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Sunstroke and other stories

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA and RAPHAËL ZARKA
on a trip through the English countryside

The artists CHRISTIAN HIDAKA and RAPHAËL ZARKA first met at Winchester School of Art, graduating in 1999. Their chance meeting there would blossom into decades of friendship, as well as dialogue and collaboration as artists. In the early spring, the pair embarked on a week-long trip around the English midlands ending in Egham, Surrey, to observe several sundials that RAPHAËL had located, as well as pay a visit to their alma mater. Their dialogue is one of friendship and familiarity, which takes a profound look at how geometry, art history, and a shared curiosity about ancient forms has influenced their way of seeing.

CHRISTIAN and RAPHAËL are sitting in a picturesque garden surrounded by Tudor buildings somewhere near their former alma mater, Winchester School of Art, in England.



CHRISTIAN HIDAKA
How you feeling, Raph?

RAPHAËL ZARKA
Pretty well, and yourself?

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA
Tired.

RAPHAËL ZARKA
Me too. You know, I was being a sundial last night, myself.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA
What do you mean?

RAPHAËL ZARKA
I had a fever and it felt as if I had the full side of the sundial. It circled across me, on the East, then West, the North and then South. And as soon as it turned to the other side, the previous side was healed, and I didn't have any fever left.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA
You had sunstroke?

RAPHAËL ZARKA
Exactly. To me that was the curse of the sundial because we've been on the road for about five days. It was always pretty cloudy but I had the symptoms of sunstroke last night, so it felt like the curse of the sundial.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA
I think the sympathy you have from looking at so many sundials gave you the feeling of having been a sundial.

RAPHAËL ZARKA
Maybe I've been exposed to the sundial itself and I have a sunburn from looking at too many sundials.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA
Well, I'm glad you've recovered a bit.

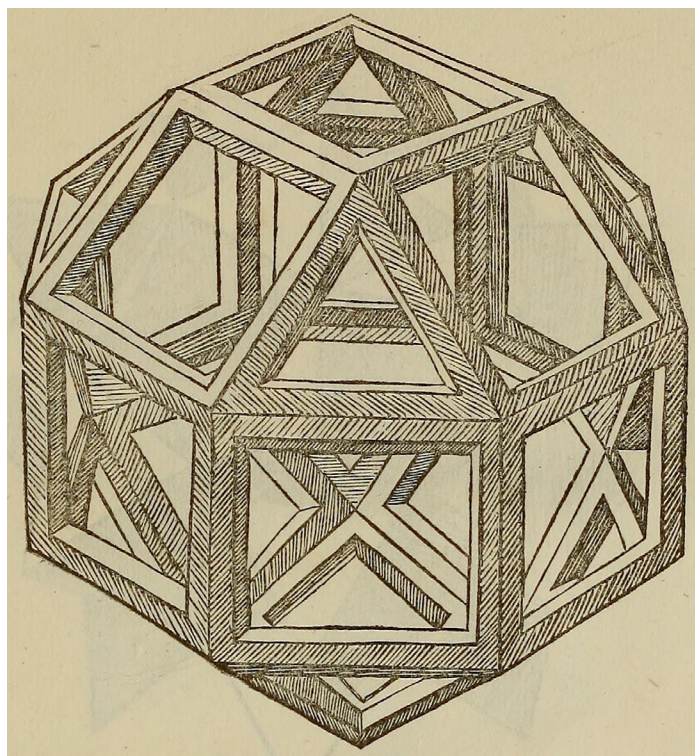
RAPHAËL ZARKA
Yes, I feel much better.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA
We're at the end of a long week. It was really fantastic to watch you doing your work in the field, accompanying you, looking at your subject and learning more about your process. For me this is really one of the most fascinating aspects of our collaboration, how I move forward and apply myself after watching you. Not being a painter, because I am a painter, you have a very different way of working, which for me is very refreshing. So maybe we should talk about what brought you to England, why you wanted to make this journey to visit the sundials.

