Striving for Imperfection

Quasi-Reality in a Post-Truth World

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At the time of writing this in June 2017, we are living in a period where too many falsehoods are used in politics and in mainstream and social media making? - not necessarily lies. They are statements meant to confuse and obfuscate. Many perceive these falsehoods as 'true'. The time we live in now is starting to be known as the 'post-truth era'. Facts are no longer the main component in forming opinions and making decisions. Today, opinions and decisions rely more on perceptions, on 'gut feelings'. Populist ideologies have exploited this. As societies, we are in danger of succumbing to populism. It's happened before – many times (think of Nero, Robespierre, Hitler, Pol Pot, etc.). Populism provides easy answers to complicated questions, answers that large numbers People on the whole see what they want to see or what they think they should see – not what there is to see, not what is there to be seen.



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Foreword

Descartes, Truth v Trump, Post-truth

So what role can art have to bring back some sort of objectivity in forming opinion and decision

The images in this exhibition are not real. They are not truthful. They are at the same time, not meant to confuse and obfuscate. In fact they are intended to clarify that indeed, they are not truthful in very much the same way as Magritte's painting, The Treachery of Images (see figure right). They are images captured from reality, however what is shown is not what there is, but what we think there is or what we wish there was. The images are platonic views, idealised views. These images say to the viewer that this is not reality. The image has been transformed of people want to hear, rather than truthful ones. into what people believe the image is or want it to be rather than what it actually is.

> The images are a quasi-reality. They are verisimilar – that is they look real, but aren't. Verum meaning René Magritte is telling us that this is not a pipe. – and indeed it is truth and similis means similar. Similar to truth, but not truth. Novels, for example, are verisimilar. Novelists can shape their stories in any way they see fit, in order to provoke an emotion in the reader. News items are, at least in theory, factual. The news may also provoke an emotion, but it is not designed to can apply in other areas: Films are verisimilar, while documentaries are factual; landscape paintings are verisimilar, while landscape photography is factual. Scarily, any of these 'factual' products can be turned into 'verisimilar' ones.

In this exhibition the original photos have been turned into verisimilar images - not truthful ones. They are images meant to defy the current trend of shorter and shorter attention spans. They are images designed to invite the viewer to look at them closely and discover, firstly, that although at first sight



not. If he said, "this is a pipe", he would be lying and obfuscating.

they appear 'normal', they are not in any sense 'real'. Secondly the viewer is invited to spot how the image is not 'truthful'. Along the way the intention is to create interesting and aesthetically pleasing images, but without emotion. Deadpan. The images can do so, news should be designed to inform. The same then be interpreted in many ways, but not as 'truth'.

> It is important to distinguish between the factual and the verisimilar.

It is up to the beholder.

Gestalt Blue Skies

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Platonic Views (Water)





















Platonic Views (Solids)















Platonic Views (Living)















Time and Space

















































Composition 206, "Staircase", 2016





ated long before the existence of that concept), but could be some form of 'determinism'); Law of Past Experience (where things are categorised according is composed of 4 chevrons, while the one on the they do reflect our times. to what has been perceived in the past – in social Certain aspects of human psychology help to exterms that could be 'history'). For the purpose of this introduction, we won't go into the detail of all plain why there can be such a thing as a 'post-truth' culture – Gestalt Theory is particularly relevant. these laws. For the present purpose, we are illustrating and focussing on the Principle of Simplicity or The fundamental principle of Gestalt Theory Good Gestalt, Law of Closure and Law of Symmetry. is the Principle of Prägnanz (pithiness in German), sometimes known as 'Law of Good Gestalt' or 'Law Law of Simplicity of Simplicity', which states that we tend to order People will perceive and interpret complex imour experience in a manner that is regular, orderly, ages or information in the simplest possible form. symmetrical and simple. This law implies that when people perceive the world, they eliminate complexity and unfamiliarity so they can observe a reality When looking at the figure on the left below our in its simplest form. Eliminating extraneous stimuli eyes see the black shape, but our brain separates it helps the mind create meaning. However, reality is into three basic shapes, illustrated by the colour vernever regular, orderly, symmetrical or simple. These sion on the right. are platonic concepts that only exist in the mind - not in reality. In Gestalt theory this principle of 'simplicity' is broken down into several laws which refine it: Law of Proximity (where things that are close together are bunched as a group - in social terms that could be 'community'); Law of Similarity (where things that look alike are bunched together as a group – in social terms that could be 'race' or 'nationality'); Law of Closure (where things that are incomplete are completed by the mind - in social Law of Closure terms that could be 'religion', which explains the inexplicable simply: God made everything); Law of Symmetry (where things are perceived as being sym-When looking at an incomplete image or set of information we tend to look for a single recognismetrical with a central focal point – in social terms that could be seen as, for example, 'balanced news able pattern.

