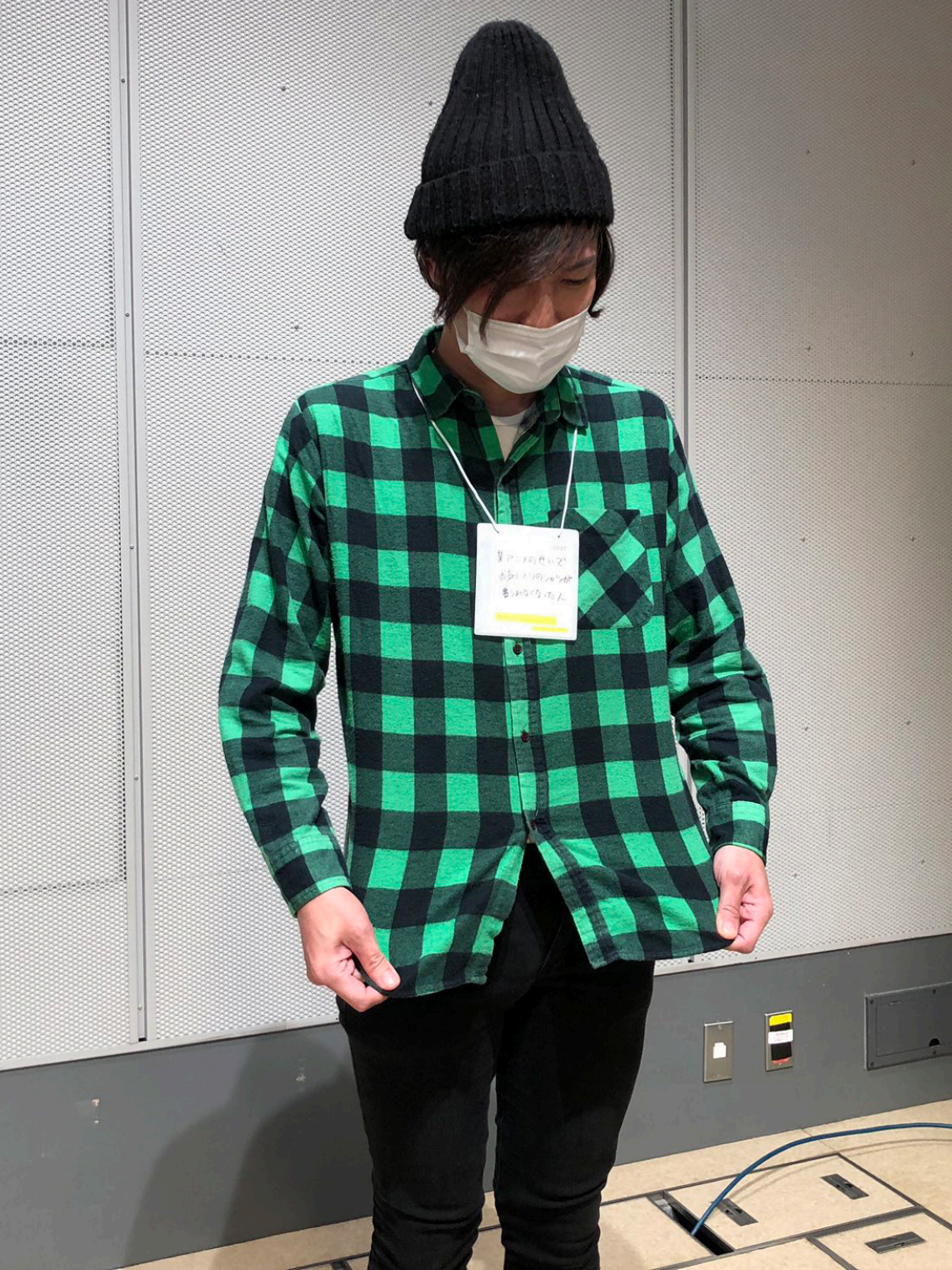
Simplistically put, artlike art holds that art is separate from life and everything else, while lifelike art holds that art is connected to life and everything else. In other words, there is art at the service of art, and art at the service of life. The maker of artlike art tends to be a specialist; the maker of lifelike art, a generalist.

