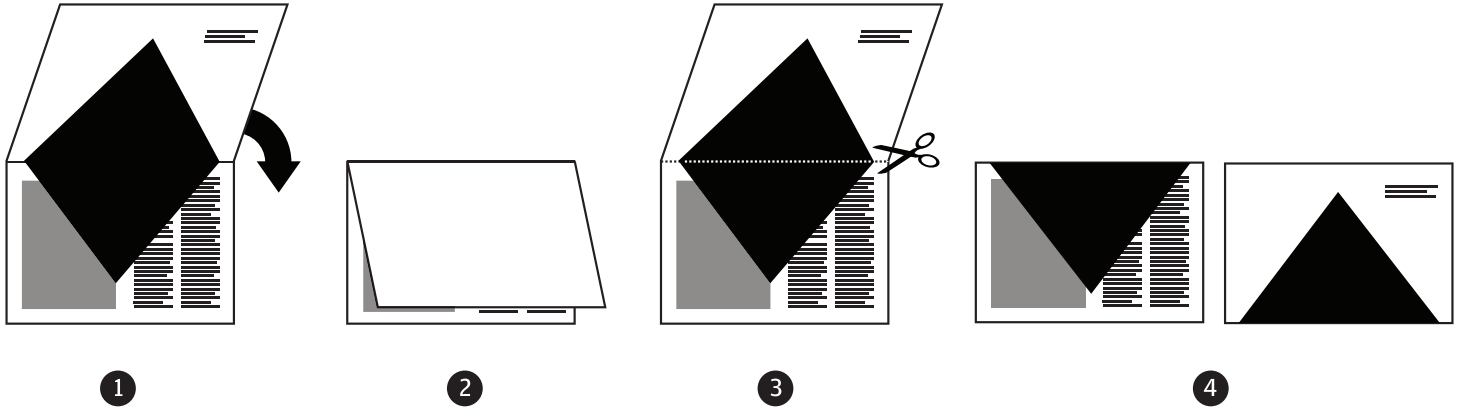
First Sheet

1. Fold the first sheet in half.
2. Folded.
3. Cut the middle of the sheet.
4. You are now left with two sheets.

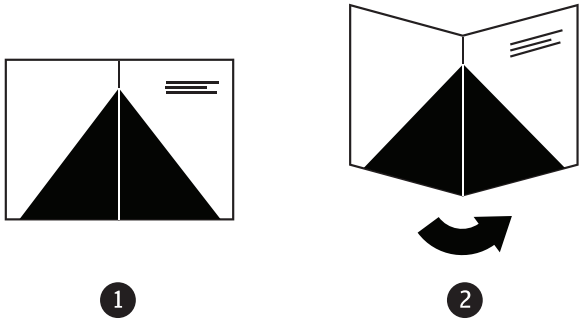
Second Sheet

- Repeat the same steps as with the first sheet.



You now have four sheets

1 + 2 Fold the cover sheet with the content facing outwards.



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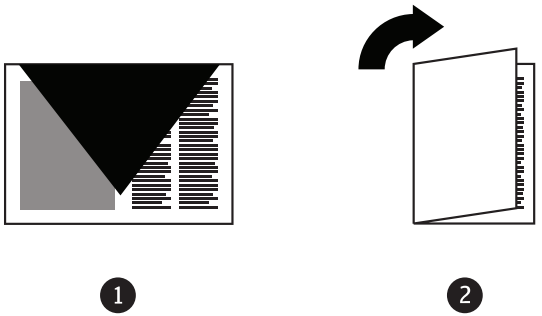
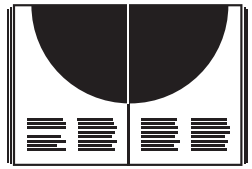
1 + 2 Fold the remaining sheets with the content facing inwards.

Last step

- Put the three folded sheets inside the cover sheet. You now have your complete booklet.





Middle page

Cover page

Three Red Cars

A conversation about math and reality with Roland van der Veen.