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Afterword

The images in the preceding pages were not created in order to expose 'post-truth' (many were cre-

reporting'); Law of Common Fate (where things appear to move upon a path – in social terms that on the left and a panda on the right. Whereas, if



In the image below most people will see a square viewed as individual elements, the figure on the left right is a group of splodges. Although none of the elements are complete, our brains find a recognisable pattern between the shapes, which is easier than making sense of the individual shapes. We see the whole, rather than the individual components.



Law of Symmetry

People tend to perceive objects as symmetrical shapes that form around their centre.

People will usually perceive three sets of eyes in the figure below. Our minds recognise the symmetry in each set and groups the objects together regardless of proximity. This allows us to see three sets of eyes instead of six individual eyes.



⁵⁸ How is Gestalt Theory relevant to the images in this book?

Three of the Gestalt Theory laws (symmetry, simplicity and closure) are directly linked to the three main concepts that inspire the creation of the images in this book: Imperfect Symmetry, Imperfect Ideals and Imperfect Perception. First, why 'imperfect'? When humans perceive something, the mind follows the laws of Gestalt. What people perceive is in the mind and, as an idea, is perfect – not so in reality. When trying to reproduce in reality what has been perceived in the mind, the product can only be imperfect because that perception, that idea, has been returned to reality where nothing is perfect. For example, when walking by a fruit stall in a market, one sees the fruit arranged in certain patterns, with certain colours, in certain shapes (Fig. I). What the mind sees is not the actual fruit, but a perfect arrangement in a simple pattern, simple colours, simple shapes (Fig 2). When we try to reproduce that fruit stall using the image in the mind and elements of what is actually there, it is impossible to produce a 'real' image because the reproduction of the image returns it to reality, where nothing is perfect (Fig 3). In the case of the images in this book, they are trying to be something as close as possible to the way humans perceive images, however it is impossible to portray the 'perfection' of what our minds create, compared to what is possible in reality. Thus the concepts can only be 'imperfect' when portrayed in reality. The reality of the law of symmetry can only be Imperfect Symmetry. The reality of the law of simplicity in its purest form can only be Imperfect Ideals. And the reality of the law of closure when expressed physically can only be Imperfect Perception. At a very fundamental level, one can speculate that all that the laws of Gestalt have a big bearing on what we know as reality. So, although none of the three figures here are 'real', the image closest to what is actually there is Firgure 1; the closest to what we immediately perceive is Figure 2, and what is closest to a 'post-truth' image is Figure 3. Figure 3 looks like it could be real, it is at first glance, verisimilar, but it is an impossible image in the same way as Magritte's pipe.



ig. I: This is a representation of a fruit stall in Ethiopia. This image was captured by a camera, providing a close rendition of a three dimensional object in two dimentions. This would be a documentary photo, reflecting what is actually there.



Fig. 2: This image is a representation approximating what the mind first perceives. A series of simple shapes, colours and patterns. It is an 'approximation' because it is not an ideal, but rather an illustration of how the mind transforms things into its simplest forms.



