

Ben Elliot Shop 



Exhibition view



Exhibition view

Ben Elliot Shop ⚽
energized by Red Bull
Until August 5th, 2018
Magasins Généraux
1, rue de l'Ancien Canal, 93500 Pantin
as part of the exhibition *Par amour du jeu 1998-2018*

Ben Elliot Shop ⚽ is an art installation that takes the shape of a concept store bringing together 45 brands and entities from eclectic backgrounds such as clothing, tech, food and entertainment.

Representing lifestyles that tend towards human enhancement and artificial intelligence, Ben Elliot Shop ⚽ brings together a selection of elements echoing football and more generally sport. Ben Elliot proceeds by aggregation of objects and uses their own characteristics to disseminate a general idea or concept, often polysemous, that can therefore be understood both by the art world and by wider audiences. At first glance, the concept store seems to be the only visible part of the project. In reality, the work also integrates the communication and the interactions with the people and the companies included in the project, their own audiences and networks, generating many contents deriving from the products and the installation.

Inspired by the context of the leading communication agency BETC, where the project is presented, Elliot worked with many marketing services to develop a formal and conceptual balance between the communication stakes of the brands and of the artwork itself. The process of creation is thus thought in terms of collaborations, and its economic system is not limited to the patrons-collectors-galleries but also integrates other players such as advertisers, who benefit from a service of smart advertising.

By exhibiting objects in a cultural institution where they can be called artworks, Ben Elliot Shop ⚽ could be considered as a simple entanglement of ready-mades. But the life cycle of the objects does not stop there. They remain buyable, they are reinjected into the consumer society and return to their original status of products, avoiding the danger of becoming fetishized.

Energized by Red Bull

Featuring 1MORE, American Apparel, Anker, Aqua Quest, Arc'teryx, Avalon, BBryance, Champion, Click & Grow, Cobra Labs, C.P. Company, Fila, Fnatic, GORE-TEX, Gosha Rubchinskiy, Infinite, ISAORA, Liam Terror, Lil Wavi, LuMee, master-piece, Microsoft, MIT CSAIL, MIZUNO, MusclePharm, NeuroGum, Nike, OpTic Gaming, Red Bull, Red Star, SALOMON, Sennheiser, Shukyu, Soylent, Splyce, Sponser, Studio Hagel, The North Face, Tonsser, Uhlsport, Under Armour, Waviboy, Wearable X, Winter Vandenbrink, Xbox.



Anker, Red Bull, BBryance, Lil Wavi



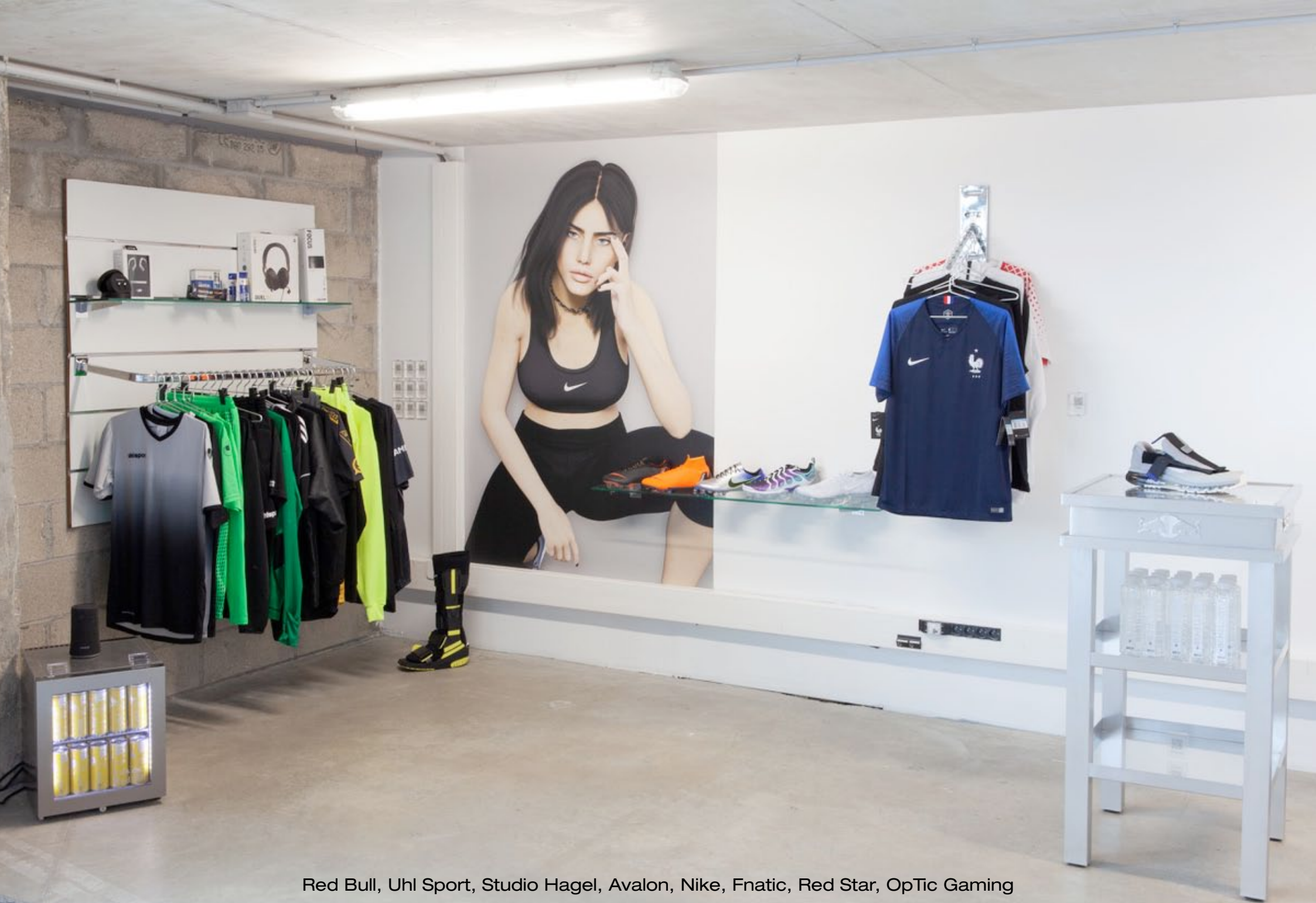
Red Bull, C.P Company, Salomon, The North Face, Arc'teryx, Champion, GORE-TEX, Under Armour, Anker, Fila, Wearable X

If only one work was to summarize the spirit of the group show *Par amour du jeu 1998-2018*, consider that Ben Elliot's would make sense. Created by the visual artist of 23 years old, it takes the form of an installation whose, at first glance, does not appear as obvious art: it is a real-fake concept store in which sporting goods, energy drinks, iPhone shells, etc. are exhibited. Ben Elliot does not bother with circumlocution to clarify his approach: «Recently, most of my projects were based on a brand or a product [...]. The goal here was to spread my ideas and trigger a sponsored project from all sides, which concludes with a networking of objects, ideas and data shared through the exhibition, but also through all brands and people involved, objects and computer networks.». «Nike, Under Armour, Fila, Red Bull, etc., Ben Elliot has been talking to all of these brands alone and obtained positive answers from people not always easy to reach», says Eugénie Lefebvre, director of the art foundation.