RAPHAËL ZARKA
It all started in 2001, when I discovered by chance two geometrical objects made out of concrete – two modules of artificial reefs, actually. I didn't know their name or function at the time, I didn't know they were called rhombicuboctahedron. But I took photographs of them, and it became my first work. I was still a student, but for me, everything started from those photographs. Like Brassai said, they were "involuntary sculptures," and that's how I treated them. I had always dreamed of myself as a kind of archeologist, even though it's really more an Indiana Jones-type of approach to archeology, more phantasmic than rational. This was my first great discovery.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA
So you watched Indiana Jones when you were a child?

RAPHAËL ZARKA
Yes, it's what led me to study art. I wanted to study archeology, but they said to study archeology you must study the history of art, but you could not study the history of art without having a studio practice, and I had no interest in that. I grew up in a village and my parents never took me to museums, so I had a very average – or wrong idea – of what art was. I understood art as technicality, and I couldn't be bothered to learn all these skills.



CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

So when you first studied art, it was a very technical education?

RAPHAËL ZARKA

In high school it was very difficult, it was rather my own limitations as a teenager; I was unable to consider the breakthrough of modernism. But I eventually got a teacher that inspired me—he gave a class about Dada and Kurt Schwitters and suddenly it changed my perspective. At the time as a teenager, I was only interested in skateboarding, but watching Kurt Schwitters take things from the streets – like a bit of paper, a train ticket – and make a collage, suddenly it felt like that was something that didn't need technicality. It felt closer to my life, to what I was doing. That was a change in me, and it ignited my desire to be an artist; it didn't come through practice, it came through the contact, the performances, the excitement of gathering.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

And you are from Nîmes in the South of France...then how does coming to England to study fit into that?

RAPHAËL ZARKA

For me at this stage, art history was the history of painting, so I was starting to paint. And at this time the art schools in France were not promoting painting – it was very highly criticized as a medium. So I thought to myself, “I should study abroad,” and I always liked American and English rock bands so I thought that maybe it would be a good idea to study in either England or America. I met an English painter in Nîmes and she suggested a couple of schools, among which was Winchester.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

And I guess that's where we began.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Yes, and I know you are from England, but why did you want to go to art school, and why in Winchester?

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

I always feel like it was a process of deduction. It is a passion, but in the sense that I'm pretty useless at other things, and this was just a very natural way forward. I wanted to paint, and Winchester was known as a painting school, so it felt natural to



apply there. And I'm glad I did, because I think out of the whole experience, meeting you was the most important part of this. But we've known each other since 1997 and we've talked a lot over the years. I've developed, I feel, in tandem with you. I feel there's always been enough difference in our practices that there can be this complementary existence.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

I think that's at the center of it, a common relationship to history.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

The approach to history is more anachronistic, in relationship to the sundials at least. How many sundials have we seen now?

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Today is the fifth one.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

Five across maybe seven counties in the space of five days. You're researching a particular type of sundial, which as an object I think people would not normally recognize to be a sundial.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

People who study them call them polyhedral sundials or multifaceted sundials. I first became aware of them through my interest in the rhombicuboctahedron that I found on the side of the road in 2001. From this project I started to make a catalogue raisonné of this form through space and time.

