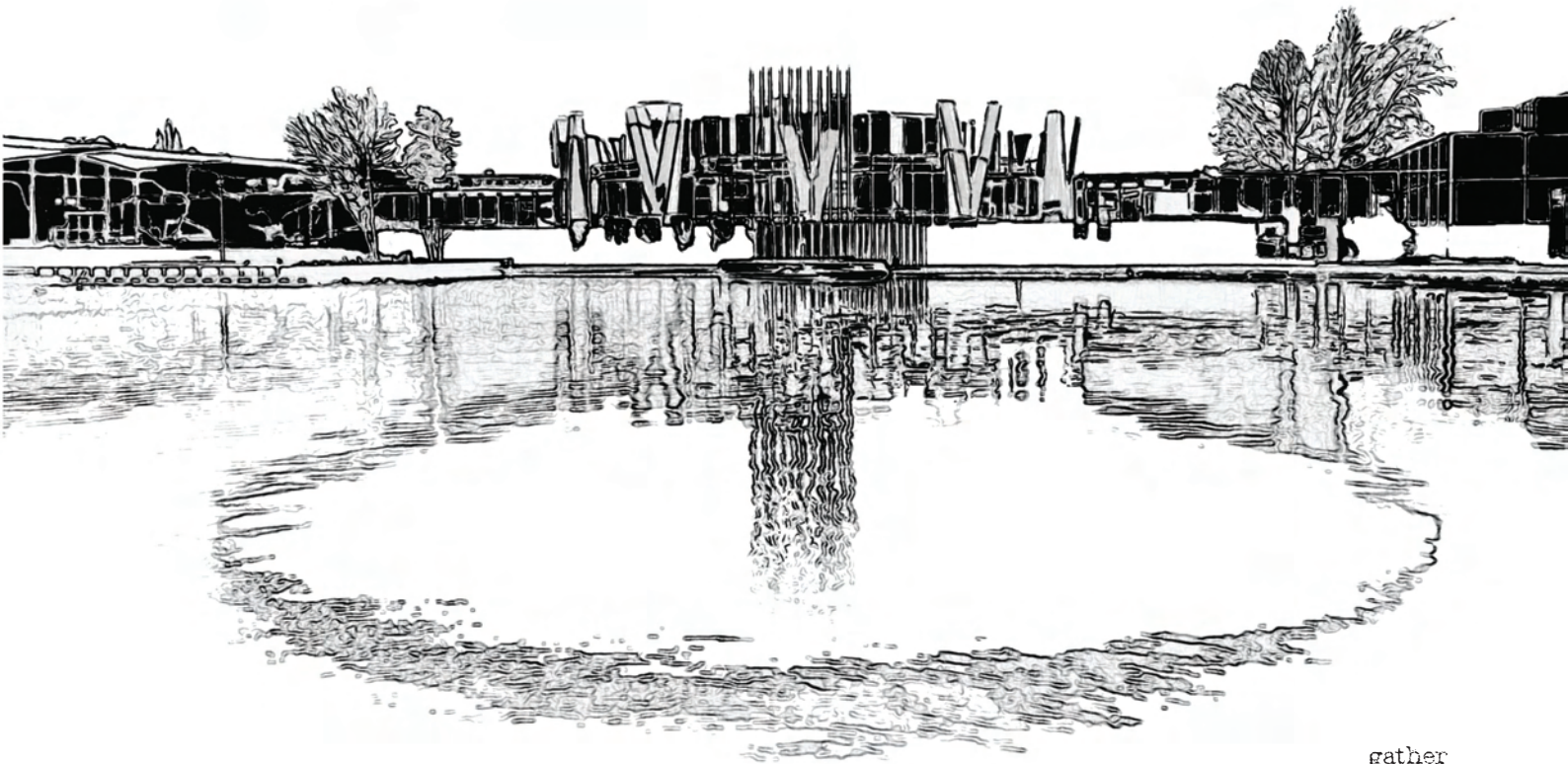
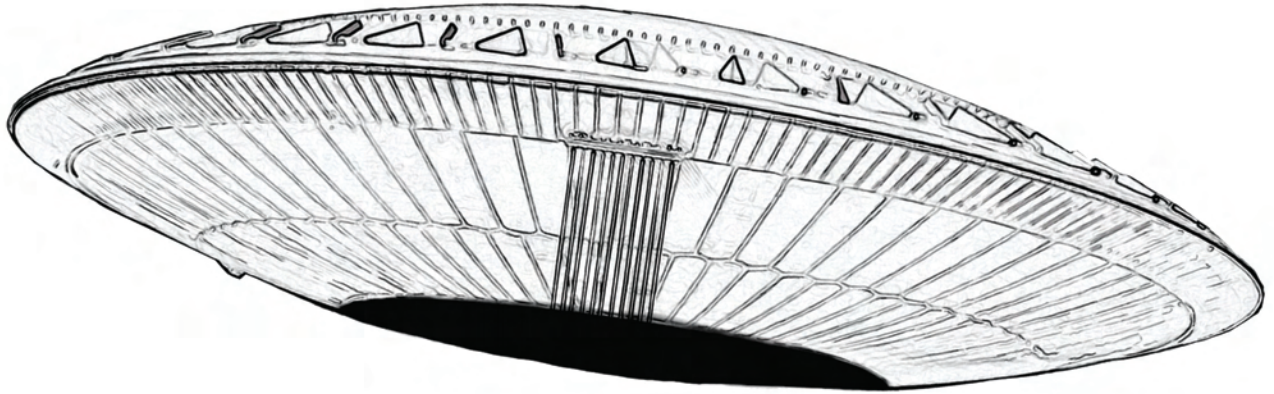


