COLLABORATION AND ITS (DIS)CONTENTS

ART, ARCHITECTURE, AND PHOTOGRAPHY SINCE 1950

EDITED BY
MEREDITH A. BROWN
MICHELLE MILLAR FISHER

COURTAULD BOOKS ONLINE

Collaboration and its (Dis)Contents: Art, Architecture, and Photography since 1950
Edited by Meredith A. Brown and Michelle Millar Fisher

With contributions by:
Fiona Anderson
Claire Bishop
Meredith A. Brown
Andrianna Campbell
Sara Catenacci
Marci Muhlestein Clark
David Kennedy Cutler
Michelle Millar Fisher
Oriana Fox
Jacopo Galimberti
Andrea Geyer
Sofia Gotti
Sharon Hayes
Marko Ilić
Frances Jacobus-Parker
Liz Magic Laser
Simone Leigh
Richard Meyer
Alexander Nemerov
Sara Greenberger Rafferty
Ileana L. Selejan
Amy Tobin

Series Editor:
Alixe Bovey

Managing Editor:
Maria Mileeva

Courtauld Books Online is published by
the Research Forum of The Courtauld Institute of Art
Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN

ISBN: 978-1-907485-07-7.

Courtauld Books Online is a series of scholarly books published by The Courtauld Institute of Art. The series includes research publications that emerge from Courtauld Research Forum events and Courtauld projects involving an array of outstanding scholars from art history and conservation across the world. It is an open-access series, freely available to readers to read online and to download without charge. The series has been developed in the context of research priorities of The Courtauld Institute of Art which emphasise the extension of knowledge in the fields of art history and conservation, and the development of new patterns of explanation.

For more information contact booksonline@courtauld.ac.uk
All chapters of this book are available for download at courtauld.ac.uk/research/courtauld-books-online

Designed by Matthew Cheale

Cover Image:
Detail of *Untitled*, 2013 (from *Work*)
Courtesy of Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery.

THE COURTAULD Institute of Art

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

FIONA ANDERSON is Lecturer in Art History at Newcastle University. Her research deals with representations of queer sexualities in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, with a particular focus on gay cruising cultures and the HIV/AIDS crisis. At present, she is completing a book on the cruising scene on Manhattan's abandoned waterfront in the late 1970s. Her research has also appeared in *Papers of Surrealism*, *Journal of American Studies*, and *Performance Research*. Fiona is a PI on the cross-European HERA-funded project 'Cruising the Seventies: Unearthing Pre-HIV/AIDS Queer Sexual Cultures'.

CLAIRE BISHOP is a professor of art history at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. She previously taught at Warwick University and the Royal College of Art, London. She is the author of *Installation Art: A Critical History* (2005) and *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (2012), which won the College Art Association's Frank Jewett Mather award for art criticism, and *Radical Museology, or, What's Contemporary in Museums of Contemporary Art?* (2013) and the editor of *Participation* (2006), a volume on the history of relational art. Her books have been translated into over seventeen languages, and she is a regular contributor to *Artforum*.

MEREDITH A. BROWN is an art historian whose research focuses on the relationships of gender, politics, labour, and economics in postwar art and art institutions. She has published on feminism, pedagogy, and alternative art spaces in academic journals and exhibition catalogues. Her scholarship has been supported by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian Institution, the Terra Foundation for American Art, the University of London, and the United Kingdom Department for Education. She is a research associate at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where she co-organises exhibitions of contemporary art. She is a staunch proponent of collaboration in all aspects of life.

ANDRIANNA CAMPBELL, Contributing Editor, is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Art History at the City University of New York, where her research focuses on the artist Norman Lewis and Abstract Expressionism. Her essays and reviews on contemporary art have appeared in *Artforum*, *Art in America*, *Even*, and *Frieze*. Campbell was the co-editor of *Shift: A Graduate Journal of Visual and Material Culture* and a 2016 edition of the IRAAA, and is a founding editor of the journal *Apricota*. Her research has been funded by the Dia Art Foundation, the New York Public Library, and CASVA.

SARA CATENACCI is Editorial Researcher and Coordinator at NERO, Rome. She holds a PhD from the Sapienza University of Rome. Her research centres upon the connections between artistic and architectural practices and social engagement in Italy in the 1970s, in particular participatory art projects. Her writings have dealt with the history of the Venice Biennial and the collaborative endeavours of the architect Riccardo Dalisi in Naples.

MARCI MUHLESTEIN CLARK is a doctoral candidate in art and architectural history at the City University of New York. She is currently serving as Director of Strategy and Communications at JDS Development Group in New York and has worked previously at the Spitzer School of Architecture, City College, City University of New York, and at *Buildings and Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum*. Her dissertation, 'I. M. Pei, William Zeckendorf, and the Architecture of Urban Renewal, 1945-1970', considers the interconnected work of planners, architects, and developers in North America in the mid-twentieth century.

DAVID KENNEDY CUTLER is an artist who lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. He has had solo exhibitions in New York, Berlin, and Tallinn, Estonia. His work has been exhibited at The Ruth and Elmer Wellin Museum of Art, Hamilton College, the Weatherspoon Art Museum at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Socrates Sculpture Park in New York, and numerous galleries internationally. He is represented by Derek Eller Gallery in New York.

MICHELLE MILLAR FISHER is an architecture and design historian whose research is centred upon architecture in translation and social histories of the everyday built environment. She is currently completing her doctorate in art history at the City University of New York, where her dissertation in-progress is titled 'Nothing Is Transmissible but Thought: Le Corbusier in Diaspora'. She is a curatorial assistant at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, where she co-organized the exhibitions *Design and Violence*, *This Is for Everyone: Design Experiments for the Common Good*, *and From the Collection, 1960-1969*. She frequently lectures at major conferences and symposia, and teaches at the Parsons School of Design and the Frick Collection. She is co-founder of the Kress Foundation-funded collaborative digital humanities project ArtHistoryTeachingResource.org.

ORIANA FOX's performance and video art critiques the depiction of women in mass media and celebrates the self-representations of feminist artists from the late 1960s to today. She has performed and shown her work in galleries, festivals, art fairs, and academic conferences worldwide, including Tate Modern, Kunsthalle Wien, the Liverpool Biennial, the Dashanzi Festival in Beijing, Solyanka State Gallery in Moscow, PSi Utrecht, and Photo Miami. Fox received her bachelor of fine arts degree from Washington University in St. Louis and her master of fine arts degree from Goldsmiths, University of London. She is currently pursuing a practice-based PhD in visual cultures at Goldsmiths.

JACOPO GALIMBERTI is a lecturer at the University of Manchester. His articles for the journals *Art History*, *Oxford Art Journal*, *Art Bulletin*, and *Grey Room* have highlighted the relationship between art and politics in Cold War Western Europe. In 2016 he was awarded an Early Career Fellowship of the British Academy for the project 'Appropriating Operaismo: Artists, Architects, Designers, 1956-1988', and is working on a book entitled 'Individuals Against Individualism: Art Collectives in Western Europe (1956-1969)'.

ANDREA GEYER is a German-born artist living between Freiberg and New York whose work addresses the construction of time in the intersection of gender, politics, culture, and history. She has exhibited in group exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and Artist Space in New York; Tate Modern and Serpentine Galleries in London; Generali Foundation

and Museum der Moderne in Salzburg; Secession in Vienna; Witte De White in Rotterdam; the Turin Biennale; and documenta12/Kassel. She is represented by Galerie Thomas Zander in Cologne and Parque Galeria in Mexico.

SOFIA GOTTI is an art historian and curator based in London and New York. She holds an AHRC collaborative PhD studentship with Tate Research and Chelsea College of Art and Design, established in conjunction with the Tate Modern exhibition *The World Goes Pop*. Her research investigates 1960s Pop Art practices in South America, and her writing has appeared in *ARTMargins*, *n.paradoxa*, and *Tate Papers*. She was the recipient of the Hilla Rebay International Curatorial Fellowship at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation. She currently holds an associate lectureship at The Courtauld Institute of Art.

SHARON HAYES's videos, performances, and installations investigate intersections between history, politics, and speech, borrowing conceptual and methodological approaches from theatre, film, anthropology, linguistics, and journalism. Hayes's work has been shown at the New Museum for Contemporary Art, the Guggenheim Museum, and the Whitney Museum of American Art; Tate Modern in London; Museum Moderner Kunst in Vienna; the Deutsche Guggenheim in Berlin; and other venues worldwide. Her collaborative piece, *9 Scripts from a Nation at War*, made with Andrea Geyer, Ashley Hunt, Katya Sander, and David Thorne was shown in Documenta 12. Hayes is an assistant professor in the School of Art at Cooper Union in New York. She is represented by Tanya Leighton Gallery in Berlin.

MARKO ILIĆ received his PhD in art history from The Courtauld Institute of Art. His dissertation, the first comprehensive survey of Yugoslavia's Students' Cultural Centres in the Cold War era, examined the ways in which these institutions played host to the 'New Art Practice' under the political programme of self-managing socialism, and further traced how they foreshadowed subcultural developments in Ljubljana and Sarajevo during the 1980s. In April 2013, he participated in Tate Modern's Global Pop Symposium, and has given papers at University College London, The Courtauld Institute of Art, and abroad. He is currently an associate lecturer at The Courtauld Institute of Art.

FRANCES JACOBUS-PARKER is a doctoral candidate in art history at Princeton University. Her research addresses postwar and contemporary art, with an emphasis on the intersection of art, politics, and technology in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. Her writing has appeared in *Artforum*, *Third Text*, and a range of museum exhibition catalogues. She is the recipient of fellowships from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

LIZ MAGIC LASER is an American visual artist who lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She has had solo shows at Mercer Union in Toronto, Wilfried Lentz in Rotterdam, Various Small Fires in Los Angeles, Paula Cooper Gallery in New York, the Westfälischer Kunstverein in Münster, DiverseWorks in Houston, and Mälmo Konsthall, among other venues. Laser's first survey show took place at Kunstverein Göttingen in March 2016.

SIMONE LEIGH's object-based practice explores black female subjectivity. Her sculpture, videos, and installations are informed by her interest in African art, ethnographic research, feminism, and performance. Leigh has won the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Biennial award, the LMCC Michael Richards award, and the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors grant, among others. Her works include *The Free People's Medical Clinic*, a project commissioned by Creative Time, and solo presentations at the Fowler Museum at UCLA, the Atlanta Contemporary Art Centre, and the Kitchen in New York. Her group exhibitions include shows at the Contemporary Art Museum in Houston, SculptureCenter in New York, Kunsthalle Wien, L'Appartement22 in Rabbat, Morocco, the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh, and the AVA Gallery in Cape Town.

