

## Eleven Minus One - Project Details

For this project, Amir Zaki carefully reconstructed and reinterpreted, in virtual 3D space, several photographs from a series made in the mid-1980's by Swiss artist duo Peter Fischli and David Weiss. Their photographs depict precariously balancing temporary sculptures that they intentionally constructed in a slapdash manner. Their photographs of these sculptures were casually shot in their studio using unprofessional lighting and equipment. Through these photographs of temporary sculptural constructs made of household detritus, Fischli and Weiss subvert the idea of sculpture as a heroic manifestation of a unique and masterfully constructed object. Their work privileges the document over the sculpture, which Zaki interprets as an ironic inverse of the ubiquitous professional photographic documentation of the 'serious' sculpture found in so many art books and journals.

In Zaki's adaptation of their work, there is a re-inversion at play as he privileges the sculpture again, but only as a 3D virtual non-object in order to destabilize their relationship. This has manifested as a series of short photorealistic animation loops and a foldout book based on the eleven different ways that a cube can be unfolded\*. Working with this methodology allowed Zaki to further interrogate the conventions and limitations of photography by exploring depictions of 'real' space, but without the restraints of actual physics or forces such as gravity. Zaki is interested in the perversion of using Fischli and Weiss photographs of quickly made, throw-away sculptures as a source to create an incredibly laborious photorealistic virtual 3D scene that can be explored from all angles, both through photographic and orthographic projections\*\*. In this project Zaki has also fetishized the sculptures by making them virtual, stylized and idealized. He has resurrected these sculptures and placed them in a world where they need not ever 'fall' (fail). In the animations Zaki has created, the sculptures simply spin, teeter or gyrate indefinitely. In the photographs Zaki has rendered for the book, the sculptures hover in a perfect orthographic projection space, surrounded by a black void.

The book is a very complex foldout design that is quite difficult to describe in text. It is ten double-sided square pages. Each page spread unfolds into unique configurations of six squares that represent all sides of a cube. The images on each unfolded page spread depict 3D digital recreations of photographs from by Swiss artist duo Peter Fischli and David Weiss. When the series *Equilibres* fully unfolded, the book opens up to approximately 27x36 inches. It is an interactive object, and can be folded and unfolded in multiple ways, creating grids, cubes, and unfolded boxes, each creating a unique experience and juxtaposition of images.

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Comment:

It is important to recognize the book in terms of a limited edition or a multiple. It is also more of an object with sculptural qualities and a tactile nature than a 'book' in the traditional sense.

\* The idea of the unfolded cube is drawn directly from working within 3D virtual space, where everything is viewed and understood based on six sides of an object: front, right, back, left, top and bottom. The eleven iterations idea is derived from "Unfolding the Tesseract" by Peter Turney, found in the Journal of Recreational Mathematics, Vol. 17(1), 1984-85. There is also a nod to artist Sol LeWitt's conceptual practice in general, but most specifically "Variations of Incomplete Open Cubes". Further, the act of unfolding a cube, in essence flattening or deflating it, can be interpreted in the ironic spirit of privileging a two dimensional representation of a sculpture over the three dimensional object itself that Fischli and Weiss seemed interested.

\*\*Orthographic projections are views that have no 'lens distortion', and are thus unlike the way most cameras represent space. They look both photographically believable but very unusual. The normal use for orthographic projection is in architectural drawings where everything is drawn as if equidistant from the viewer, as opposed to things receding back and projecting forward in space. Orthographic projections can be thought of as ideal or perfect in one sense, but very unusual and totally unlike human vision. Amir Zaki - 2010