

## Paris i kroppen

Kroppen i Paris. Overvejelser over tegnede og skrevne notater i min skitse-notatbog 14.-21. november 2002

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# Paris in the body - the Embodiment of Paris

- Analysis and reflections about my drawn and written notes in my sketch-notebook, 14 - 21 November 2002

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*All illustrations made by the author.*

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*Abstract: The author of this paper is a visual artist who holds a ph. d. degree in visualisation and rhetoric in multimedia.*

*The aim of this paper is twofold: to describe and illustrate my use of a sketch- and notebook, in experiencing Paris and in particular some of the interesting museums in the "city of all cities", to explore the role of the body in experiencing our surroundings. My claim is that this moving around should be studied carefully in perspective of designing museum exhibitions.*

*This paper is about accumulation, and how I constantly try to expand my background for creating innovative kinds of exhibitions. It is also a study of a variety of ways of drawing for different relevant purposes.*

*Key Words: museology, set design, exhibition, drawing, space, body, accumulation.*

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To experience is a bodily phenomenon. Our life means concretely being an individual, a complex body that moves around.

We are born as a body, and we stop being a body when we die, becomes a no longer gifted body that is atomised over time.

Throughout life the individual in its development can be described as a mobile body being an original in its existence. Nobody else can be said to live the existence of another single individual.

Often the individual feeling of identity and body is related to mirrors. Therefore we often tend to be focused on the front of a minor part of the body, the face, as in the self-portrait I drew in November 2002 on Monday the 18. in bed in a hotel in Paris. See figure 1.

The "en face" look psychologically *is* an important part of the individual's self-experience of identity, and an eye contact is often a very important part of mental presence and conversation between individuals.

And this still, with respect to identify, you can sometimes feel that the "en face" attention overshadows the rest part of the body.

## **An accident**

Sometimes we become attentive to our whole physique in situations where we use our body more intensively than usual and almost always if we feel deep pain or actually hurt the body directly.

Unfortunately I had an accident when a colleague and I were on our way to visit Euro-Disney "back-stage" to study how the Americans in this big entertainment park had chosen to service their audience from entrance to exit.

We never got that far.

As a result of a push from a passenger, who apparently had forgotten that he had to get off the train at this stop, my left shin got caught in the gap between the steel step of the train and the edge of the platform.



Figure 1.

Self-portrait on November 18, 2002 on a rest day in bed ordered after surgical treatment. BL-sketch- and notebook, page 60.

This fall gave me a deep triangular heavily bleeding cut. It continued as a concrete pain from the lower part of my left leg and a half a day study of an excellent French hospital.

An attentive surgeon spoke to his two students about the necessity of considering all the stops and checking that you can reach all the tools prior to any operation. He then gave me the necessary stitches, so the following day I was able to resume my walking studies of Paris instead of drawing self-portraits from a-lying-on-my elbow-perspective-in-bed!

### **Elbow perspective**

It is quite ironic that the injury which intensified my consciousness about my body, hit me exactly here in this

particular situation since I had *beforehand* singled out special attention to my body as the key theme on which I would focus as I moved around the city and its museums.

(The handwritten text on the drawing in figure 2 says:

"Damn! My shinbone hurts! I have been sleeping a while. But it still hurts, quite a lot actually. I must try to get upright again. I hope that the optimistic prognosis of the surgeon holds good. What a sight here in picturesque Paris: my own feet all bandaged up! That is not what it should be about!")

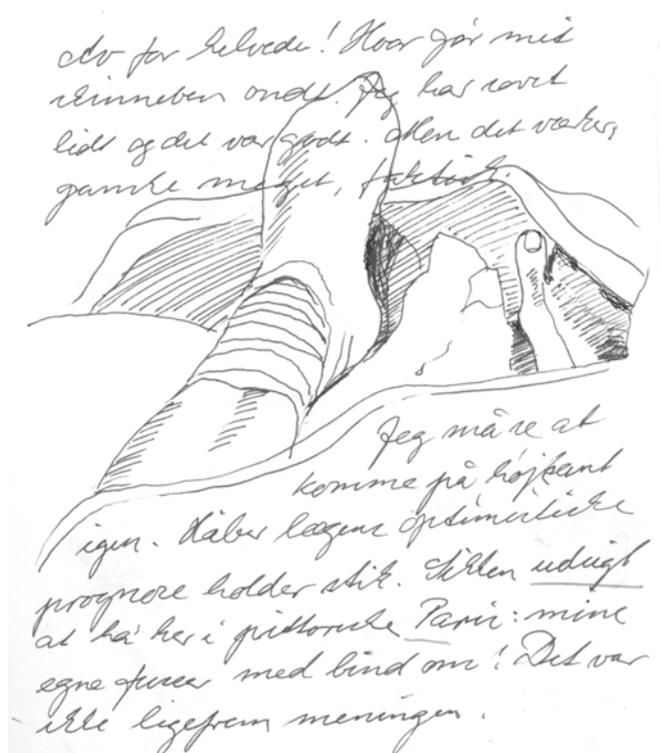


Figure 2.

Text and drawing are here on top of each other. Aesthetically I am here experimenting by using what Lanham calls "looking at" optics, to look at the drawing and the handwritten text, and what he calls "looking through" optics, meaning that the text is also transparent as carrying a semantic content "what it says" (Lanham 1993: 34). BL-sketch- and notebook, page 59.

## Note about the intension of the journey

In a note to fellow travellers and colleagues I wrote a month before we left for Paris:

"As a tourist I will move around in the urban space and walk round studying museums, selecting on the basis of a range of different criteria and parameters:

- the whole building and concept of the museum is of interest to me.
- digital installations have my interest both as single entities and as integrated phenomena.
- certain art museums and museums of natural, cultural and maritime history are especially interesting to me". (Laursen 2002).

It was the explicit intention to move my body through the urban space and the spaces of the museums as the central dimension of experience:

"One sees the environment not with the eyes but with the-eyes-in-the-head-on-the-body-resting-on-the-ground". (Gibson 1986: 205).

The content of this quotation fits very well with my way of working during the whole excursion in Paris. I did not just look at something, but simultaneously also looked around, often around the whole horizon:

"We live boxed-up lives. Our ancestors were always looking around. They surveyed the environment, for they needed to know where and what there was in all directions. Children pay attention to their surroundings when they are allowed to do so. Animals must do so. But we adults spend most of our time *looking at* instead of *looking around*". (Gibson 1986: 203)

I sought inspiration by moving my way around in the surroundings to study some central parameters of the bodily based and experience-based design of museums and installations.

## **Two stages**

The writing of this paper was planned to begin some months after my return home from Paris. Thus there are two stages in this urban study:

1)

Creation of the content of drawings and text in the sketch-note book (in Paris)

- experience and identification
- use of my body and use of sketch- and notebook
- in-medias-res-analysis (spatial and temporal, written and drawn) in the sketch- and notebook
- in-medias-res-production, drawn and written in the sketch- and notebook

2)

Analysis (home again from Paris, distance in time and space)

- studies of symptoms of attention: what caught my attention in Paris?
- studies of different ways of drawing (my use of different typologies of visualisation)
- studies of multimodal rhetoric
- studies of the radius of consciousness

The bringing together and analysis of these phenomena is a central goal of this paper.

## **Four meanings of "body"**

In this article the word "body" can be understood in four different ways:

- 1) My own body as an instrument which I use to move around, and which I use to perceive the surroundings
- 2) My own body as an instrument which can write and draw (as well precision as gross motor coordination)
- 3) The museum considered as a body: a spatial phenomenon - a complex organism - that I walk around in
- 4) The city of Paris considered as a body: a huge complex organism that I do move around in.

My body is constantly surrounded by direct surroundings, either by the room(s) of the individual museum or rooms elsewhere or by the city.

Visits were planned to many museums and sights on this tour. Have a look at the list at the back of this article. It shows more than twenty different places. A very intense and compressed travel experience, which was characterised by both expected and actual intensity:

"The intensity I will try to establish between me and my note-sketch book, that will pick up many notes. In an earlier article ("Design of Multimedia" Laursen 1998/2001: 242) I have argued that we can think of our existences as being "situationistic", meaning here that the life story of the individual can be seen as one long range of situations as one among many interesting interpretation. I will use this "situationistic" optic to create a large raw material that I will use as a platform for writing my article when I come home" (Laursen 2002).

This "situationistic" optic points towards consciousness as a *whole*. Our multiple intelligences potentially are addressed when walking in the city as well as inside the museum. According to Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, we have cognitive competences that can simultaneously relate to phenomena like space, movement, musicality, logics and language. (Gardner 1984).

Body and consciousness then, are phenomena that are difficult to separate. Together they comprise the individual's being.

## **Senses and competences**

In addition to the competences, we also have five senses available all the time. That means that we have a combination of multi sensory and multimodal qualities. ([www.viden-design.ruc.dk](http://www.viden-design.ruc.dk)). Senses and competences are part of the combined potential for the input to our consciousness (Laursen 2001). And it is this "combined consciousness potential" of mine that walks around the beautiful French capital bringing with it all the cognitive capacities of all the senses in a "situationist" being based on previous and compressed lived experience!

This sounds hard.

It was although I had some breaks both with respect to the walking itself and with the drawing. But the senses and the competences do not take breaks on command. Neither do our being or our memory.

That is why it is not always easy to plan in this kind of work. Associations can always interrupt no matter how much you need a rest.

## **Associations**

Most people have the experience that associations have a tendency to arrive unintended as well as intended. An example of an unintended association - about Air Greenland - will turn up later. It lands in one of the following sections of this article. What a jump! But that is the intrinsic nature of associations.

In general we are mentally well equipped when we experience our being in our world which always takes the form of the surrounding part of the world we at any given moment are able to perceive from our unique position.

Of course, it is also important to be aware of the existence of some prostheses - for example binoculars, TV and internet - that enable us to have a more global (village) experience. This should be part of our reflections, because it plays a role for our readiness and central experiences from these phenomena becomes part of our memory.

With our body and consciousness, we are confronted with enormous amounts of possible impressions from the surrounding world, and not just about it but also about our own transient position. In that sense experiencing is a highly individual and intimate matter:

"Motion changes the available stimulus information in many ways. Even a shift of the head sideways is enough to reveal new aspects of most nearby objects and to occlude others that were visible before. The patterns of occlusion and disocclusion produced in this way specify the relative positions of both the observer and the objects themselves. More extensive movements have more dramatic visual consequences. When we go around a corner or

through a door, we obtain whole new vistas that were previously hidden". (Neisser 1976: 109).