RICHARD MEYER is the Robert and Ruth Halperin Professor in Art History at Stanford University, where he teaches courses in twentieth-century American art, the history of photography, arts censorship, curatorial practice, and gender and sexuality studies. His first book, *Outlaw Representation: Censorship and Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century American Art*, was awarded the Charles C. Eldredge Prize for Outstanding Scholarship from the Smithsonian American Art Museum. His other publications include *What Was Contemporary Art?*, a study of the idea of 'the contemporary' in early twentieth-century American art, and *Art and Queer Culture*, co-written with Catherine Lord, a survey concentrating on the dialogue between visual art and non-normative sexualities from 1885 to the present.

ALEXANDER NEMEROV is a historian of American visual culture. He writes about the presence of art, the recollection of the past, and the importance of the humanities in our lives today. His most recent books are *Soulmaker: The Times of Lewis Hine* (2016), *Silent Dialogues: Diane Arbus and Howard Nemerov* (2015), *Wartime Kiss: Visions of the Moment in the 1940s* (2012), and *Acting in the Night: Macbeth and the Places of the Civil War* (2010). In 2011 he curated the exhibition *To Make a World: George Ault and 1940s America* at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington DC and published the accompanying catalogue. His new monograph on the photographer Ralph Eugene Meatyard will appear in spring 2017. He is the Carl and Marilynn Thoma Provostial Professor in the Arts and Humanities at Stanford University.

SARA GREENBERGER RAFFERTY has exhibited widely since 2001, including solo exhibitions at The Kitchen, New York; MoMA PS1, New York; Eli Marsh Gallery at Amherst College; The Suburban, Illinois; and a commissioned sculpture for the Public Art Fund. In 2014, she participated in the Whitney Biennial, the Hammer Biennial, and had solo exhibitions in Portland, Riga, and New York. In 2015, her work was included in exhibitions at the Muse-

um of Contemporary Art, San Diego, the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, and Galerie Andreas Huber in Vienna. In 2016, she mounted her fourth solo exhibition at Rachel Uffner Gallery, where she is represented, and had a solo project at Document in Chicago. Rafferty teaches full-time at Hampshire College and lives and works in Brooklyn.

ILEANA L. SELEJAN is the Linda Wyatt Gruber '66 Curatorial Fellow in Photography at the Davis Museum at Wellesley College, where she recently curated the exhibition *Charlotte Brooks at LOOK, 1951-1971*. Her work centres upon war and documentary practices, and the intersection of aesthetics, ethics, and protest in photography and art. She was the recipient of the Joan and Stanford Alexander award to fund dissertation research in Nicaragua. She previously taught at New York University, the Parsons School of Design, and West University in Timisoara, Romania. She also writes independently, and is a contributing member of kinema ikon.

AMY TOBIN is an art historian based in London. Her doctoral dissertation, 'Working Together, Working Apart: Feminism, Art and Collaboration', focuses on the intersections between creative practice and gender politics in Britain and America in the 1970s. She teaches at Goldsmiths College, University of London, and has also taught at the University of Birmingham, the University of York, and Sotheby's Institute of Art. She is co-editor of the forthcoming book *London Art Worlds: Mobile, Contingent and Ephemeral Networks, 1960–1980*. Her writing has also appeared in *Tate Papers*, *British Art Studies*, *Feminist Review*, and the *Moving Image and Review Art Journal* (*MIRAJ*).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As each of the authors of the volume can attest, creating papers together across research interests, cities, timezones, and sometimes differing writing styles—not to mention major life events—can be immensely challenging (during the writing of this book members of our cohort have experienced transatlantic moves, professional shifts, changes in marital status, and childbirth). This volume is the reward of much hardwork, and a marker of the value not only of reflecting on the art, practices, and histories of collaboration but also of engaging personally and professionally in it as well. And, of course, such a volume could not have come into being without the participation of many people. We owe a great debt of thanks to the ever-wonderful Maria Mileeva and Alixe Bovey at Courtauld Books Online for accepting this book proposal and shepherding it to completion; to Margaret Stenz, who worked to copyedit the many chapter versions with aplomb; to Matthew Cheale for his beautiful and careful design of the book; to Caroline Arscott and Mignon Nixon for their guidance during the 2013 research group phase of this project; and to Lara Frentrop and the late Cynthia de Souza for their administrative assistance. For their thoughtful contributions to our initial research group, our thanks go to Eva Bezverkhny Molcard, Zehra Jumabhoy, Elyssa Livergant, Kristina Rapacki, and Julie Solovyeva.

We cannot thank enough all those who have contributed writing and art to this volume. Most especially we extend tremendous thanks to Andrianna Campbell who, acting as contributing editor and a lynchpin of this project, commissioned the artists' texts and marshalled their contributions to completion. We are grateful to the six artists for enriching this book with their thoughts and presence; to Claire Bishop, a brilliant mind who has rigorously investigated—among other areas—the collaborative and participatory turn in contemporary art, for her incisive foreword; and to Alexander Nemerov and Richard Meyer for their willingness to take collaboration seriously and to explore new and creative methods of making art history. Most of all, we acknowledge all our co-authors of this book. Thank you for your patience and enthusiastic participation in what has been the genuinely fulfilling, frustrating, and rewarding process of collaboration. We have made it through together.

—The Editors

FOREWORD

THE SOCIAL TURN TEN YEARS ON

CLAIRE BISHOP

A decade ago I published an essay 'The Social Turn: Collaboration and its Discontents' that somehow managed to detonate a minor mind-bomb in the field of social practice. Until that point, no art historian had ever really challenged the assumptions of this convivial, collective, participatory, event-based work. You were either for it or against it. The discourse around socially-engaged art was the preserve of its passionate advocates: committed activists who perceived the world as so unjust that any form of collaborative social engagement amounted to political resistance. And if you disliked it… then there was silence. Social practice was quietly ignored by the commercial art world and museums, appearing only in the occasional biennial, kunsthalle, or education program. The time was ripe for an intervention.

There was, of course, extensive pushback against my polemic. People assumed I was a rearguard traditionalist in favour of exhibitable and collectable artefacts that keep the market and museum afloat. In fact, I tried not to privilege objects *or* the social practice alternative (authentic collective experiences), but instead to understand both—and the mediation between them—as forms that carried their own aesthetic and political weight. To do this, the writing of Jacques Rancière was invaluable—not just for myself, but for a whole swath of practitioners seeking to find a critical alternative to 'criticality'.

In retrospect, the popularity of Rancière and the surge of socially-engaged art in the 2000s are best read as a symptom of political stagnation—one that anticipated, but also significantly changed with, the eruption of utopian activity that was Occupy Wall Street. Hitherto, artistic objection to the status quo had operated in the absence of a political movement; its small-scale projects read as melancholic micropolitical gestures, quietly hoping for messianic redemption. In 2011, this malaise became a globally co-ordinated expression of resistance, to the extent that even those artists who did not directly participate in Occupy benefitted from the art world's changed mentality towards art-activism that it occasioned.

Featured here in this volume, *Collaboration and Its (Dis)Contents*, are six essays collaboratively written by young scholars who have sought out prior moments of art activism, collaboration, and collectivism—and from countries far outside the traditional Euro-American axis—much more readily than previous generations raised to internalise a historical canon of portable objects. The relationship of art to social change is now a valid and pressing issue, whose efficacy today can only be strengthened by knowledge and examination of its myriad historical precursors. The essays and artists' projects that follow focus on collectives, collaborations, communal artmaking, as well as works that historically we ascribe to one author, but might have several authors working towards different ends.

That it is has been a decade since my essay and books such as Blake Stimson and Gregory Sholette's *Collectivism after Modernism*, highlights how reticent the field has been to turn away from attributes that are typically ascribed to collective practice or assumptions made about single authorship. These essays, artists' projects, and the afterword offered by Alexander Nemerov and Richard Meyer therefore allow us to revisit not only the potential of examining artistic collaborations, but also of collaborative writing and research.

INTRODUCTION

COLLABORATION AND ITS (DIS)CONTENTS

MEREDITH A. BROWN and MICHELLE MILLAR FISHER

When we reflect upon the practice of making and writing the histories of art, architecture, and design, it becomes apparent that historically the preference has been to trace singular trajectories, thus erasing, ignoring, or glossing over moments when individuals engaged in collaborative work or collective efforts led to individual gain. Collaboration is complex, messy, time consuming, and often fraught. It is also generative, expansive, and creatively invigorating. This makes the writing of histories of collaboration equally complex. Such an endeavour requires the unravelling and disavowal of the common narrative of the solitary romantic figure burning the midnight oil or the lone genius that has dominated the Western canon for centuries. Working collaboratively also requires working at the edges of humanities disciplines that, unlike the sciences and social sciences, still privilege individual research and authorship and, even when the intention is the opposite, produce scholars geared toward working in silos. Defining the different ways in which individual and group efforts combine and overlap and placing them into relationship with established histories is a difficult, complicated task. Yet it is the project of this book.

In *The Creative Architect: Inside the Great Midcentury Personality Study*, the historian Pierluigi Serriano makes this conundrum clear. He traces a mid-twentieth-century project that convened dozens of architects, including Philip Johnson, George Nelson, Eero Saarinen, and William Wurster, to consider the conditions necessary for creativity. The study was carried out in 1958 by the Institute of Personality Assessment and Research (IPAR) at the University of California, Berkeley, and brought together the era's most renowned architects for three days of personality tests, interviews, and observed group interaction. The study outlined the stakes for creative collaboration at a pivotal moment of national and international cooperation. During the post-war era, more than a decade after the founding of the United Nations, the notion of teamwork was a pervasive conversation in Western culture, both locally (office, school, sports team) and at the national level (the legacy of the Allies winning the war). Yet, as Serriano explains, the IPAR study revealed that this zeitgeist was anathema to the participants in the study. These men (for there were no women in the study), 'were found to be quintessentially individualistic and recalcitrant team players'.[1] The lead investigator and IPAR founder Donald W. McKinnon, a psychology professor at UC Berkeley, concluded that although the study's findings corroborated the centrality of the individual in the creative process, the process itself encompassed more than just one person.[2] As McKinnon looked at four nodes of creativity—personality, environment, process, and product—he found that his research materials on personality by far outweighed the data collected on the other three nodes. In other words, it was much easier to delineate the traits of the creative person than the creative process. Call it what you will—environment and process for McKinnon, or interplay, cooperation, interpersonal context—but collaboration can be hard to see and even harder to pin down in research and to articulate in writing.

Collaboration and Its (Dis)Contents: Art, Architecture, and Photography Since 1950 presents one attempt to untangle the cooperative creative process. Collaboration has been a

component of art making for centuries—from ancient Greek potters and painters, to the nineteenth-century photographers Hill and Adamson, to the contemporary Raqs Media Collective—yet it remains a complex topic for art historians of all periods. This book contributes to the growing art historical debates around collaboration and collectivity and their relationship to modernism, feminism, Marxism, and contemporary practice. It questions not only what constitutes collaboration in modern and contemporary art but also explores the possibilities created by collaborative historical research and co-authored scholarly papers—a practice that remains undervalued in humanities scholarship, which continues to privilege traditional single-authored texts. Taking its cue from Sigmund Freud's landmark 1929 publication, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, in which he wrestled with inherent tensions between the individual and society, *Collaboration and Its (Dis)Contents* asks what it means to produce work together as individuals and why this might matter for the creation of art and scholarship in the twenty-first century.

