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Text written in conjunction with "U"
Presented at The Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridge, U.K.
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(This text was written during the fabrication of "U," and each section correlates with one of the objects on the U-shaped plinth. The order of the sections of text was determined by the arrangement of the objects, which was decided on at the end of fabrication.)

When architects design new buildings, they, I suppose logically, design the biggest elements first—the building’s footprint on the earth (as seen from above), the building’s height, shape, and interior divisions. At the end of this process the small things get decided—all the things we touch when we use the space—the floors, windows and doors, buttons, and handrails. I can’t help but wonder what would emerge from reversing this. I’d like to know if it is possible to design an entire building around a single doorknob.

The best object to provide scale on a photo showing a small object is:

(written by user ambrus) on March 01, 2011 at 11:14 UTC

Pen(cil) 7%

Coin 27 %

Ruler 38%

Credit card 8%

CD 4%

Floppy disk 2%

Door key 1%

Keyboard 1%

Thimble 1%

Drinking glass 2 %

Human hand or finger 8%

556 total votes

plaster, joint compound, balsa wood, acrylic paint, colored pencil, aluminum, tile mosaic, paper, denim.

You are 173 cm tall. Your bellybutton is 109 cm off the ground when you are not wearing shoes. Your hands are 21 cm long, from the base of your palm to the tip of your longest finger. You say “I was always embarrassed of my hands, for being so long and feminine. Do you think they are feminine?” I say, “I do, but, also, the way you use them when you talk.”

Torahs are hand-calligraphied documents written on scrolls of parchment in which the complete accuracy of every word, line, and mark are of absolute importance. Each scroll takes approximately a year and a half to produce, written by an expert scribe, and a single error will make an entire scroll unacceptable for use. The scrolls themselves are extremely fragile and care must be taken not to touch the parchment or writing itself with one's bare hands. When reading from the scroll, in order to keep one's place in the dense text, a tool known as a "yad" is used. A "Yad," meaning "hand" in Hebrew, is a silver or brass rod around the size of a long pencil with a miniature sculpted hand on one end, its fingers folded back so that it always points with its index finger at one's spot in the text.

I've always had a barely conscious body-habit in which I make line drawings with the muscles in my legs, back, and shoulders. In this private game, I minutely contract and relax the muscles as if I am controlling the nib of a pencil that is attached to my frame. I don't think anyone can see me doing it. I draw flowers, or write out simple words and sentences like *Hello I am no one*.

He said “Maybe you should get me some leather gloves.”

A brick that ends up in the ocean, if it manages to get washed ashore, will eventually be made round, its hard edges worn away from the impact of the waves grinding it into the sand as it rolls back and forth in the moving water.

A plumb bob is a pointed, tapered brass or bronze weight which is suspended from a cord for determining verticality. The plumb bob when used correctly will always tell its user exactly which way is down.

The "plumb" in "plumb-bob" comes from the fact that such tools were originally made of lead (the Latin for lead is *plumbum*.) The adjective "plumb", meaning properly aligned, developed by extension, as did the noun "aplomb," from the notion of "standing upright," which we now use to mean self-possession, especially under duress.

She asks me “How am I supposed to change when I can’t describe how I want to be? How can I desire something I can’t name?”

He made me a calzone to eat on the train, wrapping it in plastic and putting it in a bag with a paper napkin. On the seven hour journey, I ate it half-way there, guiltily slightly hoping to make the stranger next to me jealous.

I have always been decent at spelling. I can see and feel the words, usually, hand written or typed, and know what order of letters looks right and what looks off. I am still mad at my second grade teacher for correcting, with her red pen, my un-capitalized spelling of my favorite name, Emma—OF COURSE I KNOW THAT NAMES ARE CAPITALIZED, but if written in cursive, all in lower case letters, it just feels so good to write, all those loops and curves, and it looks better too. I remember awkwardly attempting to explain this to her.

a sandwich. a telephone. toilet paper. a down coat. a window. a chair. a mug. a bookend. a houseplant.
a paper weight. a soap dish. an earring. a champagne flute.