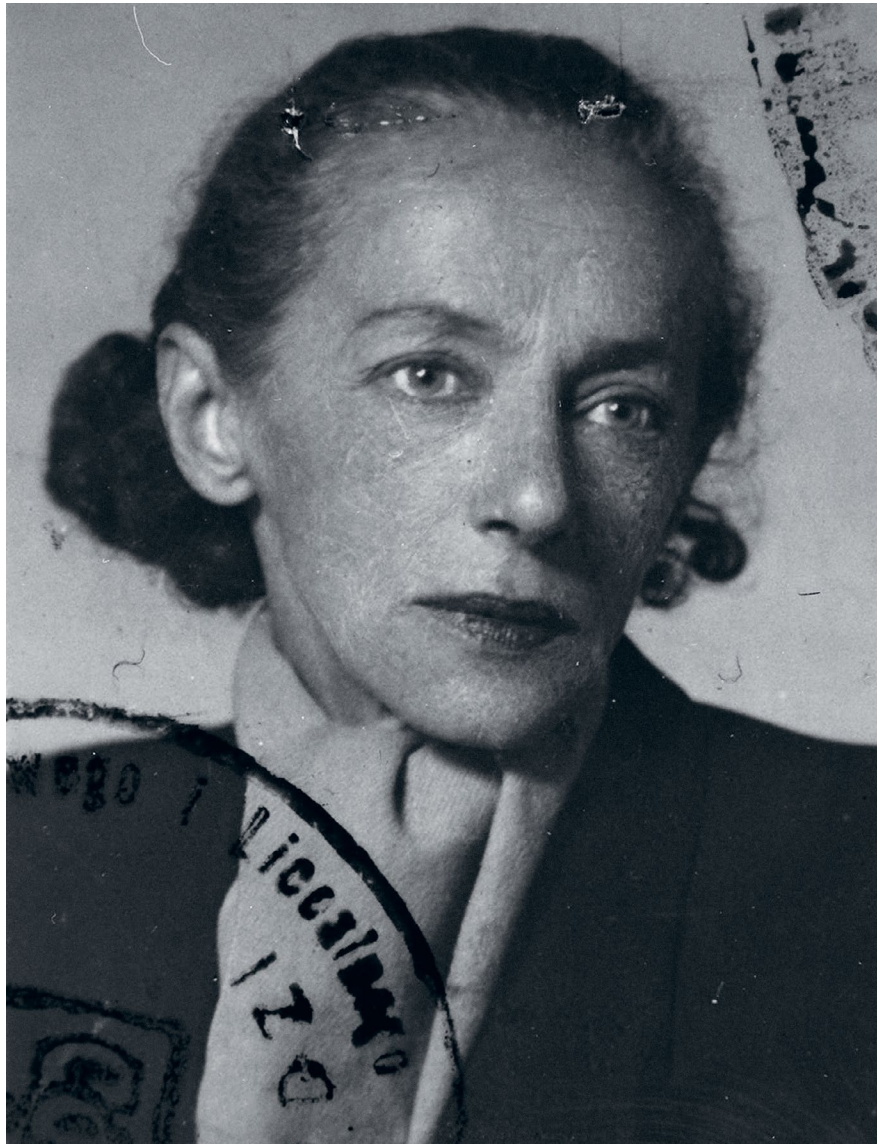
CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

What is the first appearance of the rhombicuboctahedron in history?

RAPHAËL ZARKA

The first form appears in a portrait of Renaissance mathematician Luca Pacioli by Jacopo de' Barbari, around 1500. After Pacioli published *The Divine Proportion*, where 60 polyhedra were drawn in perspective, there was a kind of craze for these geometrical objects. At first, they were only speculative forms and had no purpose. But rather quickly, the people studying sundials – the gnomonists – understood polyhedra would be useful to make multi-sided sundials. The first polyhedral dials in Italy, Germany, and France were small, portable objects made of wood or metal. But in the 17th century, these objects turned monumental. Carved in stone, they started to





ornate gardens, and they were particularly popular in England and even more in Scotland, where I made my first sundial trip a couple of years ago.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

Your engine – this catalogue raisonné – is a type of storage place for future ideas, where each image is almost a hyperlink to a whole new body of work.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Yes, because first you have the category of the sundial within rhombicuboctahedron, and then all these types of sundials with a less symmetrical approach. My interest is in finding preexisting objects and recognizing in them the type of sculptures that I need to be making.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

The sculptural potential of the object.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Yes, and most of the time these objects are on the margins of art history. They may have been produced by architects, mathematicians... Like Galileo manufacturing some apparatus to study freefall or Arthur Schoenflies making plaster models out of his crystallographic studies in space tiling. When I see these objects, I feel that they could enter my body of work.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

It's in relation to a certain idea of modernity that never happened, that almost could have happened via something that happened in the deeper past. This is something that's attracted you to this particular type of English polyhedral sundial – the fact that they answer certain issues that early modern sculpture wasn't able to.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Sometimes you see some sculptors from the past, let's say Katarzyna Kobro – who I have always liked a lot – and when you're back in the studio or you're doing drawing, you think, "how could I work from what Kobro achieved without repeating a gesture a hundred years after, which would have no meaning."

