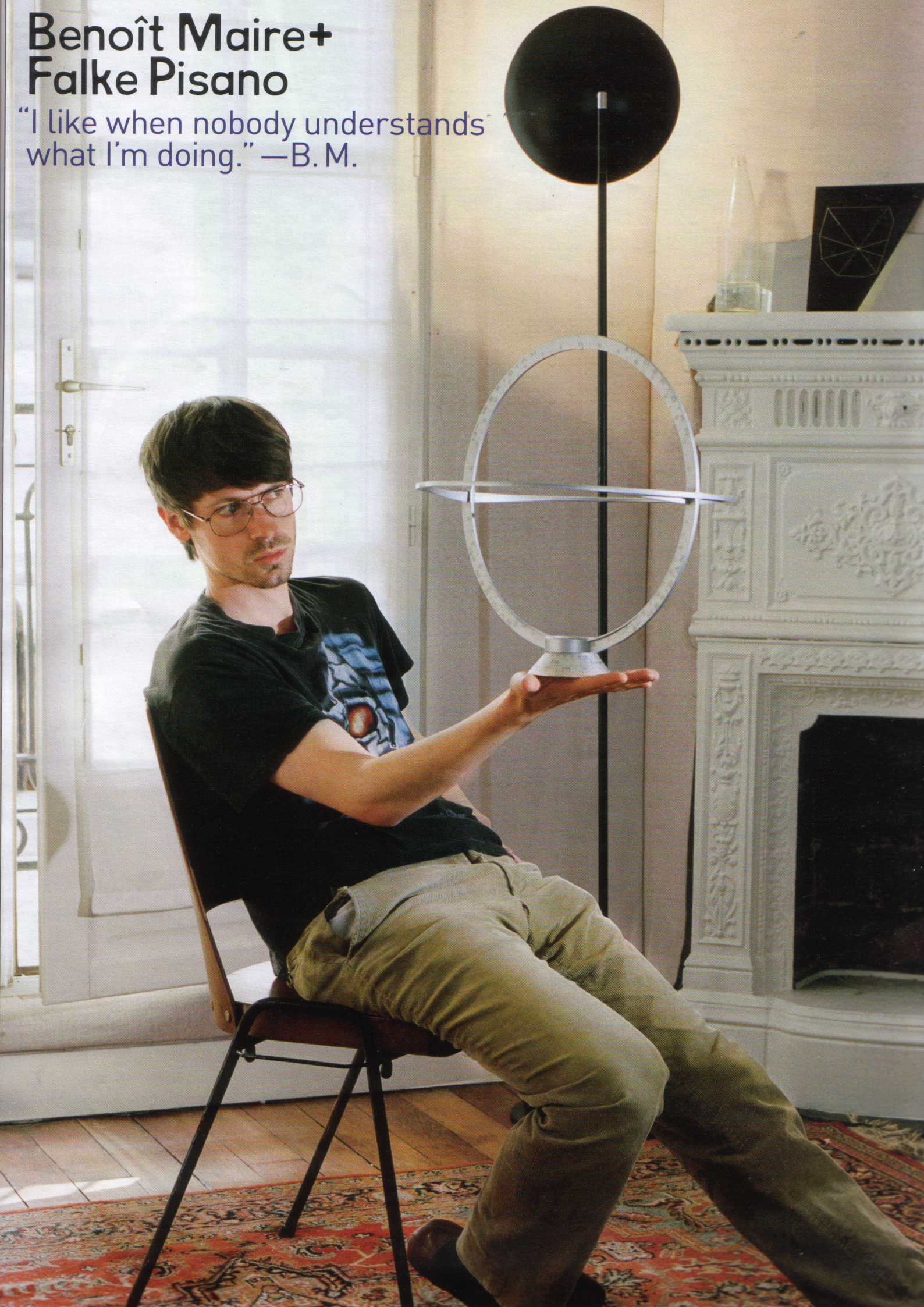
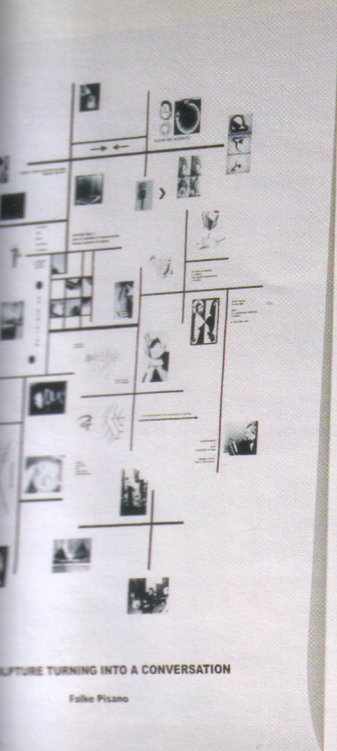


Benoît Maire+ Falke Pisano

"I like when nobody understands
what I'm doing." —B.M.





OBJECT AND DISINTEGRATION

A Performance in Trialogue Form

Falke Pisano
with
Will Holder & Karolin Meunier



"I like when nobody understands what I'm doing," French artist Benoît Maire tells Dutch artist Falke Pisano in their self-published interview. Later on, in the same interview, Maire explains his position as being a "defect of youth." While his taste for confusing people is arguably not a defect, his youth, along with Pisano's, is uncontested. Both born in 1978, these two young artists are already catching the attention of international audiences.

Maire and Pisano are interested in language and how it relates to abstract object making. Their work, both as individuals and collaborators, hinges on the insight that an idea or an object's most fragile moment—when it's most vulnerable to being broken apart—is during its state of alchemic transformation, caught in midmotion between one identity and another. For example, Pisano made *Turning a Sculpture into a Conversation* (2006), where the act of making an object gradually transforms into a spoken-word piece while Maire once engaged the art historian Arthur C. Danto in a conversation about an abstract sculpture, to make the video *Spider Web* (2006). Both works highlight language for its descriptive qualities, in a Joycean tradition of folding form into a story. Traditional binary constructs become useless, and the known and the unknown cease to be opposites.

Theory, specifically that which relates to perception and reception, plays an important role for both artists. *Organon*, their 2008 project at Croy Nielsen gallery in Berlin, included six tables, each one covered with various nonfunctional articles. As they prepared the exhibition, they alternated roles of spectator and performer, either arranging the materials or taking notes in turn. As a metaphor for the process of collaboration, *Organon* points to the contingency of words and objects, and how multiple voices inevitably prevent any consensus on not only the reception of art, but its creation as well. To emphasize this idea, the artists recruited one participant to come in once a week to rearrange the objects. The exhibition thus became a crossroads between performance, interpretation, self-expression, and sculpture. In short, an active and potent collaboration that hopefully no one will ever fully understand. —Anthony Huberman

Benoît Maire in his flat, Paris, September 2008. Photo: Duncan McKenzie.
Falke Pisano, Berlin, October 2008. Photo: Udo Hesse.