Libération Newspaper, June 15th 2018



Gosha Rubchinskiy



Red Bull, Uhl Sport, Studio Hagel, Avalon, Nike, Fnatic, Red Star, OpTic Gaming



Soylent

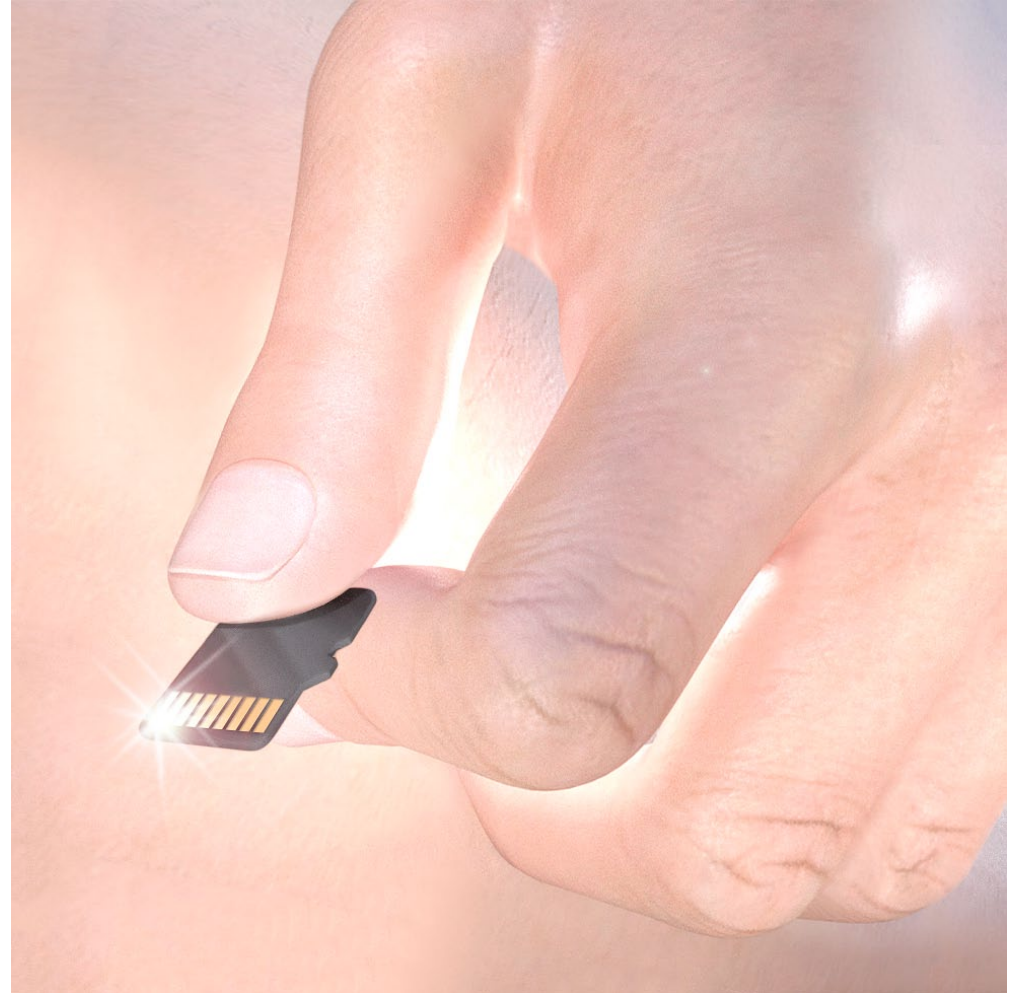


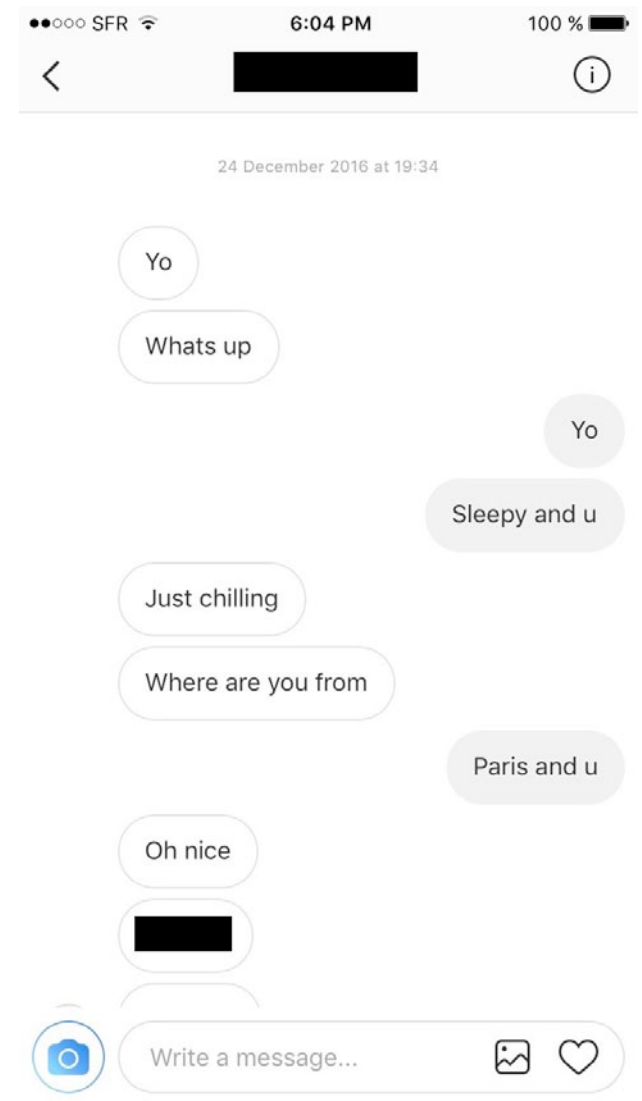
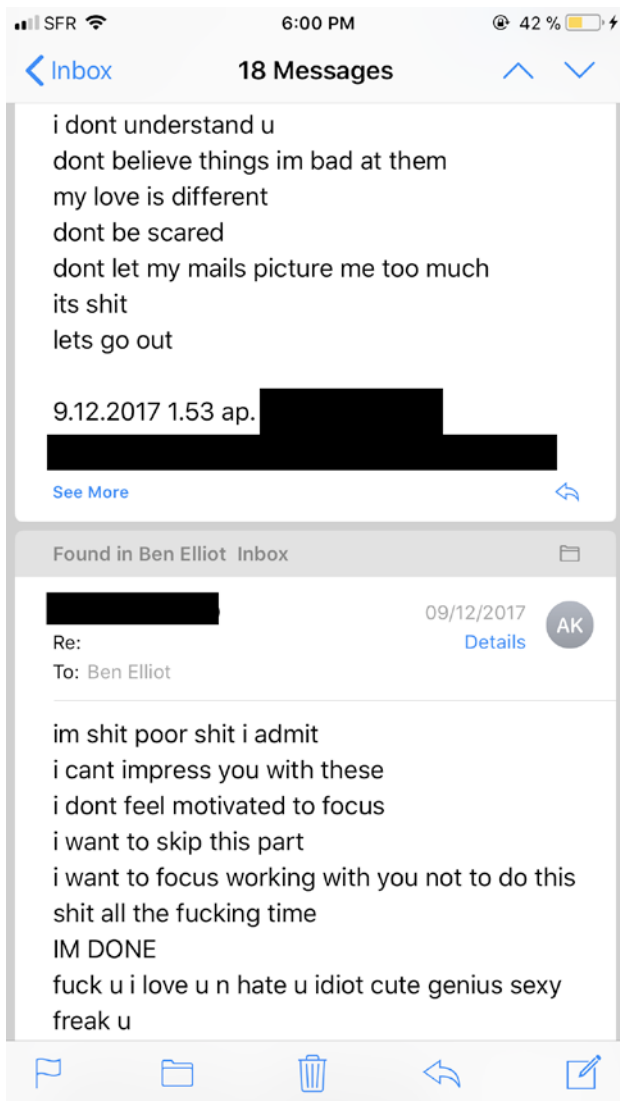
Nike, Avalon

Ben Elliot

The Stalker, 2017

The Stalker is an archive file composed of screenshots, and various contents, available on a limited micro SD Christmas Edition and through a download link. It retraces the daily harassment towards Ben Elliot from one anonymous follower via all kind of platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, emails, phone messages, phone calls, videos, voice messages and pictures. Started as a basic Instagram conversation on December 24th 2016 (the two never met IRL, nor Elliot answered any message after the first conversations), *The Stalker* documents universal human purposes such as personal fulfillment through relationships and smartphone uses, putting privacy as a buyable public good.





Diary, 2017

Diary is a one-year status compilation from Ben Elliot's instagrams. Gathering topics such as emotions, feelings, tastes and self-achievements, the book is highlighting timeless human concerns and questioning the meaning of being an emerging creative. Evolving in the context of social media's full public access to information, it is however an intimate work — intrinsic to the tradition of diarists. Elliot organized spontaneous writings into a narrative work, using the textual elements from a platform predestinated to pictorial content.

The release of *Diary* is accompanied by the launch of an ongoing series of unreleased instagram selfies printed on 0.75mm polycarbonate sheets. 12.3 x 7 cm: the size of a 5,5" smartphone screen.

Publisher: Doppell Edition
Graphic Design: Lucas Liccini
Visuals: Nicolas Stefano Pedde Lay
& Pierre-Ange Aznar



6 days

i am wondering what i want to do
today since like 4 hours on my
bed n i really want to do nothing.
I would love to take a ticket to
tokyo n just walk in the city n lick
fuji but i have no money i would
love to take a ticket to leave earth
but looks impossible i am really
stuck here for all my life i think
umm so i can diary myself

but i just had a revelation

i will seize some good feelings
n sensations n then i will die. rn
iam listening something i never
heard yet n love it so much i feel
in love with here i want to keep
here music just for me. i love
being extremely sensitive too rn
on my bed feeling the music into
my body her japanese voice :o

5 days

iam living in a polish drama
movie all grey n some black for
emotions n red for blood with
empty looks in a insane decor
lmao

4 days

1.2.16 is a lovely n smelly day
even if my body is tired i can
smell some sweetness

2 days

ewwwwww

1 day

not the one uploading

iam thinking about life like
everyday it s actually my main
daily activity with exploring it. ...

DIARY

BEN ELLIOT

Then it doesnt exist

*The cutest book ever :) buy it
before i burn it*

Now playing porte de mesrine

Everything is possible today :))

*I like to remind too that we are
Just a big (or small, as u like)
mass which is Just a perpetual
flux of infos which at the end just
create energy without any goals
and like all the stuff around*

31 July

JPP

Drinking skin

Drinking my skin

Listening your body needs like

2 August

#now

5 August

#nohuman

Unlimited

7 August

*Today I was full of hate for
humanity and life as two
separated levels. First one for
being so narrow with life
and second one for being itself.
I am exhausted*

*Also I accept the fact that the
way to succeed (internal and
external success) is very long
and the arrival point is death so
I am planning a perfect business
plan in two majors parts but ...*





Unreleased Selfies, ongoing series. Digital print on 0.75mm transparent polycarbonate sheet. 12.3 x 7 cm (36 x 27 cm with frame).

tbh3: Ben Elliot water, 2017

«It started when I agreed to be formatted» Ben Elliot.

No embarrassment, no doubts, a simple and precise sentence, I agreed to be an object of the art world, a product. After all, we are no longer in the «nothing is lost, nothing is created, everything is transformed», but rather «nothing is lost, nothing is created, everything is sold» - and then is finally bought.

It is said that when one falls off a horse, one must go up immediately, when one drinks too much, one orders a beer the next day. To fight fire with fire means to choose the evidence. *If I call it art, then it is art, and it is as simple as that.*

We could evoke the obvious links between Ben Elliot's work and the practice of Andy Warhol or Nicolas Bourriaud's relational aesthetics. But Ben Elliot is not an artist, it is a registered trademark. A bit of *self-branding*, a lot of selfies and a meticulous Instagram diary: Ben Elliot is self proclaiming his own artistic brand.

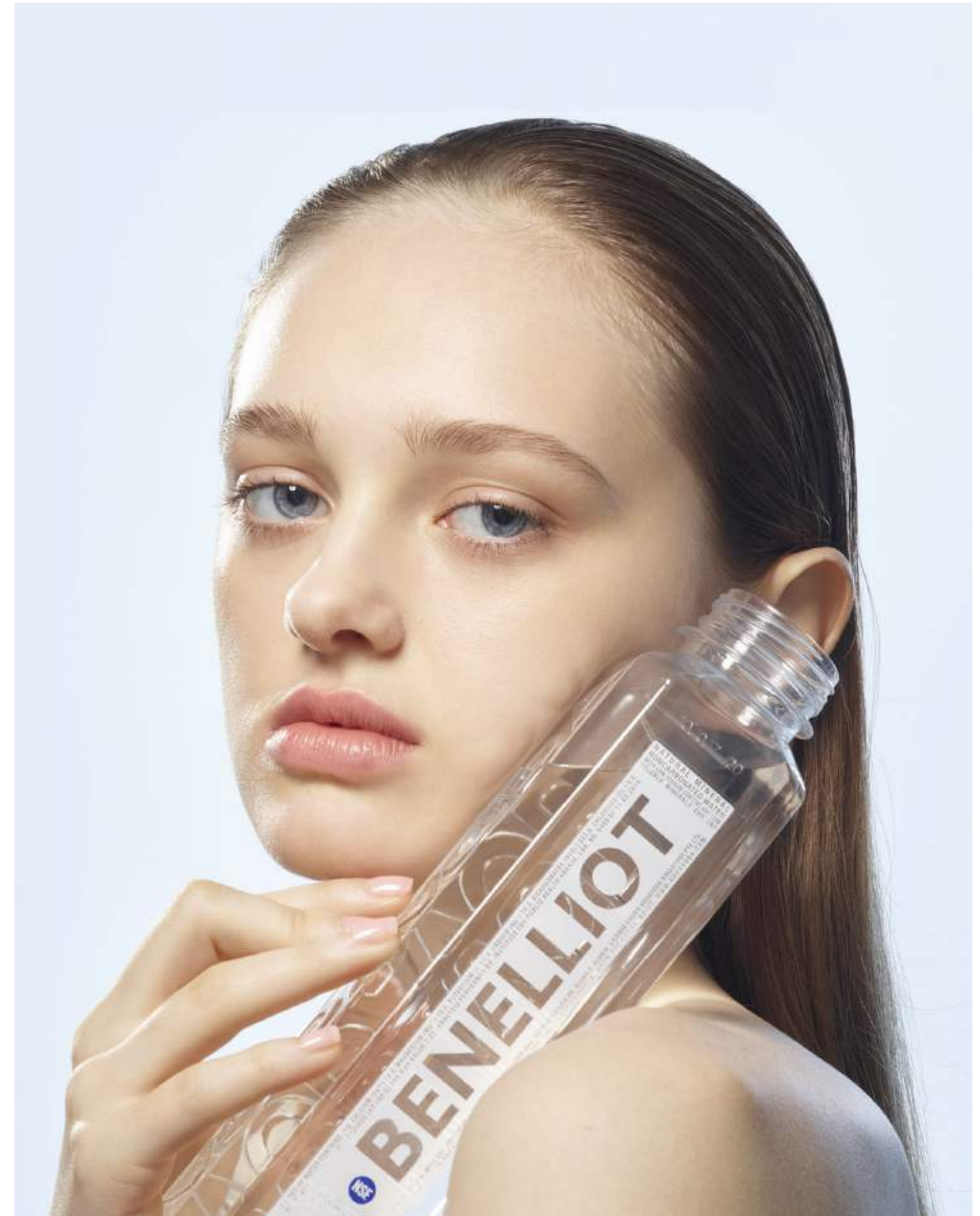
tbh3 is the third part of the series *tbh, i dunno if I have feelings*. Ben is honest, he does not lie and says what others insinuate.

