

Anonymous
(17th century)

Dave Hullfish Bailey
(Born in 1963 in Denver.
Lives and works in Los Angeles)

Marcel Broodthaers
(Born in 1924 in Brussels.
Died in 1976 in Cologne)

Sarah Crowner
(Born in 1974 in Philadelphia.
Lives and works in New York)

Mariana Castillo Deball
(Born 1975 in Mexico City.
Lives and works in Amsterdam
and Berlin)

Eric Duyckaerts
(Born in 1953 in Liège, Belgium.
Lives and works in Nice, France)

Ayşe Erkmen
(Born in 1949 in Istanbul, Turkey.
Lives and works in Berlin)

Hans-Peter Feldmann
(Born in 1941 in Düsseldorf.
Lives and works in Düsseldorf)

Peter Fischli & David Weiss
(Born in 1952 and 1946 in Zürich.
Live and work in Zürich)

Rachel Harrison
(Born in 1966 in New York.
Lives and works in New York)

Giorgio Morandi
(Born in 1890 in Bologna.
Died in 1964 in Bologna)

Matt Mullican
(Born in 1951 in Santa Monica,
California. Lives and works in
Berlin and New York)

Bruno Munari
(Born in 1907 in Milan.
Died in 1998 in Milan)

Nashashibi/Skaer
(Rosalind Nashashibi was born in
1973 in Croydon, UK; Lucy Skaer
was born in 1975 in Cambridge,
UK. Live and work in London)

Falke Pisano
(Born in 1978 in Amsterdam.
Lives and works in Amsterdam)

Jimmy Raskin
(Born in 1970 in Los Angeles.
Lives and works in Los Angeles)

Frances Stark
(Born in 1967 in Newport Beach,
California. Lives and works in
Los Angeles)

Rosemarie Trockel
(Born in 1952 in Schwerte,
Germany. Lives and works in
Cologne)

Patrick van Caeckenbergh
(Born in 1960 in Aalst, Belgium.
Lives and works in Sint-Kornelis-
Horebeke, Belgium)

David William
(David Reinfurt was born in 1971
in Chapel Hill, North Carolina;
Will Holder was born in 1969 in
Hatfield, UK. Live and work in
New York and London)

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For the blind man in the dark room
looking for the black cat that isn't there

Our story begins in Ancient Greece, with Socrates announcing, "I know that I know nothing." Clearly, confusion has always been at the heart of wisdom.

Centuries later came a statement many have attributed to Charles Darwin, "A mathematician is like a blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat that isn't there." As a scientist committed to cataloguing, explaining, and drawing a clear picture of nature, Darwin mocked the mathematician's inability to describe the physical world in anything but abstract and speculative terms.

But artists also understand the world in speculative terms. With their help, we can learn to enjoy the experience of not-knowing and the playfulness of being in the dark.

This is for the blind man in the dark room looking for the black cat that isn't there.

Sarah Crowner puts two issues of *The Blind Man* (edited by Marcel Duchamp, Henri-Pierre Roché, and Beatrice Wood in 1917) back into circulation, available for sale at their original cover prices of 10 and 15 cents. Seeking an explanation of a painting, Marcel Broodthaers interviews his cat in a 1970 sound recording. For their 16mm film *Flash in the Metropolitan* (2006), Rosalind Nashashibi and Lucy Skaer drift through the dark corridors of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, using a strobe light to illuminate fragments of statues and small vessels. And an anonymous illustration of a curiosity cabinet from 1672 reminds us that museums have long offered a space to enjoy the discovery of extraordinary things we do not understand.

In *The Right Way* (1983), Peter Fischli and David Weiss dress in rat and bear costumes and meander through the infinitely beautiful Swiss countryside, stopping to consider existential questions along the way. Their playful revelations are also represented in a newly revised series of diagrams. Rachel Harrison presents her own version of Darwinian exploration in *Voyage*

of the Beagle, Two (2008), a series of fifty-eight photographs of portraits, busts, and other unclassifiable faces. A selection of her abstract monochrome sculptures stand nearby.

Matt Mullican's large site-specific installation animates his epic topology—a highly subjective theory that separates our existence into five worlds, which he outlines in the hundreds of drawings, rubbings, prints, photographs, banners, and bulletin boards on view. Preferring the folkloric and the miniature, Patrick van Caekenbergh presents his intricate and massive hat, which tells the tale of a man unable to forget, and who walks from town to town struggling to rid his crowded head of the weight of too much knowledge. Alongside, Rosemarie Trockel quietly responds with the blank stare of a non-reflective ceramic mirror.

Between the First World War and his death in 1964, to the noise of the modern era's machines, wars, and technology, Giorgio Morandi painted table-top arrangements of bottles and bowls over and over again. Dedicating his life to the traditional form of still-life painting,

he seemed to insist that even the most familiar exercise would be a speculative proposition that one would never fully understand. Bruno Munari, in a similar spirit, playfully searches for comfort in an uncomfortable chair.

In a major new sculptural installation that recalls itinerant communities and life off-the-grid, Dave Hullfish Bailey constructs a sprawling research laboratory built in modular parts, which fold out from the metal frame of a boat trailer. With one pound of strawberries in thirty-four small photographs, Hans-Peter Feldmann points to the inevitable incompleteness of categorization. In Ayşe Erkmen's film, a coffee fortune-teller predicts the future with unflinching confidence. And in Eric Duyckaerts' selection of videos, the artist plays the role of an expert-professor, explaining a series of complex ideas in arguments that hold together logically, yet still seem impossibly absurd.

Based on an imaginary face-off between Nietzsche's wise eagle-serpent (from his 1883-85 philosophical novel *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*), and Rimbaud's

dumb donkey (from his 1946 poem *Bottom*), Jimmy Raskin's new installation documents the artist's own struggle to understand how art can be a form of critical thought and strategic subversion, without extinguishing the often unruly and vulnerable poetic act. Also linked to language, hesitation, and doubt are new works by Frances Stark. The two-channel projection *Chillida (Forms and Feelings)* (2006), by Falke Pisano, considers the act of subjective interpretation itself. Finally, bringing the exhibition back to mathematicians and to blindness, Mariana Castillo Debal hangs a car-sized piñata in the shape of a Klein Bottle in the museum's performance space. On the exhibition's last day, a crowd of blindfolded museum visitors will break it apart.

For the blind man... is accompanied by a new publication conceived by Will Holder, as well as game designed by David William to help children better understand the fourth dimension (that is, time). Please feel free to play with both of them.