In more than one way, it is difficult to capture in static media the experience of simultaneous moving and being. Time is always "other than what it just has been". It leads to the need to transform to a more fixed form some of these phenomena of consciousness such as some drawings and notes made during a being that is permanently changing.

## **The sketch- and notebook as a hybrid of media**

What are my reasons for choosing a simple book with a spiral binding as medium and using ordinary pen to leave something visible on the surface of the paper?

Actually I think there are several good interrelated reasons.

For me an absolutely basic quality of this medium is that I can draw as write in this book. You can leave both visual and verbal traces and thus create and fix statements in these two different (but in our consciousness interrelated) forms of expression. In this way, you may produce interesting multimodal experiences. It is appropriate as we all carry around a multi-sensory and multi-modal consciousness.

Some things are suited to being pinned down or fixed by writing. Other things are suited to being fixed visually, for example as different kinds of drawing. Both of these modalities - and their relations - are the forum of this article. And it is appropriate - to use a computer-based term - that both my drawn sketches and my writings are "stored" in the same place. A book is a composed and composing medium into which you can even paste things if relevant.

Drawing is a cognitive process (Laursen 1990, 2003). I will illustrate that - and analyse to some extent throughout the article. Different phenomena in the visual sketches such as the following elements will appear: observation, experiencing, identification, amazement, aesthetics, documentation, simplification, compression, experimenting, and absorption.

Sounds are also important, but unfortunately I can not bring them to the pages of my sketch-note book, but I can write about sounds and sound-scapes, try to characterise them.

Why I simply do not call it a diary, is because diaries usually are used as a medium you only write things in. And when I do not call it a sketchbook, it is because they are usually used for drawing only. That is why I mostly call it a "sketch- and notebook", because this term semantically is sufficiently broad to show that both visual and verbal notes are to be fixed in the hybrid media I have chosen.

## **Walking around**

The book as a medium is easy to bring with you everywhere. Not least when you have bought a warm dark green wind- and waterproof oilskin jacket with a sufficient number of pockets the right size for sketch- and notebooks et cetera.

Such a book is practical when walking around the city, on the many routes of the metro. And you bring it with you all day long so you can rapidly capture something you have become aware of, before it has vanished again from your consciousness.

You can walk in many different ways. And experience in many different ways. What does it actually mean to go for a walk:

- \*to hike?
- \*to ramble?
- \*to walk around?
- \*to stroll with or without purpose?
- \*to walk around with the possibility of creating pictures?
- \*to investigate?
- \*to have planned to create pictures?
- \*to let the impressions come to you on an already planned route?
- \*to steer directly towards a specific destination?

There are many possibilities (Laursen 2001).

In my opinion it strengthens my memory to work with such a type of sketch- and notebook, and in particular the *access* to my memory. To look at a sketch again - even a very long time after - means most often to me that I immediately am brought back to something, which is close to the sketching and note-taking situation or at least to central aspects of the

experienced. Often it also accentuates multi-sensory phenomena such as sounds, temperature, maybe smells or tastes. And my reflections on the passed situation I often feel I am brought directly back into again, a kind of the "in medias res" of the reflections! That is helpful for the analyses that follow.

From a great number of other sketch- and notebooks it is my experience that this memory dimension works over many years.

## **Handiness, typologies of pictures and genres**

Moreover a sketch- and notebook is easy to handle. And you can draw in many different ways and vary the tempo using many different kinds of visualisation.

The sketches that follow will illustrate that. In this sketch- and notebook the following range of different typologies of drawing are represented:

- \*drawing from observation,
- \*drawing from memory,
- \*drawing as reporting,
- \*drawing of functions,
- \*outline drawing,
- \*workshop drawings,
- \*drawing of movement,
- \*canonical drawings (sketching of imagined basic forms), sketching of imaginations (attempts to visualise imagined elements) and
- \*drawings that are so completed that they are no longer sketches.

So many possibilities are available in a sketch- and notebook in respect to visual typologies and genres (Laursen & Halskov Madsen 2003). The possibilities are supported by the fact that you can work in a scale where the speed of the drawing instrument goes from slow and extremely controlled actions to faster and more spontaneous movement of the hand, arm and body.

## **Being unnoticed**

Moreover the sketch- and notebook is an unnoticed medium. Methodologically this can be very important for the possibilities of fixing impressions of the surrounding world on paper without anybody else noticing. Being unnoticed often has some certain advantages not at least in public space where you can relax without worrying about your equipment getting stolen for example.

Expensive equipment will always be a risk when walking around.

So in a way you can say that the very discrete medium of a book in some ways broaden my radius in studying the surrounding world because it appears to have a very limited value.

But there is more to being unnoticed than that.

An example: If you bring a camera and use it, many people will be aware and react to the fact that you are depicting the situation. This can often block or change your intention for taking pictures, for example if you want to document a situation.

If you are equipped with a small book and a pencil people will rarely register the situation as a situation in which an act of depicting is taking place. You can stand, walk around or sit undisturbed by other people as long as you wish without other people feeling involved in what you are doing.

This situation changes radically if you use a notebook in a bigger format. Most people - following conventions about understanding art and artist - will guess that some kind of depiction is on your agenda and you will often get a lot of positive comments about your work and the process of drawing (often in contrast to taking photos).

Luckily you can also avoid this if you do not want to be disturbed. And that is my clear conscious choice here. I want to be present as a not particularly noticed observer, who - to some extent - also takes part in what typically seems to be going on in people's actions in my near surroundings.

According to my self-understanding the book here is not a hiding place, but rather a medium that periodically acts as a supplement to an intense being in the world.

## **An "In-medias-res"-medium and a "situationist" medium**

In the above sense, the sketch-note book is a fine "in-medias-res" medium, meaning a medium that both in time and space is "among things", out in the world, in the surroundings and, moreover, relatively unnoticed in the various situations.

You can say that our lives spontaneously and continuously are constructed on the basis of situations (Laursen 1998). At one level - a situationist level - the life of a human being can be characterised as one long range of continuously emerging situations.

The situations of life are, from this point of view, never alike or identical. For the present situation is, in principle, always unique and in that way different from all other situations, caused by the fact that we have never been in the present situation before.

This does not mean that life is experienced and remembered this way.

For seen from an other level - the accumulations in memory - it is our pre-understanding of the world that existentially is foundational (Gadamer 1976), mentally organised from what we have experienced in earlier stages of our life:

"The eye comes always ancient to its work, obsessed by its own past and by old and new insinuations of the ear, nose, tongue, fingers, heart, and brain. It functions not as an instrument self-powered and alone, but as a dutiful member of a complex and capricious system"(Goodman 1976: 7).

Luckily we have two eyes and mobile stereo vision, so the "eye" is meant in the plural here.

From an epistemological perspective Ulric Neisser identifies some basic cognitive structures of vision:

"In my view, the cognitive structures crucial for vision are the anticipatory schemata that prepare the perceiver to accept certain kinds of information rather than others and thus control the activity of looking. Because we can see only what we know how to look for, it is these

schemata (together with the information actually available) that determine what will be perceived. Perception is indeed a constructive process" (Neisser 1976: 20).

We organise our everyday understanding and understanding on the basis of our experience, but luckily it is also a dynamic phenomenon, the schemata are open to change:

"At each moment the perceiver is constructing anticipations of certain kinds of information, that enable him to accept it as it becomes available. Often he must actively explore the optic array to make it available, by moving his eyes or his head or his body. These explorations are directed by the anticipatory schemata, which are plans for perceptual action as well as readiness for particular kinds of optical structure. The outcome of the explorations - the information picked up - modifies the original schema. Thus modified, it directs further exploration and becomes ready for more information" (Neisser 1976 : 21).

We are always simultaneously in a unique "in-medias-res-surrounding-situation" where we bring our complex experience. Also when we are in Paris, and also when we go to a museum here or anywhere else. You bring it with you all the time, it is a part of your mind and body, you are your consciousness.

## **Tension and combinations**

Reflections of function and content in my choice of media are often understood in the terms of a tension between "situationism" and experience. My sketch- and notebook simultaneously prolongs the analytical *double wish* to be able to make decisions and arrive at solid judgements both "in-medias-res" and in later investigations. In this article I try to show aspects of both these dimensions. The writing of this article here represents the last dimension.

Therefore it is important that the sketch- and notebook as a medium contains some pre-existing, well-established characteristics as well as spontaneous, newly acquired characteristics. Under some circumstances you sometimes have the need to reflect for a long period of time on a certain

location in order to write and interpret aspects of your experience. You can also go deeply into the challenges of a motif and the complexities of a picture's surface to expand your experiences that way. Or you may need to (very quickly) write down a thought using written language or draw a very fast sketch. And certainly you can feel a need to *combine* some of the possibilities mentioned here.

## Plastic qualities

In my opinion, the sketch- and notebook is a wonderful instrument for combining many things, to collect important elements. Thus the sketch- and notebook has some important plastic qualities as a medium. That is why I use it so often.

In periods, I bring it with me and use it all the time, also when I am not travelling. In the following vignette in figure 3 the streetlights in Paris have been lit outside my hotel window where you can see one of these characteristic French capital wrought iron decorations:



Figure 3.

What characterises Paris? Wrought iron is probably one of the aspects. By the way, how do you interpret the text in the picture? King George. King Edward or parKING, BurgerKING? Sketch- and notebook, page 62.

The circadian rhythm is part of the experience of the town. And lights and darkness in the enlightened urban space.

The importance of being able capture in some form things which suddenly appear in your mind - was demonstrated by the Danish author Leif Panduro, who in a very funny passage in a novel teased a young bookseller by asking him whether he had got some "indfaldspapir" for sale.

In Danish "indfaldspapir" was invented by Panduro as a joke. It sounds a special kind of paper for technical like purposes. It is not! It actually means an ordinary type of paper in which you can roughly jot down thoughts that suddenly appear in your mind. So the poor fellow did not know what to answer.

You may think now that it is a book made of "indfaldspapir" that I have brought with me to Paris. Well, to some degree it is, but there is more to it than that. It is not just about jotting down in writing or drawing spontaneous and original phenomena coming to my mind and attention, but also to create a forum for traces of a "being over a period of time" in Paris, where also the spaces *in between* are of importance.

It is not just the "indfald" and the process of giving it form, which is my goal; also the study of in-between "surroundings" and the circumstances under which they appear have my interest with respect to my consciousness and my research.

## **Attention**

Using my sketch- and notebook, I ask the following question: What was my consciousness directed towards in this specific week in Paris? How was my attention directed towards something? What kind of being, what kind of existence, is it I live there? Or lived there?

