



Previously, he had remarked to you: but not at the moment.

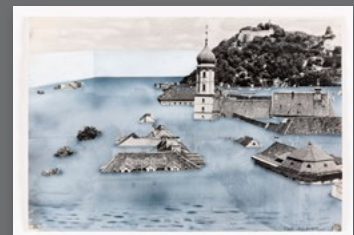


You scarcely remember the objects of your childhood that needed your confidence, your affection.



The way a girl cared for animals that lived in the fields in front of their house.

Which was her world.



She and her friends carried little chequered notebooks they'd purchased where parents buy school supplies in late August. Maybe with Donald Duck and the Scouts on a red cover.

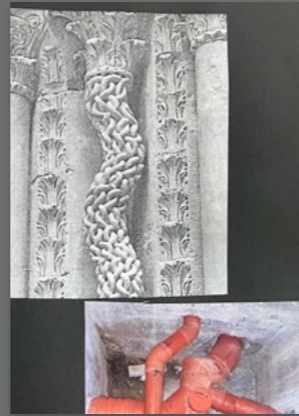
In these notebooks, they documented the injured grasshoppers and bumblebees they found in the fields and noted in tables their injuries and what the corresponding reanimation attempts had been.



Perhaps not with the effect of relieving their pain.



They meant well.



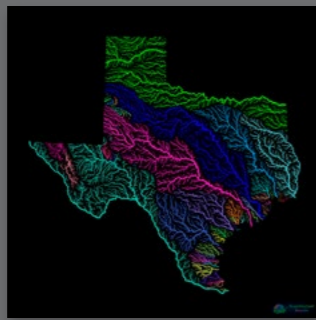
Again, try to remember back, but a little less distant: when childhood gives way to analytical probing.



Do you recall microscoping blades of grass sliced hair-thin? The miracle of cells—an abstraction.



By slicing a blade into paper, does it become an image?



Once, they had tried reviving a tadpole that was floating on the pond's surface.

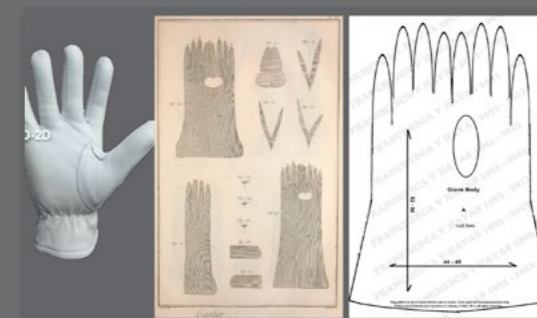


They believed the animals' soundness depended on their care.



Cells become circles. Outlines, drawn on a map. With nothing between them. But perhaps the color of the paper as background they are drawn against.

While in three-dimensional space,



as a medium,



the matrix is holding the cells.