When the Serbian luxury water Voda Voda agreed to collaborate with the artist, they jointly launched a production of a few hundred bottles of water bearing his name. A shooting with the young and precocious Lily Taïeb gives birth to his muse.

The brand is created.

But he is not the first. At all times artists have signed their works, thus depositing a trademark, marking to the iron a stage of their life, establishing a picture of their generation and their environment.

To name a thing is the first act of creation, the original act. The name is the first communication that takes place around us.



Ben Elliot continues to build the myth of his own character and extends his persona through communication tools that are everyday objects. The simplest ones.

All these fictions take part in federating a group, creating a space to listen and speak. Because when we listen, as Ben Elliot does, when we are in total contact with our present, it is a deep understanding of today's codes that allows us to anticipate the future.

A simple bottle of water becomes an extension of his personality, his own myth. I drank *Ben Elliot*, as we wear Nike, Dior, Chanel and as we buy an iPhone. These objects become an integral part of the artist; some added limbs.

During a journey through transhumanism and communication theory, I met Ben Elliot: a derivative product born between the Millennials and Post-Millennials times.

Without knowing the intrinsic value of light waves, we can observe them because they obey known rules. Like these luminous rays, Ben Elliot makes art that obeys rules which we can follow but whose nature remains unknown. This mystery makes us believe in it.

Sacha Guedj Cohen



Bottle production: Voda Voda

Campaign pictures: Charles Negre

Model: Lily Taïeb

Make up & Nails: Lorandy

Hair: Paul Duchemin

Coordination: Samy Ghiyati & Louise Briskmann

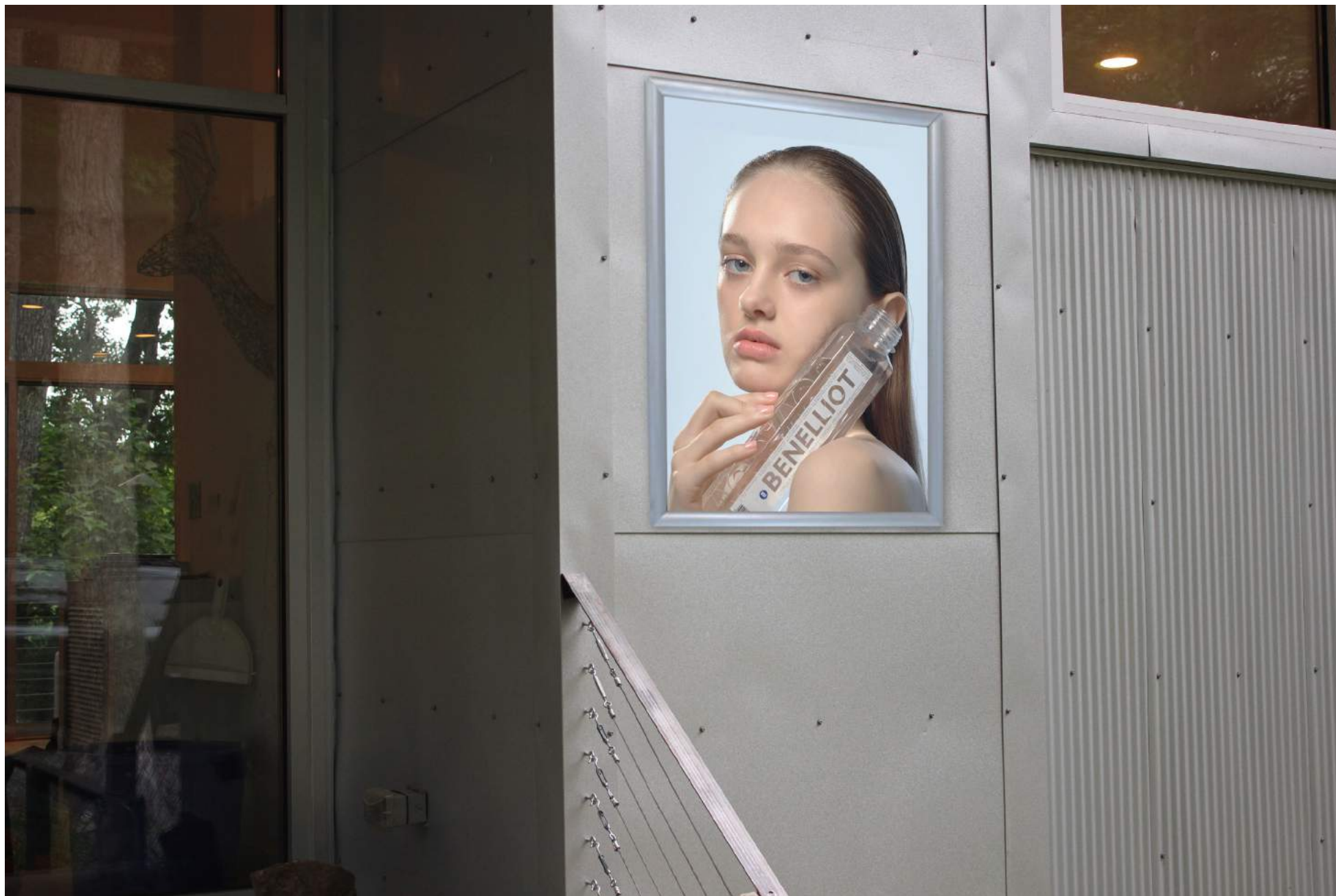
Thanks to Jessy Mansuy Leydier & Dejan Margetic



tbh 3: Ben Elliot Water, 2017. Campaign pictures. Photography Charles Nègre. Model Lily Taieb



Ben Elliot Water, 2017. Exhibition view, Guest Room, Carrboro, United States. Solo Show.



Ben Elliot Water, 2017. Exhibition view, Guest Room, Carrboro, United States. Solo Show.



Ben Elliot Water, 2017. Exhibition view, Guest Room, Carrboro, United States. Solo Show.



Ben Elliot Water, 2017. Exhibition view, Guest Room, Carrboro, United States. Solo Show.



Ben Elliot Water, 2017. Exhibition view, Whitescreen, Jeune Création. Website: whitescreen.jeunecreation.org

Discussion with Ibai Gorriti April 2017

Ben Elliot has just released the third installment of *tbh i dunno if i have feelings*, which started in 2016 as “an exhibition with a set of basic artworks” he explains.

It’s interesting that you started with books and you’re now doing brand collaborations. It seems to follow evolution. “Yes totally, and everything is technology in the end. Books are like the first smartphone of humanity in a way. And water is the first product of life, the basic one we are and consume everyday. Everybody needs water. It’s the best product.”

Water is certainly a basic product but we made it a product, a commodity. It being a product, a commodity, is kind of problematic, right? “I don’t think that way. I just see water as a product of life not just a product to shop. Of course it’s in a shop and you have to buy it, but still it is the product and the first technology of life, we can build a lot of stuff from it. The water brand I made the collaboration with is a fancy water, but I don’t have really a position on that. I chose this brand for how it looks and the quality of the water. It is not really my goal to represent luxury. Politics or social issues are not what interests me in this project. I’m more the kind of people who see humanity as a big organism or network, like when you look at animals or nano-particles, it’s just a species for me and I’m just observing it. Lifetime on earth is just a tiny part of life, so tiny that in the end buying water or not is not really a question.”

So you’re just observing life and representing it in your works as it is? “Yes, more focusing on how things evolve, humanity+, the post-human thing. I know it will end with artificial intelligence whatever the final form.” Humanity? “Yes, sure. And it’s okay. It’s not a bad or good thing to change or disappear ultimately, monkeys disappeared before, that’s the game.” Are we the new dinosaurs? “Absolutely.” I think so too. But if we are the new dinosaurs, are we our own meteorite? “Sure.” Or is technology the meteorite? “I feel like the meteorite is just life. I don’t believe in destiny or else but it is plainly logical. First you have a cell in water, then more and various transformations and then an A.I. Then it will return in the loop of matter which I am pretty sure is infinite.” But we are life. “A part of it yes, always changing and it’s okay.”

So when you approach social media, technology and everything there is no criticality nor commentary to it in the way you do it? “No. Art today is almost all about denouncing stuff. I’m not like that. I did a party and it was more like celebrating and I feel social medias are beautiful things, there you can share ideas, your personality, it’s an unlimited meeting point for everybody and everything. Now we’re focusing on how to make the body better, how to live smarter... uploaded and augmented. Of course the Internet may not be perfect and you can point some bad sides too if you want, free will is good.”

Fashion plays an important role in your work. “Well, everything is visual today so it is more about how you look and express yourself, clothes are a daily life object, an important one in the social game, it defines yourself and your ideas. On social medias it’s the first thing you see from the person. I also think it is fun to be part of fashion in a thoughtful way. I’m sponsored by some brands on instagram, like Nike, and I like to think I’m wearing ideas.”

It seems hard to me to stay neutral when you do a party, a water collaboration or social media... you’re either critiquing it, making a parody or celebrating it or maybe none of those. “Yes none, just reproducing them in a brand-new way... My work is not about celebrating, even if I did it once, it’s more being a part of it and activate something different inside.” Then we all are part of it, doing social media, throwing parties, self-branding... but you seem to do so in quite an extreme way, going very far, maybe exploring the limits. “Yeah, the limits are good to reach another layer.”

It’s also funny that you mention Kim Kardashian because she also operates with all this in a very extreme way, I think. “Yes. I don’t like everything about her but I think she with her family did really good things culturally speaking. Making 13 seasons of your life with Keeping Up With The Kardashians is a huge masterpiece!” So you’re interested in it conceptually but not aesthetically? “Yeah depends on the day.” Kanye West also wants us to believe it’s a masterpiece. “Yes nobody is taking him really seriously when it comes to art” Well, many people take it seriously. He sells millions of records, he fills stadiums... It’s the art world, which is very few people, that does not take it seriously. “Yes that’s what I meant, because they think they’re smarter. It’s all about that. Things should be put at the right place more often, don’t want to insist on The Kardashians (laughs) but they’re doing more interesting stuff than 99% of the artists today. I feel like it deserves to be seen in a different way sometimes.”