CLOSE ENCOUNTERS



gather
move towards the building
slowly
stand closely together
in the middle
stand up straight and concentrate
concentrate hard
press your feet against the ground
look up
concentrate more
imagine how the building is starting to drift
concentrate
keep on pressing your feet against the ground
concentrate more...and more...and feel how the building
is starting to fly
keep on concentrating
and give it
a soft landing

Rotterdam, April 14, 2008

Dear Mr. U.G.,

Through a mutual friend we received your contact details, and we are taking the liberty to approach you with a request. Being invited by the Van Abbe Museum in Eindhoven to participate in Be[com]ing Dutch, we have decided to realise a long-nourished dream of us to take the opportunity to focus on the Evoluon. Please let us explain.

To celebrate their 75-years existence the well-known Dutch electronics company Philips based in Eindhoven erected the Evoluon. The building opened in 1966 as a museum of technology and progress. Today, it houses a conference centre; though it is still owned by Philips.

The building is unique due to its futuristic design, resembling a flying saucer. Interestingly, this saucer is not fixed to its base, but resting, through gravity, on the lower part of the building. Designed by architect Louis Kalff, who was involved in the design of Philips products for many years, it is said –as the myth goes– that it was based on an idea by Frits Philips who originally made a quick sketch on a paper napkin. The architecture of the Evoluon, that even urged architect, designer and poet Buckminster Fuller to come to The Netherlands to see it, reminds us of famous films such as '*2001: A Space Odyssey*' by Stanley Kubrick and Spielberg's '*Close Encounters of the Third Kind*'. And even today, the building evokes images of utopian desires and science fiction.

As questions of belonging and engagement are becoming ever more of an issue in the political and cultural debates worldwide, Be[com]ing Dutch asks whether art can offer alternative examples of thinking about how we can live together today. These are big questions, and they also do ask a lot from art. And from artists.

There for we feel that they need to be approached from a slightly smaller perspective, less abstract and distant. More human maybe, in order to allow these questions to become 'ours'. Simply put, we feel that before being able to build constructively on answers, we need to create an experience in order to make them potentially shared by many, if even for a short time.

You see, the Evoluon is not just any building. It has a unique position in the Eindhoven community and it has been playing a crucial role for generations of visitors from The Netherlands and abroad. By its presence in the urban environment of Eindhoven it performs, one could say, itself alienation, strangeness and beauty.

During our explorations, we also bumped on an interesting little book by Carl Jung originally published in German in 1958, entitled *Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies*.

Somewhere in this text Jung states: "In the threatening situation of the world today, when people are beginning to see that everything is at stake, the projection-creating fantasy soars beyond the realm of earthly organizations and powers into the heavens, into interstellar space, where the rulers of human fate, the gods, once had their abode in the planets.... Even people who would never have thought that a religious problem could be a serious matter that concerned them personally are beginning to ask themselves fundamental questions. Under these circumstances it would not be at all surprising if those sections of the community who ask themselves nothing were visited by 'visions,' by a widespread myth seriously believed in by some and rejected as absurd by others."

We know that the Evoluon will not give us the necessary answers, but it might do something else. We decided to open the Evoluon again to anybody to exploit and explore its potential to create a shared experience, to create a situation that should re-enforce imagination, and by doing so, create a modern myth.

The focus should be, we feel, on 'energizing by joined mental forces'. Knowing now that the building is not fixed to its base, we are asking ourselves the impossible but important question if collectivity would be able to make this building fly. Or slightly drift, at least...

Therefore we are organizing a performance event in the Evoluon, in an attempt and with the help of different communities and generations to join forces in order to test and try if a collectivity of mental willpower is able to create this 'tour de force'.

This event will take place on of September 14, the last day of Be[com]ing Dutch.

We have been thinking that we would like to ask you to allow us to talk with you on the potential of mental power. We also wonder if you would be interested to come to Eindhoven in September and help motivate the people in this collective attempt.

We are looking forward hearing from you. If you have no objections, we will try to call you next week to discuss more details and questions you might have.

With warmest regards, Liesbeth Bik and Jos van der Pol