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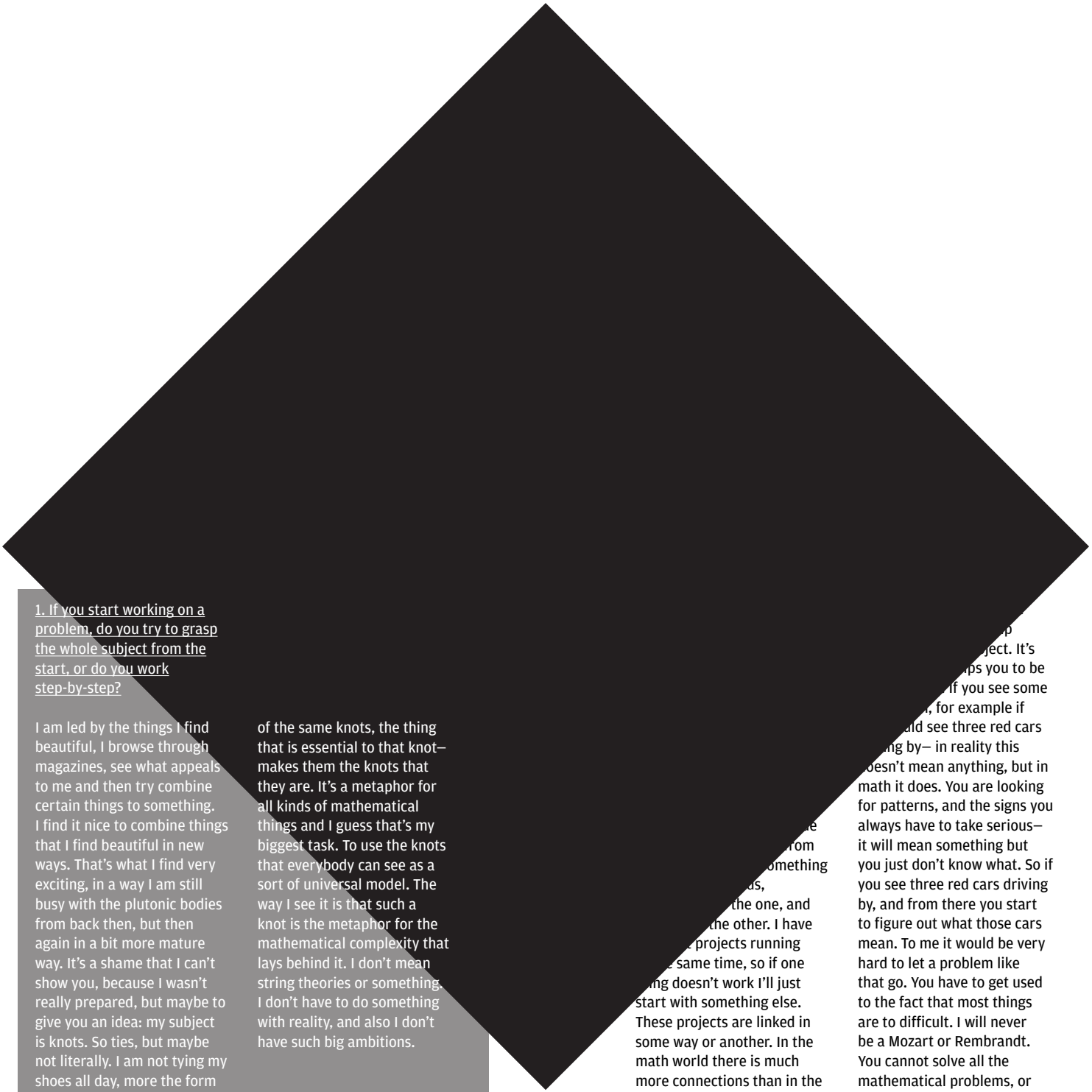
By Jasper van de Kerke
& Michael Nino Evensen

–

Gerrit Rietveld Academie



1. If you start working on a problem, do you try to grasp the whole subject from the start, or do you work step-by-step?

I am led by the things I find beautiful, I browse through magazines, see what appeals to me and then try combine certain things to something. I find it nice to combine things that I find beautiful in new ways. That's what I find very exciting, in a way I am still busy with the plutonic bodies from back then, but then again in a bit more mature way. It's a shame that I can't show you, because I wasn't really prepared, but maybe to give you an idea: my subject is knots. So ties, but maybe not literally. I am not tying my shoes all day, more the form of a knot. And of course form is very difficult, because it can bend in many ways.
You want to talk about form, and at the same you don't. You want to find something that combines all the forms of the same knots, the thing that is essential to that knot– makes them the knots that they are. It's a metaphor for all kinds of mathematical things and I guess that's my biggest task. To use the knots that everybody can see as a sort of universal model. The way I see it is that such a knot is the metaphor for the mathematical complexity that lays behind it. I don't mean string theories or something. I don't have to do something with reality, and also I don't have such big ambitions.

ject. It's
ps you to be
If you see some
, for example if
uld see three red cars
ng by– in reality this
oesn't mean anything, but in math it does. You are looking for patterns, and the signs you always have to take serious– it will mean something but you just don't know what. So if you see three red cars driving by, and from there you start to figure out what those cars mean. To me it would be very hard to let a problem like that go. You have to get used to the fact that most things are to difficult. I will never be a Mozart or Rembrandt. You cannot solve all the mathematical problems, or see all the connections at once. You have to get used to the fact that you are human. I've learned to let that obsessive thing go ■

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omething
us,
the one, and
he other. I have
projects running
same time, so if one
ng doesn't work I'll just start with something else. These projects are linked in some way or another. In the math world there is much more connections than in the science world. Science is too complicated, but within math the things that you study are so relatively simple that they are always again connections; it's different sides from the same thing.

2. Could you tell us something about yourself, your background and how you started?

Myself, what exactly would you want to know? My name is Roland van Der Veen, I lived my whole life in Amsterdam, and studied in Amsterdam. I started with mathematics because for Sinterklaas I got a gift and it was a plutonic bodies box. Cubes, geometrical forms stuff like that.., that's where I started. On primary school I already liked to work with sums, and the concentr that you have.. anot of consciousness working. It's a where you ca where eve simple. Y the out neces was sch O h

It's like finger exercise– not much happens. It's not creative, and that's negative because creativity is very important in math. I see math more as an art form. You really have to make somethi that's from you, s that's new cann

3. If you are working in such far abstractions is it hard to keep a connection to the physical world?

You want to have a visual image to go along with these abstractions. The art is to find a formula to go along with a certain problem, if you have the formula then you solved the problem. I wouldn't say these formulas have a direct connection to reality. Maybe I am not so interested in reality.

4. If somebody would say that math is a sub-culture what would you say?

Yeah yeah, very much so. It's also closed from the outside world. Because math is very inaccessible, and also hard for us to understand. I don't even understand 1% of everything being published. If you just give me any article, I can't do anything with it. It's a very closed community. There is actually nobody in Holland that does what I do, I am the only Dutch guy on the congress that deal with my subject.

5. Do you have any specific goals that you want to reach in the future?

I would like to make something even more beautiful. I have my materials to work with, I got my knots, I got my cube and I got a lot more toys. You try to form unity with this so that a person that knows about math, unfortunately not everybody, can see the beauty in this. It's hard to explain what the beauty is; a renewing look on the things that are already known. For example Jimi Hendrix who renewed all kinds of concepts, I am trying to widen traditions and images that are already there.