Fig. 3: This is a 'post-truth' image. It oversimplifies reality, while at first sight seeming to be truthful. It is not truthful, it is verisimilar. It is an imperfect idealisation of reality. To paraphrase Magritte, "Ceci n'est pas un etalage de fruits". This is not a fruit stall.

Imperfect Symmetry

Under the Gestalt Law of Symmetry, people tend to perceive things as symmetrical and in our mind that symmetry is perfect. But what would happen if reality actually were perfectly symmetrical? The which is, as far as we know or understand, where everything started. Energy and particles exploded into being from 'the singularity' – a point with infinite density and no volume – and speeded out in all directions. The distribution of these particles should have been 'uniform', because all elementary particles were the same – gravity should have acted on each particle with the exact same force in every direction. Had that been the case, the symmetry of energy and matter would have been perfect – an ever expanding perfect sphere. That's not what happened. Within an instant of the big bang, symmetry was broken. For yet unexplained reasons, there were small fluctuations in the distribution and working of these particles, so that when some of them came together, they thus attracting more particles, and as the groups of particles congregated, their collective gravity increased, thus attracting more particles and so on. Eventually these bits of matter became galaxies of stars, planets, moons, comets, etc. If there had been absolutel perfect symmetry, all the Big Bang particles would have simply expanded evenly forever. Even if the fluctuations of the particles had been symmetrically distributed, we would have ended up with a universe which was also in some way symmetrical. Something, perhaps like Figure 4 – though maybe in three, four or more dimensions instead of just two:

saddle-like (Fig. 5) –, the universe is not symmetrical. Physicists say that shortly after the Big Bang, perfect symmetry was broken (perhaps to do with

quantum uncertainty, quarks breaking away from the electroweak force, and hadrons developing different masses from leptons, the electroweak force fragmenting into electromagnetism and the weak force and so on). So, imperfect symmetry is necessary for answer to that question starts with the Big Bang, change and evolution. Imperfect symmetry is not the same as chaos, or total randomness ... there is order, but there is also change. Imperfect symmetry is the first concept that has a bearing on the creation of the images in this book.

Imperfect Ideals

The second concept is related to the first in the sense of 'perfection versus imperfection', but here it involves human concepts, rather than physics. The perfect straight line, the perfect circle, perfect square, perfect sphere. These are the simplest forms and they are, of course, human concepts that don't exist in nature, nor even in any part of the reality that human beings have created. The only perfectly straight line is in the mind – it's an ideal. The same exercised slightly more gravity than their neighbours, goes for beauty, morality, knowledge ... crime! The perfect crime! If there were perfection in reality, in whatever field, there would be stagnation. By definition, perfection cannot be improved. And so, development stops. In this Platonic sense, any form created in the real world is only a shadow, an imitation of its counterpart in the world of Ideals. After more than two millennia since the time of Plato, we still strive to create these forms, these perfect ideals, without ever being able to do so. Surprisingly, Albert Camus' Myth of Sisyphus comes to mind. Sisyphus is condemned for all eternity by Zeus to push a boulder to the top of a mountain, but the boulder inevitably rolls back down again before he can Whatever shape it might have – flat, spherical or ever reach the top. Camus concludes that, like the task of Sisyphus, life is purposeless. What gives life any meaning is the act of 'pushing the boulder' – not reaching the top. Camus says, "One must imagine



Fig. 4: Two dimensional symmetry. If the Big Bang had not had small fluctuations in its particle, the universe might have had a pattern a bit like this, but in three or more dimensions



Fig. 5: According to a computer programme which took ages to develop, the universe looked something like this (though not necessarily an ellipse) at about the time galaxies were being created – the red bits. That is to say, the universe was not symmetrical.