Here I claim that the book as a hand-held tool has a range of quick qualities which allows me to capture and make visible what is significant for my awareness. This is my claim and thesis.

Home again from Paris I wrote down key-words in the book and on the allocated pages of the book made an overview of the appearance and frequency of the key-words. As shown you can see in the lower left part of figure 4 the Danish word "kroppen"/=body appears many times.

That gave birth to the title of this article "Paris in the body - the embodiment of Paris".

Figure 4

The table of contents showing key-words and topics in my sketch- and notebook displays many references to the word "krop"/body (in the brackets I have written: "my body" and "the body of museums" (BL-sketch- and notebook, page 6)

Having looked through this table of contents showing key-words, subjects and themes, noticing when they appear and with what frequency, it became clear to me that the word "body" (in the four meanings mentioned earlier) clearly was the most dominant theme in the book. In the following this will be explored in more depth, especially in relation to vision as a tool of consciousness and the hand as a drawing and writing instrument.

### Many combined movements

We move our eyes in our head. We move our head. We move our bodies in many different ways and tempi. Moreover we often move our body using various kinds of means of transport: bicycles, cars, bus, underground, trains, riverboats, aeroplanes to mention some of the most relevant in the Paris area. In all of these situations, your sight is an integral part of what comes to your consciousness:

"It selects, rejects, organizes, discriminates, associates, classifies, analyses, constructs. It does not so much mirror as take and make"  
(Goodman 1976 : 7-8)

You move your hand when you draw. Or maybe more precisely, your hand moves when you draw, this can occur in several different ways.

For most people drawing is associated with fine-grained motor coordination. The hand rests on the paper and the pencil makes small, well controlled movements. The self-portrait in Figure 1 - and parts of the drawing of Notre Dame Cathedral in Figure 10 - are examples of such a use of the hand. The hand - like the gaze - moves from time to time so it can rest indifferent places on the surface of the drawing.

If one speeds up the making of strokes - as in the drawing of von Spreckelsen's huge arch in the La Defence area in Figures 21 and 24 - it is not the joints of the fingers that are the main part of the body in action, but primarily the wrist that is active and swinging. The increased speed gives the strokes a different character. Try to compare these two different ways of drawing.

You can very easily make a very quick experiment by drawing as fast as possible any irregular stroke on a piece of paper. Then try to copy it by drawing a slow line as exact as possible making a careful copy next to the fast one. What you have in front of you now are two very different sketches where just one of them is associated with a fast movement. It is simply impossible to copy a fast line when drawing slowly!

So during the process of drawing the movements of your body - minor and bigger and combinations of the two - will leave some visible traces in the appearance of the drawing.

## **Many joints**

We have a large repertoire for varying our motor coordination when we use our body, also during the drawing process. We are able to activate the following parts together and simultaneously: the joints of the fingers, the wrist, the elbow, the shoulder, the hip, the knee, and the instep of the foot.

It is a limited format I hold in one hand, my sketch- and notebook (the size being 21 x 14 cm), but I can make

movements visible in the lines produced although bigger formats are obvious media for these visual expressions.

An example of a very fast drawing process is presented in Figure 5 that shows the hill view of Sacré Coeur seen from the "glass-pipe-staircase-system" on the exterior of the Pompidou Centre (or what you should call this very special construction of the staircase, our language seems to face some problems signalling spatial dimensions of such a kind). This sketch was made in only a few seconds.

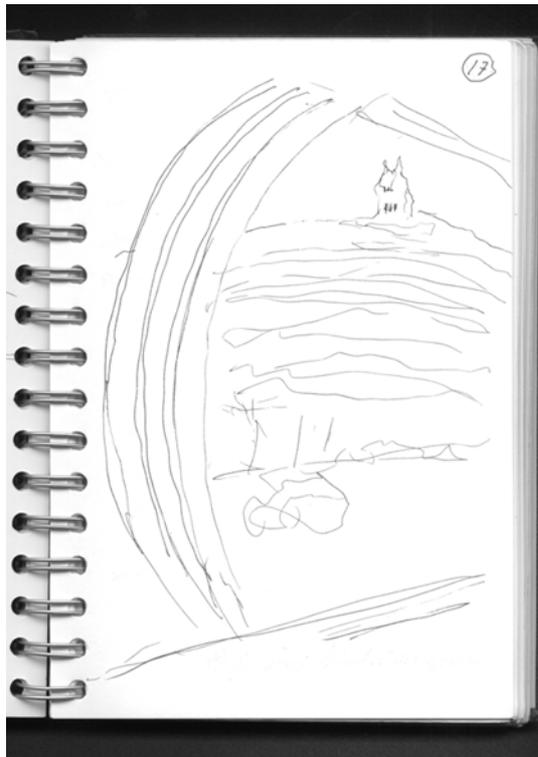


Figure 5.

In wonderful sunshine I saw the sky, the horizon and the ground. Here in this very fast sketch the eye has been "taking and making" rapidly, also on the surface of the picture. (Sketch- and notebook, page 17).

The drawing was made in movement as I get on the escalator. It does not show any details, but for me it catches a moment and particularly some central visual qualities from that unusual space in which it took place, so many in fact, that I will later be able to reconstruct the actual experience when I see or re-view this drawing.

## Memory and space

You probably do not remember the Pompidou Centre for its beauty. You may even say that it has none. But the function of this unusual building in the local surroundings in the city seems more like a success. Not only can you look from the centre but also in, giving a sense of the life taking place inside this coloured giant where all the technical installations seem to be placed on the outside of the spectacular architecture. Here is a brilliant combination of an outdoor-indoor experience, which is at the same time also an indoor-outdoor experience. Therefore it was very important to catch and preserve a little visual glimpse in this tiny sketch of my experience of the space in this glass-pipe-staircase-construction where a famous vertical and horizontal wide-screen-view showed spectacular heights and depths, visual phenomena that an ordinary camera would not have caught.

A little more time is used in the following fast sketch, but we are still under a minute. My primary goal here is to signal a bit of that milieu, mood and feeling we experienced during a French evening at dinner time:



Figure 6.

Fast sketch of the restaurant "Les Philosophes", showing narrow streets lit up in the evening. It is a highly recommendable idea that an excursion like ours had a connoisseur to find and point out the interesting localities beforehand. BL-sketch- and notebook, page 13.

The focal attention in this drawing is on the sign under which Kim Sandholdt (carrying a camera) is standing.

## Originality

One of the qualities of sketch- notebooks as media is their tendency to become original.

There are several reasons for that.

One is that we are all biological variants that have lived different lives and gone to different schools and thus been subjected to different influences, both qualitatively and quantitatively. The leader of the Danish Jazz band "Fessors Big City Band" once was asked why and how he got his nickname (pro)"Fessor" and he replied that the only reason was that he was the only person in the band that had spent all seven years in the first class in school.

Graphologists identify originality and symptoms in the enormous differences in handwriting. Drawings are often studied for the originality of the different strokes, for example.

At the same time, one can argue that an individual's experience of the surroundings in a strict sense can be said to be original. (Gibson 1986).

Probably a lot of people have been sitting like me and trying to make the same bench even flatter than it was before, the one I used when I drew a part of the Eiffel Tower in the middle of the afternoon on Wednesday 20 November, 2002, (see figure 7). But it is not necessarily the case that they did the same as I did, when they actually sat there.

Perhaps some have sat drawing there, but certainly many more will have taken photos, and most people probably just sat there staring at this world famous overwhelmingly spectacular metal construction.

There are good reasons for why this tower is so well-known and can be seen in any type of weather. But like the other visitors I did not bring the weather with me. It was already

there when I arrived! Actually I had to make my way through it to get to this attraction:

"Wonderful sounds from the fountains when I pass them on my way to the tower. Still I feel a mild heat haze and mild winds." (BL-sketch- and notebook, page 80)

## **Relative proportions**

I do the following two things. First, after arriving at this place and having found my seat on the bench, I choose as my first action to draw the tower at so close a distance that the totality cannot be seen. Using this part of the totality (*pars pro toto*), I deliberately intend to provoke the viewers of my drawing slightly. You can - when you study this sketch - imagine the rest of the motive or interpret the drawing as an original way of "cropping" a visualisation of this well-known attraction, or do both.

As the second action, I write in the book about the experience of (re)viewing the tower:

"Quite nice to sit here again under the tower (I also sat here many years ago). It looks like a enormous work of graphics. And there is a little shop in each of the four "legs"! You may imagine the rest of the tower!" (BL-sketch- and notebook, page 80)

Deliberately I also use the phenomenon of writing on the pages of the book to influence this drawing of one of the "legs" in more than one way.

Apart from the questions I ask in my handwriting, I also use the mass and extension, "looking at" the text itself to sort of "push" the drawing, so that it seems to be pressed to the bottom of the page, whereby one foot of the tower appears even more enormous as "*pars pro toto*".

In the first round, I created the drawing. In the second, I wrote the surrounding text.

The term "in relative proportions" is important to analyse because the visual elements here involves well known, but not often compared dimensioning: handwriting, people, the Eiffel Tower, the spiral back of the book.

My sketch- and notebook can also be seen as an aesthetic study of how to exploit the format of the pages of the book in handwriting and sketching

This drawing here is also an experiment in the use of a spiral book as a spatial medium.

## Relative simultaneity

To try to formulate oneself both in handwriting and sketching simultaneously often results in some original contributions - or innovative aspects of different kinds as in Figure 7. This does make it particularly interesting to explore the use of a medium such as sketch- and notebooks. And even if you depart from the wish for originality (a tendency which I certainly would not like), then any concrete experience of standing in front of and walking around the Eiffel Tower can in its own right, and in the deepest meaning of the word, be considered as original.

We can place ourselves in the same location in the same position, but we can never do it simultaneously. We always are our bodies. A body always occupies a space and we cannot simultaneously "overlap" the space each of us occupies at any point in time. The position of the single body is unique with respect to spatial and temporal dimensions.

That means that we never see the same things from the same position at the same time. So in this sense originality is something that is *difficult to escape*. That does not mean however, that originality has intrinsic value. It certainly also is a question of aesthetics and communication.

