In my hands, every day

In my sight, every day

In my hands, every day; in my sight every day

Kajsa Dahlberg & Jirka Skála
curated by Laura Amann
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https://fotografestival.cz/2017/in-the-sky/

"Australia fights sharks with drones - Algorithm spots sharks on aerial images taken by drones"

"Several arrests at demonstration against Online censorship in Russia - Demonstrators lament increase control of the web through government"

"Facebook knows family secret: Algorithm shocks user - Father of US-journalist was adopted, Facebook suggested unknown relatives as friends without apparent reason"

Headlines of derStandard.at on the authors Facebook feed on the 27th of August 12:41-12:43pm

"The modern machine...possesses its own laws of pulsation, functioning, and relaxation — laws that do not stand in conformity with the rhythm of the human organism. The world of the machine, the world of mechanical equipment and urbanized labor, produces specially connected collectives, begets certain types of people. These are people who we must accept, just as we accept the machine, though we must not smash their heads on its gears. We must bring some kind of equalizing coefficient into the machine's iron disciplinary pressure, though history insistently demands we pose these not as petty problems of the social protection of the individual personality, but rather the bold engineering of human psychology according to such an historical factor as machinism."

Aleksei Gastev

Method Time Measurement (MTM) was developed shortly after WWII with the aim to rationalize and optimize all movements and motions needed to perform manual labour. The process involves analyzing motions, describing them and assigning them ideal duration times. From 10 basic categories 1600 subcategories were defined. The assigned times are supposed to be representative for an experienced worker under normal circumstances. It takes around 2000 cycles until an MTM measurement becomes standard. MTM is consequently also used to predict and expect task times of complete production cycles. But evidence shows that reality and theory don't agree as the system relies on analyst judgement and results may not reflect on the accuracy of the work done. This did not prevent MTM becoming a popular and widespread tool to increase productivity in labour.

MTM is a process much in line with earlier developments of scientific management, automation and mechanization such as Taylorism and Fordism. It is easy to see early forms in the enthusiastic appropriation and application of mechanization processes in Soviet Taylorism. Aleksei Gastev, poet and factory worker was a passionate promoter of 'systematic planning', 'chronometration of time' and 'automated uniformity of labor', pushing his vision of assembly-line production and rationalization so far as to make Fords theories compatible with Karl Marx' thinking. As the founder and first director of the 'Central Institute of Labor' (1920-1937) he was also instrumental in the Constructivist's artistic and architectural appropriation of Taylorism, since his distinct interpretation lent itself to modernist aesthetics and it was his fanatical promotion that paved the way for the embrace of the machine cult by the Soviets.

It is notable that Gastev had very well understood that mechanization basically meant the mechanization of man himself and that this process had to go so far as to encompass his so-called mental activity basically even if it this meant going against human nature.

Psychophysiology and Psychotechnics, a much revered and adopted discipline within Taylorism, were exactly trying to achieve this reprogrammation of the human mind. In short Psychotechnics is defined as a scientific theory aiming to seize and subordinate the mind and artificially control behavior. The discipline researched in an experimental manner a variety of problems also related to aesthetics, such as the balance of simple shapes, symmetry, repetition of spatial forms, rhythm and rhyme, impression of the poetic language elements, the conditions of uniform appearance and so on. Ultimately it served as a further tool to achieve the mechanization of the human as Gastev had demanded, to reach not only physiological perfection but also the adjustment of mind and behaviour to the needs of machines.

Very much opposed to the enthusiastic adoption of scientific management, the cult of machines and the great hopes for improvement of labourers lives through less working hours, better payment and more time for intellectual and artistic labour in the Communist context was the reception or anticipation of mechanization in the Western countries. The introduction of machines was received with a great amount of anxiety and fear of replacement and obsoleteness by the workers. Additionally it was very soon clear that the improvement of efficiency through machines within the system of Capitalism would only serve to further exploit and oppress workers while increasing profit on their backs.