Sisyphus happy". In the same vein, people pursue ideals, but cannot ever fully reach them. Nonetheless, Plato would have been amazed by how close we are in our present time to creating some forms which are very close to what he could only imagine. In the Greek world nothing was straight or smooth, everything was a bit crooked, a bit jagged. But less crooked and jagged than in, say, the Stone Age. Today people can draw a rectangle on a computer screen with edges that are within microns of being perfectly straight. Humans can polish mirrors and lenses to focus on galaxies that are light centuries away. However, as soon as a rectangle is printed, the line is bent, it will be ever so slightly jagged. Even the most sophisticated telescope's most polished mirror is too defective to detect a gigantic planet in the nearest solar system. There is always more polishing to be done. Still, Plato would be impressed if he could see how close humans are today to producing in reality what he might have considered perfect. The 'perfection bar' will always be raised.

Imperfect Perception

In the field of human perception, this third concept is related to Gestalt's Law of Closure. If people only have a partial view of something (which is what we always have - we never have a total view of anything), we tend to invent the rest of it in accordance to what we think it should or might be, rather than what it actually is (which is something we will never know totally). If I ask, "what is this?" (Fig. 6)

Most would say it was a face. But, of course, it's much closer to being a circle and two dots. In people's perception two horizontally placed dots frequently represent eyes. Two dots on a piece of paper are enough to hold a baby's attention, so this Gestalt thing would appear to be innate. What about these other little figures? (Figs. 7, 8, 9 and 10) What are Fig. 6: Two dots and a circle are enough to convey 'face'. they?

Most would say "cat, dog, bird and mouse . . . or maybe rat". It doesn't take much information for people to reach a conclusion about what they see, despite having very few details. And, at the level of absolutes, no one will ever see the whole ... probably. God might – if he, she or it exists.

Gestalt theory (the German word 'Gestalt' means 'form' or 'shape') sustains that humans have an innate ability to recognise symbols as representations of reality, of recognising the whole even when details are missing. Children's drawings, for instance, are usually representations of what they think they know or of what they think should be – not what they see. In their drawings, children share a language that is practically universal. Children from Africa, America, Asia, Europe – they all use very similar marks, such as lines and dots; diagrams, such as circles to represent a treetop or a human head; schemata, such as suns with 'rays' emanating from their periphery and 'mandalas', which are all-purpose shapes such as circles and squares with a cross in the middle. (See Figs. 11 and 12 which contain very surprising details!)



Fig. 6a: Charles Schulz, the author of the comic strip 'Peanuts', was a genius at using a minimum to express a maximum. Note that this picture is the exact same image as Fig. 3 with the addition of a few more lines.







Fig. 11: This child's drawing has marks (the undulating line of the kite's string); diagrams (the tree on the left); schemata (the sun and the human), and mandalas (the kites with a cross in the middle). These features are shared with children from all over the world, more or less regardless of what culture or, surprisingly, what time they come from. It would appear that understanding and representing symbols is innate in human beings. Culture does play a role regarding subject matter: This is a drawing by a seven yearold in the USA. It is a child flying a kite (another is stuck up a tree). Now look at the figure below (Fig. 12)



Fig. 12: Here the child is also seven years old, but from Russia. He is portraying himself as a medieval warrior, astride a horse, attacking his enemy with a spear. Why medieval? Because this drawing is from the 13th century drawn on a piece of tree bark. The subject is different, but the symbols are very similar.

Recognition of symbols then, is something humans are born with and as they grow, they learn new symbols and how to interpret them. Something similar has happened to cultures. With the passing of time cultures acquire new symbols: cave paintings, pottery decoration, hieroglyphics, representational art, use of perspective, abstract art, conceptual art, etc. Once people have started to learn symbols, what they perceive is very much dependent on their culture. People before Classical Greece, for example, would have seen the sea's horizon as a straight line (and probably the limit of a flat earth). We now know that the horizon is not really straight, because the earth is more or less spherical - but, it looks straight. If we could show a photograph of the Earth taken from space to these ancestors, they wouldn't understand what it was. A spherical earth was not conceivable. In the Middle Ages European painters depicted reality as they thought it should be, rather than as they saw it. They didn't portray perspective and when they finally started to do so, it was all wrong. The size of people didn't rely so much on where they were in the picture (large in the foreground, smaller in the background – see Fig. 13) but on how important they were – big if important, small if not. (Fig. 14)

