

Presenting the series
Readings from a Sideways Manner

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When Woolf is finally able to rear herself away from the rubbish heap of old letters and diaries, it is to read poetry, and, again invoking the writerly reader, she says, "the time to read poetry is when we are almost able to write it." (Elsewhere, in her diary, she inverts this statement to similar ends: "The most successful

reading leaves me with the impulse to write it all over again," which reminds me again of Barthes. In another beautiful passage in *The Pleasure of the Text*, he says that his best ideas come to him in a sideways manner while in the presence of someone he loves, and that his most creative reading is oblique or distracted, when he is

led to "look up often, to listen to something else." One could argue this is a doubtful sort of reading since the reader perhaps failed to connect with the writer. On the other hand, how can we object to a reading that is so generative, so capable of spawning the seeds of future texts? I might add, this oblique mode of reading is often

how I read Barthes himself, with a sort of free-floating attentiveness to the page and a diffusion of consciousness that tends to set me thinking about my own work and ideas as much as his.)
—"The Problem With Reading." *Index Cards*,
Moyra Davey

A few days ago, we came up with the title for this bulletin, naming it 'In a Sideways Manner', in reference to Moyra Davey's "Photography and Accident". The bulletin offers the space of an A4 sheet, and functions as a platform for publishing current activities, research and writings by the students of the MA Graphic Design program at the Estonian Academy of Arts (EKA). The title, as well as the ambition of this bulletin, reminded me of the above-mentioned article that I cut out of the newspaper four years ago and became a key reference ever since. An English translation seemed suitable.

While rereading the article, the underlined sentences still resonated with me, highlighting how from the crab's point of view, moving sideways is just moving forward. Only now, the first sentence of the article caught most of my attention. 'On New Year's Eve, we hesitated.'

Beginnings come with hesitations. Entering the two-year master program in Graphic Design at EKA is a beginning. This new bulletin is a gathering place, starting line, and take-off all at once. We will gather and move in a sideways manner. Straight ahead.

—LM

Zijwaarts, translating to 'Sideways', is the title of a text I often refer to, first published in the *De Standaard* daily newspaper on Friday, January 4, 2019. While reading it for the first time, I underlined certain sentences with a dark pencil. These underlinings are a reminder of what I found important to treasure that day.

I remember how the movement of a crab, which is sideways, stuck with me as a metaphor for how I envisioned the kind of work I would like to create. Sideways work. Or, even better, how approaching and translating in a sideways manner would become the direction I would like to follow.

SIDEWAYS

Guinevere Claeys

On New Year's Eve, we hesitated. Should we hope, should we despair? If this time is indeed as it presents itself, a tilting time, should we believe that it will naturally tilt right? Or should we intervene? When does hope become guilty neglect? When does despair become a self-fulfilling prophecy? Is hope concerned with the right things? Is despair concerned with anything at all? Is hope courageous? Is despair yellow? Is hope not too often a matter of yielding? But is despair different from panic? And aren't both of these blinding?

We had plenty of questions. We kept the answers for next year. As if hope and despair were in fact reasonable. As if the choice is a decision. Or is it?

Later that evening, I learned why crabs walk sideways. Countless theories, but the only right one, unfortunately more often than not, is the least sensational one. Crabs walk sideways because they cannot do otherwise. That is how they are built, their legs pivot only in the lateral direction.

So, from the crab's point of view, it just goes straight ahead and we are the ones moving in a sideways manner. Which I thought was a nice change of perspective so last minute. When you can't do otherwise. Sideways can be forward. After all, an inevitable hopeful thought to start anew. As if I couldn't do otherwise.

↑ English translation of "Zijwaarts" by Guinevere Claeys, published in the newspaper *De Standaard* on Friday January 4, 2019.

↑ Some notes of the translator, framing and accompanying the English translation of "Zijwaarts" by Guinevere Claeys.

Guinevere Wouter
Claeys Deprez

ZIJWAARTS

Op oudjaar twijfelden we. Moeten we hopen, moeten we wanhopen? Als deze tijd is zoals hij zich presenteert, een kanteltijd, moeten we dan geloven dat hij vanzelf juist zal kantelen? Of moeten we ingrijpen? Wanneer wordt hoop schuldig verzuim? Wanneer wordt wanhoop een zichzelf voltrekkende voorspelling? Is hoop met de juiste dingen bezig? Is wanhoop nog met iets bezig? Is hopen moedig? Is wanhopen laf? Komt hoop niet te vaak neer op berusten? Maar is wanhoop iets anders dan paniek? En zijn beide niet blind?

De vragen waren met genoeg. De antwoorden hielden we voor volgend jaar. Alsof hoop en wanhoop trouwens redelijk zijn. Alsof de keuze een beslissing is. Of wel?

Later die avond leerde ik nog waarom krabben zijwaarts lopen. Talloze theorieën, maar de enige juiste, dat is helaas vaker zo, is de minst sensationele. Krabben lopen zijwaarts omdat ze niet anders kunnen. Zo zijn ze gebouwd, hun poten scharnieren alleen in laterale richting.

Vanuit het standpunt van de krab bekeken gaat hij dus gewoon rechtdoor, en zijn wij het die ons scheef voortbewegen. Dat vond ik een aardige perspectiefwissel zo op de valreep. Het is maar hoe je niet anders kan. Ook zijwaarts kan voorwaarts zijn.

Dan toch een onvermijdelijk hoopvolle gedachte om weer te beginnen. Alsof ik niet anders kon.