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

Because it would be a pastiche?



RAPHAËL ZARKA

Yeah, it would be a pastiche and I'm not ready for that. And so the strategy that I found for myself is to go back in time. Kobro did these sculptures in the 1920s, and I'm going back in time to Antonello da Messina's painting of Saint Jerome in 1474. Within that painting, I see a piece of design that reminds me of Kobro's sculpture, and I am taking this thing out of the painting and making a sculpture the size or the scale of Katarzyna's work. There is a conversation happening across temporalities. I've always been very interested in triangulation, this idea that if you want to measure land, you always need three coordinates in order to determine a position or verify a distance. It's never a binary in my case – it's at least this triangle. It could be even more.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

Would you say that this approach, this attitude, determines a certain contemporary position? For example, in the early 20th century, this type of triangulation might not have been possible because of a lack of knowledge or access to certain information. The age we're living in, what you are talking about, is something existing almost like a hologram between what is projected from relative points. The thing itself doesn't actually exist—it exists because of certain sources of projection. And in this case, we're talking about Kobro and da Messina and probably Euclidean geometry, which is, I guess, the binding force between those two positions.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Yes, totally.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

I've always known you to be looking at sundials, but more recently I'm becoming aware of why these types of sundials are of particular interest to you. It has a lot to do with something about the unusual situation in which they arose in England in particular?

RAPHAËL ZARKA

I guess you have the late development of the Renaissance in England in mind, the importance of hermeticism, the subjects you became particularly fond of after reading Frances Yates' books. As far as I know, it is totally rooted in that context. I'm amazed that such objects can exist. For me it's a forgotten part of the desire for geometrical abstraction that mankind possesses. There has always been this desire and we know that from mostly other cultures, like Muslim



geometry and ornamentation. But I think even our Westernized geometry is connected to ornamentation. We both share a deep interest in Piero della Francesca, who studied polyhedra and perspective, but he didn't seem to have much interest in the geometrical forms in themselves. In his *De Prospectiva Pingendi* he's considering them because they can be helpful for depicting architecture, whereas Paolo Uccello before him really tried to give an autonomy to complex geometrical forms.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

Well, it would take a mathematician like Luca Pacioli to fully appreciate the autonomy of these forms, as to have been a painter at that time was to be all about applying mathematics and perspective in order to make an image more real – that was the obsession. Pacioli was able to abstract the idea of pure geometry, and perhaps Uccello was also obsessed by this question.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

I guess the autonomy of geometrical structures starts with intarsia, the practice of inlaying wood, first begun in the studios of Urbino and Gubbio, for instance, within what today we would call still-life compositions. I find it interesting to notice that this process of automation of geometrical forms comes from an art which is right in-between painting and sculpture, an art of “constructed images,” where you have to cut all the shapes you want to use. The intarsia makers of the 16th century will often borrow polyhedra out of Pacioli's *The Divine Proportion*.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

Copying and pasting them, transferring them onto intarsia...

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Actually, maybe it's still anachronistic to see these geometrical forms as autonomous. They still served a purpose, they were allegorical, they embodied mathematics or platonic philosophy... My interest in geometrical abstraction is not as formalist as it might seem; what I find really interesting is how these forms can be invested with use or meaning.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

How geometry appears in our everyday reality, or in history?

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Yes, geometry as an empty shell. In this way, I don't need to be a modernist – esoterically interested – to quote or use materials that could refer to the esoteric. In geometry you have the Pythagorean approach, where there is magic and rationality and all this is mixed up, and then you have the Euclidean approach, where you take all the metaphysics away and you're only studying the proportionality,

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

The purity of the form.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Yes, the purity of the form or its mechanics, its hidden properties... So it's really interesting that a square or polyhedra can have a metaphysical meaning or a purely mathematical meaning.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

When I think of your catalogue raisonné of the rhombicuboctahedron, what is really fascinating is how these symbols are being used over time. It is like a coat of paint. Whatever the esoteric meaning is changes over time, and what is left is really the form. It shows the temporality of how the form is used, and in the end, none of these uses outlives the form itself. The form is the thing which exists in the end, always. The sundials are possibly beautiful precisely because they weren't intended as aesthetic objects in and of themselves. They became beautiful because they weren't intended as artworks. There's a certain timelessness to them, which wouldn't be possible, if, say, an artist had made them initially as artworks.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