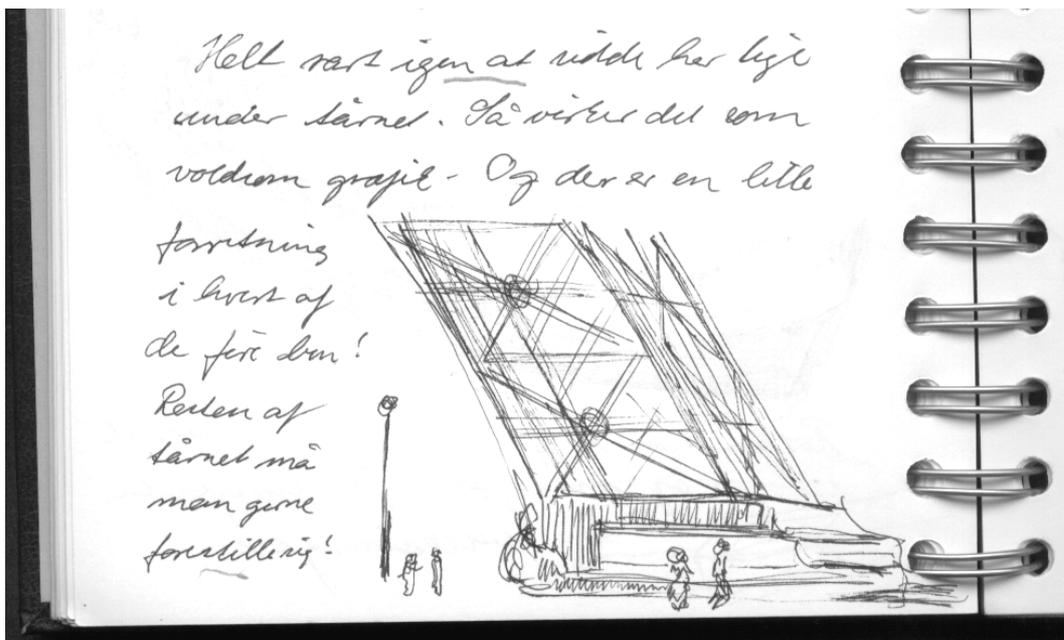


Figure 7.

First the drawing was made. Afterwards it was squeezed by the comments made in handwriting. BL-sketch- and notebook, page 80.

Did you think of the same order: drawing - text or visa versa?

## **Intimacy**

The diary phenomenon is also associated with the term "intimacy".

The classic diary signals privacy as well as intimacy. It is the kind of literature that reveals "confessions", if it gets out of the hands of the writer.

Now this is in deep contrast to my sketch- and notebook, which for me is a tool that other people also could investigate and hopefully comment on. In this respect my book is *not* traditional.

If it is intimate it is certainly not in the confession-meaning of the term. There are no confessions in it (as far as I am aware!). So I am afraid that I must disappoint the especially interested reader on this point. But the book is hopefully intimate in the sense that it is original and worth reading not least in the light that it is authentically true in the sense that it has *not been edited*.

Quite concretely, it has been produced on location in new situations where I have been drawing and writing - writing and drawing - and no leaves are missing in this spiral book, where I wrote page numbers before I started to put other kinds of content into it.

But I have known from the very beginning that other people would be likely to look at it, its status being a working tool. So it has been written with the kind of filter that this kind of knowledge represents.

## **What characterises a sketch- and notebook? A fluctuating example**

Copenhagen Airport: waiting time, time for expectations, distraction? Airports seem to have some kind of "situationist" character. They remind me of a squashed anthill, enlarged but relatively flat. People swarm around seeking different and identical destinations, before the gates. What a compression of human energy! Visual and audial information in certain

areas which sometimes appear as an empty or crowded or even overcrowded anthill, in which a paradox seems to be that nobody seems to live there. But you can almost always be sure that you will have to use your legs and body to walk around and always if you are going to international departures.

My consciousness is influenced by a here-and-now-experience of being surrounded by the airport phenomenon. I draw a sketch and I write something down in my book. A red aeroplane catches my attention. (See Figure 8):

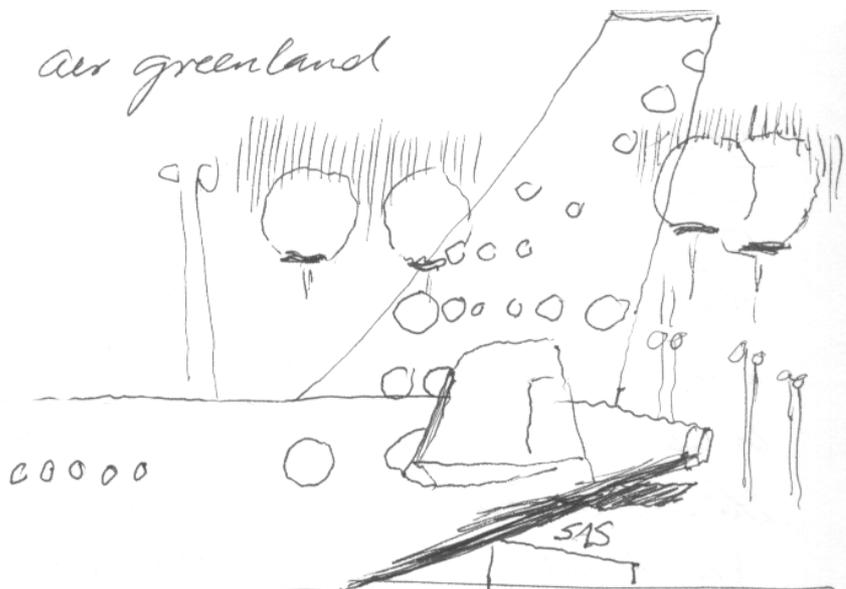


Figure 8.

Notice the reflections in the huge glass windows of "Copenhagen Airport Kastrup". BL-sketch- and notebook, page 10.

This plane belongs to "Air Greenland", which I have also written on the drawing.

Why this attention?

I am absolutely aware that I am not going to travel in this machine (the early time of the day also taken into consideration). One good reason why I pay so much attention here is that I have to much time to spend before my Paris

departure. I am early, so I can take my time to experience more than the boarding and departing procedures. As an example, I have time to pay 47 DKK(!) for a single cup of machine-made coffee in one of the cafés!

## **Chains of association**

Drinking the mocha I realise that I have remembered also to bring with me my childhood - or at least some reminiscences of it - to this flat island of Amager, because red ships (from the Danish shipping company J. Lauritsen from the city of Ribe (Hestehave & Mulvad 1994 : 32/33) seem to sail round among icebergs in distant northern green-blue waters in my consciousness now and many years ago!

The chain of association seems clear: the red aeroplane, Greenland, the red ships in the green-blue water. The red colour in its grey surroundings here displays a lot of visual power, likewise the red ships with the ocean around Greenland as background. And I remember these clearly, They differed from other ships, like the aeroplane here, mainly the colour contrast.

This aeroplane has a certain size. Several phenomena in the drawing indicate this: it is seen from a low position and moreover it is just the tail of the machine that is visible as "pars pro toto". Is the plane so big or am I so close to it that there is not enough space for it in my field of view? That is a possibility, but it is not the case. I actually could see all of the aeroplane from where I was sitting without moving my eyes, head or body.

Something else was going on there! Something had aesthetic quality. All those white and mirroring circles seemed to sort of fizz like champagne. White bubbles on the red surface on the rudder. It strengthens the entire elegance of the design of the plane. And simultaneously in my perception these round bubble-forms in a certain way seemed to interact with some other round shaped phenomena, the white lamps that are mirrored in the glass wall belonging to the restaurant which is between me and the plane. This is also influenced by the central perspective from the street lamps outside.

This complex visual interplay interested me. I tried to catch it in a drawing that signalled an interesting complex space between my eyes and the horizon.

## **Absence of colour.**

I knew that my black pencil would not capture the main visual code of the whole scenario!

I felt the absence of the possibility of using colours in this line drawing of the Air Greenland aeroplane to be quite a limitation. I might have brought and used coloured pencils. But then you have to bring many. And then you start facing a practical problem, coloured pencils are not such a fast medium as a black pencil because of the switching among the pencils during the drawing process.

The desire to show colours in my drawings reoccurred when walking round Notre Dame studying the tactile and surface qualities of the trees and autumn leaves among other things. A symphony of colours that could inspire for at least a week's intensive experimentation, using pastel, colour pencils and other colour media. But the low temperature at this moment - it feels really cold and I am freezing in spite of appropriate clothing for this Paris drawing trip - indirectly sharpens the intensity of my awareness of the interplay of colours.

I realise, that I will not stay here in this specific location much longer, which again is the beginning of reflections about reasons for returning if the opportunity should emerge. So that can also be seen as a reason to stop and draw again (however I do not entitle this phenomenon "Future-memories" as the late Danish poet, Michael Strunge, might have done).



Figure 9.

One of many coloured fallen leaves around and especially behind Notre-Dame. The colours seem to play a role in memory. BL-sketch-and notebook, page 22.



Figure 10.

My bench-view of how the Notre-Dame cathedral was visited by many tourists. They swarmed in and out of it. And I stop and draw because on earlier travels I have passed this spectacular location. Two years ago my family and I actually sailed next to this church on the Seine (see figure 23), but it is quite many years since I have had time to just stop, stay, and look carefully around here. At that time French children used the roofs of the towers as a slide without falling from the banisters from the height of 69 metres! Maybe that is the reason why I did not go to the top of the towers this time. BL sketch-and notebook, page 23.

Still, the phenomenon of colours appears in my mind - and my consciousness is immediately back in Copenhagen Airport - as

soon as I re-view the black and white drawing of the coloured aeroplane in Paris or the vignette of the leaf I drew later!

## **Jumping about**

A lot of colour phenomena seem to be stored in my consciousness. And apparently the colour phenomenon seems to be characterised by readiness. However the colour influence is not linked to the drawing of this specific cathedral-front. Something else is also relevant, namely other drawings and paintings of this church. That makes it possible to compare visualisations.

Among other things I have in mind that it will be possible later to draw comparisons with other peoples pictures. How did they depict this motif? How, when and why are questions that I will study later in a comparative picture analysis.

Something similar happened when I passed Pont Neuf and crossed a street on my way to Notre Dame and spontaneously turned around and drew this bridge. I am assured that my memory is not a complete library where you can immediately find more or less well-known pictures of bridges in Paris. Well I might find some, but still a much more specific and indepth (re)search will be necessary in order to find representative and qualified answers.

I have other good reasons for drawing the front of Notre Dame: partly that it is historically interesting and partly that it has some special visual qualities, being positioned on the small island on the Seine which - at the time I was drawing - showed an extremely high water level.

This highly dangerous situation simultaneously characterised other central European capitals - Prague for example, an old city which I have visited several times - and I was directly reminded of it in an exhibition in the Tuilleries of historical photos from Prague. The water from the Seine ran into the River Moldau for a short second in my mind. I had no mental sheet between these associations. I think there are very few people do!