This project, initiated by Meredith A. Brown as the central focus of her postdoctoral fellowship at the Research Forum at The Courtauld, began as a peer-led investigation of collaborative practice across multiple media and geographies. Brown convened a group of sixteen early career scholars and advanced doctoral students to think about collaboration and its influence on the history of modern and contemporary art and architecture. Brown (in London) and Michelle Millar Fisher (in New York) led a series of research seminars that took place in person and via virtual technologies over the course of 2013. The participants committed to a year-long experimental process of open-source research, wherein they made their research material, brainstorming sessions, and gathered information—in short, the scholarly process—available to one another by digital means.

The group discussed myriad questions during this early research phase, with several strands of conversation emerging that interrogated what might constitute collaboration: What distinguishes individual, partnership, group, and community? How do we understand and define collaborative practices in the history of art, design, and architecture in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries through historical examples? The small groups built on these initial discussions by investigating collaborative practice in the digital age; the politics of collaboration; the appearance of gender, appropriation, institutional subversion, and authorship; and the ways in which particular media do or do not lend themselves to collaboration. Conversation also focused upon the differences between research fields, especially the sometimes staggering difference in approach between multi-authored papers in the sciences and the humanities. The question of collaboration has lingered in the field at large as the project has neared completion. Digitally minded historians of art, architecture, and design are leading us forward, as evidenced by the College Art Association and Society of Architectural Historians' Guidelines for Digital Scholarship, published in 2016, which explicitly address collaboration and co-authored work in the context of the Digital Humanities.[3] It is clear from the guidelines' examples of work in art history—from projects such as ArtHistoryTeachingResources.org to SmartHistory.org to the Metropoli-

tan Museum of Art's standard-setting Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History—that collaborative practices (digital or otherwise) not only benefit the discipline of art history but also are increasingly the norm.

At the end of this digitally based collaborative research project, the participants formed small groups to work together to knit their overlapping research interests into single pieces of writing, resulting in the six co-authored chapters in this volume. Each essay approaches the history of collaborative art practice in a different way—modelling its subject as a means to examine how and why collaboration poses a challenge to artists, architects, performers, photographers, and historians alike. Indeed, in many cases, the authors have been working together across great distances during the writing process, using digital means to enable their collaborative work and communicating via e-mail, Skype, Google Docs, and community-sharing platforms such as Mightybell. The process was not always an easy one, for practical reasons such as distance between collaborating partners and available time, as well as the conceptual difficulty of finding overlapping research interests robust enough to form a chapter. This is attested to by the fact that two promising research partnerships did not, in the end, make it to the finish line with a completed chapter. Each participant in the project can identify numerous road blocks that do not exist in more traditional modes of research and writing, including synching writing schedules and styles and finding collegial ways to confront differences of opinion or method. Each can also point to the ways in which cooperative research and writing can open up new ways of thinking and allow for more experimentation than is generally permitted in individually authored work.

As an open access online book, *Collaboration and Its (Dis)Contents* fittingly corresponds to the values of the research group that were very much shared from the start, namely a commitment to accessible, rigorous scholarship and transparency in research. The final essays represent a cross-disciplinary conversation within and across writing partnerships that range in subject from an epistolary look at 1980s alternative art exhibitions in London and New York, to post-war photography in Latin America, to a mid twentieth-century public-private endeavour between architects, urban planners, and state agencies. The book as a whole is arranged loosely chronologically, and each chapter takes a different approach to the study of collaboration.

In chapter 1, 'Exploring Collaboration in Architecture, Planning, and Renewal in California, 1935–1965', Marci Muhlestein Clark and Michelle Millar Fisher take the single architect as a lens through which to explore much wider collaborative intentions and practices in architecture and urban development. As they argue, the fields of architecture and urban planning are inherently collaborative: it takes many individuals—including architects, developers, craftsmen, construction workers, and administrators—to realise the modern built environment. Clark and Fisher concentrate on two key cases in the career of one mid-century modern architect, Vernon DeMars. Their study branches out from DeMars to encompass the roles played by his colleagues Garrett Eckbo, Fran Violich,

T. J. Kent, the architectural collective Telesis, and others, and extends consideration of the modern movement in architecture and urban planning during the immediate pre-war and post-war periods. Through a shift in focus from the International Style in Europe to the pioneer practicality and less dense terrain of California—a space ripe for development and in need of practical infrastructural solutions for migrant workers, burgeoning populations, and governmental housing and planning policies—Clark and Fisher provide new insights into the creative planning solutions and shortcomings of these projects, the political and social issues at stake, and collaboration as a public-private endeavour.

In chapter 2, Andrianna Campbell and Ileana Selejan focus their attention on photography as, in their words, 'a means of collective witnessing' in 'Margin of Life: Post-war Concerned Photography in Mexico and Guatemala, 1947–1960'. In the West, in the wake of the post-war devastation and atrocities, photography served multiple purposes, one of which was to relay and interpret the horrors of war and the struggles of reconstruction and nascent peacetime. This chapter charts the ways in which photographers instigated new modes of production and formatting layouts and examines the emergence of organisations such as Magnum Photos that supported socially engaged independent photographers. The photographer Cornell Capa, whose 1973 audio-visual presentation and book *Toward the Margin of Life: From Primitive Man to Population Crisis for the Center for Inter-American Relations* provides the title of this chapter, coined the term 'concerned photography' to indicate this focus on purportedly honest, truthful, and human-centred work in the medium. As the authors point out, concerned photography moved away from a focus on those on the social peripheries of the United States (the subjects of Jacob Riis, Walker Evans, and Dorothea Lange) to populations in rural settings in Central and South America, seeking out success stories of people of colour who had expatriated to these areas. Campbell and Selejan's essay interrogates American photography of this vein, exploring the utopian aims of the foreign photographic gaze in Latin America and the ways in which the resulting images were instrumentalised in popular magazines such as *Life*, *Color*, and *Ebony*. The 'concerned photography' project was, they argue, an investigation of the post-war yearning for human kinship, manifested in magazine spreads and museum exhibitions, that blurs what might be traditionally considered the 'social margins' and explicates the projection of racial identity in the United States, Mexico, and South America at a period critical to their post-war synthesis of national identities.

Latin America is also considered in Sofia Gotti and Marko Ilić's comparison of mid-century alternative art institutions in Argentina and grassroots organisations in the former Yugoslavia. In chapter 3, 'Points of Origin: From a History of Alternative Art to a History of Alternative Institutions', Gotti and Ilić map the relationships between artists and alternative art institutions, situating them within both their nations' domestic policies and the histories of contemporary art in Latin America and Eastern Europe. Using Buenos Aires's Instituto Torcuato di Tella and Zagreb's Galerija Studentsog Centra as key examples, they identify the artistic activity that emerged in such art organisations and

delineate how artists' practices were (or were not) influenced by the programmes of these centres. This chapter traces the similar ways in which artists in these different cultural and political climates engaged with international artistic developments while simultaneously resisting the dominant cultural centres of North America and Western Europe. In both countries, alternative art flourished under a system of controlled funding, which, Gotti and Ilić argue, resulted in a political neutralisation of such spaces. At the same time, however, these loci of artistic experimentation enabled artists to participate in the wider globalising art world through the lens of their own cultural contexts.

In 'Deschooling, Manual Labour, and Emancipation: The Architecture and Design of Global Tools, 1973-1975', Sara Catenacci and Jacopo Galimberti look at Global Tools, an experimental collective of more than thirty Italian architects, designers, artists, and critics. These practitioners—among them Alessandro Mendini and Gaetano Pesce and the groups Archizoom Associati, Group 9999, and Superstudio—created and managed a system of experimental laboratories in Florence and Milan as a platform for creative expression through craft and manual labour. Their project was intended as an antidote to the perceived failures of modern design in the post-war landscape. They criticised what they interpreted as the blind trust in new technologies, which, they argued, had served only to expand the production of consumable goods and speculative building, rather than to enshrine the place of carefully crafted, thoughtfully consumed design where designer, architect, and society were meaningfully connected and in reciprocal dialogue with one another. Founded in 1973, less than a year after the Museum of Modern Art mounted the exhibition *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape*, Global Tools lasted three years before it disbanded. Catenacci and Galimberti consider the genesis, actions, and demise of Global Tools, and, in doing so, elucidate one flashpoint in the recurrent reconsideration of the moral, political, and epistemological underpinning of manual labour and crafts in design and architecture.

In chapter 5, 'Making Art with Your Kids: Generation, Cooperation, and Desire in Parent–Child Artwork of the 1970s', Meredith A. Brown, Oriana Fox, and Frances Jacobus-Parker discuss various implications of art made by artists with their young children. As they relay it, the rapid social, political, and economic changes of the 1960s and 1970s were reflected in avant-garde aesthetic movements where many artists turned to ephemeral and 'de-skilled' forms of artmaking to explore everyday life as art. This was the same moment that feminist discourse entered the art world and some artists began to explore labour and identity through the lens of parenthood. In their roundtable discussion, the co-authors reflect on case studies in this genre: Mary Kelly's conceptual installation *Post-Partum Document* (1973–78), Zofia Kulik and Przemyslaw Kwiek's extensive photographic documentation *Działania z Dobromierzem* (*Actions with Dobromierz*) (1972–74), Dennis Oppenheim's filmed and photographed series of Biological Extensions performances (1970–75), Ulrike Rosenbach's videotaped *Einwicklung mit Julia* (*Wrapping Julia*) (1972), and Martha Rosler's complex videos about everyday life as a mother–artist in the 1970s. These works

make evident the porous boundary between art and life as the artists worked with their own children to engage with concepts such as maternal and paternal identity, infantile dependency, parent-child relationality, temporality, and mortality. The authors use these artworks, among others, to discuss questions of creativity, creation, agency, and desire, and point to the dependency of all artists on others in order to create. Parent-child artistic collaborations, they argue, span the boundaries between art and life, highlighting the necessity of cooperation for both artistic and biological survival.

In chapter 6, Fiona Anderson and Amy Tobin undertake an experimental dialogue with each other and their research. Begun as an exchange of images and research sources from their own projects, they built an accumulative dialogue, picking up on what they termed 'examples of concrete exchange and similarity across difference, or in other words correspondence and correspondences'. The resulting essay, 'Collaboration is Not An Alternative: Artists Working Together in London and New York, 1974–1981', analyses several ground-breaking artist-run spaces and collaborative exhibitions. These include the Women's Free Art Alliance and the exhibition *Hang Up, Put Down, Stand Up*, organised by the Women's Workshop of the Artists' Union and Women Artist's Collective in London, and the *Times Square Show*, organised by Colab, and *Arroz con Mango (The People's Choice)*, organised by Group Material in New York. This chapter touches upon the ways in which collaboration-as-production created new spaces and modes for display in the 1970s and early 1980s. Anderson and Tobin seek to actively challenge the oft-invoked descriptor 'alternative' through their model of collaborative research and writing.