Conceptual art came from the frustration with traditional forms in a way. When I see your work over the last year I see that you also started with a more traditional exhibition format and then from there you went to different medias, not traditional at all, like throwing a party. Was it a reaction to the exhibition? “Yes, Totally. I like to make a difference between art and contemporary art because the last one seems to obey some established trends and rules. I played by the rules in the first exhibition and I’m happy that I did that, once. I will do it again, we all need to fit somehow. But still I like to think there’s contemporary art and there is art. Art is more about realizing in what world you live and the potential it has, making it visible again, in a new way, to generate a new step.”

You're represented by a PR agency instead of a gallery for now. "It's part of it." So you consider the tactics you choose to present yourself to be part of the artwork. "Sure, the way you present things is as important as the rest, it shapes the whole thing." You two worked very closely to organize *tbh i dunno if i have feelings 2*, the party. "Yes. The goal was to choose people from different backgrounds like music, fashion, art, entertainment... and to bring together some very young figures who embody the different ideas of today." So was there like a casting for the attendants? "Almost, more like a natural casting." At the same time you were doing your work you were presenting other artists, empowering your whole generation through your work. Same for the bottle project, you assembled different aesthetics close to yours but didn't create any content yourself directly. It is like creating with a curatorial approach."

< Comments

elliott.ben Now available worldwide on benelliots.com link in bio

damn_dxniel Are u goddamn serious
1w Reply

damn_dxniel #uglygod
1w Reply

principevera
1w Reply

kawaiiraaa Omgggg
1w Reply

gracecorners @jackca.ddy
1w 1 like Reply

saugahill Wow
1w Reply

thewordsofapoet I'm just saying, you go for this!!
1w Reply

thewordsofapoet Next step is making it alkaline
1w Reply

ellietholland @hindsy13_
1w Reply

litosway_ Do you have an e-book version of "how I sold my first artwork"? Awesome work btw.
4d Reply

hectoeg This is iconic
22h Reply

Add a comment as elliot.ben... Post

58 mins ·

I get its "art", and a "concept", but did YOU even make a business plan???? who tf is gonna buy that overpriced BULL. YOU aint Kanye WEST hunny xxxx

Like Comment Share

1

1 hr ·

LOOOOOOOOL

See Translation

Like Comment Share

March 28 at 4:47pm ·

have people always been so prone to bold, self-confident declarations of truth?

it seems like my feed is constantly clogged with rapid fire 2D hot take assertions with 0 nuance or qualification and I can't figure out if that's a result of social media rewarding people who brand themselves as headstrong prophets, of the declarative nature of posting, or if that's just human nature.

Like Comment Share

Nick Zhu, Lindsay Howard and 160 others

Imao this is a joke right?
Like · Reply · 2 hrs



Today at 2:54 AM

Replied to your story

U POS I've never seen so much shit in my entire life u r not a fucking artist dumbass

Replied to your story

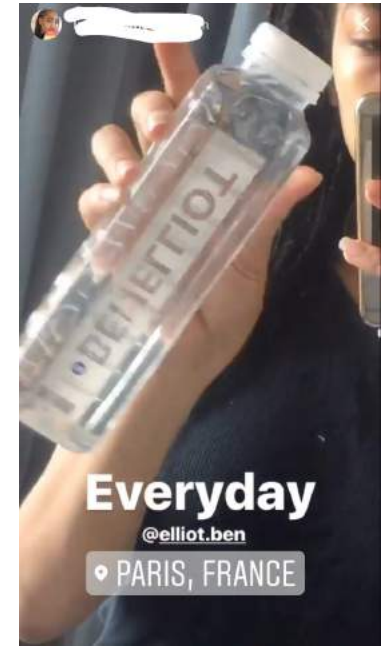
Fu dumb shit ass

Today at 10:52 AM

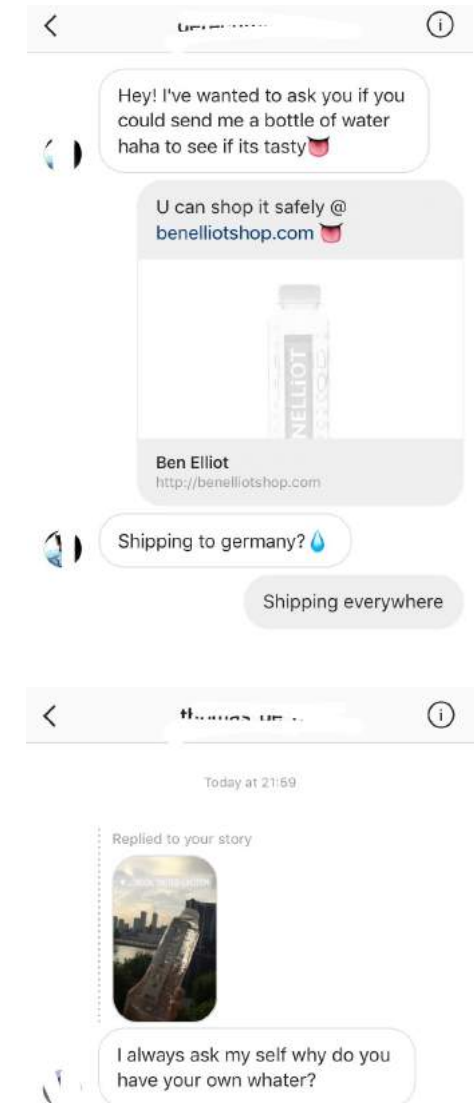
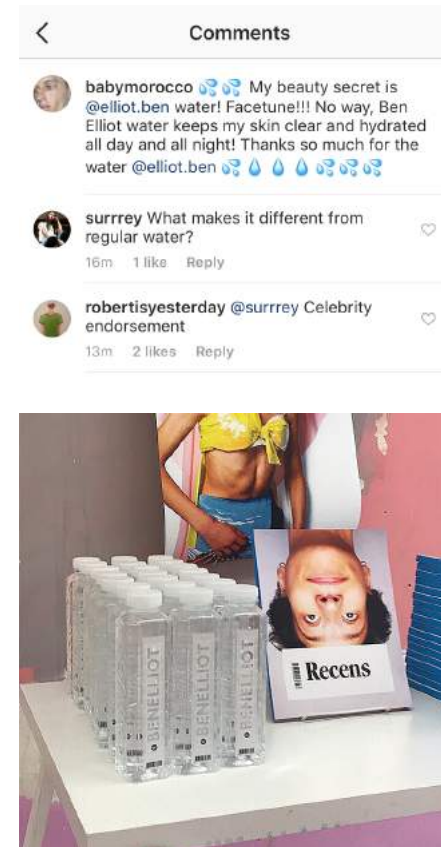
Replied to your story

So inspiring

tbh3: Ben Elliot Water, 2017. Facebook posts, comments; Instagram stories, comments, DMs.



tbh3: Ben Elliot Water, 2017. Instagram stories.



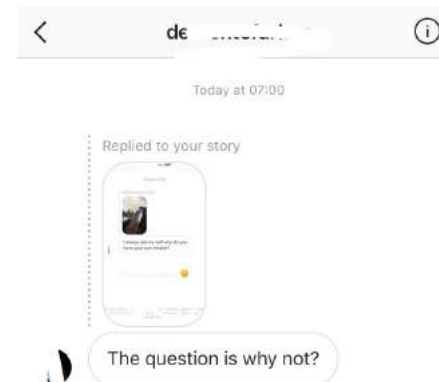
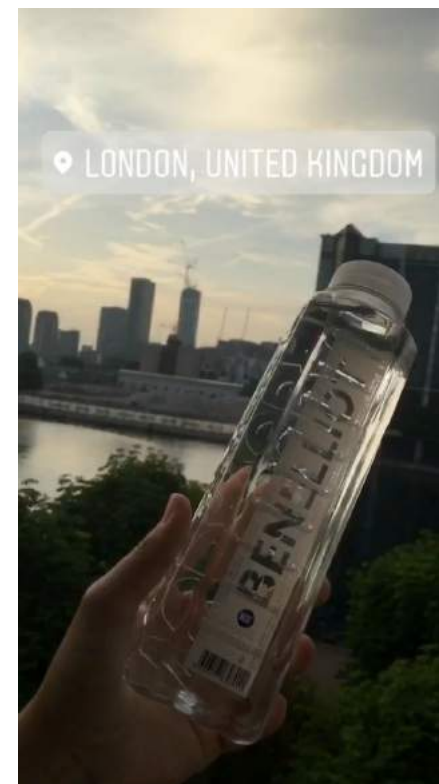
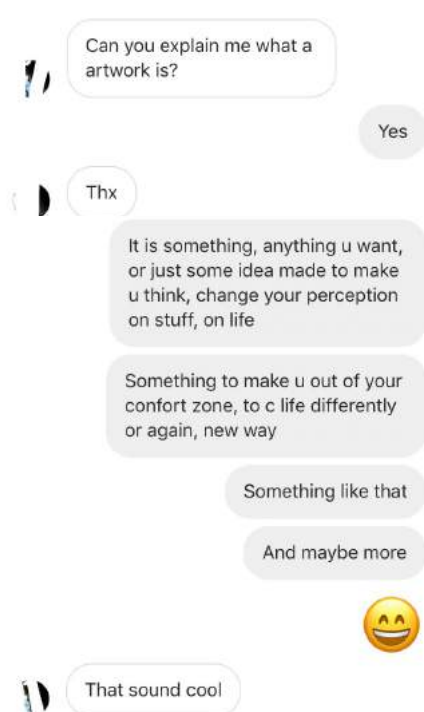
tbh3: Ben Elliot Water, 2017. Instagram posts, comments, DMs; Snapchat Chats.



Fashoo \$15 bottle water haha how many people copped

Well 15\$ is the cheapest artwork of the year plus being the best and probably a good investment for the future but money is not the point, the singulary is the keyyyyy

Not knocking it pretty legit marketing plan



tbh3: Ben Elliot Water, 2017. Instagram stories, DMs.

tbh i dunno if i have feelings 2, 2016

On April 29th, 2016, Ben Elliot initiated a party as an artwork; promoting himself and his own image to share his practice.

This work is extending his interest in the interactions surrounding the act of creation and the communication techniques used in the art world. It was attended by 500 faces from the parisian new generation in the fields of music, contemporary art, entertainment and fashion ; exploring the importance of partying, and more generally socializing, within the millenials context.



elliott.ben Ben Elliot Party

Co-hosted by Yulya Shadrinsky / Djs: Gucci Gang, oklou, Moriba, Laeti Quette / Special Guests: Liza Monet, Laetitia (Fuchsia Party) / 29.04.16, 23h - 5h / Rive Gauche Club, 1 rue Sabot, 75006 Paris



tbh i dunno if i have feelings 2, 2016. Party pictures. Photography Yulya Shadrinsky.