Figure 11.

Pont Neuf. Other people have also drawn and painted it. When, from where and how? Comparative studies are later tasks for my incomplete memory. BL sketch- and notebook, page 20.

## Money

"It will be much cheaper for me to draw a sketch of the cathedral" said my inner Scotchman instead of buying souvenirs in the surrounding kitsch universe.

And a propos Scotland - and Glasgow in particular - they have made a range of some very interesting and radical changes in their museums, which have pleased visitors significantly.

The point of departure here has been to say that the public - the visitors - will always be the centre. The museums are the *servants* of the public.

This has led to very fruitful considerations about how the entire body of a museum should be organised to serve as a basic structure for the experience and thus satisfy the needs of the bodies of the visitors.

As an example: Why is there nothing else than the queue itself to look at when you are standing there?

In many of the queuing areas materials, which are related to the exhibitions people are on their way to go and see and study, might be exhibited!

It is a waste of meaningful communicative possibilities not to stimulate the expectations and knowledge of the audience by not realising such immersive potentials, when people find themselves in such a tiring queuing culture from which only pickpockets benefit!

## **Bubbles and aerodynamic design**

If we go back to the time just before my departure I spotted such aesthetic potentials - the bubbles - in the concrete surroundings of the architecture of Copenhagen airport after my attention had been caught primarily by the red-grey colour contrast. These potentials - as far as I can analyse retrospectively - are triggered by a range of complex visual schemata in my situation-specific being. (Gombrich 1959).

How do passenger aeroplanes look? Here in this airport I am in the privileged situation that one such aeroplane is parked in front of me at a sufficient distance and without occluding elements that block my view. And even though I am not an engineer or constructor of such planes, I do know quite a lot about aeroplanes, the construction and interior. I have flown a lot in my life and been on board many such machines. This last aspect may be visible indirectly in Figure 12, which shows a part of my view towards the port side wing, although it is another window in another airplane on my trip back, a slightly different type of aeroplane than the one in Figure 8.

## **Visual references**

In Figure 8 there are some more schemata activated in relation to the appearance of lamps, and in relation to the ability of certain surfaces - such as glass as in my earlier example - to reflect things and mirror surroundings.

The advanced schemata in the drawing in figure 8 may seem similar to the Belgium graphics artist Escher's "Three worlds". As in Escher's graphics, three illusionary worlds are created in my drawing:

- 1)the substance of the glass (in Escher's picture this corresponds to the concrete surface of the water with leaves floating on top of it),
- 2)inside the building where I am sitting drawing (in Escher's picture this corresponds to the sky and the trees above the surface of the water) and
- 3)outside the building, where we find the aeroplane (corresponding to the fish world down in the water).

This is a complex double exercise of imagining you as reader are facing here as you also have to reconstruct the graphics of

Escher. You can see my drawing in Figure 8, but what does Escher's really look like? You can see the three layers - or worlds - in my work, and (or) find Escher's picture via my notes at the back of the article. Or are you familiar with Escher's depiction? Can you imagine it exactly? Or what you consider to be fairly exactly?



Figure 12.

To build windows into a cylinder form like this passenger cabin results in an especially complex design. Is it not strange, however, that we spontaneously think of this window as sitting in the wall of the aeroplane and not as something flying on the paper which seems to create the "ground" that is not there at all!

Another schemata relating to how to organise elements on the surface of the picture is active in Figure 8; it can be called a "pars pro toto". This aeroplane does not seem less interesting in spite of the fact that we only see a part of it. A selection has been made. (Laursen 1988).

Schemata related to perspective drawing are also at play, showing the line of the horizon and vanishing points. Knowledge about practising hatching techniques when drawing is also part of the genesis and appearance of this drawing. (Laursen 1988a).

In Gombrich's meaning of the term quite a lot of schemata seem to be activated in Figure 8. And as far as I can see, we

are dealing with schemata which have to do with both experiencing and reproduction.

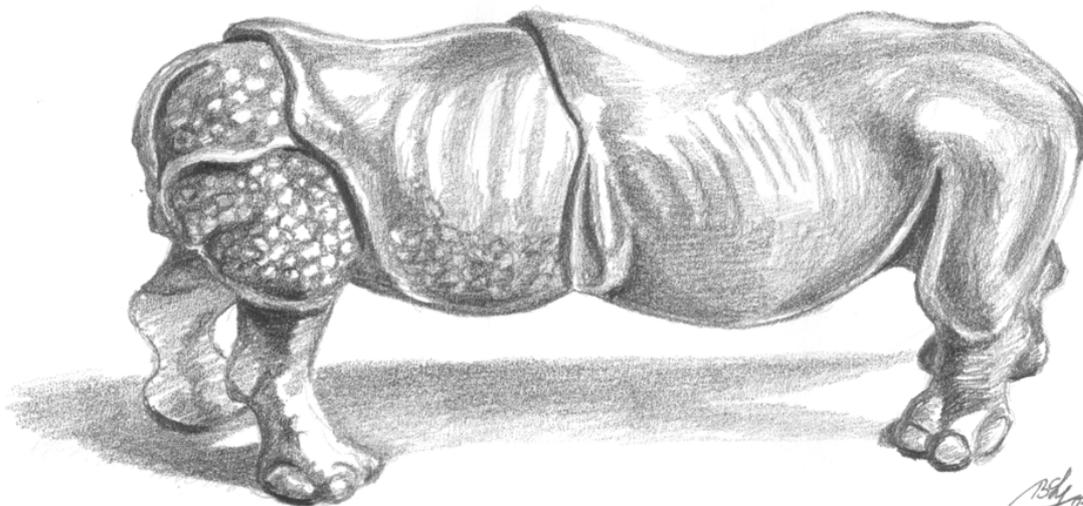
## Impossible rhinos!

Gombrich is also well-known for his reflections about rhinos and schemes. (Gombrich 1969). These reflections become particularly important when I meet a rhino in Paris, although stuffed and indoor, and even the specific one - the armoured Indian rhino (rhinoceros unicornis) - that seems to be the species that caused a good deal of his troubles with rhinos in relation to schemes. See Figure 14 (that I have entitled "Gombrich missing illustration" showing a bit of irony). The theory of schemata is valid, but the example is highly problematic, because a rhino that looks as if it is dressed in armour *exists* and is not a combination of the scheme of a medieval armour and an (African) rhino!

Unfortunately Gombrich is not sufficiently attentive towards the existing concrete diversity among the five species of living rhino on this earth when he makes his primary analysis of the scheme of the rhino based on the famous woodcut by Albrecht Dürer.

The armoured Indian rhino seems close to Dürer's drawing in Indian ink and woodcut. But Gombrich does not seem to know this and instead refers to one of the two African species.

See Figure 13, which I drew after my homecoming from Paris:



*Rhinoceros unicornis*

*ceratotherium simum*

Figure 13.

BL-drawing titled "Gombrich's missing illustration" of (some of) the armoured Indian rhino (to the left) and (some part of) one of the two African rhinos (to the right; they are called the "black" and "white" rhino because they are both grey! The word "wide" was mistaken for "white" and then followed the "black" automatically). This drawing was made some months after the Paris period, but the idea was already present in this form in Paris.

### **The mistake during the stuffing process**

It is an armoured Indian rhino that I drew on the national history museum, Musée National d'Histoire Naturelle. See Figure 14.

To make the confusion even more complete, I can add that it is a very old and famous specimen of an armoured Indian rhino, and due to the time when it was re-built, the technique of stuffing had the vital, but unfortunately negative impact on the visual appearance of the animal.

The impact on the skin of the stuffed animal seems quite smooth and less armoured than any living animal of that kind!

For that reason another participant in our excursion asked me some relevant and understandable questions on experiencing this rhino: "What is it with this rhino that is so interesting?" she asked.

And the only "clear" answer I could give was this: "It is what you cannot see that is the interesting thing!" You should be able spontaneously to see that this animal looks armoured, but unfortunately it does not!

The museum conservator has simply missed that quality in his reconstruction of the dead animal.

He has probably never seen this type of rhino as a living creature, I guess! And moreover this whole story about the origin of rhinos, seem to be entirely French!? If you look at the people referred to (noted in my drawing in Figure14 also), it seems that here the world is more French that you would expect!

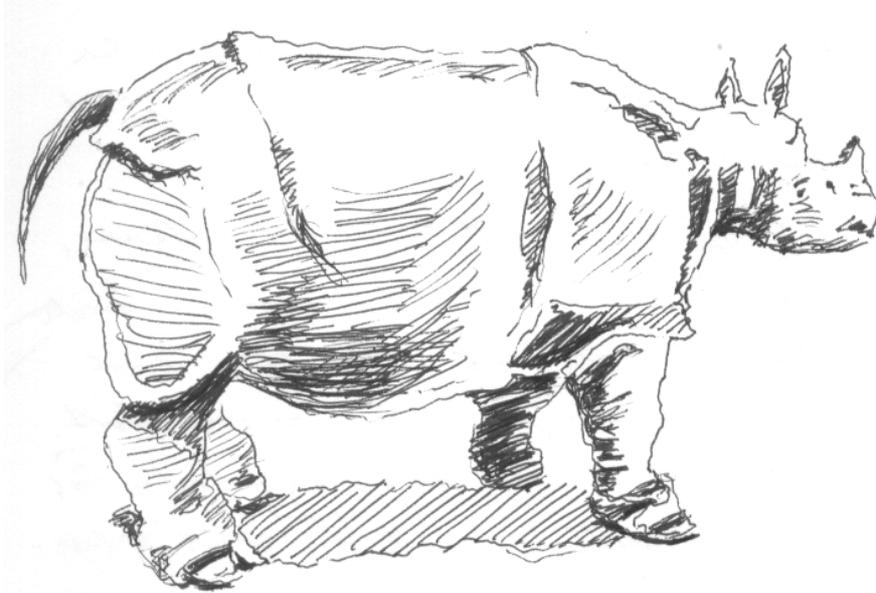


Figure 14.

Drawing of an Indian armoured rhino (*rhinoceros unicornis*). It is an old and very hard stuffed animal that does not look like the living, armoured Indian rhinos. BL-sketch- and notebook, page 45.

So what is left of the concrete empirical animal has been filtered by the museum conservator and his skills and knowledge (or missing knowledge). It does make the appearance of this animal far from characteristic.

The distinctive, armoured qualities are simply missing.

### **Recreating reality**

It is vital that recreations made by museums - such as stuffing - are built on experiences where the conservators themselves have seen and heard the animals authentically in concrete surroundings. There must be no elements present that do not fulfil those criteria.

