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## do you confuse love & success with fame?

s.basar

Do you want to be famous? Do you want to change the world? Do you think you can change the world by being famous? Do you have a plan? Do you stay up at night thinking about how exactly you're going to become famous? Do you fall asleep with a faint, uneasy feeling that fame may, for lack of a better word, suck? Do you dream about sleeping next to someone else who is famous? Do you mind if they're more famous than you? Do famous people dream of unfamous people the same way unfamous people dream about famous ones? Do you have a point? Do you think changing the world is cute but extremely naïve? Do you even know what the world is? Do you know for sure in a few years time there's even going to be a world worth saving? Do you think about yourself a little too much? Do you think about yourself not nearly enough? Do you think in first person? Do you ever refer to yourself in third person like you're a character in a film that's based on you? Do you have the rights to the documentary on how you will become successful? Do you have your own website? Do you have an App available yet on the Apple Store? Do you have plans to change your name? Do you believe the Chicago-based economist who says that certain names bring success while others condemn you to socio-economic penury? Do you have parents that can help you in 'the industry'? Do you measure success by Yen-signs or by how many people 'LIKE' your Facebook page? Do you Tweet enough? Do you Tweet about the wrong things? Does your name trend yet? Do you have a Google+ account already? Does your avatar faithfully reflect who you are or who you want to be seen as? Do you desire a portfolio-career? Do you think careers make sense looking forward —

or only when looking back? Do you personally know enough influential people? Do you know if they genuinely know who you are? Do you feel comfortable calling them by their first names? Do you network enough? Do you plan on networking more vigorously? Do you ensure every social engagement you make might yield professional advancement? Do you hand out business cards or type directly into your iPhone? Do you hold that it's necessary to hire a P.R. agency soon to represent you? Do you know what and how they charge? Do they know your work? Do you work? Do you have it neatly archived yet? Do you have your press release ready to go? Do you have an up-to-date CV on your MacBook Pro? Do you think your press release could be your CV? Do you take out an ad? Do you try and get media sponsorship? Do you mind being branded? Do you have a name for your brand yet? Do you go to enough casual 'in conversation'-type events with advertising gurus? Do you mix-up your Saatchis? Do you announce that you're 'digital-first'? The Guardian said it is. Do you find Julian Assange heroic or annoying? Do you think he did everything to become famous or to seek revenge? Do you think more people know who Assange is than Ashton Kutcher? Do you think Demi did the right thing? Do you spend too much time on things that won't really help you escape the rotten pit of anonymity? Do you have a book out yet? Do you know for sure you've got the right person to blurb for the back of the thirteen edited books you plan to publish with cutting-edge, independent presses in the next 18 months using two graphic design studios from the former Eastern Bloc and two who graduated from Yale? Do you think long titles work best or should you stick to one-words? Do you know if exclamation marks are still hip or completely crap now! Do you have someone to ask? Do you confide in them? Do you look fat in this? Do you actually care what I think or just pretend you do? Do I care? Do you? You do.

*Shumon Basar is a London-based writer, curator and educator.*

## memento moriz.

a.mooradian

Moriz was the brilliant kind of student that always knew how to please his tutors. That's why they helped him get that job at OMA on his year out. What a great worker. The other students didn't hang out with him much but he figured they were intimidated. Rem probably had the same problem.

But his greatest skill was his online presence. Every morning he would scan the blogs and the 'zines, soaking up references. His Twitter account had five thousand followers - it paid off listing his username at the end of his book review in *Architectural Digest*.

Before graduating, Moriz had organised numerous extracurricular events, small publications, mini symposiums... you name it, his name was on it. He saw himself as a great gatherer of minds. A provocateur. A radical young intellect. One day he would publish a book of his own. He imagined writing it with someone like Hans Ulrich Obrist. What a guy. That would be great. Imagine: Hans Ulrich Obrist.

Moriz was excited when he got the offer to run a big symposium for the architecture department only a year after starting teaching. He managed to fly in the Deans of Princeton, Columbia, RISD... he blew the whole budget on their hotel suites but the dinner was amazing and the cocktails were great. The younger speakers didn't expect much, just a few beers and those he could pay for with his students' travel budget. Easy.

The Dean of Sci-Arc — what's-his-name — couldn't make it because he was stuck in Montreal for a convention with Eisenman, but he hooked up a live feed from his hotel room. Big TV's look awesome in photos. The lecture hall wasn't as full as he'd imagined, but Moriz was still amazed at how the online

coverage was potentially sharing this knowledge with thousands of people digitally.

