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visual poetry and the monotony of life on the edge

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Published in:
Organizational Aesthetics

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Publication date:
2020

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication from Aalborg University](#)

Citation for published version (APA):
Görlich, A. (2020). "I am a fetcher": visual poetry and the monotony of life on the edge. *Organizational Aesthetics*, *10*(1), 18-20. https://oa.journals.publicknowledgeproject.org/index.php/oa/article/view/210/244

"I am a fetcher": visual poetry and the monotony of life on the edge

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About the Work:

"I am a fetcher" is a pattern poem. By presenting this pattern poem, I wish to show how visual poetry captures the organization of 'training', the dimension of subjectification and the 'reactivating of sensuousness' in the attempt to understand how young people struggle on the edge of the educational system.

About the Author:

Anne Görlich is Associate Professor at Aalborg University. Her main research area is young people in the margins of the educational system (NEET) and she works methodologically explorative with poetic inquiry.

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> "Poetry is the here and now of the voice, of the body, and of the word, sensuously giving birth to meaning. (..) Poetry is the excess of sensuousness exploding into the circuitry of social communication and opening again the dynamic of the infinite game of interpretation: Desire. (…) we have to start a process of de- automating the word, and a process of reactivating sensuousness in the sphere of social communication". (Berardi, 2012, 21)

Philosopher Franco Berardi (2012) argues that 'techno-linguistic automatisms' wire the social body and freeze the affective potencies of language. He calls for a need to reactivate sensuousness, the emotional body and social solidarity; a process of de-automating the word. This pattern poem is the result of such a process of de-automating the word. My research focuses on young people on the edge of the educational system and in this case, I wanted to capture how marginalized young people are wrapped up in the organization of 'training'.

For this purpose, I found that visual poetry adds valuable dimensions to poetic inquiry as I know it (e.g. Gergen & Gergen 2012, Prendergast 2009, Richardson 1997) in three ways. Firstly, the pattern poem highlights the monotony of an organizational practice of offering apprenticeships in one supermarket department after the other to young people on the edge. Secondly, figuratively the pattern poem adds the dimension of subjectification (Butler 1990) at the core of a young person's life, which connects to the position in the educational system and society. And thirdly, the pattern poem adds, what Berardi calls, the 'reactivating of sensuousness'; the ability to reactivate the senses in language and in research.

fetching things, putting things on shelves, I am
a fetcher, fetching things, putting them on shelves, I am
a sweeper, sweeping the floor, washing   I am
and I make sure things are on the way   I am
a fetcher of things, putting on shelves   I am
a thrower, throw things out, sweeping   I am
sometimes I see some one I know   I am
a sweeper, sweep the floor, wash the floor   I am
a fetcher of things, put things on shelves   I am
and I make sure things are on their way   I am
and think. I don't hate it, throw things out   I am
a fetcher, maybe not a holiday exactly   I am
here and I call it an easy way to get up   I am
and I make sure things are the right place   I am
a sweeper, washer, throw things out   I see
sometimes I see someone I know   I see
someone I know, don't hate it   I see
maybe not a holiday excactly   I am
a fetcher, throw things out   I
don't hate it, sweep the floor   I
fetch things, throw things   I
put things on shelves   I
sweep the floor, wash it   I am
no one ever told me to hurry, with anything, never, no one ever told me
to hurry, with anything, never, no one ever told me to hurry, with anything, ever

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