Guy who face-swapped with a Starbucks cup



What if I were to just go shopping? Would that not be art? What if I didn't realize that art happened at certain times, and in certain places? What if I were to lie awake imagining things in bed at 4 A.M.? Would that be the wrong place and the wrong time for art? What if I weren't aware that art was considered more marvelous than life? What if I didn't know an artist was meant to "create" art? What if I were to think art was just paying attention? What if I were to forget to think about art constantly? Could I still make, do, engage in, art? Would I be doing something else?

**Guy who can no longer wear his favorite shirt
because of the anime "Demon Slayer"**



Avant-garde artlike art is supported, tardily but steadily, by high culture's institutions, the galleries, museums, concert halls, theaters, schools, government agencies, and professional journals. These share the same separating point of view about art and life: that art could vanquish life's problems as long as it was far enough away from life so as not to be confused by it and sucked back into its mire. These institutions need artists whose work is artlike.

**Person whose eyeglasses get
fogged up over a hot drink**



Deaf

Milk

Skimo

Custom

Syrup

Deaf

Caution: Very Hot
This sleeve is made with
100% post consumer recycled material.

Starbucks

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Avant-garde artlike art basically believes in the continuity of the traditionally separate genres of visual art, music, dance, literature, theater, etc. While combinations of these genres have been commonplace in dance, film, and particularly opera, they are hierarchic arrangements with one of the genres presiding over the others, and all the genres identifiably distinct, though interrelated. Either singly, or in satellite order, they need, and get the support of, galleries, museums, concert halls, theaters, schools, government agencies, and professional journals. Hands in gloves.

Banksy, remote-controlling his shredder at the auction



オウゴン会員の
産熱作も也
15725-

Avant-garde lifelike art is not nearly as serious as avant-garde artlike art. Often it is quite humorous. It isn't very interested in the great Western tradition either, since it tends to mix things up: body with mind, individual with people in general, civilization with nature, and so on. Thus it mixes up the traditional art genres, or avoids them entirely — for example, a mechanical fiddle playing around the clock to a cow in a barnyard. Or going to the laundromat.

**Person who spotted cockroach just before going to bed,
immediately searched for improvised weapon and
cockroach escaped in the meanwhile**



"Look," I remember a critic exclaiming once as we walked by a vacant lot full of scattered rags and boxes, "how that extends the gestural painting of the '50s!" He wanted to cart the whole mess to a museum floor. But life bracketed by the physical and cultural frames of art quickly becomes trivialized life at the service of high art's presumed greater value. The critic wanted everyone to see the garbage as he did, through art history; not as urban dirt, not as a playground for kids and a home for rats, not as rags blowing about in the wind, boxes rotting in the rain. Avant-garde lifelike art does very well in such real-life circumstances. It is not a "thing" like a piece of music or a sculpture that is put into a special art container or setting. "It" is inseparable from real life.

**Person who forgot to take out the trash
and is racing to beat the pickup**



Despite formalist and idealist interpretations of art, lifelike-art-makers' principal dialogue is not with art but with everything else, one event suggesting another. If you don't know much about life, you'll miss much of the meaning of the lifelike art that's born of it. Indeed, it's never certain if an artist who creates avant-garde lifelike art is an artist.

Avant-garde lifelike art has never fit into traditional arts institutions, even when their support was offered. These institutions "frame" them right out of life into art (more or less ineptly, at that).

That one spot in Ueno Station with a low ceiling

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The root message of all artlike art is separateness and specialness; and the corresponding one of all lifelike art is connectedness and wide-angle awareness. Artlike art's message is appropriately conveyed by the separate, bound "work"; the message of lifelike art is appropriately conveyed by a process of events which has no definite outline.