Often you actually do see things like that, when for example you look at birds of prey - especially eagles - and find that they have been used in an emblematic way, for example representing the emperor's interests and being bodily positioned in ways that are not typical of any of these birds in nature.

## **The body of set design**

As a general description and analysis of the Natural History Museum, it is fair to say - studying the museum as a whole - that it certainly takes set design seriously, a group of set designers seem to have worked intensively there. Thus the body of the museum has in a sense been turned into a theatre. (Laursen 1992).

As a visitor, you are influenced by the flow of rooms, because they are designed as spaces people move through.

It is by no means designed as an accident that the enormous octopus in my illustration in Figure 15 hits the spiral of the back of the book. In my "in-medias-res"-reflections - about how to depict this whole frightening scenario - I have consciously composed the illustration so it seems to "attack" its spatial surroundings.

This animal from the deep seems to be trying to catch the bypassing audience. Visually, I try to create a spatial analogy between this significant parameter in the scenario and the way it reappears in my sketching and notes.

We shall feel in our bodies that we are deep down in this wet underworld where we can easily be hit by the tentacles. They do not just look as if they catch but actually are very close to catching the viewer. See Figure 15. That this spatial design is a well developed strategy can be seen by the use of the beautiful video-pictures in Figure 15 as bait: you have to go near to study them, but then you get extremely close to the tentacles - the purpose of this sophisticated installation! You will have to move into the domain of the tentacles to be able to see the relatively small video-pictures clearly. See Figure 16. This is a very elegant use of the space here. The set design of this museum is made by the French film director René Allio and his team.

Every detail in this room shows spatial know-how about nature. The showcase with flatfish is on the floor, so it resembles the outdoor experience of stepping on one of these animals, which some visitors may have done and never will forget! See figure 17. The use of the low position of these animals illustrates their everyday surroundings in nature, which most visitors probably know from the fishshop where they find them placed at another height.

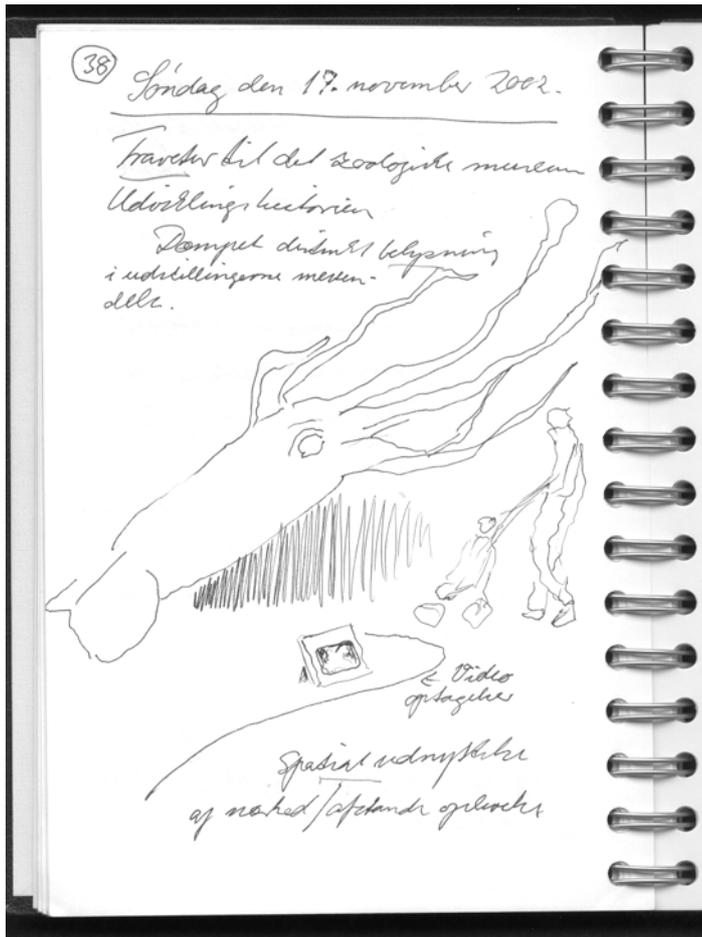


Figure 15.

This gigantic re-constructed octopus seems to reach out to catch the passing public. And maybe you are seduced by the beautiful small video-pictures to step too near! You are bodily "attacked" by this communicatively well functioning special construction. BL-sketch-and notebook, page 38.

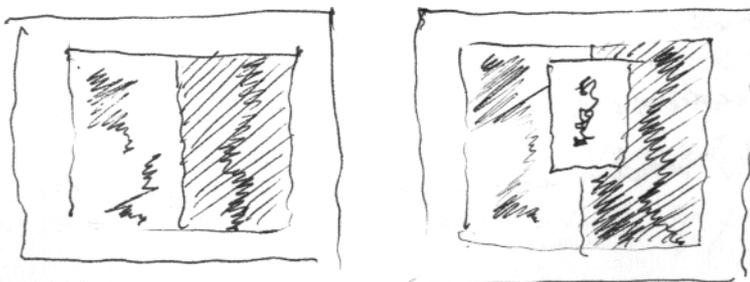


Figure 16.

Here you see a rough sketch showing the principles in the screen design of the video-pictures. This sketch is enough for me to be able

to remember the design even without sharp or moving pictures. BL-sketch- and notebook, page 39.



Figure 17.

You may feel as if you are able to step on the flatfish when you walk on the glass covering this showcase. BL-sketch- and notebook, page 39.

## The old "Menagerie" in the Jardin de Plantes

This zoo could be characterised as the tourist attraction that had *no advertising* this autumn! Only a diminutive park sign - among several others - told you that you were close to this absolutely see-worthy institution. There is no large portal here nor are there signs when you get in, so you can orient yourself as to how to go and see the garden!

All in all I did not find much else than what must be present in what is called a zoo: some animals in some cages; they were made in the same style, using iron constructions that reminded me of the Petit- and Grand Palais or the Eiffel Tower.

I found it pleasant to walk around with living creatures now. But I did find one spectacular and surprising exception here: a sculpture group of a family of hippopotamus created as a playground for children, where these highly naturalistic hippopotamus were in natural size 1:1!

The children loved this place climbing around making several kinds of spatial experiments: hanging in the hippopotamus teeth? Can I get my head into its mouth? See Figure 18.

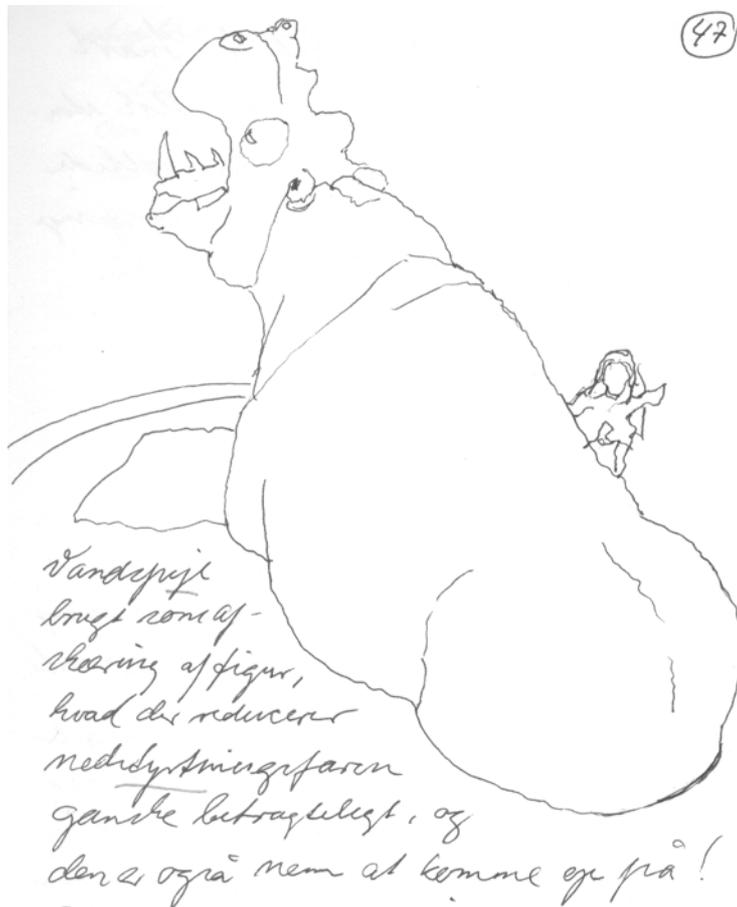


Figure 18.

Playground for children built around a family of hippopotamus with realistic appearance and scale. Crowds of kids were fascinated by these purpose built realistic animals where they could climb round as athletes on these well formed sculptures. BL-sketch- and notebook page 47.

It really did seem as if the minds of these children were filled with imaginings about these "fantastic", and at the same time absolutely realistic, sculptures. They probably imagined that they were extremely close to these creatures, living with them. In this naturalistic playground, many of the central parts of the wider concept of experience that I met in the National Museum of Natural History were being practised, and maybe also in some sense a little more, because here the children all the time had to use their bodies and touch the interesting animals.

This certainly is such a success that everybody with children will have to calculate a lot of extra time to go passed!

With respect to perception my drawing can be interpreted in two ways: if you move the eye of this animal, and instead see the ear as the eye, the whole creature will look more like a cast member of a cartoon. In this way you can switch between two different visual styles. (So sometimes I also make experiments within ongoing experiments when I sketch. BL-sketch- and notebook, page 47).

You may conclude that this playground is actually quite visionary as a concept for exhibitions! In the neighbouring areas, you could see some "modernist" colourful playgrounds with animals that do not look like "naturalistic" animals; they have more simple forms look more like schemata of animals. The only problem however seems to be that no children are interested in these - from a formal point of view - very clear shapes. The naturalistic animals seemed to have a quite different and direct appeal! That might be worth noticing not at least in pedagogical circles that are not just sponsored by toy producers.

## **Phenomena not seen before**

In this menagerie, I saw an animal that I had never seen before on this earth, a *Pseudois nayaur*, which was extremely beautiful. Here my body is trying to create a visualisation of the body of the animal in the drawing process.

I follow the different positions of the animal over time. To me, it seems cold, but apparently not for the animal, which after a quarter of an hour decides to lie down on a huge round cliff.

I think it is some kind of an Alpine ipex, but I am not sure, and - as earlier examples have already demonstrated - you should be very careful with the terminology, taxonomy and diversity of nature and the wildlife of the Himalayas which unfortunately I have not yet studied.

What really troubles me is this exceptionally agile beauty of this animal and the fact that I do not know it although I certainly have studied a large number of different species until now.