Highsnobiety
17 mai · 🌐

Hiring an intern, Ben?



This 22-Year-Old Threw a Party With Paris' Cool Kids and Called it Art

S.HSNOB.CO

👍 J'aime 💬 Commenter ➦ Partager

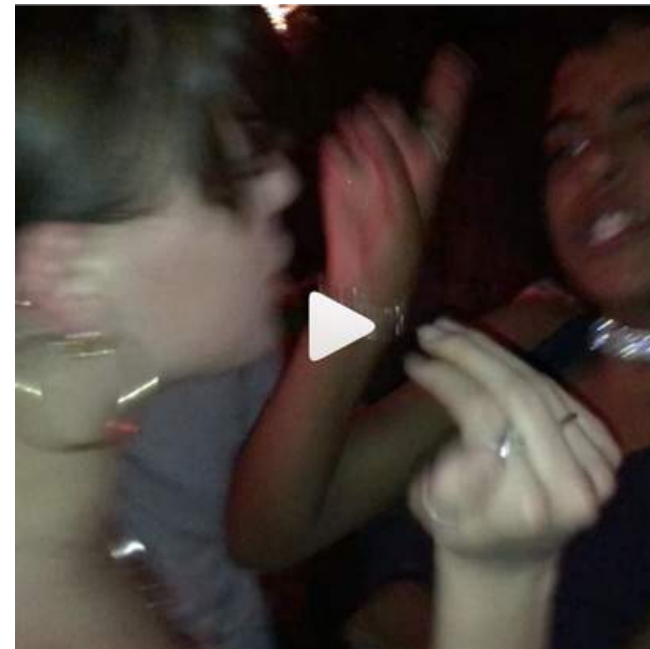
👍❤️😂 638 Meilleurs commentaires ▾

72 partages 30 commentaires

Adam Andrews Robert Suthers this dude seems like a cunt
J'aime · Répondre · 🗳️ 1 · 18 mai, 04:07 · Modifié

Cris Fetty Loggyman Gathering cool people in a room and taking photos is not new or exciting.
J'aime · Répondre · 🗳️ 12 · 18 mai, 02:35

Pogman · 5 months ago
What the actual fuck is this horrible shit of fuckery? Why do you even bring attention to this guy and his lame ass "art"? This is sooooo fucking bad. Fuck y'all.
^ ▾ · Reply · Share ·



shadrinsky
Le Rive Gauche Follow

4,635 views 26w

shadrinsky Congrats my dear @elliott.ben, yesterday's party was a huge success! Thanks to @angelinaworeth @annabfr @crystalmr @thaisklapisch @moribakone @laetitiagimenez @aavril_alvarez @20y.rs my brain @maritagurcciani and thank u everyone who came 🥰🥰🥰🥰🥰

20y.rs Dope 🏆

benjbenjbenjbenjbenj 🥰🥰🥰

moribakone 🥰🥰

elliott.ben 💖

maritagurcciani making history 🏆

laetitiagimenez 🥰🥰🥰

margaux_f.d @marnie_duke why don't we have motive like this wtf

lamalejandrobe 🥰🥰

redouanramdan May 6. 🚗

caillia Please!! All music in this video! I post 🥰

Log in to like or comment. ...



tbh i dunno if i have feelings 2, 2016. Press, Instagram, Facebook posts and comments.

Interview

High Snobiety

May 2016

Self-educated Parisian artist, Ben Elliot, has a particular fascination with human interaction. Being born in 1994, he's part of an age group that increasingly doesn't remember what life without high-speed internet looked like, which obviously shapes how he and his peers interact with each other as well as those that fall outside their digi-literate demographic.

His latest work, *tbh i dunno if i have feelings 2*, involved throwing a party, which he framed as an artwork. 500 or so hyped Parisian millennials from the vaguely defined «creative fields» and their friends were invited to this party.

Talk us through your reasoning behind this project. What inspired it? Why this form?

I did this party as an artwork to promote and share myself and my ideas directly without using any object. Promotion for promotion, as an art form in itself.

I had to gather people from different areas and a party was the ideal point. I am inspired by all kind of interactions: social media, reality TV, artificial intelligence, brain and body, technology, robot etc. They are all linked to the dematerialized and interactive world that we live in.

And how are you going to display the project?

The pictures were done for press purposes. I like to think that I can use the medias as an exhibition space, instead of regular galleries. The medias can choose the way that the images match with their platform. In the end it can look so different depending on the identity of the magazine. You can do your own selection, related to what your audience wants. No rules. Feel free. And that is basically what viral means. You have no control over where and how your images will end up.

You've said that "this experience aims at displaying the importance of partying, networking, and more generally socializing, within the millennial context" – what makes these things so important to millennials, in your opinion?

People from my generation are always balancing between the online and offline life, we are a new kind of human, socializing in a fresh new way. Though, these issues that most people think are from tomorrow already exist. I mean, my iPhone is a part of my body and my soul and I want to celebrate this naturalness.

Maybe my interpretation is incorrect, and correct me if it is, but does that mean you think that all of these things matter to millennials more than other generations?

Not at all. I am just focusing on my generation who is socializing differently than others, closer to the A.I. pattern. Of course everybody is partying, networking, socializing, interacting at their own level. This is one of the major characteristics of the human being.

Networking within “creative” fields is no doubt important, but going from my own experiences I find that a lot of people that might lack in talent hide behind this as a way of making a name for themselves within the arts – getting by on favors and likability rather than the quality of their work, and ultimately bringing the standard of culture down as a whole. Would you agree or disagree?

Agree and disagree. Most people have no talent, some have skills and others have the talent of making a name, which is itself a talent. What is interesting here is the fact that people seem to have a big issue with people making themselves a name out of «nothing». This was one basis of the project.

If you look at Gucci Gang [a group of four girls with a large amount of followers in Paris], a lot of people criticize them as if they aren’t doing anything. But they are 15 years old, they do interviews, photo shootings, they did their first DJ set at my party, they constantly organize and take care of their social media accounts. While they’re doing all this, other people are just passing comment and not doing anything themselves.

Same thing with the Kardashians. I am having fun when I hear that the family is bringing the standard of culture down - because *they are* the culture.

What is, in your opinion, the difference between your party pictures and ones people would take in a club on a night out? Is there something in yours that makes them intrinsically more artistic or are all club Instagram videos worthy of being considered art?

There’s no difference except that they are from my party and inherent to the person who took it. These photos are a part of the artwork and all other pictures or videos made by the people who attended that night are a part of it too. It depends how you interpret it. If you say it’s art then no doubt it is.

Interview Metal June 2016

At only 22 years old, French artist Ben Elliot has turned the Parisian art scene upside down. His first solo exhibition, *tbh i dunno if i have feelings*, led him to the concept of his last show, *tbh i dunno if i have feelings 2*, which consisted of throwing a party, inviting all the cool millennials in Paris and letting them share pictures of the event (that was under his name). We gmail-chatted with Ben about being self-educated, different forms of showing art and future projects.

When did you first come up with the idea of throwing a party as an artwork to promote yourself?

After the first part of my solo show I did in January. I was thinking about doing a continuity; something connected to it but in a totally different form.

Have you been interested in creating art for a while now?

I've been doing stuff for two years now. Before that, I was only writing some ideas and thoughts, but I wanted to share them in a different way than words, to try something new.

Did you grow up in a creative environment, or did you have a group of friends that also did creative stuff?

No, I kind of grew in a lonely way, early detached from my family. I had, and I am having, a self-education – I like to experience everything and that's how I come to art. I guess my imagination is my best friend.

How did *tbh i dunno if i have feelings 2* go?

The second edition went really well, I had a lot of fun doing it. It was an intense process. A lot of people came by and made it happen; and all the people involved in it, and in particular my publicist and I, recognise ourselves and our generation in the final result.

Did you select each one of the attendants?

Yes, sure. Each person has a particular meaning in it. They were all so different, from different backgrounds and all deeply connected at the same time. It was a celebration of all kinds of creativity. The mood was juvenile power!

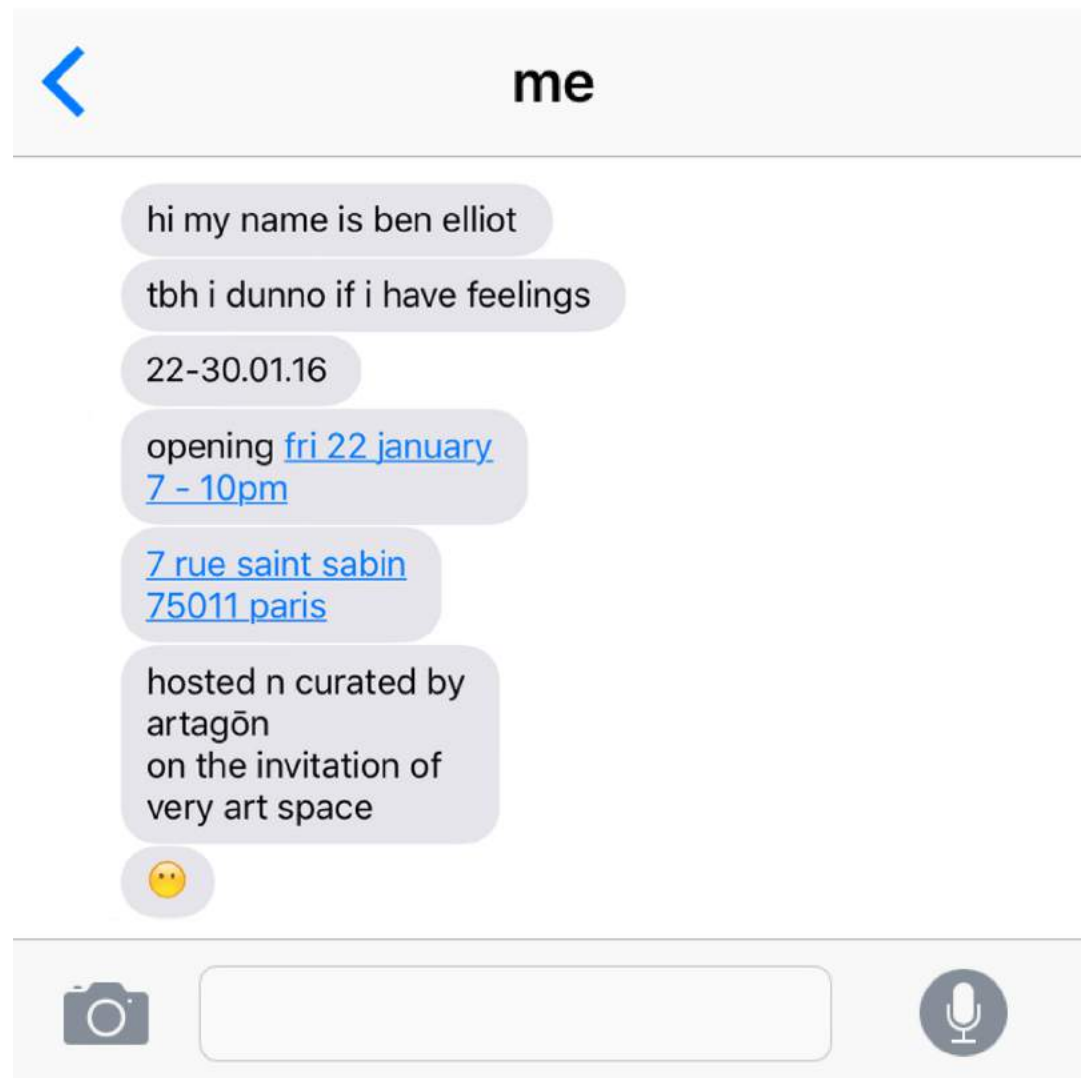
It's interesting that you see it in a way that the artwork itself will still be seen and shared online and by different people that was there, like a non physical gallery.