With these six chapters written by emerging voices in the field, this volume furthers the study of collaborative art practices of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries while promoting a still-uncommon scholarly approach to collective research and writing. Reflections by established scholars—Claire Bishop, Alexander Nemerov, and Richard Meyer—in the form of a foreword and afterword remind us that collaboration in art history is not a concern only by emerging scholars alone.

Moreover, this book contains three collaborative artists' projects that demonstrate the range of aesthetic strategies taken by contemporary artists interested in collective action. Each of the projects reflects on the collaborative nature of artistic practice as metanarrative: an approach that charts, explores, and deconstructs deeply collaborative work, be it the tensions of authorship, mass protest, or the collective formation of tropes of female psychology and its cultural stereotyping. The conversation between artists Sara Greenberger Rafferty and David Kennedy Cutler unpacks the multi-layered work of *Work*, an on-going collaborative project about labour, value, and authorship in the art market that began in 2012 as a studio assignment for art students. *In Times Like These, Only Criminals Remain Silent* by Andrea Geyer and Sharon Hayes takes the form of newspaper broadsheets pinned to the wall. These broadsheets contain a list of queries that speak to notions of public and collective identity, belief, and opinions and that connect to images of protestors holding blank placards, raising questions about who has access to and what constitutes

political speech. Contributing Editor Andrianna Campbell interviewed Simone Leigh and Liz Magic Laser about their work *BREAKDOWN* (created in collaboration with the opera singer Alicia Hall Moran). The work examines the history and recent past of female crises, both public and private, as they have been portrayed in popular culture.

There are many questions of collaboration that our volume does not exhaustively answer or even touch upon. How might recasting the role of an artist's assistant as that of collaborator change our understanding of the work of art? In what ways does collaborative practice occur? What social, political, economic, and historical conditions facilitate or preclude co-authorship? What is the goal of the historic privileging of one participant's role over the other's—the deliberate creation of a canon or accidental historical blindness? What does the sequence of or punctuation between names disclose about the interactions of pairs? To what degree do particular media lend themselves to collaboration? What are the ethical concerns of collaborative practices? Can collaboration exist among non-consenting participants? Are collectivity and collaboration distinct or synonymous practices? A systematic survey of collaboration in art and the writing of its histories has never been our aim. Rather, we hope this project will encourage historians of the visual arts to approach the monograph with a new perspective and to take on the study of collaboration where it has been historically overshadowed, overlooked, or erased. A quote attributed to Charles Darwin seems a fitting summation of the aims of this book and its contents to follow: 'It is the long history of humankind (and animal kind, too) that those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed'. By engaging historians of art, architecture, performance, and photography alongside practicing artists in a collaborative project, this book both facilitates the study of collaboration and promotes it as a scholarly approach. We hope it will continue provoke wider discussion of how collaboration is practiced and valued in the humanities.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1. Pierluigi Serriano, *The Creative Architect: Inside the Great Midcentury Personality Study* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2016), p. 11. As Serriano suggests, 'teamwork was a topic at center stage in the postwar debate about creativity'.

2. Serriano, *The Creative Architect: Inside the Great Midcentury Personality Study* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2016), p. 215.

3. See http://www.collegeart.org/pdf/evaluating-digital-scholarship-in-art-and-architectural-history.pdf.

CHAPTER 1

EXPLORING COLLABORATION IN ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING, AND RENEWAL IN CALIFORNIA, 1935–1965

MARCI MUHLESTEIN CLARK and MICHELLE MILLAR FISHER

1.1
Dorothea Lange, View of Kern Migrant Camp Showing One of Three Sanitary Units, 1936.

'The design of a community is seldom the work of an individual'.[1] So wrote the curator Elizabeth Mock in *Built in USA*, the catalogue for her 1945 exhibition on contemporary American architecture at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Yet, the architectural canon—like many histories of visual art and design—has traditionally privileged monographic narratives, following individual career trajectories rather than acknowledging the more complex reality of shared authorship and collaboration. This is particularly ironic in architecture, a practice reliant on teamwork. Over the ensuing decades, certain historians of the built environment have increasingly shared Mock's sentiment, with newer generations of scholars seeking to understand how complex team dynamics and close

partnerships with builders, developers, and communities determine the processes and final products of architecture.[2] This paper, a collaborative endeavour itself, embraces such methodology in tracing the career of architect Vernon DeMars (1908–2005), whose work for the United States Farm Security Administration (FSA) Mock praises. DeMars was an important hub for architectural practice in California in the mid-twentieth century, not least in his role as co-founder of the School of Environmental Design at the University of California, Berkeley. Here, we will focus on three key case studies in which DeMars played a major role—FSA agricultural camps built by the Region 9 San Francisco office between 1936 and 1941; the formation of the architectural collective Telesis in 1939; and the urban renewal site of Capitol Towers, Sacramento, built between 1959 and 1962—in order to delineate a network of relatively anonymous local architects, developers, planners, and landscape architects who relied on one another in pursuit of 'progress intelligently planned' in California.[3] DeMars and his cohort actively shared projects, partnerships, and experimental forms of professional and public dialogue. This commitment came first through circumstance in the FSA office where all the project stakeholders worked side by side, viewing collaboration as a necessary practice for the progression of modern architecture and society.[4]

We see here collaboration as the interwoven concerns and actions of individual architects, local councils, private developers, and public administrators who were conjoined in pursuit of goals that ranged from economic recovery to social engineering. We also suggest a more expansive and poetic interpretation of collaboration as the push and pull between architects, the environment, and adaptation of ideas from one context to another. Using DeMars as interlocutor, our goal is to establish specific actors—the developer James Scheuer, the architect Donald Reay, and DeMars's FSA colleagues—whose work is often side-lined in dialogues on modernism as important additions to the discourses around rural and urban renewal that occurred in Europe and North America in the mid-twentieth century. We intend to highlight through those west coast case studies the complex intentions and experiences that surround the design and realisation of architecture. Analysing these overlapping dialogues enables us to understand DeMars's individual practice within a framework that acknowledges the types of interrelated, collective labour that occupy the greater part of the architectural profession and its history.

ENVIRONMENT AND COLLABORATION

The United States government's response to the Great Depression in rural areas was coordinated by the Farm Security Administration or FSA, born in 1933 and initially named the Division of Subsistence Homesteads.[5] This office was tasked with improving the lived experienced of very poor rural farming families across the nation who, in the 1930s, constituted thirty percent of America's workforce. The agency was responsible, via various forms of financial aid, for consolidating agricultural production in order to allow

for more direct governmental oversight.[6] The FSA also employed documentary photographers including Dorothea Lange and Walker Evans. Precipitated by the conditions of the Dust Bowl states, the Region 9 FSA office also began building camps to house displaced agricultural populations, both in the form of permanent farmsteads and temporary homes for a labouring population that fluctuated in number depending on the season (fig. 1.1).

The San Francisco Region 9 FSA was a tight-knit community of young, idealistic architects who were dedicated to engaging with architecture on humanitarian grounds. Unlike other centralised FSA offices across the country, theirs was allowed uncharacteristic free rein and rebelled against too close an oversight by the federal headquarters in Washington, DC.[7] For DeMars, along with his fellow FSA colleagues, who included among others the architect Burton Cairns, the landscape architects Fran Violich and Garrett Eckbo, and, later, the planner T. J. Kent, taking a path that promised anonymity rather than individual accolades was in large part dictated by the dismal economic environment in the immediate aftermath of the Great Depression.[8] They all graduated into their respective fields of architecture and design from the University of California, Berkeley, in the early 1930s at a time when the curriculum still ploughed a fairly traditional path. The consensus of the students—and some of the faculty and local Bay Area architecture firms, too—was that the prevailing pedagogical focus on Beaux Arts language offered neither a formal nor conceptual framework with which to tackle the tough issues—rampant inflation, homelessness, unemployment—faced by their country.[9] Like many of his generation, after a brief period in private practice DeMars took a position that intersected with the larger collective spirit of that decade.[10] From 1936 to 1941, as the district architect for the FSA Region 9 office, DeMars played a major role in designing approximately forty agricultural camps for Dust Bowl migrants, and did so in close collaboration with his peers from Berkeley. These camps were erected in California, Arizona, Texas, and other south-western states (fig. 1.1).

The FSA's new rural communities were created from scratch on farmland bought by the government, usually located well outside existing town limits. The communities included spaces for tent platforms, single cabins, larger farmsteads, and ancillary shared spaces. The camps were built when possible using standardised, prefabricated parts that could form single homes on site in as little as ten minutes. The transitory nature and proximity to the family automobile made the very early FSA migrant accommodations similar in character and form to lower-end tourist-related structures of the period.[11] Weedpatch, made famous by its inclusion in John Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), was the first such camp, built south of Bakersfield, California, in 1936. First came tent sites, then wood frame houses, and lastly wood frame buildings for the post office, community hall, and other shared facilities. At certain camps, some of the main buildings already existed prior to FSA involvement, including men's and women's toilets and showers with laundry facilities on the outside. In these cases, the agricultural workers would bring their own tents, and the FSA team provided platforms. These were, as DeMars described,

> a little thing called a ramada, on four posts, and a lattice above … which had a shelf under it and a couple of shelves above. That was the kitchen, a place to put the kerosene stove and some things … it was at least a thousand percent better than putting it on the ground. We had rails to tie the tent lines. . . . The roads were graveled—you could park the car in front.[12]

During the first few years, the FSA team made site visits and responded to feedback from the residents in order to calibrate the site as closely as they could to the communities' needs, the first true public collaboration many of the architects and engineers would experience. As the pace of work regularised in the late 1930s, however, the number of site visits decreased and the camps became standardised and assembled from plans without immediate oversight.[13] Weedpatch was initially designed to house transitory populations following the picking of the crops. However, the planners later added permanent structures after the migrants at Weedpatch decided to stay for the winter. Not all camps were initiated with the intention of being purely seasonal hostels. The FSA camp at Chandler, Arizona, built 1936-37, was just one example of a cooperative farm planned for habitation year round. Designed to house thirty-two families for a more permanent coordination of those displaced from the Dust Bowl, this farm ranged over six hundred acres and included a community centre as well as shared washing and laundry facilities, and a community school. Sites like Weedpatch and Chandler also provided free healthcare and basic housing for farm workers, thus emerging in radical opposition to competing privately owned farms that did not offer similar provisions.