Moriz couldn't believe it when he got an email back from Hans Ulrich Obrist's PA about meeting up to discuss a collaboration. Hans Ulrich was very busy though, and it took a while to pin him down. He had been texting for weeks with little response. Hans Ulrich must have been travelling. Luckily that gave Moriz more time to think over what the book should be about. He struggled a little but was much calmer when he thought: "I'll just find lots of people to write some essays."

Finally Moriz heard back from Hans Ulrich. "If you come to the Serpentine, we can chat for a bit before I meet Kazuyo and Ryue." Moriz couldn't believe it. Hans-Ulrich-fucking-Obrist.

He woke up on the morning of the meeting, grabbed his notes and reached for the jacket he'd bought for himself as a reward for the success of the symposium. 'I should take a taxi', he thought, but he couldn't really afford it after buying the jacket, so he tucked his trouser legs into his socks and got on his bicycle.

On his way over to Kensington, as he swerved between the cars, Moriz became increasingly ecstatic. He had really made it. All that work had paid off. People would start to recognise him. Think - there goes that guy who wrote that book with... BAM! Moriz lay sprawled on the tarmac, his trousers still tucked into his socks.

*Aram Mooradian edits Fulcrum.*





*Image: Failed self-promotion, or "Why Megan Fox still doesn't know my name."*

## SYMMETRY

Earlier this year, I went to Nairobi in Kenya with an architectural development organisation. Having worked with another design charity in London, I was excited to experience a more hands-on working strategy – time "in the field". As a sociologist, this trip would also finally put me in a more direct role with beneficiaries and local agencies – something many architectural development studios rarely get the opportunity to do. Our work aimed to be as 'participatory' as possible, to ensure the outcome would be appropriate for the specific needs of the communities we were working with/for.

There are no architectural formula (nor should there be) for prescribing participation. It is highly contextual, and will vary according to the location, involved agents, clients, end-users capabilities (and the architects' ability to understand these factors). This is far from a straightforward process.

Design is an activity heavily influenced

by our cultural viewpoint. So are the subjective ways we try to "be objective". Because architecture is a political process, it is *per se* a societal intervention. A collaborative design philosophy is therefore in need of a vital element to be relevant and constructive on a pragmatic level: symmetry.

By redressing imbalances in representation (thereby establishing greater symmetry), design participation becomes less a counter force to external experts than a route to a more pluralist culture of collaboration for local good.

This might mean that outsiders need to design something they do not particularly like. It might even mean that they need to believe in something they cannot relate to. In turn, symmetrical participation and collaborative setups mean we can skip utopian blueprints for a better world and focus on the truly realistic differences that are attainable on the very local level. If this is pursued, I believe designers can affect great change, while leaving the "real" political issues to those naive enough to believe they alone will solve the world.

*Christian Halsted is a sociologist and design researcher (see #13).*

## EQUALITY

The Office for National Statistics published their *Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings* this week. Widely publicised, the survey is compiled from a 1% sample of all UK workers using the PAYE (Pay-As-You-Earn) tax system. It paints a particularly bleak picture for British women in full-time employment, who are still on average paid 19.5% less than their male counterparts (although this figure is diminishing).

Both the *Guardian* and the *Telegraph* published extensive reports on the Survey's results, the *Guardian* even produced a helpful interactive table outlining the details of the statistics.

However, while the articles describe the statistics themselves in fine detail (paying particular attention to the fact wage rises have stagnated) neither commented on what these statistics actually mean in real terms for women all around the country. In fact, they suggested women should be happy that their wages had seen the largest rise since last year.

As the recession deepens it is becoming increasingly taboo to discuss

what you earn, which makes it possible for companies to fluctuate their employees' wages relatively discreetly.

At the current rate it will be 2041 before women achieve parity of income.

Generations of women are to be paid less than men, and the newspapers seem to be more interested in generating infographics than commenting on the implications. Although the gap is narrowing, the fact is no one seems prepared to address this discrepancy.

It is important to promote the issue, to be more aware of the inequalities, and to press for greater transparency. It is frankly an insult that women are still paid less for the same or similar work in the twenty-first century.

*Eleanor Dodman (see #4).*

## BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE

This week concludes Fulcrum's schedule for the term (back in Jan).

Limited numbers of back issues from the series 21-30 will soon be available from the AA bookstore. If you are missing particular issues, or for other enquiries, please write to us at: [fulcrum@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:fulcrum@aschool.ac.uk)