Yes, it totally makes sense. It was the challenge. Doing something in real life and having an online impact, making everything art – from party to interview.

tbh i dunno if i have feelings, 2016

tbh i dunno if i have feelings is thought as a liaison of both universal notions (dematerialization and metaphysical) and ultra-intimate others (diary and daily feelings). Based on a set of interconnected works, the exhibition develops proposals that can act both alone and in organization. Polycarbonate, a transparent material, interacts with its environment and is reacting according to the adjacent atmosphere and other external datas, creating a complete junction (such as natural and artificial light that put the pieces in a constant recreation mutable by transparency). Here, several layers of material/dematerial are responding to each other. This interest in the network is then integrated within the creative process, through the use of communication strategies (invitation and social networks) as well as social and transactional relationships inherent in the act of exhibiting (opening), such as the idea of a speculative and instant society.

« *At first sight, it is a distance that is established with the work of Ben Elliot. A polycarbonate sheet, a transparent plastic sail, a title evoking a lack of emotion... except an assumed love for his iPhone. From this aesthetic exudes the idea of trans-humanism: the incarnation of human into networks such as the Internet, and its dematerialization into online data. Yet it is the debate between tangible and intangible that is replayed in the works between transparency and tangibility - between life drive and death instinct as Freud would write. But this metaphor is frequently used to describe the two sides of the same coin: the economy - and especially the capitalist economy. Ben Elliot's works are burnt and thermoformed... And Jeremy Rifkin to describe our time like this when we have to pay the entropic bill of an economy deeply rooted in the laws of thermodynamics and despite the omerta on the relationship between speculation and energy.* » — Charlotte Cosson & Emmanuelle Luciani





tbh i dunno if i have feelings, 2016. Exhibition View, Very Art, Paris, France. Solo Show.



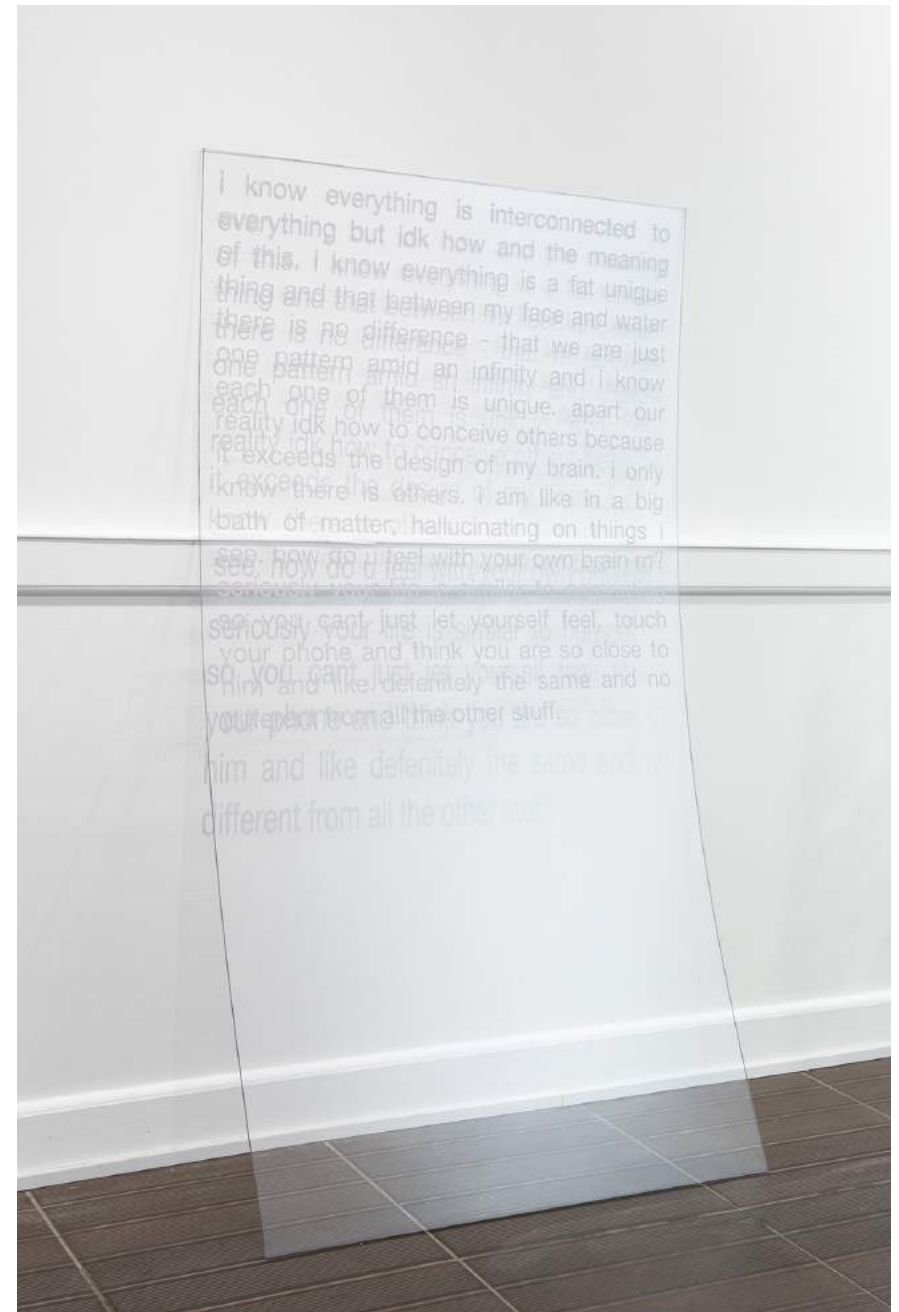
tbh i dunno if i have feelings, 2016. Exhibition View, Very Art, Paris, France. Solo Show.

t-boards, 2016

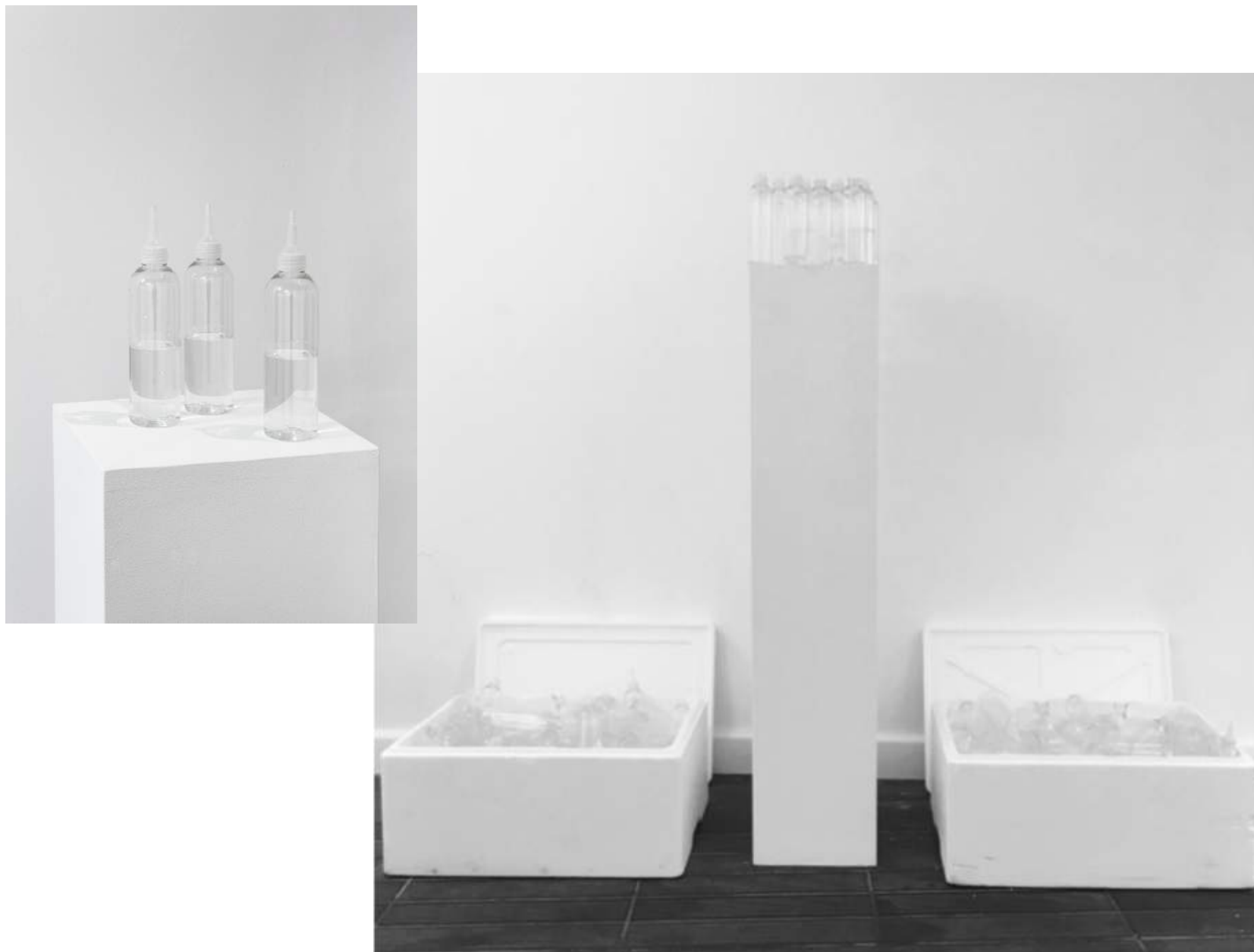
I wrote it during the night of the 30th to the 31st of December. It was about five am. I was thinking too much about my life and everything around me to fall asleep. I wasn't at my place that night and my iPhone was without battery since hours. I had to use the iPhone of my friend to connect on my Instagram and write this in a comment of one of my own posts bc I couldn't find a paper. Actually I love writing stuff on my cell. My iPhone is like a perfect extension of myself, a really good friend who connects me to the world with smoothness and I really hate when he is low battery bc I just feel like assisting to death, losing a bff and it makes me think about my own condition. I mean it is not easy to be conscious of something you can't really control or define but yes I guess this is the rule so #yolo



t-board, 2016. 150 x 80 cm. Helvetica printed on polycarbonate.



t-board, 2016. 150 x 80 cm. Helvetica printed on polycarbonate.



