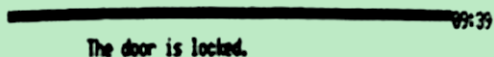


BENDT EYCKERMANS THE CARRIER

4 June – 18 July 2026

Private View: Wednesday 3 June, 6–8pm



CARLOS/ISHIKAWA

Unit 4, 88 Mile End Road

London E1 4UN

www.carlosishikawa.com

+44 (0) 20 7001 1744

Our lives are set trajectories according to the 'block universe' theory and its deterministic implications. In a 'block universe', past, present and future coexist within the whole of physical reality. Time is a spatial element, and every point in the



future, past and present exists together at the same moment. And within this theory, our lives appear as fixed world-lines in the landscape we call space-time. If the future is set because it already exists, what

is the purpose of free will within such a universe?

This is theoretical thinking, or scientific philosophy, but I think it is kind of beautiful. It helps with the idea of death



– that one day we all have to part from loved ones. It suggests that the moment we are born exists at the same time we cast out our last breath.

This theory brought me to the question: what determines our identity, our sense of 'being', and our formation of consciousness? In what way do environmental elements and material remnants of ancestral history



determine the progression of a life and the identity of a person?

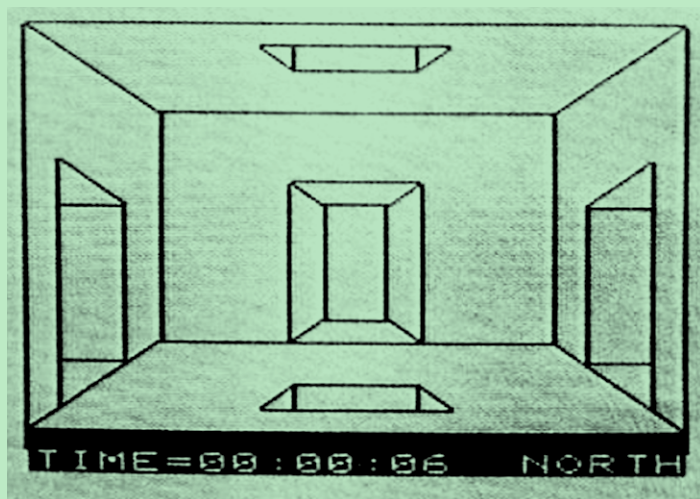
How can the idea of this be painted? Possibly in the form of a life in its entirety, painted and constructed within life's cosmologies and social contexts.

It is this notion of material entities within our social context that constructs a form of determinism in our lives. We are bound to our environmental elements. The streets through which we wander like mazes, our paths herein carved by habitual movement, driven by desire and ambition or a pathway



that was already partly formed by the decisions and desires of our ancestors. These are the so-called set trajectories of a deterministic universe through which our consciousness experiences the passing of time. We are bound to the edges and paths of our life's maze. They take the form of cities,

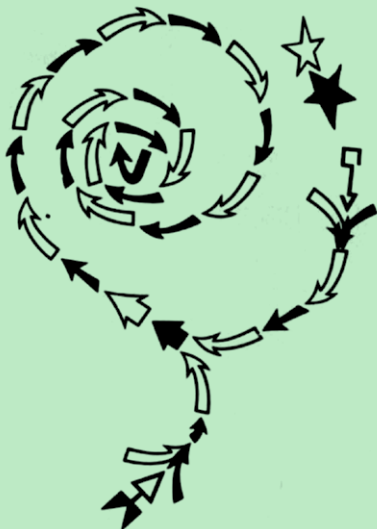
villages or whatever habitat you are in. Within this setting we shelter in spaces that form pillars. They are the set foundations and supporters of life, represented by our decisions and the accumulation of ancestral history and geography that structures and



influences our identity.

These supporting pillars have been partly constructed by the people preceding us in the mazes of life. We follow our trajectories and project our being onto the formations we recognise as our natural environment. We