This structure of feeling sounds actually all to familiar if we think about contemporary sentiments towards labour market and its current or anticipated developments. The rapid evolution of new technology, robotic systems, artificial intelligence and all possible cross pollinations of these have many a professional worried about the close future in their respective disciplines - except now this does not only concern workers, but also academically trained people.

Similarly if the methods of scientific management entailed measuring the 'ideal' movements of workers (be it physically or mentally) to increase efficiency and profit or leisure time (depending on political context or vision) nowadays we see all of our data mined and extracted to the maximum as data has become the most valuable capital in a digitally dominated world and going full circle in the newest developments that have seen tech giants invest in physical stores to further increase the surveillance and extraction of information through tracking of offline movement and behaviour.

The death of capitalism has been announced many a time, but each step seemingly closer to collapse we have seen it mutate into a harsher and more merciless monstrum - so in what kind of Capitalism are we currently living?

In an attempt to define exactly this Nick Srnicek describes the current state of prevailing economy as Platform Capitalism. So from the Fordist model of mass production and mass consumption we went a Post Fordist model that saw flexible production, the individualization of products, responsiveness to consumer preferences and outsourcing of non profitable sectors at its core and money was to be made mainly through branding.

Parallelly we went from life-long careers to jobs, arriving to a rhythm of employment from gig to gig.

Platform Capitalism on the other hand operates with intermediaries and offering of infrastructures. The main revenue streams within these structures consist of advertisement, cloud computing, products and sharing economies. The strategies applied lead to monopolization through network effects (just think how hard it is to escape companies such as Facebook or Google in one way or the other), cross subsidization where companies offer services for free to get more people on board and raising prices on other items to make profit and ultimately they all come with a built in architecture that does not allow for neutral unmonitored exchange but requires adherence to specific rules of behaviour, manipulating its users.

The key resource being data platforms become constantly improving aparatuses to extract data across alls economies. To expand their activities in data collection the infringe on privacy, ask for ever more personal information and gather data through wifi networks and the like turning all our activity not only labour and consumption into profit but even leisure, idleness or sleep while ever increasing this effect through constant manipulation with the same means.

Again we can argue that the discourse is evolving between two very disparate visions, on the one hand those who see the digital as a means to liberate the human, free up time for leisure or intellectual activity, increase salaries and therefore break down hierarchies, decentralize control and possibly even help harmonize social relations and on the other hand those who see the increased omnipotence of technology as the ultimate tool to further oppress and exploit, increasing the power, surveillance capabilities and wealth of the ruling class. We might agree that currently the latter scenario seems significantly closer to our reality, indicating that without changes to the underlying framework it is not likely that technology will radically improve the lives of the masses - we are left to wonder how to possibly move towards the first?

Laura Amann, 2017
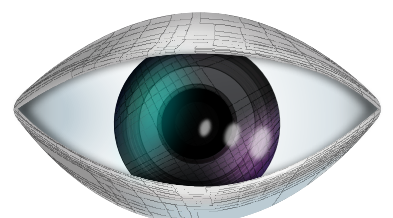
Kajsa Dahlberg (born 1973 in Göteborg) is a visual artist based in Stockholm and Oslo. Her works interrogate the content and subtexts of different medial forms of expression: How are collective and individual narratives intertwined? How do political representation, historical discourse and the formation of individual identity interact? And what is the role of the respective medium? The newly created work - - - shown at Hunt Kastner is the first in an ongoing project and questions the shift of focus from production to distribution and circulation of content through the internet. By using one medium to capture another, a document is created that can only be watched as an event in time and potentially would have been very different if recorded minutes later. Simultaneously it relates to the genesis of data of ourselves through leisurely activities which yet again will reappear on our screens as the algorithm learns about our interests and habits. Dahlberg addresses the issue of a sense of loss of future which can only be regained by once again relating to a more humane temporality.

Dahlbergs work has been shown in biennials and group exhibitions such as...

Jirka Skála (born 1976 in Sušice) is a visual artist based in Prague. His work is close to the tradition of post-conceptual art and participative art, these tendencies being reflected through the mediums of text, performance, installation, photography and videos. Earlier works thematised the textual narrative and alternative modes of communication, later he investigated the duality of socially and privately determined relations to consumer productions by means of work or leisure resources. Deepening his research in this field, for this exhibition Skála dissects his personal archive in form of an external hard disk, revealing not only his working structure but also his physical relationship to this familiar object and realizations of the conditions his artistic practice operates from.

