

ABOUT THE KINK IN THE ARC

This novel is set within a ‘sanatorium for the weary of image’. The idea of a rest home or sanatorium is very close to the idea of the artist’s retreat or residency; in that it allows the residents ‘time and space’ away from the travails of contemporary existence. It is of course a fictional trope beloved of modernist writers and of filmmakers. It can provide gratuitous echoes of the asylum (see [A Cure For Wellness](#)) and serves well as a metaphor for a moribund or doomed society ([The Magic Mountain](#)) or the inevitability of mortality ([The Wind Has Risen](#)). It is also a useful container for circularity, for endlessness ([Last Year At Marienbad](#)) and for worlds within worlds ([Sanatorium Under The Sign of the Hourglass](#)). Readers should note that though the novel will make reference to characters suffering from mental exhaustion it is not in any way attempting to make light of mental illness or to stigmatise further those who suffer from any such condition.

The idea of a collective novel is important on a variety of levels. By collecting descriptions of artworks from so many different sources, I can create a kind of database of daydreams, ideas, reveries, imagined works: a labyrinth, as I mentioned but also a layering and counter layering of artistic sensibilities and possibilities. Outcomes can change. Participants can re-edit, reconstitute, re-site their individual contributions or offer changes to all/any. Ideally the structure and the contributor’s parts within it, move as freely as abstract thoughts, desultory conversation and speculation. By weaving those different artworks and *by extension*, real and imaginary, past, present and future together, the novel can contain or begin to represent a shared consciousness. It’s collective and mutable nature means the novel refuses to be static. It can drift into further possibilities taking the artworks along with it.

The novel has manifested as written texts, as a website (analogous/parallel screen grabs and texts) as readings, exhibitions and performances (at [MHKA, Antwerp](#) in 2017).

The Kink in the Arc is an attempt at a re-framing of the novel, perhaps as a proxy form of consciousness via collected, imagined descriptions. On a simpler level, it is a variable form of eternal, collective group exhibition.