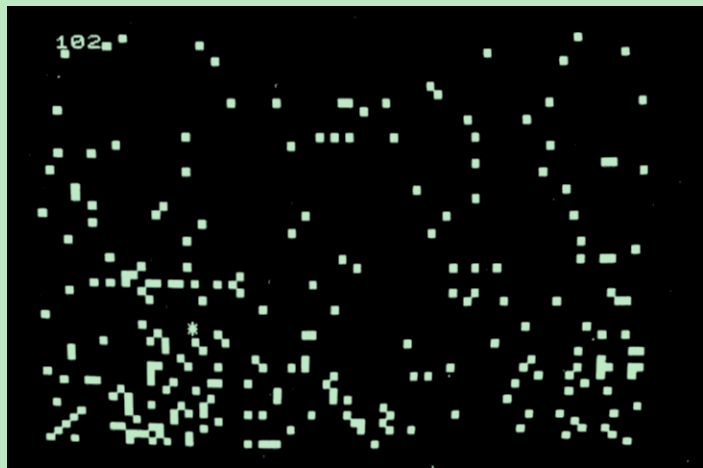
think we decide freely, but the constructs of our past and ancestry, our deterministic universe, keep us on track. The decisions have already been made or always have been set to



be made. Thomas Pynchon, in *Against the Day*, wrote something that feels relevant:

From this height it was as if the Chums, who, out on adventures past, had often witnessed

the vast herds of cattle adrift in ever-changing cloud-like patterns across the Western plains, here saw that unshaped freedom being rationalized into movement only in straight lines and at right angles and a progressive reduction of choices, until the



final turn through the final gate that led to the killing-floor.

Through the painted subjects, I explore what the cosmological aspects of a life could be, and how the formation of identity can be depicted and symbolised by its environmental

influences. The paintings use a lexicon specific to my own cultural and geographical context in search of a symbolic system that can give life significance and meaning.

Life's cosmology is the contemporary symbolism shaped by current political



movements, environmental forces and social contexts. When we die, our lives are represented and remembered in the form of remnants materialised or memorised by others. These symbols are guided by the historical

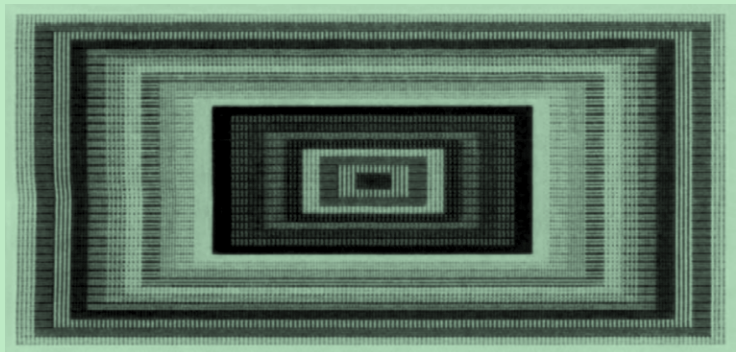
context of their time. My cosmological world exists through emblems of Belgian architecture, the people dear to me, my family's legacy and my thinking and feeling of 'the current collective sensibility'. Within



the painted imagery we see these emblems and elements appear in the form of façades, doors, characters, hoarded material, sculpture,

lexical logos, plastic, cars, airplanes, night and day.

For a long time I have been searching for a way to implement the element of architecture as an entity in painting. To be more precise, my personal geographical architectural surroundings. I often feel that we are in a constant dialogue with our surroundings,



and the self cannot be conceived apart from the spatial and environmental conditions in which it is embodied and sustained. This environmental decorum is more a part of our foundations as beings than we realise.

I understand architecture to be an extension of sculpture. It is sculpture in spatiality,^[1] and spatiality is just the thing

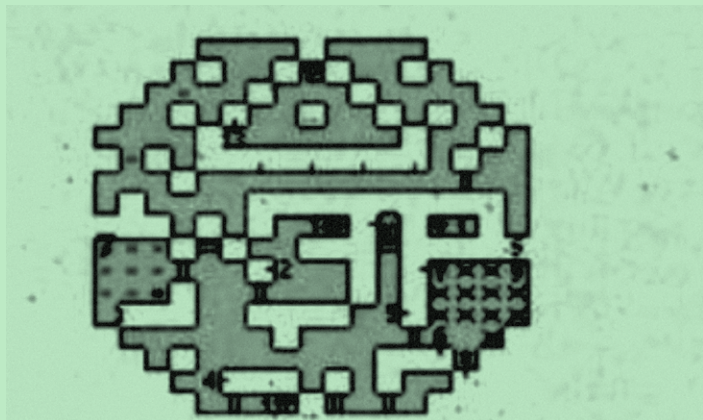
that attracts me when making a painting. The illusion of depth and its believability is the energiser that challenges me in painting. I was also in search of real spaces where sculpture and painting function symbiotically (not in the context of contemporary art), as a



coalition of visual sensations, supporting each other within a certain social function and context. Strangely enough I kept stumbling upon graves.