Just to be there and observe this beauty is enough for me to fully occupy my attention.

But I do also succeed in making a sketch.

And although I have not seen this animal before, I seem to have seen quite enough of other animals, which also appear visually related to it. So I do not face problems in reproducing this animal in my sketch. I did not run out of schemata! So phenomena not seen before can be represented if related phenomena can be identified.

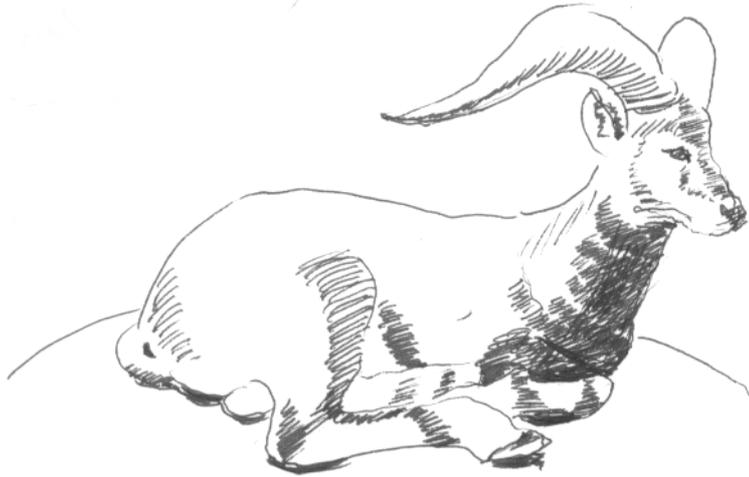


Figure 19.

Pseudois nayaur (Blue Ship). "I have never seen it before, but it is so beautiful" I have written in my sketch- and notebook, page 49.

## **Body and landmarks**

In Paris you find much that is designed as shows of power. Among other things you meet the long road - the axis of the arches of triumph - the Champs Elysées. In Figure 20 I am walking along this famous road that is flanked by double rows of plane trees on each side.

I am resting on one of the beautiful double benches made of wrought iron and wood. Walking speed also allows you to experience the characteristic street lamps. Thinking of the size of this monument, erected by Napoleon, I am a bit surprised to be able to draw it on a single page in my sketch- and notebook. See figure 20.

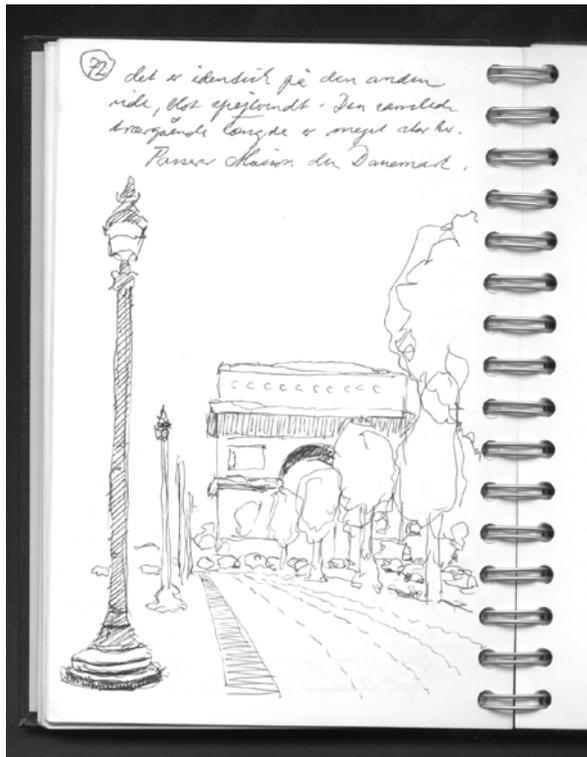


Figure 20.

The grandiose Arch of Triumph at the Champs Elysées that you can also see from many other positions far away in the rest of town. BL-sketch- and notebook, page 72.

Later, things change when I experience and draw the new Arche de triumph, because then I spontaneously choose to draw on a double page to signal this gigantic surrounding world inside the small scale format of a spiral book.

The new Arch de triumph - constructed by the Danish architect Johan Otto von Spreckelsen, "La Grande Arche", is the absolute architectural core of the area "La Defense". I was overwhelmed by its appearance seeing and meeting it on the staircases from the underground, where I felt I returned to the surface of the earth walking on white marble and experiencing gigantic architecture from a frog's perspective.

All this was supported by the entire area where you only find new built modern, tall and wide scaled experimental architecture.

The proportions of this whole scene are suggested in the tiny wire-hanging lift where my colleague Kim Sandholdt is on his

way to see the spectacular view from the top of the building, see Figure 21.

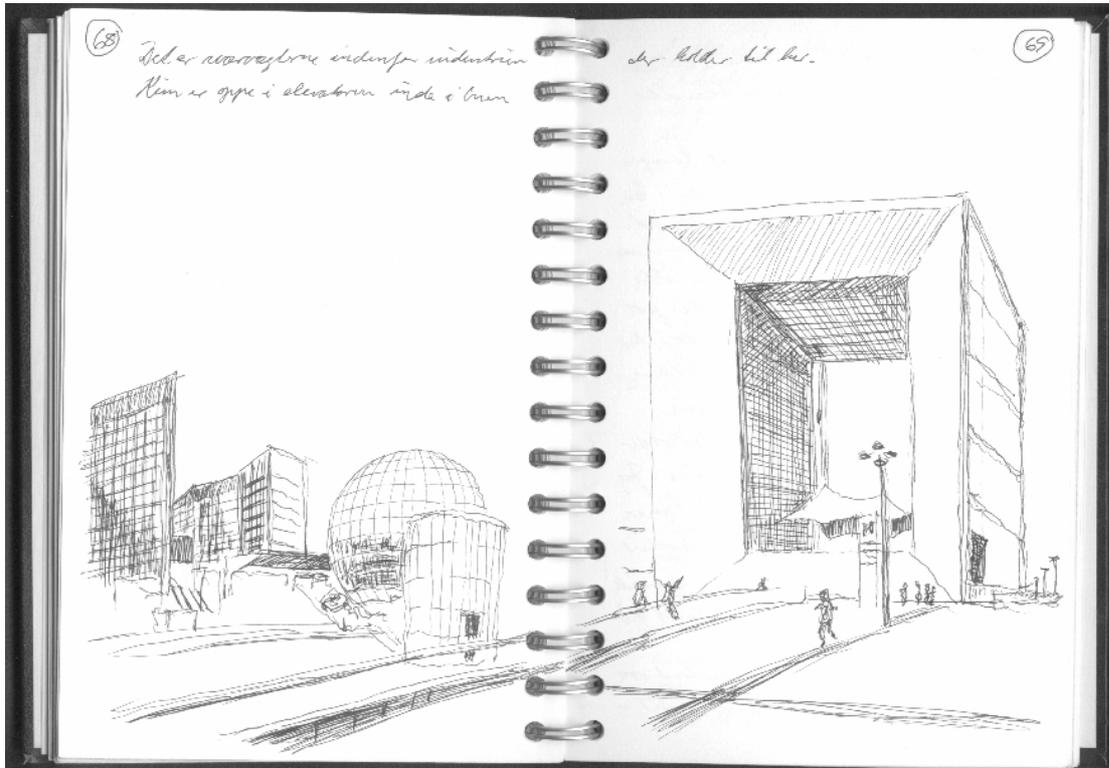


Figure 21.

La Grande Arche. The Danish architect Johan Otto von Spretkelsen's Arche de triumph is placed on the most powerful avenue in Paris. BL-sketch- and notebook, page 68-69.

Is it not a paradox that we Danes often criticise French people about their scale format, and any time we have a chance, we visit?

There certainly is a lot of power in these large-scale formats, probably according to most people, no matter what else you feel about these expensive buildings.

## Rock crystal

A small thing like a rock crystal is the point of departure for sketching and developing the entire complex of the buildings in Figure 22 (to the right ("page 67")).

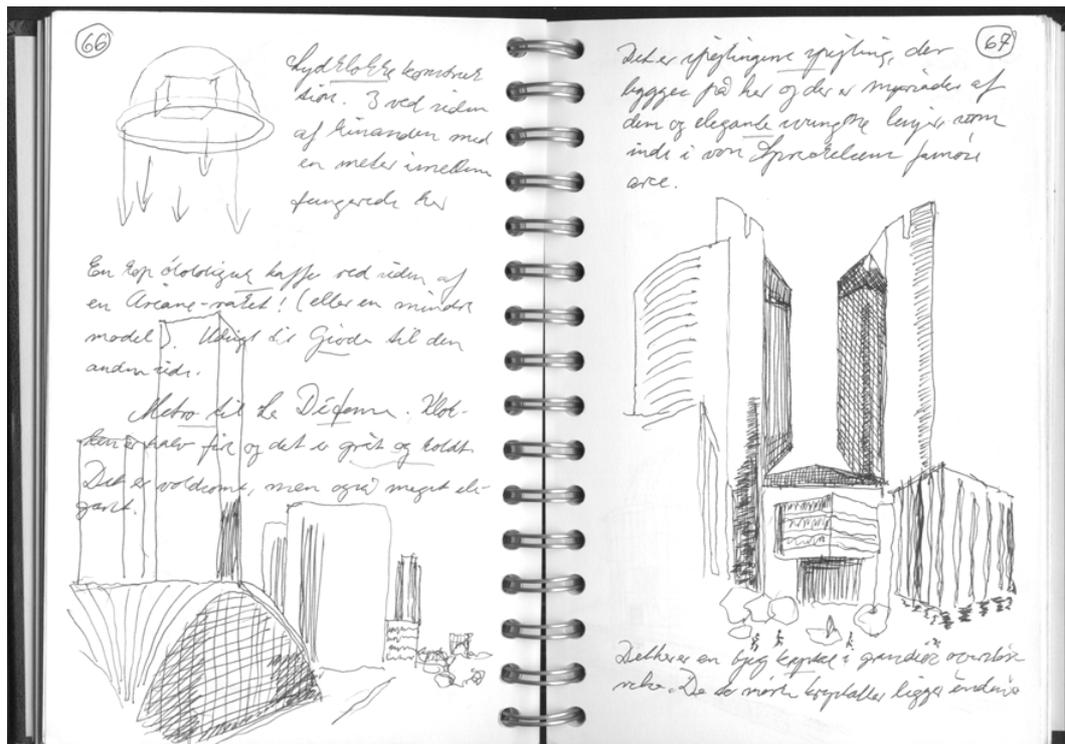


Figure 22.

