

Y is for Yourself

Marc Ruaix

Undecipherable entity composed of physical and metaphysical attributes implied by the awareness of existence. Personal, unrepeatable and irreplaceable, 'yourself' runs unnoticed from sunrise to sunset, steadily holding the reins of the inner and outer self. Approaching the question of 'yourself' inherently introduces an external party into the conversation; it is only when the question of 'myself' is triggered by a different self that 'yourself', that identical one that is you, materializes.

One can question the genuineness of 'yourself' and many have researched it through a wide variety of methods. Since the turn of the century, we have seen a general increase in media (Google Trends, 2019) reaching out with promises of happiness and peace for those who venture to dive into the darkness of the self. As a newly available prescription of faith, we have embraced a self-pleasing version of 'ourselves' as a means of salvation. A less fortunate outcome awaits those who fall into the temptation of embracing a definition of 'yourself' provided by other-selves. How convenient, to accept the judgement of the external party, to look aside while our self is being carved out into minimalistic sculptures and the leftovers swept away.

The pursuit of understanding 'myself', especially if it is through 'yourself', can lead to more harm than good. In contrast, collectives of artists, and occasionally designers, have found relief in the mere act of expressing themselves; in ejecting this undecipherable entity inside them in any imaginable form, even if the meaning behind it, behind 'themselves', has slipped through their hands. Tackling 'yourself' is not an easy endeavour, but if you undertake it, be sure it is for yourself.

Publication

P. Rodgers, C. Bremner, & G. Innella (Eds.) (2020). *An Illustrated* A to Z for the Design of Care*. Lancaster: Lancaster University.