In the most straightforward sense, architectural collaboration entails all stakeholders, from labourers to administrators, working together to realise a particular site. However, when planning and realising camps such as Chandler and Weedpatch, DeMars and his colleagues collaborated not only with one another but also—necessarily—had to take into account the environment of the West that shaped the camp architecture in tandem with the prevailing economic and political ecosystems of the post-Great Depression period. Local building traditions and materials significantly shaped the implementation and final forms of the camps and, once they were built, also moulded the reception of these FSA projects in the public eye. The FSA architects were challenged with incorporating previously untouched landscapes into their designs, landscapes that varied vastly between sites in California, Arizona, and Texas in terms of temperature, soil, and existing vegetation. Tree patterns, delineation of open and shared spaces, light and shade, and planting were thus integral concerns in the design of camps.[14] This consideration necessitated close collaboration between architects who were responsible for the building forms and landscape architects responsible for couching them in often barren or hostile conditions. Both sets of professionals also needed to learn from the built forms and design innovations already in existance in each locale. For example, the FSA architects used local knowledge to create homemade cooling units that became standard features in their houses.[15]

In using locally sourced materials for the camps, the architects participated in the tail end of what came to be known as the Second Bay Area Tradition.[16] An intersection of aesthetics and practical concerns, this style was associated with an ethos of directly engaging with the natural landscape in California and with the organic materials and forms specific to the region, such as wood. The architectural historian Marc Treib suggests that the economic depression of the 1930s made this approach as much about identity as practicalities, noting that a turn to the land was 'a theme underlying many New Deal programs. . . . [F]or an agricultural society in turmoil . . . the idea of soil, roots, and home became a preoccupation'.[17] This approach, conditioned by and responding to the economic crisis, expressed a distinctly rugged, rural American architectural identity at a crucial moment, while also proving cost effective when resources were scant.

Critics took note of the FSA camps as emblematic of innovation in contemporary American architecture, often precisely because of this resourceful relationship of negotiation with the immediate environment. Camp Chandler was praised in the influential book *Die Neue Architekture*, written by the architect Alfred Roth in 1940. In another influential publication, *Built in the USA*, Mock provides the basis for Treib's assertion above, declaring that young American architects were returning to local, vernacular forms and materials as a way to 'humanise' and give national character to the European-derived modernist vocabulary that was then dominating contemporary architecture.[18] Her book included fifty contemporary projects, most of which were designed by single architects or dual architectural partnerships. Mock recognised FSA Camp Woodville as exemplary, singling it out as a model team project with the words that opened this chapter, underlining that, 'its success as architecture depends on the skill of the collaborating designers and technicians'.[19]

As might be expected in a time of scarcity, the materials used in the camp buildings were dependent on availability and cost. A partnership between the central offices in Washington and the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company resulted in metal sheeting being used in some camp buildings; these materials significantly reduced costs, but also magnified daytime heat and night-time cold. However, as both Roth and Mock recognised, the architects made significant attempts at site-specificity in these camps, despite the necessary mass fabrication and construction. Both praised the architects' use of local building materials at Chandler, where adobe provided enhanced privacy and soundproofing as well as cooler interiors. In Roth's view, the FSA architects used adobe because it was not only 'economical [and] fire-resisting, and gives good insulation' but because local labourers knew how to work with it.[20] The dominant material changed to local redwood at Camp Yuba City, California, which was completed 1940. While the building design was similar at each campsite—with the structures' upper story, roof, and transverse walls jutting out to provide shade from the fierce sun—wood resulted in a different final aesthetic but one appropriate for the topology and climate. The Museum of Modern Art's (MoMA) 1946 exhibition *What is Modern Architecture?*—the first in an introductory series to 'the modern arts' from the museum—institutionalised the recognition of a reciprocal relationship

1.2
A Space for Living, 1940, installation view, San Francisco Museum of Art.

between camp and locale. The exhibition catalogue included an entry on the FSA buildings in Yuba City, written by Mock and fellow curator John McAndrew, which hailed the site's 'easily flowing site plan, its respect for climate, its long low lines and its use of native redwood as an excellent example of a newly regained concern for the relationship between architecture and its natural surroundings'.[21]

EXHIBITION AND ADAPTATION

Buoyed by the collective working practices of the FSA and the rallying cries of housing reformers such as Catherine Bauer (whom DeMars knew well), yet prior to this nascent recognition in the architectural field, the FSA cohort decided to expand their vision.[22] In 1939 they created Telesis, a collective dedicated to 'progress intelligently planned' in postwar San Francisco.[23] The landscape architect Fran Violich recalls the collective's roots in the FSA group, where 'every lunch would be a seminar. We were planning the whole new world'.[24] The first concrete result of the meetings was *A Space for Living*, an exhibition held at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMoMA) in 1940 (fig. 1.2). It was the first of three Telesis exhibitions designed to facilitate debate about the future of postwar planning in San Francisco, and the museum's first exhibition devoted solely to urban planning. In the minds of the collective, engaging the public as collaborators was key to furthering their cause. In order to initiate an active dialogue with the general public, Telesis members were available in person during the run of the exhibition to discuss their plans with museum visitors. Reviewing the effort two years later, the architect Serge Chermayeff noted that 'every member of [Telesis] was assigned a number of days during the month that the exhibit was on to sit in the lounge area and answer questions as well as to draw out ideas from "the man on the street"', a sentiment also highlighted by Grace Morley, the museum director, in her foreword to the exhibition catalogue.[25] While no evidence exists to document these encounters, it is difficult to ascertain whether the public ever felt truly engaged—and in hindsight these transactions foreshadowed the empty public consultations of bitterly contested urban renewal (for example, that of the Western Addition, in which members of Telesis participated) in the 1960s.

The Telesis exhibition was heavily influenced by the Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM), helmed by Le Corbusier with the membership consisting of contemporary architects such as Jose Lluis Sert and Szymon Syrkus. CIAM set the agenda for 'architecture as a social art' from the moment of its founding in Europe in the late 1920s, to its percolation through North America and various diasporic contexts, to its eventual disbanding in 1959. From roots in the Stuttgart Weissenhofseidlung model housing estate of 1927 and its first official meeting in La Sarraz, Switzerland, in 1928, CIAM proclaimed a brave new world to be led through the radical vision and collaborative efforts of architects and planners. In fall 1938, DeMars, like several other FSA colleagues before and after him, took a trip to Europe. Crucially, DeMars met members of the British group MARS (Modern Architectural Research Group, founded in 1933), a regional branch of CIAM in England. He left with the informal suggestion that the FSA group—yet to form Telesis—might become a new offshoot.[26] Although Telesis never officially became a regional affiliate of the international collective, Chermayeff wrote in the architectural journal *New Pencil Points* in July 1942 that Telesis was part of this transnational collaboration and should be 'read as part of the history of the whole movement toward architectural cooperation. . . . the earlier chapters of this history were written by CIAM'.[27]

On the same trip that brought him into contact with MARS in 1938, DeMars picked up a copy of Le Corbusier's recent book *Des Canons, Des Munitions? Merci! Les Logis. . . SVP!*, published as the catalogue for the Temps Nouveaux pavilion at the 1937 Paris International Exhibition.[28] The Telesis collective further embedded themselves in CIAM dialogue—and Le Corbusier's vision, in particular—when they used *Des Canons* as a template for *A Space For Living*, their own exhibition of urban and rural planning solutions.[29] Le Corbusier's pavilion was dedicated to four themes—living, working, recreation, and services—in order to 'stress the importance of the mobilisation of the soil and [these] four functions in realising a city'.[30] This plan for the exhibition, as well as copious images of the pavilion interior and exterior, was reproduced in *Des Canons*. The architectural historian Eric Mumford describes the 1937 pavilion and the 1938 catalogue as a clear articulation of the goals of CIAM as formulated at their 1933 meeting. (These goals were subsequently published in 1943 as *The Athens Charter*.) The Telesis exhibition translated the international ambitions of Le Corbusier's original into a local California context. There, rather than a grand dichotomy between inexpensive mass housing or rearmament, it became a more measured plea to construct San Francisco on a carefully thought-out plan without destroying the landscape through unfettered, speculative building. Telesis' 1940 exhibition used exactly the same four thematic divisions as Le Corbusier's had in Paris three years before. It, too, displayed sketched illustrations of existing housing, city plan, infrastructure, and business (in this case, in San Francisco) and contrasted it with projections of a brighter future through the guiding hand of the architect. Telesis employed the same technique of juxtaposing images that Le Corbusier had used in *Vers un Architecture* and *Des Canons* to illustrate existing conditions (bad) and proposed plans (good, solution-based), using hyperbolic rhetoric: 'Must the city prosper while men decay?'[31]

ASYNCHRONOUS COLLABORATION

This was not the first time that the work of CIAM and Le Corbusier had infiltrated the California collective. Like many of their generation, the majority of the FSA cohort looked to the European continent as the font of contemporary avant-garde architecture. In particular, DeMars was fascinated by Le Corbusier's Radiant City, Cooperative Village, and Radiant Farm.[32] Le Corbusier's work had been widely disseminated in the United States through his 1935 lecture tour (concentrated mainly on the East Coast), which was covered extensively in the architectural press, and an exhibition of his work at MoMA that travelled to the de Young Museum in San Francisco in October 1937, among other venues. Le Corbusier highlighted rural projects in his lectures and, in the wake of the Great Depression, he offered them seriously 'to the American public as part of a reconstruction plan he intended for rural areas'.[33] In a process that might be termed asynchronous collaboration, the FSA cohort selectively adapted the ideas offered by the internationally known architect and made them concrete in the farm camps they built. At Chandler, Yuba City, Firebaugh, and other FSA sites, DeMars referenced the Radiant Farm directly as his inspiration for the internal logic of the farmhouse main bedroom, which had a sliding door separating the parents' bedroom from the children's room that could be opened on hot nights to provide cross ventilation.[34] Indeed, DeMars later reflected that

> [Yuba City was] our opportunity to do something that he [Corbusier] wasn't able to build . . . [the farm house and the cooperative farm] were things we were doing. I knew Corbu's hadn't been built. . . . Supposing he were given this job, what would he do? He might have done this thing we did at Yuba City, I thought.[35]

Ultimately, while the FSA camps and the activities of Telesis were very limited and localised solutions, both reflected a more global network and vision. The FSA architects not only used the currency and stature of Le Corbusier and his work as a means of legitimising their own practice, but—demonstrating uncharacteristic agency that disrupts more traditional models of influence and adaptation—also translated elements of Le Corbusier's paper utopias into concrete forms. They managed to realise Le Corbusier's Radiant Farm—the *idea* rather than the form—something its own author had found impossible. Le Corbusier's validation of and sense of urgency around agrarian planning was key to underscoring their FSA work as a purposeful and CIAM-endorsed activity. In tandem with a plethora of other examples from American and European teachers, travel, and architectural writing and journals, the California collective used Le Corbusier's site-less utopian dream—the Radiant Farm—to leverage its legitimising foundation as an internationally avant-garde architect(ure).[36] The California architects changed not only form and materials but also the context—working together at the federal, state, and city level, and