BL-sketch-and notebook page 66-67. To the left I have made a sketch of an extremely focal loudspeaker from the centre Explora I Cité des Sciences and some office buildings from the La Defense area. To the right I have depicted the miraculous "rock crystal".

This diminutive blue quartz form - in combination with a huge power of imagination and a brilliant architect - is a spatial surprise, where both the dark and reflecting parts of the buildings as well as the *space between them*, fascinate significantly.

These are deeply original buildings created with a huge artistic courage and experimental force. It is an impressive success.

## Relative size

How tall is the front of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame? I showed the church in Figure 10. Have a look at this drawing again please!

In Figure 10, I view the famous cathedral from my sitting-on-a-cold-stone-bench-perspective on the square in front of the building.

In Figure 23 the level of viewing is different as the drawing has been made onboard-a-ship-sailing-on-the-Seine, see Figure 23:



Figure 23.

Here I have seen the cathedral and drawn it when I was moving - sailing - creating an on-board-picture from a riverboat on the Seine in 2001. I have "borrowed" this illustration from one of my earlier sketch- and notebooks. Here it is me - as the drawing person - that is moved relatively quickly alongside this motif, while I am drawing extremely rapidly from this low point of view - or line of view! Does that make the church longer?

You may get a feeling of the dimensions in the two *combined* drawings in Figure 24, that show the 69 metre tall Notre-Dame front placed in front of and partly *inside* the new 110 metre tall von Spreckelsen's arch:

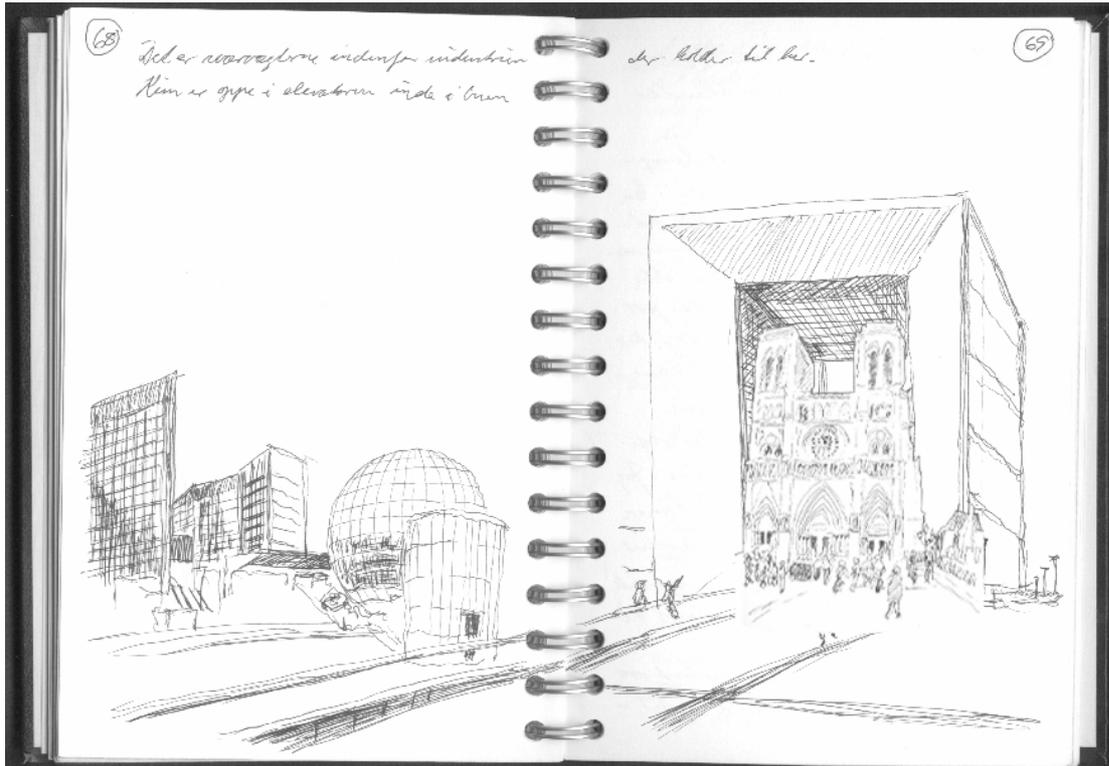


Figure 24.

Combination of two BL-illustrations, Figure 10 placed to the right on top of Figure 21. The Notre Dame Cathedral is quite big the towers being nearly 70 metres tall, but not higher than that the old church could be placed *inside* the opening in the cubic and newly built Johan Otto von Spreckelsen Grand Arche, where the total height of the building is as much as 110 metres.

### Diminutive elements

The contrasts, however, can also be created by diminutive elements.

The cathedral has a toilet which I will describe as a study of how tiny and diminutive a building can be made!

Large scale and right next to it an extremely tiny scale, what a contrast in this architecture!



Figure 25.

The toilet building is the smallest public building I have ever seen in this world. It certainly cannot be said to distract attention from Notre Dame to which it belongs and behind which it is situated. BL-sketch- and notebook, page 23.

You find a wide variety building of different appearances in the city of Paris. Not least *contrasts*. But in particular, Frenchmen show courage and innovative thinking in designing contrasts that display significant qualities.

Parisians seem to live well among contrasts of quality and innovative paradoxes, one may conclude.

### **Paris - a special attraction**

Figure 26 is the last drawing that I made during my last meal in Paris that week.

When I came home I showed it (without text) to a colleague from another Danish university and I claimed that I had drawn it in Lyon. "No way", he responded immediately, "it is from Paris", he said, and wondered afterwards - like me - how he could be so sure, when he said it.

What makes Paris look like Paris one might ask as the final question?

We are close to Gare de l'Est in this drawing, actually I am sitting in a restaurant on the square in front of it, and you can see some very interesting wall paintings to the right in the sketch. Among other things, I see Napoleons "Grand Arch" painted on distant walls far away.

All the same "Bon appetite" and welcome back to Paris! And do not forget to bring one of your sketch- and notebooks. They are highly suitable as a tool for your consciousness both when

you are in-medias-res and when carrying out analyses at a distance.

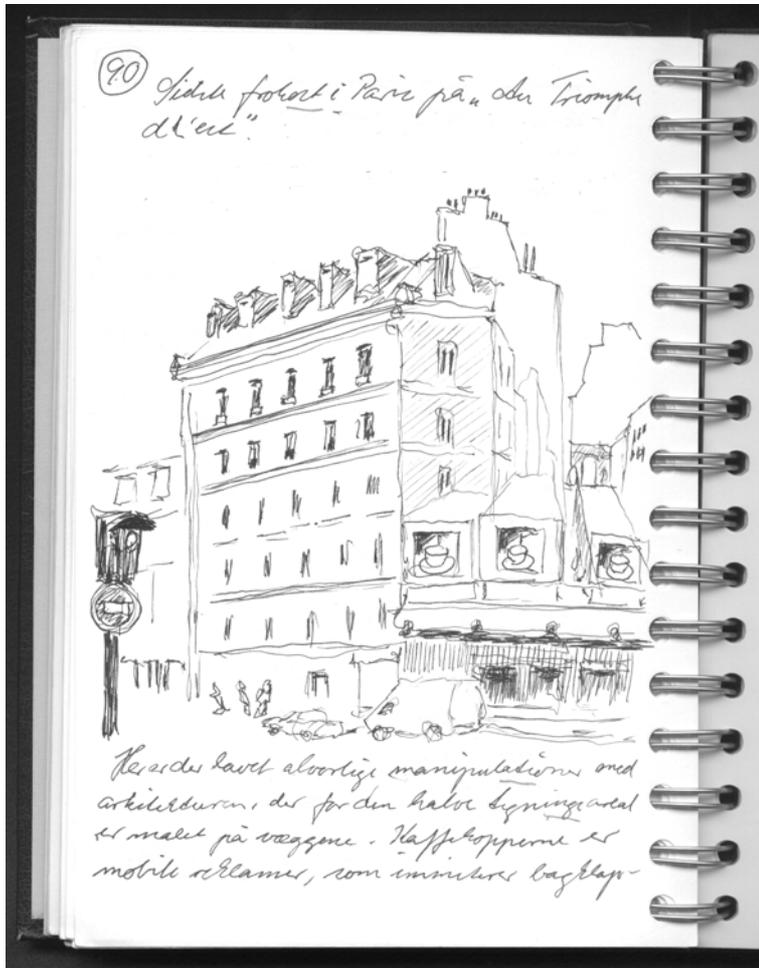
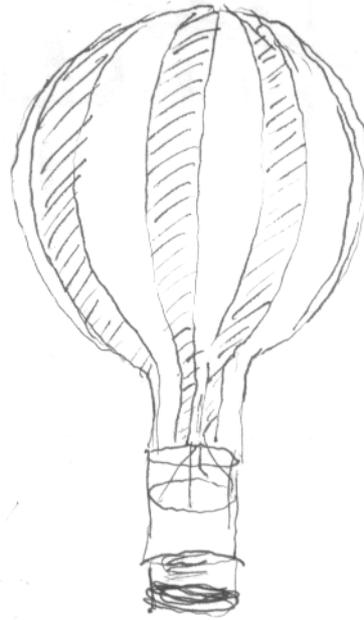


Figure 26.

Why is this motif from Paris and not from any other city in France?

The sidewalls of the buildings to the right are turned into wall paintings which again have been equipped with dynamic advertising - the huge coffee cups - which seem to be on the back parts of trucks pretending to be driving to other Paris landmarks. BL-sketch- and notebook, page 90.



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## List of visited museums and attractions

Musée d'Orsay  
Musée National des Arts Asiatiques Guimet  
Musée National d'Histoire Naturelle  
Musée Carnevalet  
Musée du Louvre  
Musée de l'Homme  
Musée de la Marine  
Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris  
Centre Pompidou  
Grand Palais  
Palais de Tokyo  
Conservatoire des Art et Métiers  
La Géode  
Explora, La Vilette. Cité des Sciences  
Jardin des Plantes  
Tower of Eiffel  
(EuroDisney)  
Notre-Dame  
La Defense  
Jardin des Tuilleries  
La Seine  
Menagerie  
Arc de Triomphe  
Place de la Bastille  
Place de la République  
Place de la Concorde  
Place de Louvre

## Notes

- 1) According to Umberto Eco's brilliant book about mirrors.
- 2) It was more than a year since I last was in Paris, but even more than 10 years since I took photos using my 6x6 camera, creating graphic work.
- 3) Escher, M. C. (1955) "Three Worlds", lithographic print, 361x247 mm, signed and dated: XII 55 MCE.