I feel like they are very enigmatic and they must have been very, very, enigmatic at the time they were produced. My theory is that the motivation to make them like this was to recreate the ruins of another civilization on their surfaces.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

What you're describing is a very pure object in that sense. Most of these sundials were understood or seen as objects of antiquity. And it's true that some of them existed in antiquity, but it's really a creation of the Renaissance. You coined this phrase, or you repeated the phrase that a historian told you: pseudomorphism.



RAPHAËL ZARKA

I think it comes from Panofsky, pseudomorphism is two forms that look alike but don't have a genetical relationship. They were produced in very different contexts without people knowing each other.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

And an artwork becomes a way to synthesize these two disparate aspects?

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Yes. I think that's something great about being an artist, you can use and play with the two nightmares of art historians: pseudomorphism and anachronism.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

But then just remaking these forms isn't enough, chasing the beauty of these forms is not enough in and of itself. The actual attitude, the thinking, must reflect the language of geometry. I think this idea of triangulation is something which deeply affected what I'm doing, having discussed things with you over many years, constructing something which doesn't exist in a very fixed space or time.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

It seems like you've always been very affected by that trip you took to the Utah desert when we were at Winchester. I remember you came back and were painting giant paintings of deserts with very acidic colors. I remember very clearly looking at one of these paintings and saying, "Christian, why, why, why, is there this yellow and pink that is so acidic and so aggressive to my eyes?" And you simply said, "But what do you think it feels like to be in the desert around midday when there is no wind." And I thought, "Okay, now I understand." It was a phenomenological approach to the image that you were making. And then you went to Japan and China, and it had another major impact on your painting, and then you went to Morocco and Rome, and this changed once again your approach.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

I went far West; the American desert gives a sense of space like no other. And then going far East to Japan, where I was born, was another sense of space, another philosophy, another way of looking. And then in the summer of 2011 we went to Morocco and then we ended up in Rome. This was a complete revelation, the reality of the Mediterranean, the light, the method of construction, talking about

people like Piero della Francesca or Masaccio. These things are part of the development of my understanding of painting. I wanted to situate myself, not in a very English idea of painting, which is a very gray island with very muted colors, but in an idea of painting, which could traverse West to East.

I remember that summer being in Italy with you – it was fantastic. We spent a lot of time talking about Giorgio de Chirico, going to his apartment, seeing his studio, seeing Rome, the ruins; everything. And there was no going back from there because I suppose I developed in a certain trajectory and tried many styles, and I wanted something more concrete. This is where geometry started to come into the work in a stronger way, and the idea of shadow, which is deeply rooted to geometry. And watching the development of your sculptural practice, I wasn't aware of it at the time, but it really made me start to think about the clarity of forms depicted in paintings, and the shadows they cast, and how to construct these forms. And then the question of what type of space to create. It was very pertinent in my mind that I was very clearly against one-point-perspective as this ideological tool of European art. So I settled on oblique perspective, which is something we share, which means to construct something with parallel lines so that space doesn't diminish. There's no real precedent for this in the history of image, where oblique perspective is used with shadow. It's been really interesting watching how you've treated your sculptural practice via oblique perspective, too.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

It gave me a new tool to build my sculpture and at the same time it opened a new space for them too. That's how I consider my works on paper; a specific space for sculptures.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

But then there was a strange play on that, where you started depicting Peter Halt's drawings, which were constructed into one point perspective as abstract forms, which you then translated into oblique perspective and then made sculptures from. It's almost a reverse from artifice to reality. A kind of language able to move backwards and forwards, from abstraction to reality.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

I think that what has the most important impact on my work is not even de Chirico or any visual artist but the writings of Jorge Luis Borges, which I discovered at Winchester. The idea of the double,

the idea of translations, a kind of methodology... he was creating fictions, but out of nonfiction literature. He was trying to put forward the literary potential of philosophy or theology and I feel that this is what I am trying to do as an artist. In this way, and to go back to Peter Halt, I think it was very Borgesian to take one language, like one point perspective, and to reconstruct it in oblique perspective.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

But those are both equal languages and autonomous. Oblique is a way to legitimize something, which in one point perspective is diminishing and less truthful to our truer understanding of the reality of these objects.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

I remember a quote by Claude Bragdon, an American architect, and I think it goes like: "Oblique perspective, less faithful to appearance, is more faithful to fact; it shows things more nearly as they are known to the mind."