Skála presented his works in a variety of international show such GNS at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris in 2003, I, an exhibition in 3 acts at Secession in Vienna in 2006, 25 Years Later: Welcome to Art in General at the UBS Art Gallery in New York in 2007, The Other Tradition at Wiels in Brussels in 2011, A Plea For Tenderness at Seventeen Gallery in London in 2012, Manifesta 11 in Zurich in 2016 and in personal shows such Hygiene at Display Gallery in Prague in 2002, Exchange of Handwriting at Art in General in New York in 2006, Two Families of Objects at Hunt Kastner Gallery in Prague in 2007, You are Object, I am the Impulse at Gallery of Vaclav Spala in Prague in 2010, Third Family of Objects And Confrontational Reading at Hunt Kastner Gallery in Prague in 2012, Jabberwocky at Foksal Gallery in Warsaw in 2014, and finally Playfield, Documents Free time, Unpaid work, recreation and idlness at Etc Gallery in Prague in 2016. He received Jindrich Chalupecky Award in 2009.

Letter to coworkers / Directions for an undirected film, Part 1:

A person born in 1993 or later who will generate the content of the film and be the filmmaker .

A person that can run a 16mm camera.

A 16mm camera to be used for the recording. No sound.

A 16mm color film wheel long enough to generate about 10-11 minutes of finished material .

A computer connected to the internet. Preferable as large a computer screen as possible, but not a projection.

The camera will be placed facing the computer monitor with the viewfinder covering the entire screen, but not the machine itself or the people operating it. The image will be static and the film shot in a single take.

The browsing session should not be planned or thought through. For the duration of this single take the person born in 1993 or later will take us through images, texts, news, social media, forums, emails, chats and videos, with the ease of doing what you always do, using the web browser of your choice. Like a flâneur walking the streets of a city center. Or by visiting the places you would usually go to get a sense of orientation in the world, to know what's going on around you, regardless of this being on local or wider scales. Regardless of language.

Mark the exposed film with your name, date and time of filming and send it to the lab.