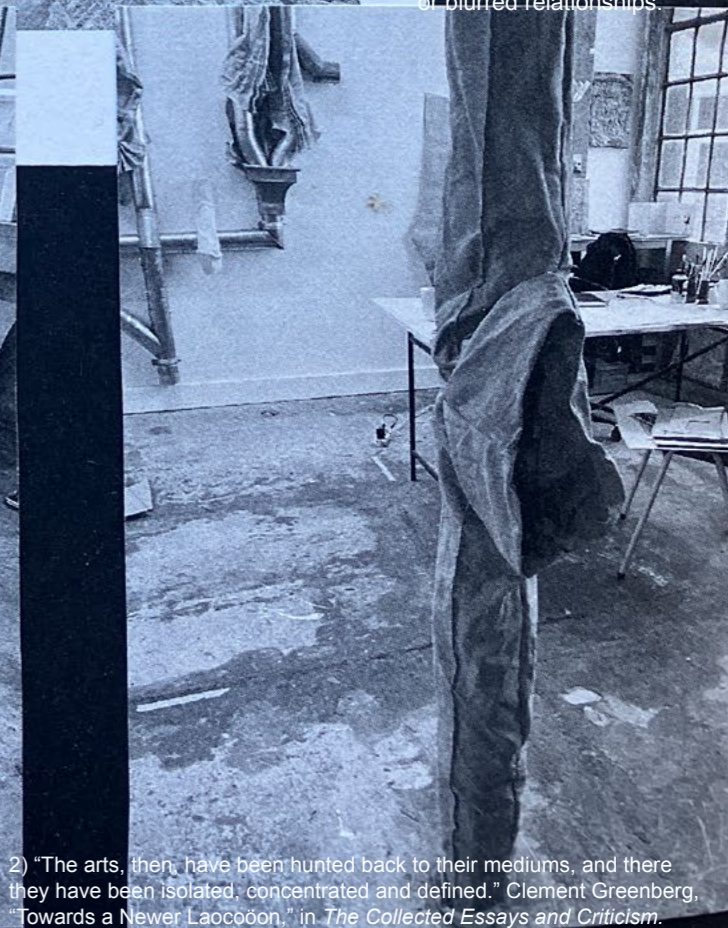
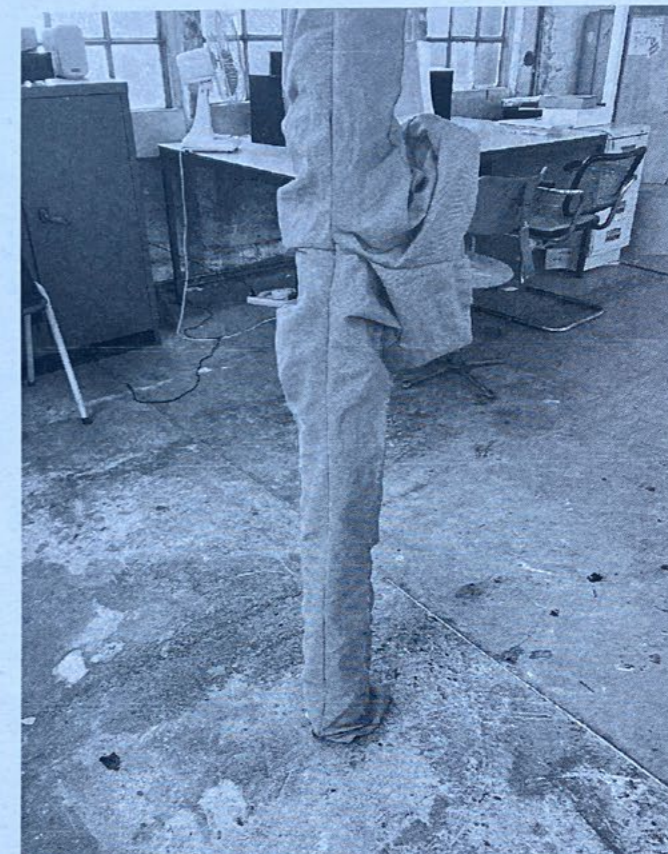
"The idea of rules as the vehicle of specificity drives a wedge between the way medium specificity is being used [by Rosalind Krauss] and the way it functioned in the most prestigious theorization of its relation to modernism, at the hands of Clement Greenberg."¹

Who defines the medium through hunting metaphors?²

Greenberg's specificity is tied to a physical substance. According to him, each art is recursive to its specific support, their flatness or three-dimensionality respectively. Circumscribing the subject from its limitations, this material reading of the artistic medium highlights not only its relationship to its own restrictions, but also its containments, its borders.

Why think of genres as closed off areas, likened to countries, requiring a passport to move between?

On the contrary, could a medium not be understood as middling work? Mediating amongst things that are already in productive (or less productive) conflict and are entangled in crisp or blurred relationships.



Think of a space holding a sculpture.

2) "The arts, then, have been hunted back to their mediums, and there they have been isolated, concentrated and defined." Clement Greenberg, "Towards a Newer Laocöon," in *The Collected Essays and Criticism, Vol. 1: Perceptions and Judgements, 1939-1944*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London 1988, pp. 26-27.

1) Rosalind E. Krauss, *Under Blue Cup*, MIT Press, Cambridge 2011.



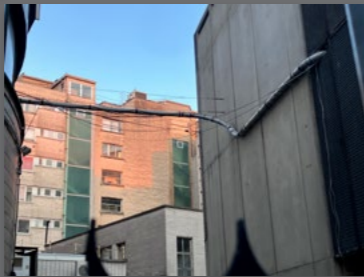
Think of a space holding a sculpture.



But what to make of the rules?



