

BETWEEN CURLY BRACKETS

Agatha Gothe-Snape filters the continuous ebb and flow of information and discourse, be it artistic, political or everyday. While much is processed, some takes hold and gradually transforms into intriguing and quizzical formations. Since 2008, Gothe-Snape has been experimenting with these textual forms, watching them as they play out the associations and conditions of a diverse range of communicational address. For the 8th Berlin Biennale, Gothe-Snape has been invited to deposit her growing word combinations onto the splash page of the official website.

On the light-grey background of the splash page, curly brackets (formed from two halves of the number 8, the promotional icon for the Berlin Biennale) contain Gothe-Snape's word combination WE GROPE TO GRASP. I appreciate its precision and craftsmanship, the way it lingers in the absence of a broader context and somehow maintains its own logic. I'm also struck by the discordant relationship between the pared-back, perimetric font and my interpretation of Gothe-Snape's word combination as a celebration of tactility and uncertainty. What emerges from this coupling is a strange interaction, one between the dynamic qualities of Gothe-Snape's textual vignettes and the flattening-out effects of the overarching design. There are three thumbnail images of architectural structures dispersed randomly amid the text: these belong to Zak Group, the designer/artistic director of the Berlin Biennale.

Dragging my mouse to the refresh button, I click, and the contents of the curly brackets transforms, a process that to my surprise recalls the anticipation of shaking a Magic 8-Ball. Three new images depicting colourful woven tapestries appear, interspersed among the words NO IMAGES NO WORRIES. The relationship between the images and Gothe-Snape's textual formation appears tenuous and their random organisation starts to become even more apparent.

In the site between the curly brackets, Gothe-Snape and Zak Group come together as a pair of disparate producers who execute seemingly divergent agendas, at least for the moment. What results is a kind of anti-collaboration, where the outcomes present themselves as contingent and meaning respectively tentative and aleatory.

By pushing my index finger down on the track-pad, I refresh the page and read the words SIMULTANEOUS GRACIOUS INTERPENETRATION. The libidinal force of this word combination struggles against its circumscribed design, which tends toward cogency. As a kind of thought experiment, I try rehearsing a series of Gothe-Snape's word combinations out loud: SIMULTANEOUS GRACIOUS INTERPENETRATION; ASSEMBLE IT TO PIECES; KEYSTONE FRUIT AND SPEED; TURN ON LOCATION; YES DISSOLVE. Concentrating on my articulation and the way each word plays out through the familiar inflections of my voice, I come to think about the final destination of these word combinations not exclusively as the site between curly brackets, but rather the site of the people who read them. In *Untitled*, the act of reading transforms the splash page into an active, practised space, just as the act of speaking transforms a reader into a performer, who either continues the circulation and distribution of Gothe-Snape's word combinations, or simply becomes the repository that holds them in place.

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