Guy who grabbed a shopping basket but only ended up buying a couple of things

精算済のみです
買物係り人

買物係り人
橋本 悠太郎
買物係り人



For each kind of art, the conveyance itself is the message, regardless of the details. Artlike art sends its message on a one-way street: from the artist to us. Lifelike art's message is sent on a feedback loop: from the artist to us (including machines, animals, nature) and around again to the artist. You can't "talk back" to, and thus change, an artlike artwork; but "conversation" is the very means of lifelike art, which is always changing.

Person who cannot find a seat in crowded food court



アドコートで
座る席が
ない人

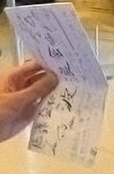
It's fairly well known that for the last thirty years my main work as an artist has been located in activities and contexts that don't suggest art in any way. Brushing my teeth, for example, in the morning when I'm barely awake; watching in the mirror the rhythm of my elbow moving up and down. The practice of such an art, which isn't perceived as art, is not so much a contradiction as a paradox.

A person going to work on a windy day

ハロウィン 2020
by ティリーポータルズ



白く風



When I speak of activities and contexts that don't suggest art, I don't mean that an event like brushing my teeth each morning is chosen and then set into a conventional art context, as Duchamp and many others since him have done.

**Guy who blows on the bottom of a videogame cartridge
before inserting it into the console**



That strategy, by which an art-identifying frame (such as a gallery or theater) confers "art value" or "art discourse" on some nonart object, idea, or event, was, in Duchamp's initial move, sharply ironic. It forced into confrontation a whole bundle of sacred assumptions about creativity, professional skill, individuality, spirituality, modernism, and the presumed value and function of high art itself.

Person stocking up in advance of an expected consumption tax increase



消費税
増税前の
人



But later it became trivialized, as more and more nonart was put on exhibit by other artists. Regardless of the merits of each case, the same truism was headlined every time we saw a stack of industrial products in a gallery, every time daily life was enacted on a stage: that anything can be aestheticized, given the right art packages to put it into.

**Junior high school student who had to stay home sick
and asked his mom to pick up a magazine
for him to pass the time**



White cloth on forehead

少年ジャンプ
キミの知らないボクの世界。
平手友梨奈
櫻坂46
60
お借ります
おハツ局計

*But why should we want to aestheticize "anything"?
All the irony was lost in those presentations, the
provocative questions forgotten. To go on making
this kind of move in art seemed to me unproductive.*

**Guy who was dancing playfully, accidentally hit hand
on corner of table, and learned the resultant injury
will take three weeks to heal**



Instead, I decided to pay attention to brushing my teeth, to watch my elbow moving. I would be alone in my bathroom, without art spectators. There would be no gallery, no critic to judge, no publicity. This was the crucial shift that removed the performance of everyday life from all but the memory of art. I could, of course, have said to myself, "Now I'm making art!!" But in actual practice, I didn't think much about it.

**Housewife disappointed by uncooperative family members
making laundry more difficult to do**



My awareness and thoughts were of another kind. I began to pay attention to how much this act of brushing my teeth had become routinized, nonconscious behavior, compared with my first efforts to do it as a child.

Guy who cannot fit package into mailbox slot



ネコボス 体重測定定規

ネコボスの商品情報「動物」可能な大きさ
※ネコボス(200g)は、動物の体重を測定するための定規です。
※ネコボス(200g)は、動物の体重を測定するための定規です。

ネコボス 動物

I began to suspect that 99 percent of my daily life was just as routinized and unnoticed; that my mind was always somewhere else; and that the thousand signals my body was sending me each minute were ignored. I guessed also that most people were like me in this respect.

Actress in a traffic safety video pretending she has just caused an accident



安全のビデオに
出ている
不注意と事故を
起こす人
MAY 2015

Brushing my teeth attentively for two weeks, I gradually became aware of the tension in my elbow and fingers (was it there before?), the pressure of the brush on my gums, their slight bleeding (should I visit the dentist?).

