Since January 2020 Elsevier has created a COVID-19 resource centre with free information in English and Mandarin on the novel coronavirus COVID-19. The COVID-19 resource centre is hosted on Elsevier Connect, the company's public news and information website.

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Hell in a handcart

When was the last time you doubted your phone? For Feedback, its word is gospel. If our mobile device told us it was evening, we would abandon our breakfast and head back to bed. If it told us we were in the middle of a heatwave, we would walk through snow in our shorts and flip-flops. If it told us that the quickest way home across London involved changing trains in Edinburgh, we would instantly book our tickets on the Caledonian sleeper.

This unthinking subservience to our devices leaves ample room for mischief. And it is in this tricky in-between space that Berlin-based artist Simon Weckert likes to have his fun. One of his newest projects, for example, involves strolling down usually busy roads, lugging behind him a red plastic handcart filled with 99 smartphones. Not as evocative as Nena’s luftballons, perhaps, but they serve a different purpose. Each phone is connected to Google Maps, and so is masquerading as a car driving down that same street.

The widespread use of Google Maps means that many nearby drivers will see an impassable traffic jam and leave the area alone, allowing Weckert to continue trundling down the middle of a deserted stretch of road.

Is it art? Is it technology? Whatever it is, we salute Weckert for being incredibly annoying.

Fly me to the moon

A lot can go wrong on a first date. Feedback once turned around in the cinema to find our date’s parents waving at us from the back row. Of course, Feedback has legendary charm. That’s probably why they came along. Either that or they really wanted to see Monsters Inc.

The bottom line is it always pays to have an exit strategy. Like a prearranged phone call, an emergency appointment or a family member stationed at the back of the cinema. This basic bit of human psychology was lost on Yusaku Maezawa, a 44-year-old billionaire who wasn’t around when we launched a global competition to find a date. That’s good, isn’t it? A totally healthy way to find love. Petrarch probably wrote sonnets about it.

The lucky winner would then get to accompany Maezawa on his planned trip to orbit the moon. As first dates go, in theory at least, it’s definitely up there. But after you’ve sensually fed each other chocolate-coated strawberries from a tube for the dozenth time, what do you do if you feel like calling it a day? Hop into an escape module? Activate an ejector seat?

The whole process seems painful enough in three dimensions, let alone six, but it is the range of options that leaves us truly bamboozled. How does a five-dimensional eyebrow feather differ from a four-dimensional one? Would one be embarrassed to pass through hyperspace if one’s eyebrows were groomed with insufficient dimensionality?

Pure imagination

Perhaps you have heard of Lärabar, the allegedly moreish snack bar with a mysterious umlaut.

Perhaps you have even tried one. If so, Feedback has reassuring news for you. Lärabar’s entire range of products are made from “only real ingredients” — that’s right, put away your doubts about consuming those non-existent ingredients, please cut us a slice of the imaginary action.

3-dim to 6-dim

Our Sydney-based reporter Alice Klein sends word of a beauty clinic in her neck of the woods that offers “3-dimensional to 6-dimensional eyebrow feathering”.

Eyebrow feathering, for those of you who weren’t around when we googled it just now, is a baroque procedure designed to give the impression of fuller brows. Tiny incisions are made in places where the eyebrow seems insufficiently bushy, and then filled in with dye so that they look like additional hairs, a bit like a tattoo.

The whole process seems painful enough in three dimensions, let alone six, but it is the range of options that leaves us truly bamboozled. How does a five-dimensional eyebrow feather differ from a four-dimensional one? Would one be embarrassed to pass through hyperspace if one’s eyebrows were groomed with insufficient dimensionality?

Feedback prefers to stick to string theory by having our eyebrows threaded instead.

Puff piece

A touch of childish humour now for these bleak times that we live in. As China cracks down on the spread of the coronavirus, infrared cameras have been installed in airports and train stations across the country to monitor the temperature of passengers.

If you think that is an unpardonable invasion of privacy, we are afraid it gets worse.

According to a tweet by the Chinese news site Global Times, the cameras are extremely sensitive. So sensitive, in fact, they can detect – how shall we put it gracefully – localised lower dorsal emissions of hot air. It is, apparently, enough to bring a blush to your cheeks.

## Twisteddoodles for New Scientist

*Come quickly we’ve made a fantastic discovery!*

*A new element you need to see.*

*Happy Birthday*

@twisteddoodles

Got a story for Feedback?
Send it to New Scientist, 25 Bedford Street, London WC2E 9ES or you can email us at feedback@newscientist.com

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