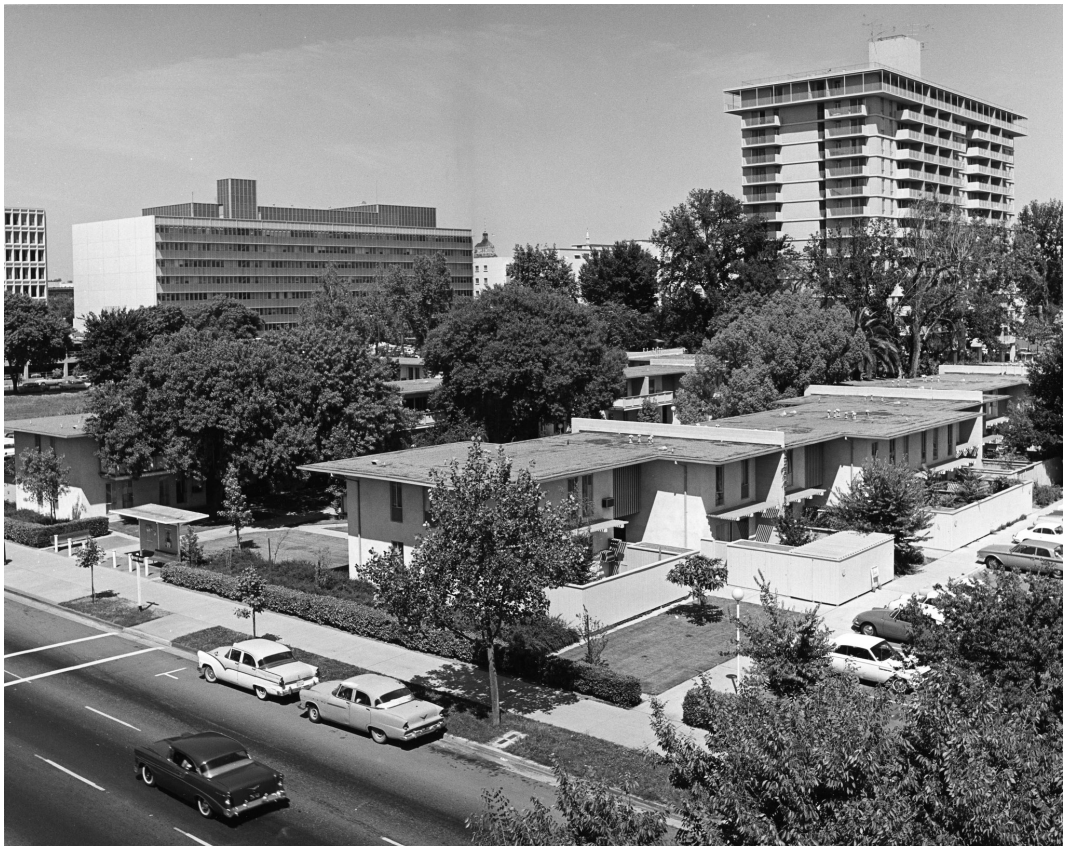
also forging broader connections with CIAM, MARS, and the architects (including Walter Gropius) behind the Harvard-based journal *TASK*, which urged architecture schools to encourage collaborative working practices.[37] As DeMars recalled, the exhibition at SF MoMA was well located opposite city hall, and the architects 'wasted no time in get[ing] all the supervisors to come over there [to the exhibition]. We got them to realise that a city of San Francisco's scope couldn't conceivably go on lacking a real master plan . . . and they couldn't do that with a planning office consisting of three people'.[38]

The FSA landscape architect and Telesis member Garrett Eckbo summed up this necessary collaboration: 'A city is a physical structure and it's also a social structure. And a political structure and an economic structure. They all have to work together'.[39] Indeed, Telesis's successful work provided the genesis of San Francisco's first city planning and redevelopment department a few years later in 1942. Thus, by tracing the work of Telesis we uncover relationships among a pivotal generation of West Coast planners, re-situate them in a global architectural context, and chart the beginning of collaborative as well as confrontational conversations between architects, the public, and the city administration in San Francisco.

TITLE I, URBAN RENEWAL

In tandem with the rural crisis, the urban housing shortages that began in the Great Depression continued to grow into the 1940s, when Congress finally initiated formal legislation to alleviate these problems. The housing acts of 1949 and 1954—Title I and Section 220, respectively—provided the means whereby rights to or ownership of blighted areas, decaying city cores, and land use could be obtained and resold to the private sector for reconstruction under public controls.[40] Subsequent to their involvement with Telesis in the 1940s, many members of the collective became pioneers in postwar California development in the 1950s and 1960s, and many of them contributed to urban redevelopment programs associated with federal housing acts. In the Title I program, which was intended to address urban redevelopment, each city initiated an urban renewal project, made specific requirements such as land use, location, type of residential structures, and ultimately was accountable for the major decisions that decided the area's future form. Through eminent domain, the city could procure an attractive piece of land, paying one-third of the purchase price and using federal government funding to pay the remaining two-thirds.[41] Companies that were interested in developing the site travelled to the city, met with local officials, and studied the city's master plan and proposed project plan. The city, through the local redevelopment agency, then extended invitations for bids and formal proposals for redevelopment. This partnership represents the first part of the collaboration necessary between various entities, both local and federal, to fulfil the requirements of the federal program.

DeMars entered the Title I Urban Renewal Program with Donald Patterson Reay, a British architect and fellow professor at the University of California, Berkeley, who, like



1.3
Capitol Towers and Garden Apartments, Sacramento, California, ca. 1964.

DeMars, was experienced in urban design. As the firm DeMars and Reay, they collaborated on designs for two urban renewal projects, Capitol Towers in Sacramento (1959–62) and Marin City in Marin County (1958–65), the first of which is the focus here (fig. 1.3). In this project, DeMars and Reay worked with the progressive New York developer James H. Scheuer, who saw urban renewal as an appropriate means to achieve social goals such as desegregated housing. For both the Capitol Towers and the Marin City projects DeMars and Reay designed a wide range of building types and planning solutions, a diversified approach to the brief and a remarkable achievement within the confines of a federal program that prioritised cost over a considered and compelling design. In part, their achievements in design can be attributed their successful collaborative partnership. Examining DeMars's participation in one such project sheds light on the nature of collaboration within the confines of a federal housing program in an urban rather than rural context, and in concert with a developer.

CAPITOL TOWERS

Capitol Towers was a pilot redevelopment that was intended to transform a fifteen-block area around the California state capitol. Scheuer collaborated closely with DeMars and Reay, hoping to pioneer—as Scheuer himself put it—a 'new dimension of urban attractiveness' in the four-block subsection to be designed by the architects.[42] Their hope was to provide more than just housing; they wanted to 'spur a deep community interest to create a new sense of gaiety, colour and wellbeing in downtown'.[43] One way to do so was to carefully calibrate the population density in the final community. Although the project's master plan prescribed a high-rise project with a density of 110 to 145 persons per acre for the site, Scheuer and the architects convinced the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency (SRA) that a lesser density of 80 to 85 persons per acre with low-rise units and on-site parking was more desirable.[44] Scheuer also hired Edward Larrabee Barnes, Lawrence Halprin, and the firm of Wurster, Bernardi & Emmons (WBE), to collaborate on the architecture and design of Capitol Towers. Associated architects for the project included the firm of Mayer,

Whittlesey, and Glass, which Scheuer retained to consult on most of his urban renewal housing projects; and Dreyfuss and Blackford, a local firm already involved in Sacramento redevelopment schemes. Scheuer was fond of hiring multiple architectural firms for his urban renewal projects and the deliberate inclusion of California-based firms softened the perception of an 'outsider' (Scheuer) profiting from local redevelopment schemes.[45]

In a model not unlike the multi-pronged approach of the Region 9 FSA office, the three firms divided tasks to design a mixture of low- and high-rise units: DeMars and Reay was heavily involved in the overall planning, while Wurster's office designed the high-rise and Barnes's designed the low-rise buildings.[46] Consistent coordination and communication was necessary to bring the project together. According to DeMars, most of the drawing was done in Wurster's office.

The final Capitol Towers project design was the climax of nearly eight years of planning and coordination between architectural firms, Scheuer, the city, and the federal administration that provided funds. DeMars and Reay's plan mixed residential towers with low-rise garden apartments in an integrated plan. This concept was new to residential building in Northern California.[47] The strategy was to lure suburbanites back to the Sacramento city centre by combining the conveniences of urban and suburban living. Amenities included the site's proximity to downtown resources, three parking garages, and a lush outdoor setting—seventy-five percent of the site was dedicated to greenery. The final plan coalesced around a pleasing interplay between horizontal and vertical massing, functionality, and nature. All of this took place within a 'superblock', the popular mid-century concept of the tower in the park—and a prominent feature of Le Corbusier's Radiant City—which protected the site's occupants from traffic exposure by drawing them up and away from vehicles.

Scheuer selected designers based on the strengths and experience of each firm, considering how each could best contribute to specific pieces of the project—especially given that most of these modernist architects, like DeMars with his FSA and Telesis cohorts, already had experience collaborating on projects in the Bay Area. Years later, DeMars reflected that

> [H]e [Scheuer] doesn't pit one against the other, exactly, but it costs more to have too many opinions being thrown into the deal. Inevitably, strong personalities disagree about some things, and then how do they get resolved? . . . That's an awful lot of architects to submit this thing in Sacramento. Except, we did win [the commission for Capitol Towers].[48]

DeMars's reflection offers a glimpse into the working realities of collaboration among the architectural team, but also leaves other questions unanswered: What were the disagreements over the design? How were they resolved? Personal contribution and agency played significant parts in the collaborative experience, but DeMars also hints at the

financial implications of collaboration on the part of the sponsor. Hiring more architects resulted, in this case, in an innovative final project but also cost Scheuer more time and money. Money and scheduling were often discussed directly among the collaborating architects. In a letter to Donn Emmons of WBE, Edward Larrabee Barnes hinted at the contractual complications of engaging three major firms in an urban renewal project. When finances were tight at various stages of the project, Scheuer asked the firms to complete their working drawings before the Federal Housing Association (FHA) had given its commitment, and to defer the typical mark-up of cover profit and overhead and work only for direct salaries and direct out-of-pocket expenses. It was a process of collective agreement. As Barnes wrote, 'I told Jim [Scheuer] that if you and Vernon [DeMars] had agreed to work on this basis, I would do the same'.[49]

Barnes's unique layout incorporated a range of building sizes, from low-rise studio apartments to three-bedroom duplexes, all of which were made of inexpensive frame and stucco construction. The first-floor apartments opened onto private patios while the second floor apartments reversed directions and looked out over the common park space. Their alignment emphasised views of the green landscaping and provided 'a balcony for each family', a feature specifically appropriate for the mild Sacramento climate that allowed increased privacy and as well as a green view from both floors.[50] The occasional three-story unit broke up the uniform roofline. To add visual interest, the buildings were staggered in height and painted with different colours of stucco.[51] A strategy also carried through to the WBE-designed towers on stilts where two different colour schemes were offered.[52]

In conceptualising their design, from the outset the architect and developer chose the 'picture of a molecule'—neutrons and protons hovering around a nucleus—as a design metaphor for the deliberately and carefully calibrated relationships between the housing units, courts, and pathways. Lawrence Halprin designed the site's open spaces in different sizes, with lighting, benches, signage, sculptured drinking fountains, and multi-coloured paving. The architect and long-time Herman Miller textile designer Alexander Girard served as colour consultant.[53] A fountain and abstract sculpture designed by Jacques Overhoff was placed at the heart of the site, flanking an Olympic-size swimming pool. Molecular cohesiveness was thus achieved through DeMars and Reay's site planning as well as Halprin's carefully designed green space, both of which emphasised community living as well as the opportunity for quiet moments of reprieve in the heart of Sacramento. The molecule metaphor also points to the collaborative process underway. In a handbook on urban renewal published in 1959, Scheuer lent his perspective on the many relationships involved in such an endeavour:

> Now begins the long, painstaking, fascinating, and potentially deeply satisfying interplay of talents, imagination, skill, knowledge, insights, and the invigorating clash and orchestration of diverse groups and individuals, which go

> into producing a redevelopment proposal. Architects, planners, artists, sculptors, landscape and graphic designers, housing and market analysts, construction experts, financial, legal, and tax authorities, all dip their ladles into the witches brew. The full-blown presentation is thus born, embodied in a developer's proposal.[54]

At the centre of the molecule, the nucleus, sat the developer as the client and ultimate decision maker. Magnetically arranged around this centre, each of the architectural firms became interrelated and interdependent through the process of design, ultimately creating a unique bond of energy and reaction.