Person woken up by the delivery of an Amazon package



富紀太
Amazon
富紀太

amazon.co.jp

I looked up once and saw, really saw, my face in the mirror. I rarely looked at myself when I got up, perhaps because I wanted to avoid the puffy face I'd see, at least until it could be washed and smoothed to match the public image I prefer. This was an eye-opener to my privacy and to my humanity.

Guy who wins bingo but is too shy to announce it



はずかしくて、
「ビ」はと言いたくない

2019/02/24 249

女性
こち

An unremarkable picture of myself was beginning to surface, and image I'd created but never examined. It colored the images I made of the world and influenced how I dealt with my images of others. I saw this little by little. But if this wider domain of resonance, spreading from the mere process of brushing my teeth, seems too far from its starting point, I should say immediately that it never left the bathroom.

**Guy who washes his hands and
dries them on his clothes**



MORE IDEAS
MORE FUN
New York

手塚 隆史
展覧会

The physicality of brushing, the aromatic taste of toothpaste, rinsing my mouth and the brush, the many small nuances such as right-handedness causing me to enter my mouth with the loaded rush from that side and then move to the left side — these particularities always stayed in the present.

**Person who tried to remove their mask
but their glasses came off with it**



マスクを
はずそうしたら
×がネも
取れた人

The larger implications popped up from time to time during the subsequent days. All this from toothbrushing. How is this relevant to art? Why is this not just sociology? It is relevant because developments within modernism itself let to art's dissolution into its life sources. Art in the West has a long history of secularizing tendencies, going back at least as far as the Hellenistic period.

**Person you mistake for a store clerk
when you visit the optician**



メガネ屋で
店員に
問うた人
2014年10月27日

By the late 1950s and 1960s this lifelike impulse dominated the vanguard. Art shifted away from the specialized object in the gallery to the real urban environment; to the real body and mind; to communications technology; and to remote natural regions of the ocean, sky, and desert. Thus the relationship of the act of toothbrushing to recent art is clear and cannot be bypassed. This is where the paradox lies; an artist concerned with lifelike art is an artist who does and does not make art.

**Person who buys an umbrella because
it's raining - then it stops raining**



雑貨未暖間
雨巾人た人
2020.10.21 18:00

Anything less than paradox would be simplistic. Unless the identity (and thus the meaning) of what the artist does oscillates between ordinary, recognizable activity and the "resonance" of that activity in the larger human context, the activity itself reduces to conventional behavior. Or if it is framed as art by a gallery, it reduces to conventional art. Thus toothbrushing, as we normally do it, offers no roads back to the real world either. But ordinary life performed as art/not art can charge the everyday with metaphoric power.



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E-mail:masayuki@jkggh.jp

*The experimental artist today is the un-artist.
Not the anti-artist but the artist emptied of art.
The un-artist, as the name implies, started out,
conventionally, as a Modernist, but at a certain
point around the '50s began divesting her or his
work of nearly every feature that could remind
anyone of art at all. The un-artist makes no real art
but does what I've called lifelike art, art that reminds
us mainly of the rest of our lives.*

Person who makes it easy for restaurant workers to clean up



If un-arding is a divesting of "nearly" all the features of recognizable art, what still remains is the concept "art"; the word is there in "un-artist." That word and all the countless paintings, sculptures, concerts, poems, and plays it briefly calls up were part of the un-artist's earlier commitment. So art, for a while, will linger as a memory trace, but not as something that matters.