Particularly Etruscan burial sites. Their use of painted 'false doors', accompanied by

artefacts and sculptures alongside the graves, spoke deeply to me. These painted doors function as an invitation to a passage towards the beyond. The living are not able to open that door, suggesting the virtuality of a world beyond this material one.^[2] Like a painting, it invites the mind's eye to open up

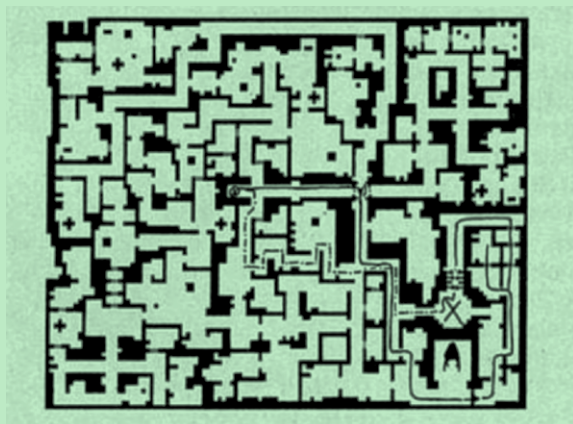


and think. Reading the marks on linen as a language of perception, inviting the spectator to a space beyond the surface of the canvas.

There is something to be said about how a closed door resembles people that have passed on. The doorway towards their inner being is closed, its façade is the only remembrance of

them we have left to look towards. As with block-universe theory, these people exist in a different place in time, their doors inaccessible to us because we cannot travel back.

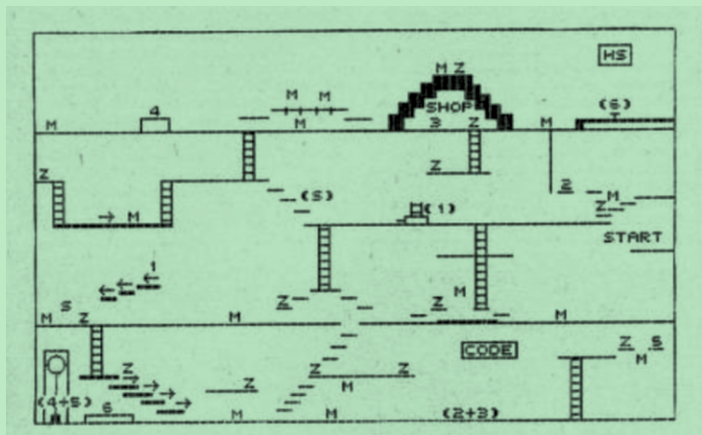
Stories about my family's history have been spoon-fed to me throughout my life. They are



crucial to the development of my ideas around lineage, identity and personhood. This process continues after death: the person transforms into 'the idea of them'. A person becomes a concept, feeding the cult-like superstitious thinking within my family, who idolise and romanticise our deceased relatives—some of

whom were problematic, banal figures. But their stories and lives still coexist with me and other family members, never fully gone despite the loss of their physical presence.

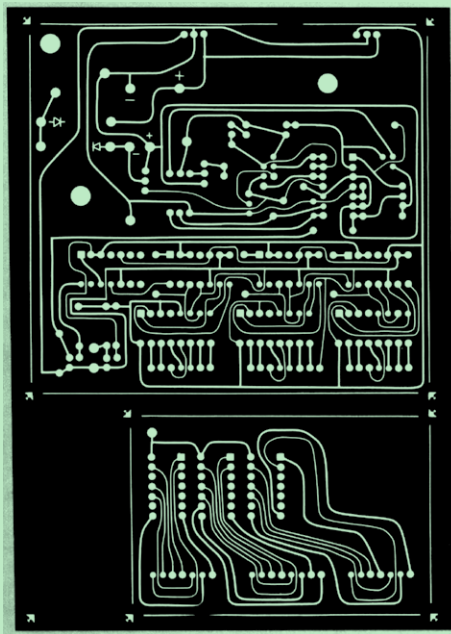
Maybe it is the influence of my family's ancestral cult that has created this search for deep meaning in the history of my



surroundings. Or maybe it is an adverse reaction towards an otherwise fatalistic nihilism – a lack of conceptual purpose and meaning in life.

In this exhibition, I want to represent a life in its totality, imbued with the

cosmological dimensions that structure our existence. These dimensions manifest through architecture, temporal specificity and emblems of today's lived experience. Life in its



entirety becomes visible as a transition towards its end – one that we read after its existence. Because, after all, death has something to do with the living.