22.01.16. Variable dimensions.
3 bottles half empty/half full on pedestal.
300 bottles on ice cubes, to consume. Gin, tonic, vodka, Get 31, sparkling water.

Resins, 2015-2016

The *Resin* series started according to two millenials principles: dematerialization; and transactional communication. These are notions that prepare the evolution from the physical world to a future reality.

The works are constantly building a junction with their environment. According to the adjacent atmosphere and other apparently external datas (such as natural and artificial light that places them in a dematerialization and recreation by the projection of transparency and reflection), there is a confusion between where the work starts and where it stops. While matter dematerializes, it is recreated in another form and the physical presence becomes movement of an absence and sensitive experience.



Resin4, 2016. 90 x 125 x 35 cm. Thermoformed polycarbonate.



S1+S2, 2015. 120 x 85 x 20 each. Thermoformed polycarbonate. Exhibition View, Villa Belleville, Paris, France.



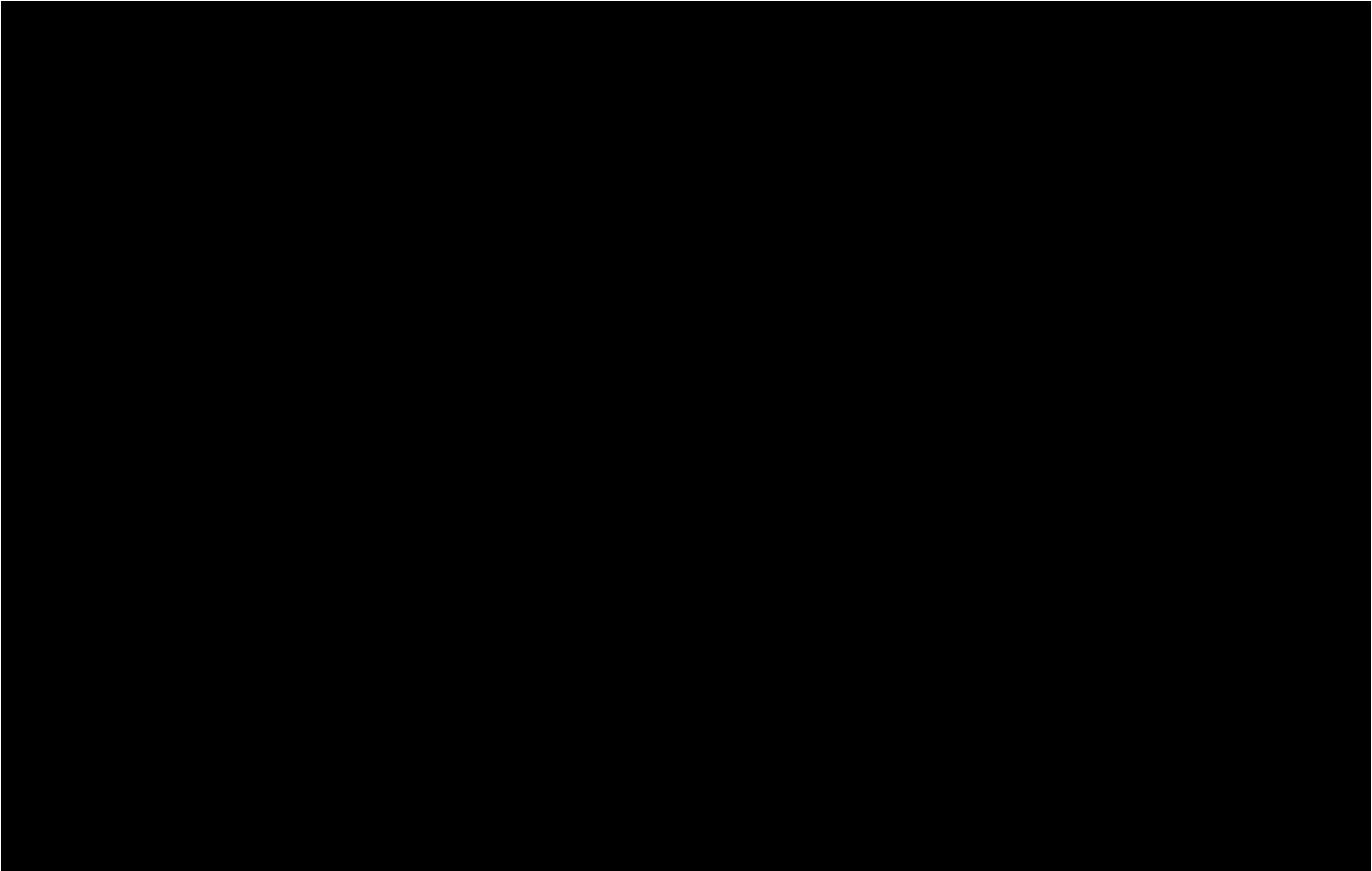
Resin2, 2015. 60 x 70 x 20 cm. Thermoformed polycarbonate.



so we can get ice cream together and listen to music, and travel across galaxies, only to have it end in slammed doors, heartbreak, and loneliness, 2016. 120 x 85 x 19 cm. Polycarbonate sheets, resin.



Cases, 2014. 24,4 x 57 x 5cm. Plexiglass, acetone, acid, water.



Endless Night, 2014. Website: endlessnight.be

Immaterial Persistence

An essay on *Box in Box*, *Dropped Plexiglas*,
and *Transparent paper on transparent paper*
Claudia Buizza

« *Things of art often begin to countdown of the things of life. Life starts with a birth; an artwork can start under the influence of destruction.* »¹

Nowadays, telematics, mass media and computer networks appear to threaten the tangible aspect of reality. Ben Elliot is an artist who does not consider his work from a purely conceptual point of view, but as the result of a psychophysical process that raises a constant dialectic between the presence of matter and the immaterial entity's exploration. Therefore, contradictions rise and the reflection on the intrinsic expressiveness of matter becomes inevitable.

The materials used by the artist are genuine and artificial. They do not imitate other materials and they do not have any history or genesis. Any question about their symbolic or ideological value would be superfluous. In the *Foam on foam* series, 2014; Elliot burns a blank foam sheet of paper on a second identical one. Combustion occurs through an incandescent rain of a blowtorch. This is under the shock from the flood that the material becomes matter: it conquers its foundation, its reason of being. The fiery drops generate a silver mackle spreading over the central part of the foam: the color is intrinsic to the material itself. While the sheet is burning, holes appear as the marks of an art that is both based on the exaltation and on the degradation of the material, until the disappearance of the medium.

Ben Elliot handles, ignites, enlivens the matter and plays with the contrasts: content and container, contraction and expansion, transparency and opacity. With *Box in Box*, 2014, the plastic box includes another same sized box, but made of glass. The qualities of the two materials are well placed in comparison. However, a work is never composed of materials only, there are also actions and tools to take on board because in this case, the process is as important as the result. In *Transparent paper on transparent paper* series, 2014, each piece is composed by one sheet of plexiglas (ranging between 10 x 15 cm to 17 x 26 cm) which has been burned to an other. The combustion progresses from chance to creative decision; this is actually the artist who decides when to stop the reaction, without allowing the burning of determining the aesthetic purpose. The artistic action is embodied in a spot of dark depth interrupted here and there by small holes. This is a black scar; the flesh of the medium, which is a victim and a witness of the artist's path. This is a proof that something has preceded it, but we can not go back: the original element is only present in the artist's memory and obvious injuries are the stigma of an immaterial persistence that reveals itself in the actual space of the work. Specifically, the rips refer to an absence in the dissolution of the medium: physical matter is transfigured in Light-matter, the border between tangible and intangible remains the memory of a world that is disappearing.

Despite this, Ben Elliot's creatures are not without power. Their vital pneuma is fire, the ultimate destructive element, frequently adopted in the twentieth century by various artists, namely Marcel Duchamp, Yves Klein, Jannis Kounellis, Alberto Burri and others. In the works of these artists, combustion participate in the result of creating the artwork through the modification of matter. To Ben Elliot, on the contrary, this metamorphosis is part of the process, not the result. The very act of burning the support is explored as a medium and a process: it is the annihilation of the material through the questioning of its foundations that intrigues the artist, because «the matter is an idea and the materials are the body of this idea.»²

In any situation, the encounter with the materials is operated by the unconscious. In *Foam on foam*, and *Transparent paper on transparent paper*, the manufacturer-destructive act aims to a specific aesthetic result, where, after combustion, color is considered as matter. The preparation and intervention on materials, the artistic act, show the unconscious authority in the metamorphosis of the material into an image-material. There is a powerful dialectic of the unconscious and the instinct, between building (life impulse) and destruction (death impulse). The work is exposed as a new opportunity to investigate the real where the act of devastation becomes «creation of novelty.»³

See, for example, the many contradictions presented by the works from the Transparent paper on transparent paper series: the tactility of the black spot contrasts with the lightness of the medium; the invisible membrane that was untouched by the flames becomes perceptible with the shadows on the wall. Behind the fascination with the delicacy of these creatures still lurks an act of degradation and devastation: the creative ratio that decides to burn the plexiglas sheet to achieve a specific result is simultaneously accompanied by the desire for destruction, sacrifice, necessary to the emergence of forms and colors trapped in the ice field. The aesthetic trial strictly relates to the mental trial and if the choice of materials depends on several factors including the unconscious, it means that the aesthetic motivation is present from the beginning.

The authenticity of the artist's gesture is in the idea of creating a work that exposes the way of using the material: through its action it becomes at the same time, subject and object. Remarkable is the example of *Dropped Plexiglas*, 2015. Faced with this work, the viewer is immersed in the same deafening silence he could hear in front of a still-glowing meteorite, crashed into the Earth's crust. Here, the heat is frozen by two transparent plexiglas sheets.

The discovery and understanding of Ben Elliot's work must be accompanied by the reading of his texts. His written work is actually antecedent to his artistic production and, although his writings are not necessarily related to what he does plastically, the reader will easily recognize the roots of his thought:

« Cancellation - decomposition - deregulation - disintegration - destruction - dislocation, fracture of the material. »⁴

and again :

«Currently, the need for illusion.

Surface - Space

Dematerialization - Transform - Distort - dissolution Idea - visceral - ipse - psyche

Translucent - White - Placid - Neutral - Pale - Minimum Light - Sound - Shape - Geometry – Dimension »⁵

These are concrete words, sometimes dark, sometimes more optimistic, arranged in the manner of a poem where grief turns to praise and the mind becomes spectacle. The talent of this artist is the balance in stylistic harmony as in the weighting between creative force and devastating pulsus. It is in this formal serenity that Ben Elliot transforms his violent gesture into an artistic achievement and consents to the aesthetic beauty of his creations to triumph over the cruelty of human action.