Having learned that the Earth is a spinning sphere whizzing around a star at the edge of a galaxy in a big universe does not mean we're very much closer to 'The Truth'. We know from past experience that



Fig. 13: Father Ted explains to Father Dougal the difference between cows being 'little' and 'far away': "OK, one last time. These are small, but the ones out there are far away". Father Dougal, like the Medieval mind doesn't understand perspective



Fig. 14: The Medieval artist did not try to create an illusion of what is real, but rather a representation of what he knew: Important people were large, unimportant people were small, regardless of the position they occupy in the picture.



Fig. 15: This painting and Fig. 14 are more or less contemporaneous from about 1482, however, this one by Pietro Perugino in the Sistine Chapel has developed the concept of perspective. It is the start of the Renaissance.

the human race has come to know things it could not conceive of three centuries ago: motor engines, microbes, nuclear weapons, the Internet, etc. If we were able to bring medieval people into our time, put them in a car and travel at 80 miles an hour on a motorway, they would not know how to interpret this experience. They cannot conceive that speed, nor the car's technology, nor the engineering that is a motorway, nor the rules that govern its use. It's all gobbledegook. A good example is the fly: A fly flies into a room, finds nothing interesting, tries to fly back out, sees light, flies in that direction and straight into a closed window. In the fly's perception a transparent window pane is not conceivable, so it keeps flying into it time after time and dies on the sill, not realising that all it had to do was fly around the window. We people of this modern age and of



Fig. 16: According to Donald Rumsfeld, "there are known knowns; there are things that we know that we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns, the ones we don't know we don't know". At the time he was lambasted and mocked for this statement, but it's true – though there's probably nothing else with which one would agree.

technologically advanced cultures must have equivalents to 'a window pane' - to paraphrase American politician, Donald Rumsfeld (Fig. 16)-, something "we don't know that we don't know". If an alien popped out of nowhere into our living room and showed us a picture of the 'worm hole' he or she used to get there, we would be nonplussed. Just as our ancestors would be when showing them the picture of Earth from space. Perhaps a better example is that we may be surrounded by 'dark matter', that is, matter we cannot perceive, in much the same way that flies

can't perceive window panes. Until very recently dark matter was "an unknown unknown". All we can interpret is what we do know or what we know that we don't know. There will always be "unknown unknowns". We will never have the full picture, never have the full explanation.

One clear example where we only have a partial picture of the truth or totality is creation itself. We can't understand how our world, our universe came into being. Our response? We invent an explanation, we make up a story: God (or gods) did it. We need an explanation and that story is more easily grasped than reasoned explanations such as,

say, quantum mechanics or string theory. Having said that, the Big Bang might explain what happened, but not how nor why it happened in the first place. The



Fig. 17: Rather than trying to understand how it is that our universe came about (despite the fact that it is a never-ending task), most of us have chosen variations on "Let there be light"! The human race seems to have need for answers – even if the answers are mere inventions which with time become myth or 'belief' or 'faith'.

an infinitely dense point with no volume, no space singularity exploded. Why not just say, "let there be light"? There's a windowpane out there that we can't see. (Even now there's a new theory which may take over from Big Bang, called the Big Bounce where the universe expands and contracts, but not to the point of a singularity).

To illustrate the point Fig. 18 is a partial drawing of something. What is it? The answer is on the next page (Fig 19).

Much of the work in this book tries to convey these three concepts, imperfect symmetry, imperalways at the same time.