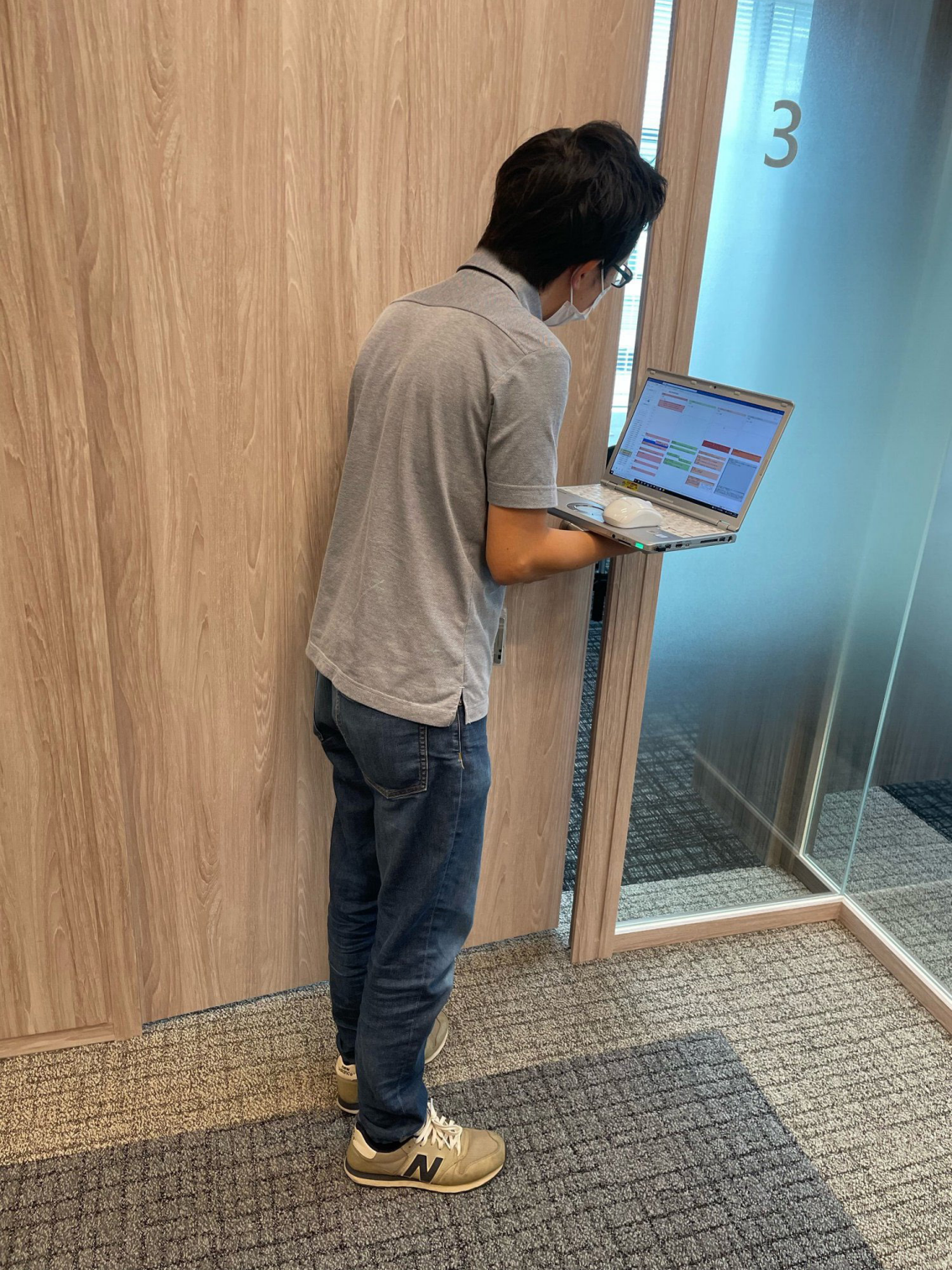
A right-handed person (the guy playing him is a lefty)



古利

As un-art takes a lifelike form and setting, as it begins to function in the world as if it were life, we can speculate that art and all of its resonances may one day become unnecessary for today's experimenter, even as the point of departure it has been. And that might not be so bad, since the attraction of artists to nonart over the last century suggests that the idea of art as a thing apart has not always been satisfactory; that at certain times the rest of life is more compelling. That's why art cannot be entirely forgotten, and why, at the same time, it can be left behind.