You know, I've followed your work since we met at Winchester and have seen the slow appearance of figures in the images, from nothing to tiny little silhouettes, and then growing bigger and bigger to very large characters. I feel there is a new generation of painters that are real fans of yours because of the way you paint figures.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

I always dreamed of painting figures. It's the hardest thing to actually find a way to paint figures. It's hard to find a way which is accessible, that makes sense, realistically, that isn't just atavistic, or pastiche. It's this issue of European painting, which erupted during the Renaissance and lasted until Cubism and is still a deeply troubling issue in depiction today. It surrounds the idea of the figure. I always paint figures in oblique space, I never depict them in one point perspective, which was the issue with the demise of figurative painting.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Can you represent a figure in parallel perspective?

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

I'm not interested in making everything oblique because I think that's the job of an illustrator.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Your older paintings were homogenous. What characterizes your work today is a form of heterogeneity where you mix different images, different types of spaces, like an exhibition space or a stage, and you have a lot of things that you can put inside.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

A central part of the work I'm doing at the moment is the idea of theater and the theatrical stage as a microcosm of the world, particularly how it was used during the Renaissance, when the art of memory became synthesized with the idea of theater, and the theater itself became an imaginary place to create an art of memory. I envisaged this way of painting as a sort of art of memory, to repeatedly go back to certain motifs and forms, to interrogate them, to find where they might lead me, and to prioritize certain forms over others in order to get closer to an idea of painting; a reasonable idea of painting that is not expressionist nor photorealist.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Now I have another question for you. You started making landscapes at Winchester, and then at the Royal Academy you were doing other types of landscape, but slowly your work shifted from landscape to stages and theater. From the moment you switched from landscape to stages you started using your strong knowledge of art history, and this was a new possibility for you to relate pictographically to other types of practices. I think it opened the space for your relationship to history—your painting was a receptacle anything could enter.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

At that time, there was this very strong DIY sensibility in post YBA art, and my way of addressing this moment—I mean it's an awful solution, but it worked for me—was to pick up a Bob Ross painting manual. Bob Ross essentially boiled down nuggets of Chinese painting, and people such as Caspar David Friedrich and John Constable in the American Midwest. So I'd been to the American Midwest and I'd looked at the Bob Ross-type paintings on the walls of the cheap motels I



was staying in. Meanwhile, I had this romantic notion of depicting the landscape and finding a way to paint it, and I'd get back to the motel and I would see this garish, bright orange and red painting, and I would think to myself, "wow, they've done it already." I began using these manuals as a way to align myself with a post-Duchampian idea of making a painting, answering to a Duchampian reality, a ready-made way of making a painting.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

I think when you travel, the representation of the space you are visiting is as important as the space that you are visiting. I've always felt that this type of relationship has been important to you; you were always going somewhere where the spaces had been painted before.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

As a painter, the way you depict a place has an effect on certain ways of seeing made by painters who came before, which informs a cultural idea of how that space could be depicted. Perhaps it's empirical.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

It's something like the French philosophical idea of artialisation, like Cézanne's Mont Sainte-Victoire. It really took Cézanne's paintings to turn the Mont Sainte-Victoire into something worth looking at. The story goes that Mont Sainte-Victoire burned, and they had to plant new trees and so they included some trees that were not on Mont Sainte-Victoire because they would create a more accurate simulation of the colors used by Cézanne in his painting.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

That is a magical transformation. That is really magic.