In photography, perfect symmetry is easily achievable (In this context 'perfect' means within the parameters of the naked eye). In architecture symmetry has always played a very important role. Say Gothic architecture. Take Whitby Abbey in North Yorkshire. The construction is certainly striving for perfect symmetry, but in those days they didn't have the tools or the materials to replicate precisely enough to achieve full symmetry. With digital photography and software, perfect symmetry is quite simple: Cut the image in half vertically, duplicate that half, flip it horizontally, carefully put it back together so that the pixels meet with their identical mirror image counterparts and, Bob's your uncle. Repeat the process this time cutting in half horizontally and flipping vertically and we have four-way symmetry.

explanation offered is that there was 'a singularity', Then multiply it by 9 and we still have perfect symmetry (Figs. 17 to 20). That's it. There's no sense and no time, but with infinite mass and heat. That that something else is going to happen in the picture. The image is stagnant. Nothing more can happen, other than more of the same. Maybe good for wallpaper, but not good enough for art.

> Perfect symmetry is static. A symmetry which is not perfect, which has small fluctuations, is a dynamic image – that is Imperfect Symmetry. Although imperfect, it looks very symmetrical and there is fascination in finding the asymmetries.

Perfect ideals exist only in the mind and can only fect ideals and imperfect perception – though not be represented in the real world as approximations, as Imperfect Ideals. The objective is try to represent some of the shapes of things as they might have appeared in the mind of the engineer who built the road, the designer who designed the tram, the farm-



ig. 20: The original photo of Whitby Abbey, where the architect strove for symmetry



Fig. 21: Perfect two-way symmetry, mirroring the left side of the original image.



18: This picture is incomplete. What is it? Most would say it's a triangle, but, of course if you have read the preceding pages you will have a strong suspicion that it is a trick question. So it's probably not a triangle – or is it? Answer is on the next page.



Fig. 22: Perfect four-way symmetry mirroring the left and top of the original image.



Fig. 23: Still perfect symmetry but nothing else can happen, except more of the same.



Fig. 19: When trying to come up with a clever drawing of the complete picture which was not a triangle, I thought, "why not a triangle". At first I was going to complete the picture as an exploding volcano, but then I remembered an image found on the American one dollar bill, it is an incomplete pyramid topped by this Freemason symbol of the all-seeing grand architect of the universe. Going back to the theme of Fig. 17, this one is a sort of "Let there be light", whereas the exploding volcano would have been a sort of Big Bang.

er who rolled the hay ... or the architect who built the building. Trying to find geometric shapes and reproduce them as perfectly as possible, as close to the ideal as possible: perfectly straight lines, perfect circles, perfect squares, etc. But, again, as soon as the ideals are represented in the real world, they become imperfect. We can approach perfection – the Ideal –, but never reach it. So, for instance, the impossible. ideal straight line is one-dimensional – length –, but as soon as we reproduce a line in reality, no matter how thin the line is, it will have three dimensions, length, width and thickness (the ink on the page) it is an Imperfect Ideal. This is the case with 'posttruth': If it seems too good to be true, it probably is.

limit the amount of information, by giving a partial and minimal view of what might be a whole (of

course all views are partial, but our mind separates elements of those partial views and turns them into independent wholes: a building, a car, a person, a face, an eye ... a postbox, Fig. 24). The intention of the images here are to provide a minimum of information but enough for viewers to form an idea of what they are looking at and then knowing that the images are

This train of thought lead first to Gestalt Blue Skies and then to Platonic Views - usually images where 'real' shapes are transformed into simple, 'ideal' shapes (within the parameters of the naked eye). The horizon becomes a straight line (Fig. 25), a roll of hay is perfectly circular, an island is totally Finally, Imperfect Perception. The purpose is to symmetrical ... These are shapes that only exist in the mind. They are ideals. The intention is to reflect those ideals in an imperfect way, but closer to the







Fig. 25: Imperfect Ideals. The natural lines of nature become straight lines imitating their ideal. The separations of air from water, water from land and one colour of sand from another are perfectly straight lines, forming long rectangles in the image.