Kajsa Dahleberg, 2017

Art Practice and Other Activities

Free Time

Idleness

Organised Education
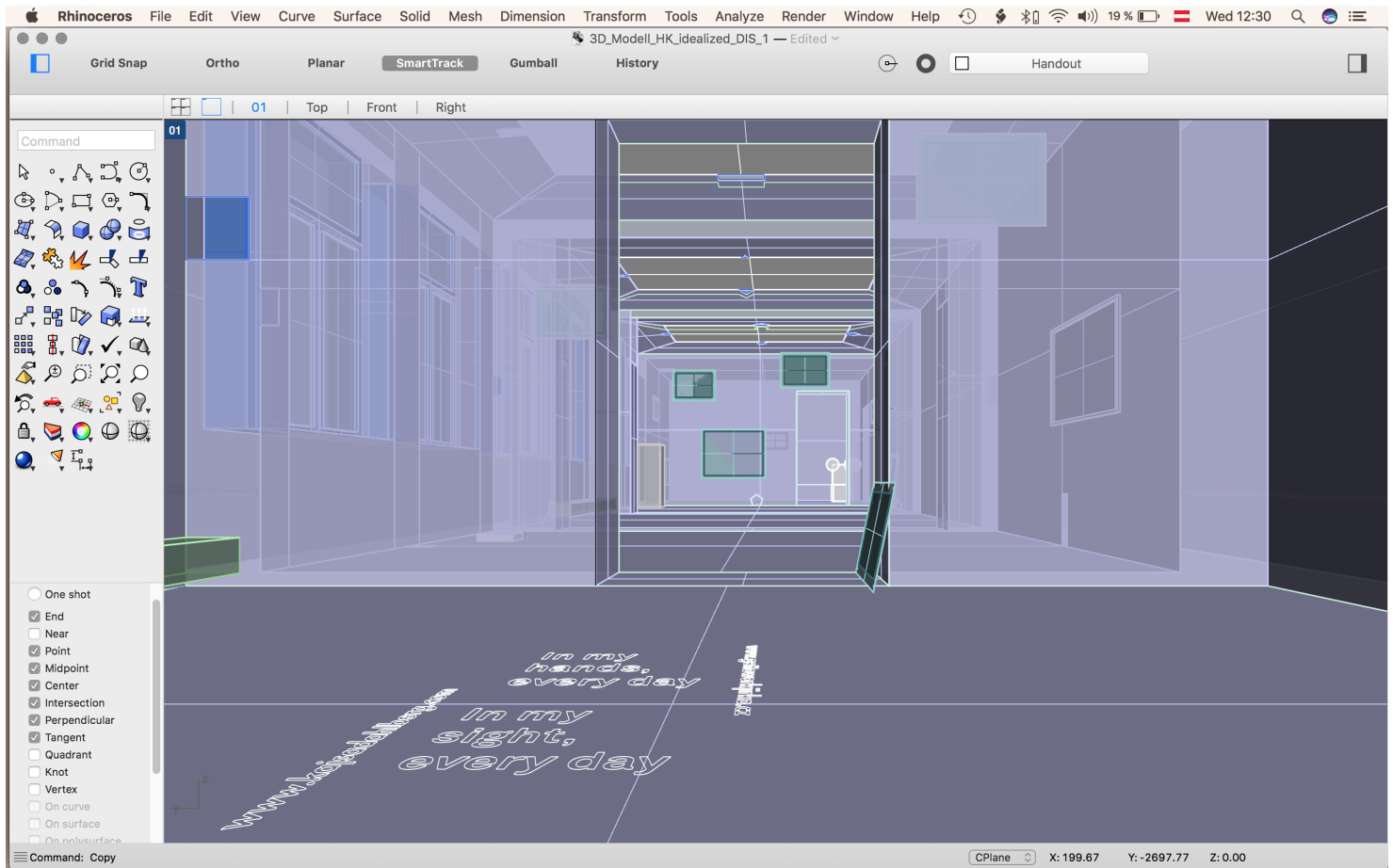
Procrastination

Recreation

Salaried Work

Sleep

Unsalaried Work

Jirka Skála, 2017

#1 Take measurements of all surfaces in space.
#2 Build 3D model in Rhinoceros 5.0.
#3 Cmd: SelectSurfaces//UnrollSurfaces//Explode
#4 Cmd: DuplicateBorder
#5 Cmd: Export [AI]
#6 Save As Scalable Vector Graphics
#7 Run genetic nesting algorithm [a method for solving both constrained and unconstrained optimization problems that is based on natural selection and repeatedly modifies a population of individual solutions]