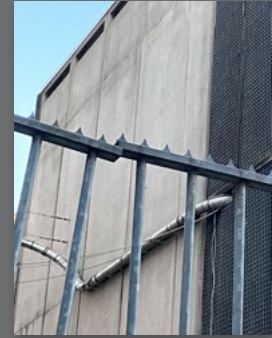
On the one hand, it might be an essential approach to understand rules not only as restriction but as a way of ensuring non-aggressive coexistence—



and yet this notion used by Krauss is perhaps less useful in relation to the aesthetic medium.



For we could argue that rules need a certain stability for a certain time in order to be read as such, while we could claim that a medium can only prove useful in a certain flexibility, malleability, processuality in which it becomes affirmed, abandoned, reinvented and reapproached so that its mediating effects remain functional.³



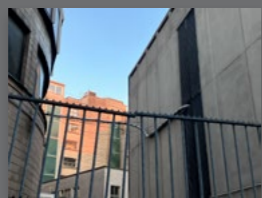
entangled in crisp or blurred relationships.



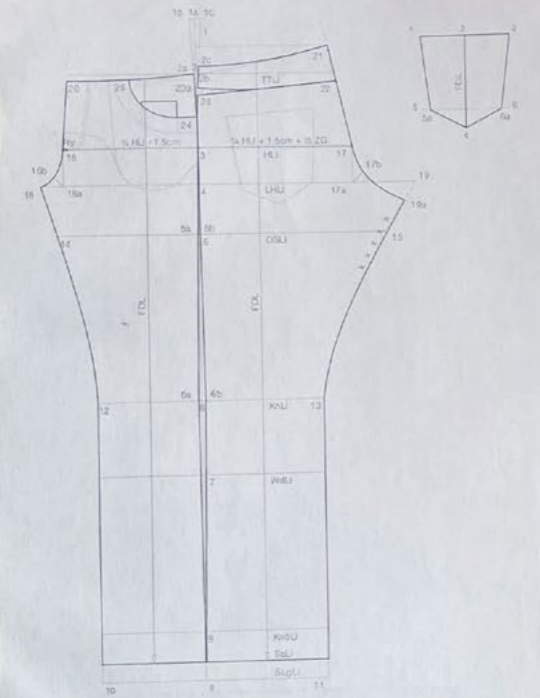
Or—when using the notion of rules, perhaps we can think of it more as the mechanics of a system, a system that joins relationships, forms, edges to be pushed or rubbed against or even crushed by and generates a memory, a reservoir of reference.



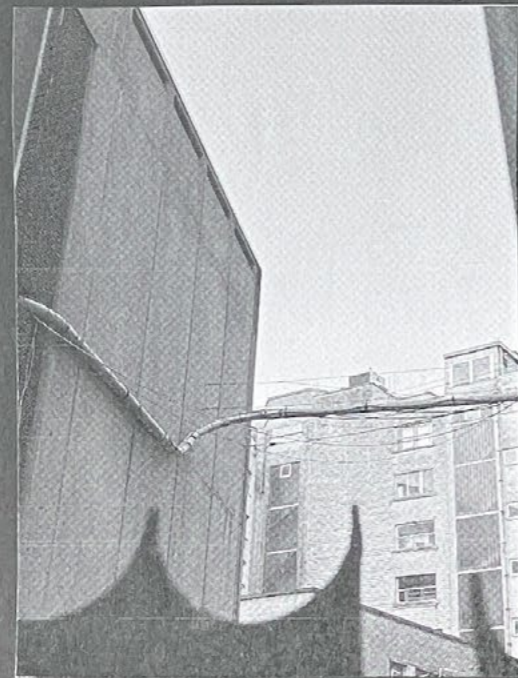
And despite it all, things held together have persisted in relieving repetition.



3) See for example in Laurent Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, Duke University Press, Durham 2011.



Even if you draw cells as outlines; in the fissures between the circles, the paper comes through, and it's the paper that thinks, too.



Think of the medium as a road that connects places and joins for instance the landscape, the weather, the tarmac, the speed and speed's limitations.

However, the cars and their fumes eventually harm the grasshoppers that live in the fields alongside the road. Or it's the grass in the fields that turns yellow over time.

When driving fast felt like enthusiasm; experiencing the landscape through speed afforded by powerful engines. When over time more grasshoppers and ponds and children got harmed and speed regulations were imposed, those were experienced by some as limiting, cutting into their autonomy.

While others, through attachment to the grasshoppers and ponds and children, felt the faster cars should tune into their consequential dependency with the orchestra of the road: a functional speed.

