

Suspended

by stephen hastings-king

In the beginning the revolution was all motion and energy. When the President for Life resigned motion and energy disappeared with the sounds of clapping hands. Now everybody is in-between. Routines from the past are suspended. Everyone is waiting. No-one knows for what. In cafes and bars conversations hover. The waiting corrodes the belief that moment A will be followed by a moment B that is recognizably continuous with it. By degrees cafes and bars fall silent. Patrons diagram the geometries of their smallest activities. They can become maps if it comes to that if it comes to that.

In the underground a committee has constituted itself. It met for earnest negotiations to generate the sense that something is being decided. With a camera crew in tow, the committee convened in a basement. Many bottles of wine later, an argument broke out. This provided the camera crew with the facial expressions of intense engagement they were hoping for. Now the image has passed over into the mediascape. But it has had no effect. For years people had their attentions directed. They have not yet relearned how to see.

In the interstices a man wearing a bowler hat is connected by a thin black wire to a kite that floats in the curved space between cobalt planes of sea and sky. Inside the skin of the kite a microscopic environment is flattened and stretched and magnified.

Beneath it, the concentrated heat from the flashlight sun has burned the narrow yellow beach to glass. On its surface enormous single-celled shadow organisms split and twitch and eat themselves.