¹ Georges Didi-Hubermann, *Génie du non-lieu. Air, poussière, empreinte, hantise*, Les éditions de minuit, Paris, 2001, p.9

² Ben Elliot, conversation with Claudia Buizza, janvier 2015

³ Ben Elliot, conversation with Claudia Buizza, janvier 2015

⁴ Ben Elliot, / , 2015, p.19

⁵ Ibid, p.14



Dropped plexiglas, 2015. 62 x 82 x 50 cm. Burnt plexiglass.

Box in Box, 2014

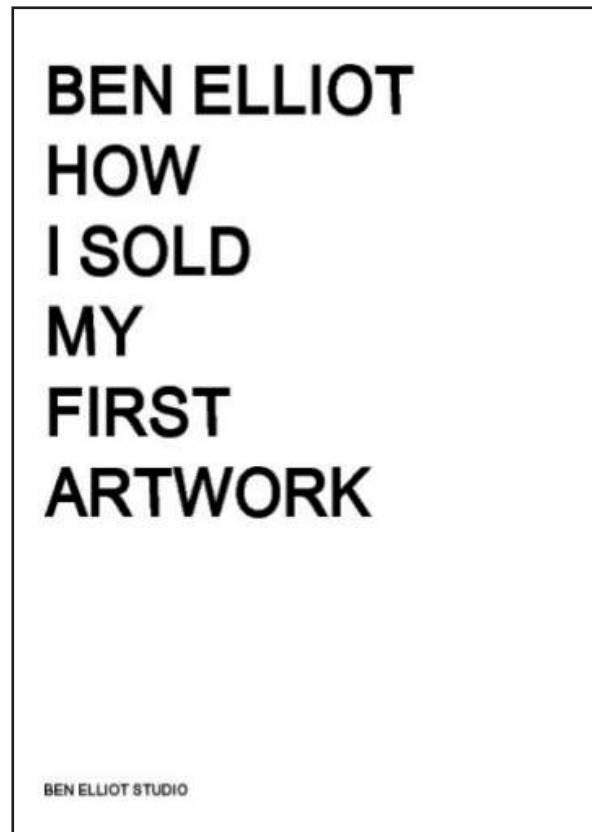
Artworks - Supports – autonomous and interconnected - subjects and objects - content and container - are prone to their transparency in a constant aesthetic of dissolving - physically real and mentally removed. Boxes filled with themselves - elements of destruction - questioning their own foundations and those of matter - which is - reality.



Box in Box, 2014. 50 x 40 x 6 cm. Plexiglass, glass.

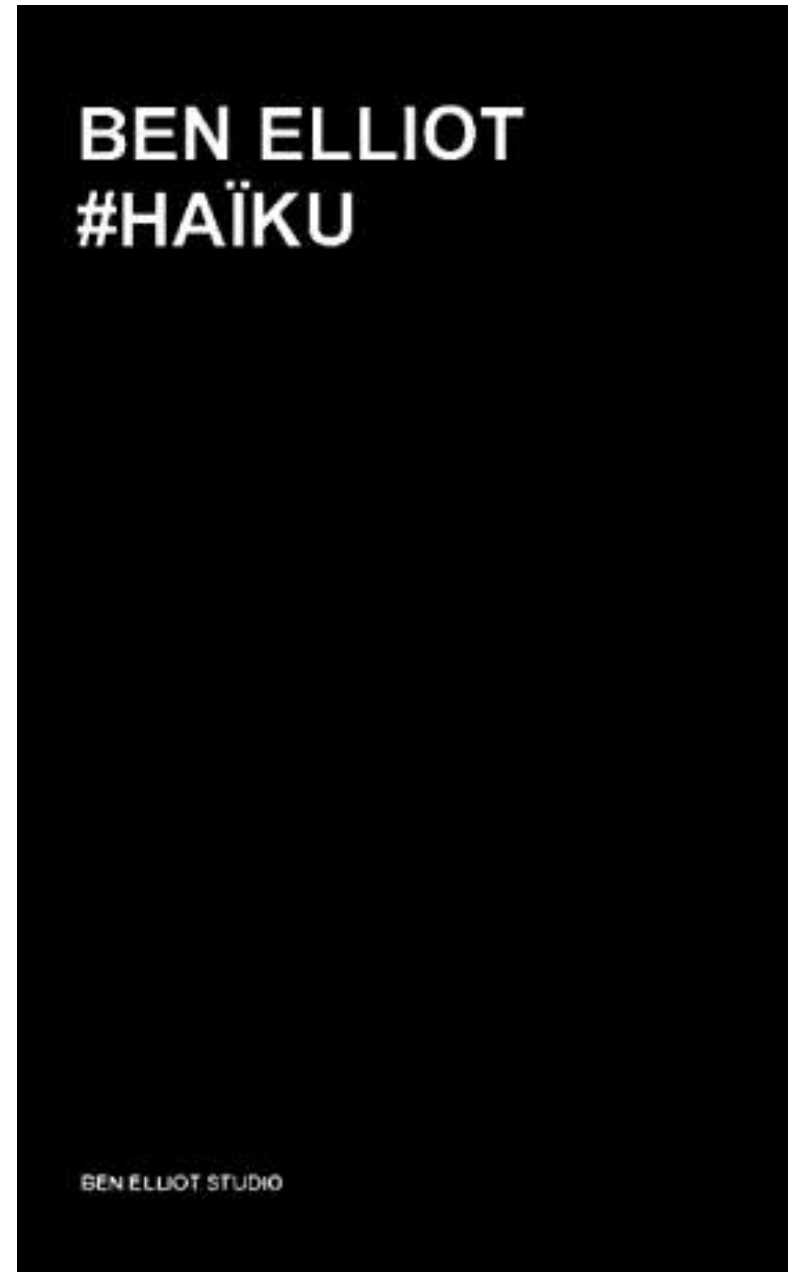
Transparent paper on transparent paper, 2014

On November 20th 2014, Ben Elliot hanged a 15 x 10 cm work at Yvon Lambert Gallery without any authorization. It sold after a few seconds. The correspondances with the collector were published in *How I sold my first artwork*, 2015. 36 pages. Self-published.



Transparent paper on transparent paper, 2014. 15 x 10 cm. Burnt transparent paper.

Publications



#HAÏKU, 2016. 300 pages. Self-published.

BEN ELLIOT

Individu & Matière - tome I - L'antiquité et la construction du modèle humain au travers de la raison; connaissance et morale - hypertrophie de la faculté logique - Dialectique humaine *unique arme* - illustrée par la « plus bizarre des équations possibles » Raison=Vertu=Bonheur. Autour de ce triangle à l'apparence d'idéal se sont construit le monde et chaque individu qui le compose à la recherche de bien être par les voies de la morale et de la raison. _De là cadavres d'idées - l'Etre mis sur l'autel de la connaissance - Cause suprême. « Rationalité à tout prix » Créations de notions maitresses Etre Absolu Bien Mal Vrai Idéal comme valeurs supérieures // Héraclite : l'être est une fiction vide de sens // _Humanisme / Optimisme éclairé par la raison / Utilitarisme / Empirisme. Isme. Plus les siècle passaient plus la recherche du bien du bon - de la lutte de la souffrance - de la recherche du plaisir habitait chaque conscience individuelle. // Filigrane : dualisme et doute de l'homme. _Morale=Doute=Destruction Sur l'obéissance à sa vocation subjective et appropriation de ses propres croyances. Sur le dépassement de l'affirmation de soi à l'ère de la destruction du réel et de l'idée : Ère de la justification perpétuelle du soi - le pouvoir par la persuasion de l'image et du visible de concert à la désintégration de la réalité par la subjectivité technologique. La mort de l'idée comme sensation - Fin du mysticisme de la conscience et du sens humain. Destruction de la raison et déclin du paradigme humain - fragilité de l'utilitarisme et de la nécessité d'illusion pour exister. La science hypothétique - si peu rationnelle (l'attrait espace temps infini dilatation.) Métaphore sur la connaissance - seule certitude sur la machine insondable de la vie - le but subjectif et passionnel de l'individu parmi la vie parmi l'absurde / Pas de séparation entre technologique et naturel. Une même chose. Une technologie naturelle. Balbutiement. Un jour peut-être la connaissance. / Eloquence XXIème siècle par les ondes et les images - par delà la matière. Transition et pensée transhumaniste - mutation de l'homme - Le genre humain peut-il encore exister - la technologie humaine comme croyance ultime / L'entre-perception d'une cinquième dimension - objets-filés interconnectés en perpétuelle dilatation silencieuse.

Individu & Matière, 2015. 222 pages. Self-published.

SUZANNE COR RESPOND ANCES BEN ELLIOT

Jaffar Jaiden Editions

Correspondances (with Suzanne), 2014. 60 pages. Jaffar Jaiden Editions.

Ben Elliot
Born 1994. Lives and works in France.

2018

Ben Elliot Shop , Magasins Généraux, Pantin. (upcoming)
MakeupPlus, Exo Exo, Paris. Solo (upcoming)

2017

Diary, Friends with Books, Art Book Fair, Berlin. w/ Doppell Edition
Diary, Miss Read Read, Art Book Fair, Berlin. w/ Doppell Edition
#videotutorial, PANE Project
Whitescreen, Jeune Création
Ben Elliot Water, Guest Room, Carrboro. Solo
Recens Paper Launch Event, The Community, Paris.

2016

tbh i dunno if i have feelings 2, Party, Rive Gauche Club, Paris. Solo
tbh i dunno if i have feelings, Very Art, Paris. Curated by Artagon. Solo

2015

Instagram, The Wrong - New Digital Art Biennale
CIY at Villa Belleville, Paris
Screening, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Lille. Curated by Heure Exquise

2014

Transparent paper on transparent paper, Yvon Lambert, Paris
NFC Biennale of Digital and Internet Art, Wroclaw
Fotografiska Museet, Stockholm

Publications

Birthday Collection, Ben Elliot Studio, 2018
The Stalker, Ben Elliot Studio, 2017
Diary, Doppell Edition, 2017
#HAÏKU, Ben Elliot Studio Editions, 2016
How I sold my first artwork, Ben Elliot Studio Editions, 2015
Individual and matter, Ben Elliot Studio Editions, 2015
Correspondances, Jaffar Jaiden Editions, 2014

Press

GQ France, May 2018 (upcoming)
The Stalker, Office Magazine, January 2018
Water by Ben Elliot, Office Magazine, November 2017
Ben Elliot - Interview, Dull Magazine, April 2017
Drinking water with Ben Elliot, OK+, April 2017
Ben Elliot - Interview, Dazed Korea, October 2016
Ben Elliot - Self-reflective visual artist, Glamcult, October 2016
Editorial, Recens Paper, October 2016
Ben Elliot - The millenial who shook Paris' art scene, Metal Magazine, June 2016
Ben Elliot - tbh I dunno if i have feelings review, AQNB, June 2016
Ben Elliot, Arcademi, June 2016
Portrait, Modzik, June 2016
This 22-year-old threw a party with Paris' cool kids and called it art, High Snobiety, May 2016
Emerging artist Ben Elliot celebrates first solo show in Paris, Glamcult, February 2016
Editorial, Dull Magazine, January 2016