PART 2

CHRISTIAN and RAPHAËL meet again the next day to continue their conversation. They are sitting in the picturesque gardens of Great Fosters Hotel, near Heathrow airport. The sound of planes overhead can be heard in the background and sometimes drowns out their conversation.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Yesterday we had our first talk to finish our sundial trips, from when we met at Winchester in 1997 to our sundial trip now. But it felt like we forgot the most important part of it: we forgot to talk about our collaborations.

Maybe a good place to begin is when I asked you to introduce the rhombicuboctahedron into one of your paintings. From the moment I found it on the roadside in 2001, I started finding it elsewhere, and I discovered it in the work of Luca Pacioli. It amazed me that this shape came into the world through this painting, and within that painting it is represented as a glass object. It's completely implausible, it couldn't exist in the real world; it's a metaphysical object. And so this object started in the painting and it came out into the world as an artificial reef, something forgotten on the side of the road. So I wanted the sculpture to go back to where it originated, to go back to a painting, and that's why I asked you to put it into one of your paintings.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

I think about collaboration as a discussion and maybe the artworks may not have four hands making them, but ultimately, I think pretty much all our collaboration has existed as a form of discussion through the artworks we make and passing things backwards and forwards from each other. And so I think you took the first move, which was to make this request, but I had no idea of the implications of what this would actually do. But then there was this gestation in this conversation and it wasn't until 2016, eight years later, that we had our first proper collaborative exhibition.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Yeah. So what happened in those eight years?

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

Well, we tried. But something wasn't gelling. I think from my point of view, I wasn't in a position to be able to receive this type of discussion in my work. I still had to evolve a little bit to a point where my language was capable of accepting these ideas. I would say the simple change was the trip to Italy, where we met in Rome. And that aspect of shadow came into the work. And I hadn't realized, because there was no shadow in my work until this point, but the implications of having a shadow suddenly opened up the possibility of space in a way which was not possible before, because the space was much flatter and more akin to early computer imagery. Introducing shadow enabled me to place certain references and objects in the work, which I couldn't do before.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

At this moment, I really understood that these paintings could also be collaborative. We had all this conversation and I think that's what we did for the next eight years.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

So fast forward to 2017 and the beginning of your fascination with sundials, which has brought us here, to the engraving by Joshua Kirby. How would you describe Joshua Kirby, as a scholar of perspective? He's credited with finally perfecting all the laws of perspective, amending the mistakes that Piero della Francesca had made. When was it published, Kirby's treatise?