#8 Stop nesting algorithm at maximum material utilization [18 iterations; 56/56 parts placed]
#9 Import in Rhinoceros 5.0
#10 Placement of 16 objects distributed in equal distance to perimeters and each other on nested gallery surfaces
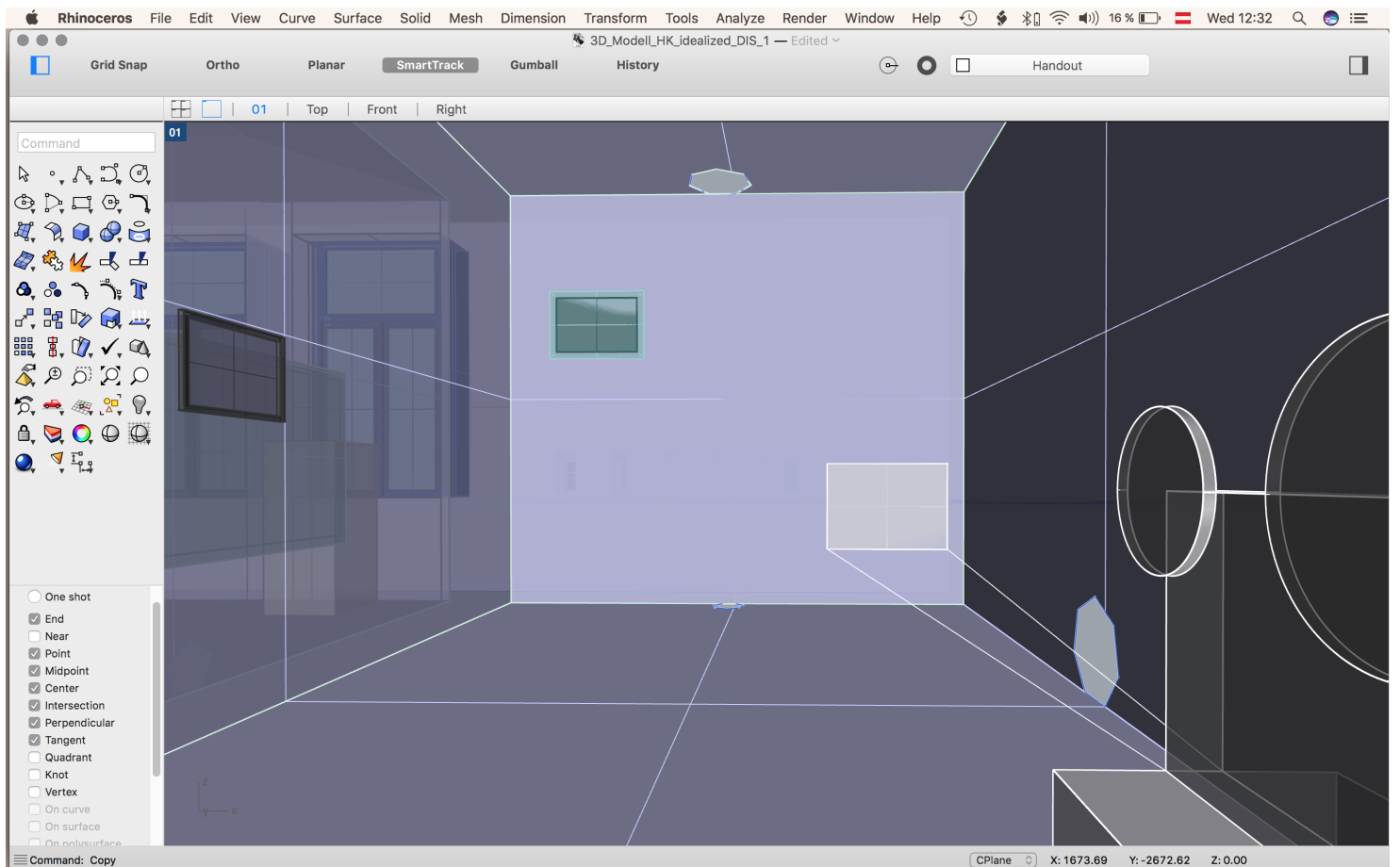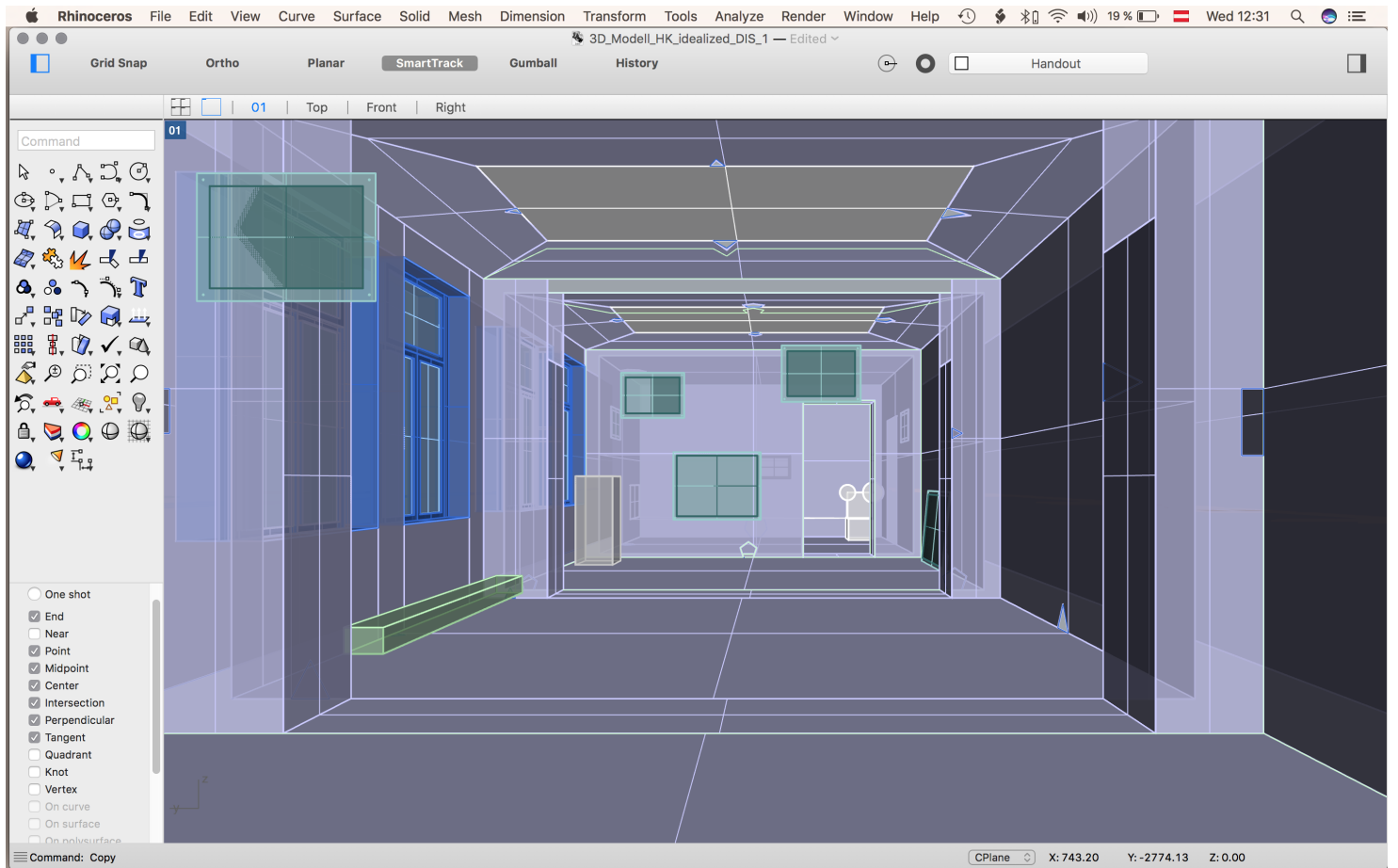
Kajsa Dahlberg
Reach, Grasp, Move, Position, Apply Force
HD Video, 40 minutes, 16:9, 2015

Kajsa Dahlberg
Fifty Minutes in Half an Hour (Halvtreds minutter på en halv time)
Video, 50 minutes, 16:9, 2013

Jirka Skála
Art Practice and Other Activities, Hard Drive Jirka Skála
Western Digital hard drive 1 Tb, 2017

Jirka Skála
Art Practice and Other Activities, Schema
Lamda print, 120 x 90 cm, 2017

Jirka Skála
Art Practice and Other Activities, Voiceover
Lamda print, 120 x 90 cm, 2017

Jirka Skála
Free Time
Lamda print, 60 x 40 cm, 2017

Jirka Skála
Idleness
Lamda print, 60 x 40 cm, 2017

Jirka Skála
Organised Education
Lamda print, 60 x 40 cm, 2017

Jirka Skála
Procrastination
Lamda print, 60 x 40 cm, 2017

Jirka Skála
Recreation
Lamda print, 60 x 40 cm, 2017

Jirka Skála
Salaried Work
Lamda print, 60 x 40 cm, 2017

Jirka Skála
Sleep
Lamda print, 60 x 40 cm, 2017

Jirka Skála
Unsalaried Work
Lamda print, 60 x 40 cm, 2017