Person who booked a conference room but
there's someone in it and now they're checking to make sure
they actually booked it before knocking



What happens when you pay close attention to anything, especially routine behavior, is that it changes. Attention alters what is attended. When you wash your hands in the bathroom, for instance, do you wet your hands for three seconds, four, or longer? Do you pick up the soap with your left hand or your right? Do you work up a lather with three revolutions of your hands or more?

Person at building entrance who thermal camera confirms does not have a fever

FREE
E
R
UT ONLY



Information

36.1



地味100%
体験できる
お茶の服装
深田町



How fast do your hands turn? How long do you rinse? Do you look into the sink or at the mirror as you wash? Do you lean backward to avoid the splashing water? Do you shake your hands to rid them of excess water before reaching for a towel? Do you look at yourself in the mirror to see if you're presentable?

**Person who mis-poured the beer and must wait
for the bubbles to go down**



If you began accounting for all these operations in sequence while you were still washing your hands, you'd notice that they seemed to take longer than they should and that everything happened awkwardly, or at least disjunctively. You may never have given any thought to how many movements you make automatically, or to their physical sensations. You might become fascinated with the soap bubbles, with the drying motions of your hands, with looking at these in the mirror rather than directly. Soon you realize it is all very strange; you are in a territory of the familiar unfamiliar.



地味スタッフ

インフ 麗丸

How, you may wonder, does someone else do it? How do you find out? Could you ask an acquaintance, "Please, may I watch you washing your hands?" Would you propose this in a private bathroom or a public one? If the proposition were accepted, could you depend on the "normalcy" of the demonstration? Where would you stand, close by or behind? Would you copy the washer's movements in order to remember them, with your hands in the air, looking in the mirror at him looking at you? Or would you put your hands in the same sink with his? How would you feel about being handed a wet towel?



By now your curiosity may be turning into play. You wash and soap longer than necessary. The soap bar slips out of your hands. You reach for it but your partner grabs it. Laughing, you both begin to wash each other's hands as well as your own. You talk about hand washing and wonder about people who wash their hands when they're not dirty (when they want to clean up spiritual dirt). What would happen, one of you says, if every time you shook hands with someone you made a point of washing immediately before and afterwards?

Left the apartment right at the same time as the next door neighbor and ran back inside to wait until they leave



These events, of course, are themselves the meaning of life. Inasmuch as lifelike art participates in its everyday source, purposely intending to be like life, it becomes interpretation, hence "meaning." But it is not life in general that is meaningful; an abstraction can't be experienced. Only life in particular can be; some tangible aspect of it, serving as representation, for example a ripe summer tomato.

An office worker whose lanyard name card has flipped over



3087
社員証番号
逆上 山下 大志
風車製作所 代表人

[Blank identification badge]

Life in birds, bees, and volcanoes just is. But when I think about life, it becomes "life". Life is an idea. Whatever that idea might be — playing or suffering or whatnot — it floats, outside of time, in my thoughts. But actually playing at life in any form happens in real time, moment by moment, and is distinctly physical. So lifelike art plays somewhere in and between attention to physical process and attention to interpretation. It is experience yet it is ungraspable.

**Person who tries to reach for subway handle
without taking eyes off their phone and misses**



Lifelike artists are conscious inventors of the life that also invents them. They experiment with meanings, sometimes as casually as one might try on different shirts, sometimes as heavily as deciding whether or not to go to a former lover's wedding. The questions always are: what is the sense of this trip, this meeting, this job, this argument? How is it experienced? Is playing at life, life? Is playing at life, "life"? Is "life" just another way of life? Is life playing or is my life playing? Am I playing with words and asking real-life questions?

A gaijin who is upset because he accidentally bought doggy snacks instead of human snacks



アまみとまがえて
犬の工サも置いた
外國人

柔らかくてちぎりやすい
鶏ささみスティック
愛飲者に選んだカルシウム配合
PET SUPPLIES

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