RAPHAËL ZARKA

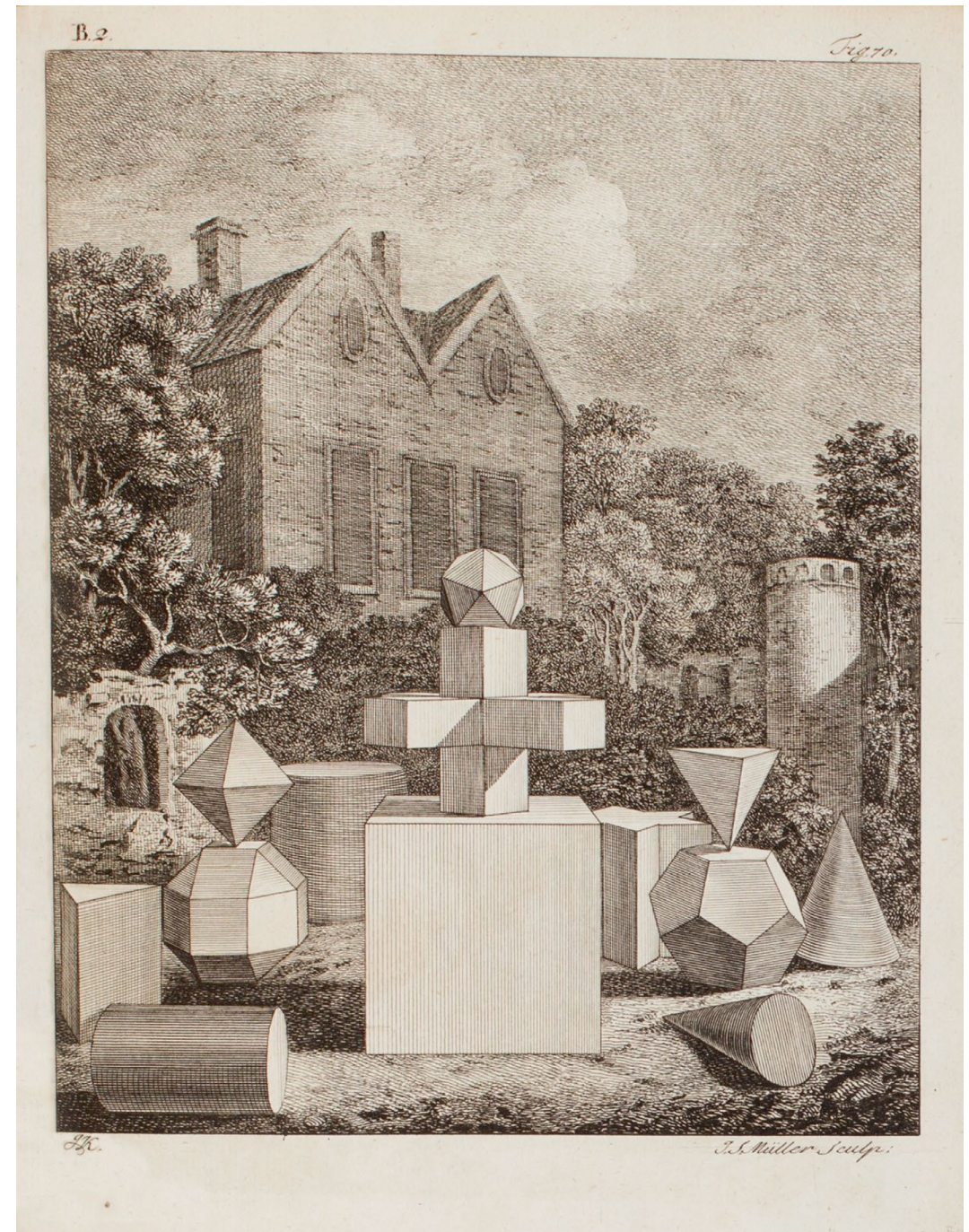
The 18th century.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

But you were taken by this particular image. It appears in Kirsti Andersen's *The Geometry of an Art*, published in 2007.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

It caught my eye in particular because polyhedra have been represented in many treatises, starting with *The Divine Proportion*. The fashion at the time would have been to display them on shelves, but here in this engraving Kirby locates them in a garden. They have shadows, they are situated in the environment; you really believe that they are in this bucolic garden.





CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

Bucolic and a little bit haunted, I think haunted with the cloudy sky, the dark house... it's almost this fantasy of a stonemason's dream. Maybe there was a stonemason who really wanted to go full whack and have his own private enclosed space, because there's a wall around this garden as well.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

And at the same time, I was increasingly interested in these stones and sundials that I discovered through my research around the rhombicuboctahedron. The rhombicuboctahedron in Kirby's drawing looks so real. As if it existed. If you came upon this image on its own, you might think this is the view of a property somewhere in England or in Scotland that was depicted. And I thought, perhaps that was a sundial of the time, and so I set out to find them.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

It's dawning on me now, it's almost like an apex, because this particular treatise was the perfection of perspective, but with this comes this climactic image of all the polyhedra congregating together. There's no other image like this and now that history has been perfected, they all come together in this gathering.

RAPHAËL ZARKA

As a student, I was always fascinated by this idea of the secondary experience of artworks, how they could be experienced outside their intended meaning or purpose.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

You're talking in a sense of how the rhombicuboctahedron reappears here in Kirby's engraving, or as a streetlight, as a public library, as a sundial?

RAPHAËL ZARKA

Yes, exactly so. It's what I always find very exciting, this idea of migrations of forms and meanings. From today's perspective, you might say Kirby's image is quoting the famous portrait of Luca Pacioli, but maybe it's just because this stonemason used rhombicuboctahedron in creating sundials that it appeared among the rest of the forms.

CHRISTIAN HIDAKA

That work remains a mystery. But it's also the origin of our first four-handed artwork.