Fig. 28: These are some of the symbols that were used to identify sporting events at the Mexico City Olympics in 1968.

shapes formed in the mind. They are ideals we strive for, but, like Sysiphus, will never reach ... the boulder we must push up the hill. These are imperfect ideals. One part of these ideals is the question of symmetry – trying to make pictures as symmetrical as possible, not by splitting the image into two tling? and then flipping it, but by starting with a reasonably symmetrical image and then altering parts of the picture to increase symmetry, but never com-26, for instance the door-handle is only on the left of the door; the wall surface is damaged; the shadows like most animals, are more or less symmetrical. In fact many sustain that one of the characteristics of human beauty is facial symmetry. While symmetry

weird. One example is Figure 27. This is a woman whose face is rather asymmetrical, nevertheless, she is very pleasant looking. However, in this image she is portrayed twice with a perfectly symmetrical face, one her left, the other her right. Beauty or unset-

In the end, the purpose of this book is to reduce character, social backgrounds, the objects of the images to their essence, their simplest form. - what makes an image, object or bepletely, leaving bits that break the symmetry. In Fig. ing what it is – while knowing that it is impossible. Graphically it is sometimes reasonably easy to portray the essence of things. A few shapes, a few lines are asymmetric, but the lines are perfectly straight. and the essence is expressed (Fig. 28). This is bas-This question of symmetry leads on to people. We, ketball, this is archery, hockey, gymnastics, and so on. With very simple symbols one can also tell which is the gents' and which is the ladies', that there are roadworks being done (though sometimes that sign is attractive, perfect symmetry in a face is just plain is interpreted as 'man opening umbrella', Fig. 28a),

that there is a speed limit, that something is poisonous, etc. Reducing the visible reality to its bare essentials is more complicated, because we're no longer dealing with signposts, but with people's cultural icons, emotions and so

forth.



Fig. 28a: Roadworks or 'man opening umbrella'??

Richard Avedon was a fashion photographer, but today he is more remembered as a portrait photographer. Wherever he went, he carried a big roll of white paper, which he used as a backdrop for his portraits. He would stand his subject in front of this white background, talk about something which made the subject feel uncomfortable and snap – only once. Usually the photos were full frontal, plain with nothing to distract from the face and posture. He por-



Fig. 26: Imperfect Symmetry. At first glance the picture is completely symmetrical. It's not. A rubbish bin and a ventilator were added to make it more symmetrical, but was left with enough asymmetry to make it 'imperfect': the door handle, the shadows. the condition of the wall.



Fig. 27: Sometimes the two sides of a face reflect two sides of a personality – not a dual personality, just a complicated one. Here one face is rather child-like and innocent, whereas the other shows a grittier, more experienced person.



Fig. 29: Richard Avedon's portraits were stark. with no background or colour to distract from the essence of his subject. He only took one it is. Without emoshot – that's it. Done.

trayed people in their essence, taking away the mask, presenting them starkly (Fig. 29). That is similar to one of the objectives of the images in this book: present the essence of visible reality with the bare minimum elements.As tion: Deadpan.

When putting these three concepts into practice, there are overlaps, which graphically look something like this: (Fig. 30)

Fig. 31: Imperfect Symmetry: The faces are perfectly symmetrical, but not the picture itself. Note the position of the hands.





Fig. 32: Imperfect Ideal: Every fruit and vegetable is very close to being a perfect circle, every box a rectangle, every line straight.

Fig. 33: Imperfect perception. The viewer only has a partial view of the whole of the object, but an almost total view of the universe and everything that is knowable





Fig. 34: Imperfect symmetry and perception. There is symmetry, but it's only a partial view of a larger whole.



Fig. 35: Imperfect symmetry and ideals. Although the actual windows are symmetric, their reflections are not. There is no perspective and every window is exactly the same size.



Fig. 36: Imperfect perception and ideals. Each 'block' has straight lines and the image is only partial, but here there is an added element: isolation.



Fig. 37: All three concepts are incorporated here: Imperfect symmetry, ideal and perception.