The stakes were high, for a successful collaboration between the architects and developer as well as between the local redevelopment agency and the federal government. The Sacramento redevelopment project included the first rental housing on Title-I cleared land west of Kansas City.[55] Following the city planning department's approval of the project, the final contract indicating sponsor, design, and budget required formal approval at a public hearing. From the outset, the developer was careful to cultivate the support of the public and local press and, indeed, the project was closely watched in California and beyond.[56] The plans for Capitol Towers won *Progressive Architecture* magazine's First Design Award in 1959. Out of six hundred nationwide submissions for best residential project, this project was particularly praised for the landscaping of the grounds and the massing of the low- and high-rise structures. Another leading journal, *Architectural Forum*, conducted a study to examine how sixteen cities performed under Title I of the Urban Renewal Act, and commended Sacramento's in-progress program for its outstanding record and a 'minimum of political favouritism, shenanigans or scandals'.[57] However, to succeed, the proposal needed the cooperation, flexibility, and imagination of distinct city groups such a local homeowners and pressure groups organised by renters, as well as the support of businessmen and newspapers. The local newspapers, the *Sacramento Bee* and the *Sacramento Union*, interpreted the city and sponsor's goals for the public, often through glamorous graphics of project details which the architects and developer always had ready to deploy. Through images, the team hoped to create public enthusiasm in anticipation of the urban renewal project.[58]

RED TAPE

The project appeared on track to become an exemplar of high design and collaboration in urban renewal. Yet despite the design achievements and successful collaboration between DeMars and Reay, the developer, and other architects, outside forces prohibited Capitol Towers from being realised in full. Financing complications delayed the start of construction from October 1958 to August 1959. The low-rise units were completed first. The towers, however, proved much more difficult to finance, and the first and only of the

1.4
Capitol Towers and Garden Apartments, Sacramento, California, view of garden townhouses and tower, 2008.

three planned towers was not completed until 1965.[59] Scheuer had always intended to see how the first tower and garden apartments rented before building the final two. However, overbuilding in the neighbouring suburbs produced a difficult housing market in downtown Sacramento at that time. Scheuer gave up the option to construct the final two towers but continued to control the land parcels until the 1970s, when he allowed other developers to build towers on the site. The Capitol Towers project was also part of the well-known story of the demise of the federal urban renewal program. Resistance exploded against the top-down, authoritative planning, massive social displacement, and severe spatial transformations of urban renewal in favour of historic preservation and, eventually, the New Urbanism championed by Jane Jacobs and her followers.[60] Historians and the public alike initially blamed modern architecture for perceived failures in the federal urban renewal movement, but that has been nuanced in recent scholarship. Together with the developer and fellow architects, DeMars laboured to achieve a thoughtful, humane urban design, despite little encouragement or requirement from the federal urban renewal committee to do so.[61] Collaboration was crucial to those achievements. Despite the challenges and controversies that surrounded the Sacramento project, it transcended bleak, box-like, superblock urban renewal stereotypes in favour of mixed-use buildings, landscape design, dynamic facades, innovative use of materials, and public art. The extraordinary site plan of Capitol Towers continues to have lasting value. In 2001, the California Energy Commission described the complex as an example of 'shining space' and 'smart growth'.[62] Today, the grounds are impeccably kept, the garden units are colourfully painted in red and yellow, and the mature landscaping continues to provide a downtown oasis. In the case of Capitol Hill, the developer and architects skilfully played their parts in a powerful public/private collaboration that altered the American city and—for better and sometimes for worse—redefined how Americans thought about urbanism, renewal, and equality (fig 1.4).

CONCLUSION

In the late twentieth century, the protagonist of Ayn Rand's 1943 novel *The Fountainhead*, architect Howard Roark, came to define (for better and often for worse) the postwar modern architect of the global West as a master-builder, an artist, and—most important—a genius who laboured alone. ('My work done my way. A private, personal, selfish, egotistical motivation. That's the only way I function. That's all I am'.)[63] In Roark, Rand offered an ideal, preaching the virtue of uncompromising individualism over collectivism through the metaphor of the independent architect, a spectre that lived on through the so-called 'starchitects' of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Roark's literary phenomenon lived and breathed in architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright and Edward Durrell Stone, who achieved both professional success and a large media following in the same period when the FSA architects and their later collaborators worked together. In contrast, our co-authored paper has focused on the types of quotidian collaborative exchanges upon which the architectural field is based, both historically and in contemporary practice. In doing so, we have parsed an alternative history that, using DeMars and San Francisco as a lens, recognises interdependent authors and complex intentions as part of mid-twentieth century architecture and planning, and reflects critically on modes of collaboration specific to the discipline of architectural history through the professional relationships of one such mid-century modern American architect, Vernon DeMars. It is tempting to see a correspondence between the comparatively small literature on DeMars and the collaborative practices and projects in which he was involved. It takes many individuals—including architects, developers, craftsmen, construction workers, and administrators—to realise most built environments, a synergistic (although often hierarchical) model. And yet, recognising collaboration provides no easy typology for the success of public housing design, and does not chronicle the fragility of the collaborative process that, fraught with contingencies of many kinds, often stalls and peters out before a project's beginning, let alone its middle or end.

DeMars and Reay's solutions for Capitol Towers follow logically from the rallying cries for better living standards showcased in the first Telesis exhibition in 1940, which were themselves informed by the FSA projects designed for some of the nation's most straitened citizens in the post-Depression years. However, the severe restrictions of the government program that supported these projects (and the wider failures of urban renewal for the very populations it was meant to 'raise up') often proved paralysing. In the end, examining the collaborative processes between developer, architect, landscape architect, and the local redevelopment agencies, provides new insight to both the creative planning solutions and the political and social issues at stake, but no corrective for the shortcomings of such projects, or for a field and a public hungry for singular heroes.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1. Elizabeth Mock (ed.), *Built in USA, 1932–1944* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1944), p. 61.

2. This is a generalisation, but one that is borne out in consideration of the recent past in the birth of the so-called 'starchitect', or even the much more recent controversy over the refusal of the Pritzker to retroactively award Denise Scott Brown a prize that many argued she should have shared with her partner, Robert Venturi, when he was awarded it in 1991. Many architectural historians—and architects themselves—work against this hagiographic treatment of individuals within the field. Beatriz Colomina highlighted this in her essay, 'Collaborations: The Private Life of Modern Architecture', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 58:3 (1999): pp. 462–71, stating, 'Builders, forever the ugly ducklings of architectural history, and only of interest to sociologists, are now being acknowledged in academic conferences and books'. The work of Dolores Hayden, Dianne Harris, Marta Gutman, among others, takes a highly networked and intersectional approach to the realisation of architecture and communities; and the recent documentary *The Pruitt Igoe Myth* deliberately foregrounds the oral histories of residents and not architects. *The Pruitt Igoe Myth*, directed by Chad Freidrichs (First Run Features, 2012).

3. This slogan was first used in print in the Telesis Group's exhibition catalogue *Telesis, Environmental Research Group, San Francisco, Presents Space for Living, an Exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Art July-August, 1940* (San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Art, 1940).

4. 'In our case in the FSA office we had all the different people [architects, landscape architects, surveyors, engineers] who would be involved in the final product right there in this one office'. Vernon Armand DeMars, 'A Life In Architecture: Indian Dancing, Migrant Housing, Telesis, Design for Urban Living, Theater, Teaching', interview by Suzanne B. Reiss, 1989, typescript, Regional Oral History Office, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, p. 214.

5. The FSA, a New Deal agency, was previously known as the Division of Subsistence Homesteads and, briefly, the Resettlement Administration, before becoming the FSA in 1937. For a review of FSA origins, see DeMars, 'A Life In Architecture', pp. 124–27. See also Greg Hise, 'From Roadside Camps to Garden Homes: Housing and Community Planning for California's Migrant Workforce, 1935–1941', *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture 5* (1995): pp. 243–58. Hise states that the FSA 'planned and managed thirteen labor camps for California's seasonal agricultural workers between 1936 and 1941'. Hise, p. 243.

6. In Cimarron County, Oklahoma, the wheat harvest yielded $700,000 in 1930 and $1.2 million in 1931 but only $7,000 in 1933, an example that illustrates how swiftly circumstances changed. Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933–40* (Houndmills, UK: Macmillan, 1989), p. 15.

7. 'All the other regions in the country that were doing houses . . . all sent to Washington to be approved. . . . You can imagine how long this process took. . . . In our particular case, our head engineer Herb Halsteen, came from Washington. . . . I'd overhear him on the phone . . . 'get off our backs'. Badger, *The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933–40*, p. 84.

8. Both Garrett Eckbo and DeMars recalled scrabbling for work in the years immediately after their graduation. DeMars said, 'We were not on easy street, middle-class, and it was a worry. My work in camps, and so forth, was one of the few income things that I could find'. DeMars, 'A Life In Architecture', p. 68.

9. T. J. 'Jack' Kent (class of 1938) recalled, 'We began to be our own teachers without knowing it by the time we were at the end of the sophomore year, and we were in rebellion [against the Beaux Arts exercises]'. DeMars (class of 1931) concurred: 'At some point in time you can't go on pretending that we are building the same way the Greeks did, with their problems, or the Gothic, or the Renaissance'. DeMars, 'A Life In Architecture', pp. 148, 153. (An interview with both DeMars and T.J. Kent present is included in the Reiss transcript.)

10. In the early 1940s, DeMars was the Chief of Housing Standards for the National Housing Agency in Washington DC, and in 1953 he co-founded the influential College of Environmental Design at the University of California, Berkeley. He made wide-ranging contributions to the field of planning, low-cost housing design, and architectural education, and sits firmly at the centre of West Coast mid-century architecture.

11. Inexpensive tourist architecture of the early twentieth century, used by individuals and families traveling long distances by automobile, began as tents on the roadside, and then cabins and later more permanent motels. For more on the origins of tourist architect of the West, see Warren James Belasco, *Americans on the Road: From Autocamp to Motel, 1910-1945* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1979), and Jefferson A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and John S. Rogers, *The Motel in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); and the excellent website motelamericana.com.

12. DeMars, 'A Life in Architecture', p. 77.

13. Ibid., pp. 83-90. DeMars's interviewer, Suzanne Reiss, likens the process at the end of the FSA years to ordering from a Sears catalogue.

14. For example, 'Down at Weedpatch there were no trees anyplace. We planted some. . . . we planted trees immediately'. DeMars, 'A Life in Architecture,' p. 77.

15. 'We began to find that throughout the area people were making their own desert coolers. They would typically take one window of the house and blank the window off. Then they made a box and a frame with chicken wire

on both sides, filled with excelsior. And then little piece of pipe at the top with holes in it, a hose attached to that, and it dripped down. There was a trough at the bottom that ran it off, and then a fan that pulled the air in. Later on they were commercially made. Still, it's called a desert cooler.' DeMars, 'A Life in Architecture', p. 104.

16. See Sally Byrne Woodbridge, Morley Baer, and Roger Sturtevant (eds.), *Bay Area Houses* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976). The Second Bay Area Tradition was a movement pioneered by William W. Wurster and Gardner Dailey in San Francisco and its environs in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Sally Woodbridge succinctly describes the style in relation to Wurster's first work, the Gregory farmhouse, in Scotts Valley, Santa Cruz (1926-27), in which he 'took the body of Modern architecture and gave it regional soul', Woodbridge, p. 157.

17. Marc Treib and Dorothée Imbert, *Garrett Eckbo: Modern Landscapes for Living* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), p. 43.

18. Mock, *Built in USA*, p. 14. Mock continued, 'Wurster, for example, was producing straightforward, essentially modern houses well before 1932, based on good sense and the California wood tradition rather than on specific theories of design'. Mock singled out California as adept at producing 'a continuous but curiously unpublicised tradition of building in this new sense . . . a flexible, native style which could go over into modern architecture without any serious break'.

19. Mock, *Built in USA*, p. 61. The evolving nature and size of the FSA team is evident in Elizabeth Mock's credits. In *Built in USA*, Mock credited Camp Chandler (1936-37) to Burton Cairns and Vernon DeMars only, but credited Woodville, California (1941) to DeMars, eight supporting architects (Butts, Eckbo, Edie, Steiner, Sweeting, Thompson, Williams, and Yuasa), and nine site engineers (Cirino, Beamer, Clark, Crenshaw, Davis, Donaldson, Kelly, Stark, and Verag), listing all by surname only.

20. Alfred Roth. *La Nouvelle Architecture / Die Neue Architektur / The New Architecture: Présentée En 20 Exemples* (Zurich: Erlenbach, 1947), p. xviii.

21. Elizabeth Mock and John McAndrew, *What is Modern Architecture?*, Introductory Series to the Modern Arts, no. 1 (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1942), p. 32.

22. DeMars was the sole witness at the wedding of Catherine Bauer and William Wurster in 1940. Bauer was the sister of Elizabeth 'Betty' Mock, the architecture curator at the MoMA, and probably part of the reason the FSA projects were included in MoMA publications in the early 1940s.

23. The first meeting of Telesis was held on August 23, 1939. Early members included Burton Cairns, Garrett Eckbo, Phillip Joseph, Fran Violich, Francis Joseph McCarthy, T. J. Kent, and Corwin Mocine.

24. Fran Violich, introduction to DeMars, 'A Life in Architecture', p. 45.

25. Serge Chermayeff, 'Telesis: The Birth of a Group', *New Pencil Points* (July 1942): p. 47. The exhibition catalogue foreword, written by the director of SFMoMA, Grace Morley, also highlighted this emphasis on a general public audience: 'In this exhibition, Telesis has found means of expressing in easily understood visual terms what the layman should know about environment planning, so that he may be able to follow intelligently what the professionals are prepared and able to do to assure him a better way of living'. In 1941, Telesis was already work on a Bay Area Regional Planning Commission Proposal, and a second exhibition of 1941, *Regional Planning for the Next Million People*, was intended to show regular citizens all the regional activities they engaged in during their daily lives, and connect that to the need for regional planning. Telesis would continue to advocate for regional planning in their next (and last) exhibition, *The Next Million People*, at the San Francisco Museum of Art in 1950. See 'Progress Intentionally Planned: Telesis and the Modernist Agenda', *The Urbanist* 483 (June 2009), accessed July 2, 2014, http://www.spur.org/publications/library/article/progress_intentionally_planned_telesis_and_modernist_agenda.

26. The British architect and MARS member Welles Coates is thanked in the Telesis exhibition catalogue. See Telesis Environmental Research Group, *A Space for Living*, unpaginated exhibition catalogue. (San Francisco: Museum of Modern Art, 1940).

27. Chermayeff, 'Telesis: The Birth of a Group', p. 45.

28. One of DeMars's early partners, Don Reay, worked for Le Corbusier.

29. This link between the West Coast and Le Corbusier has not been well studied. It might be argued that, given his highly networked career at the helm of CIAM, Le Corbusier's influence was ubiquitous and that his influence on young California architects hardly needs pointing out. However, historians such as Marc Treib have claimed West Coast exceptionalism, suggesting that the California architects' focus on regional forms was, in part, a way of 'denying continental avant-garde imports for themes validating what were believed to be distinctively American concepts'. Treib and Imbert, *Garrett Eckbo*, p. 43. Others, such as Mardges Bacon have concentrated their attention on the East Coast, where Le Corbusier's historic 1935 lecture tour was concentrated. (Bacon's excellent *Le Corbusier in America: Travels in the Land of the Timid* [Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001] pays scant attention to the West Coast.)

30. Eric P. Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2000), p. 116. The Telesis manifesto, entitled Things Telesis Has Found Important, states, 'People and the Land make up the environment which has four distinct parts—a place to Live, Work, play, and the Services which integrate these and make them operate. These components must be integrated

in the community and urban region through rational panning, and through the use of modern building technology'. Quoted in Chermayeff, 'Telesis: The Birth of a Group', p. 48.

31. Telesis, Environmental Research Group, *San Francisco, Presents Space for Living.*

32. These projects, all related, were unrealised plans for urban, rural, and areas in-between that the older architect developed, worked, and reworked from the late 1920s through to his death in 1965. The Radiant City stemmed from broader communications with and travel to Russia beginning in 1928, when Le Corbusier suggested urban plans for Moscow. While housing for the economic and social underclasses had been on the architectural agenda in Europe and America since the turn of the twentieth century, rural concerns had featured most often within the trope of garden idyll or weekend access to the pleasures and leisure of the countryside, rather than on the needs of truly agricultural communities. Although never built, the Radiant City stemmed from Le Corbusier's broader communications with and travel to Russia, beginning in 1928, and his 'Reply to Moscow' of June 1930. However, the rural farm component was developed once he became fully immersed in the French regional syndicalist journals *Plans*, *Prelude* and *L'Homme Reel* between 1931 and 1936, which published issues devoted to agrarian reorganisation plans and their implementation. See Mary Caroline McLeod, *Urbanism and Utopia: Le Corbusier from Regional Syndicalism to Vichy* (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1985), p. 213. Le Corbusier's publication of The Radiant City, *Ville Radieuse*, featured a letter from the French 'peasant-activist' Norbert Bézard, who called for Le Corbusier to address rural planning, and not focus on the city solely. After working closely with Bézard and farmers in Sarthe, France, in the mid-1930s, Le Corbusier invited Bézard to give a report on 'Rural Urbanism' at CIAM 5 in Paris in 1937. The expansion of his urban planning proposal to include farming communities reflected the architect's philosophical shift during the 1930s, a softening of the radical grid and sky-high urban utopianism of the Ville Contemporaine (1922) and the Plan Voisin (1925) into a more comprehensive, systematic relationship of urban and rural communities as part of an overarching social vision.

33. See Bacon, *Le Corbusier in America*, p. 29. As Mary McLeod (in her unpublished 1985 doctoral dissertation, cited in the previous footnote) and Danilo Udovicki-Selb ('Le Corbusier and the Paris Exhibition of 1937: The Temps Nouveaux Pavilion', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 56:1 (March 1997): p. 51) have highlighted, for Le Corbusier this outlook was never entirely divorced from bald opportunism and a desire to give his projects broad political an public appeal in the hope of their implementation. 'Recent Work of Le Corbusier', on display at SFMoMA in October of 1937, originated at MoMA in 1935 and travelled to a total of fourteen venues, including Yale College and Wesleyan College, between 1935 and 1938. See Bacon, *Le Corbusier in America*, Appendix B, for full lecture and exhibition tour details. Interestingly, the exhibition that preceded Le Corbusier's at MoMA (September 30–October 24, 1935) was devoted to 'Contemporary Architecture in California'.

34. 'In one of Corbusier's books he has a proposal for the ideal farm. . . . [I]n Corbusier's sketch there's a big sliding door that opens the kitchen to the living room'. DeMars, 'A Life in Architecture', p. 105.

35. Reiss, p. 140.

36. The main sources for contemporary practice beyond their immediate locale were Catherine Bauer's *Modern Housing* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1934)–a touchstone, predating her professorship at University of California, Berkeley in 1940–and photographs and descriptions of national and international projects in architectural journals such as *Task* and *Pencil Points*.

37. For example, see Walter Gropius, 'Education Should Aim at Combining Individual Independence with the Spirit of Cooperation!', *Task* 1 (Summer 1941): np.

38. DeMars, 'A Life in Architecture', p. 209.

39. Garrett Eckbo, "Landscape Architecture: the Profession in California, 1935-1940, and Telesis," an oral history conducted in 1991 by Suzanne B. Riess, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1993, p. 52.

40. For the purposes of this paper 'urban redevelopment' and 'urban renewal' will be used interchangeably.

41. Federal acceptance of the city's program required evidence of financial feasibility, commitment of city leaders, and a workable program.

42. 'West End Is Discounted As Labor Source', unidentified newspaper clipping, Capitol Towers IV 1082, box 1, folder 3, William W. Wurster/Wurster, Bernardi & Emmons Collection, 1922-1974, Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley (hereafter Wurster/WBE Collection). The West End was comprised of abandoned waterfront buildings and dilapidated structures that experienced frequent flooding problems due to the high water table.

43. Speech given by Scheuer to more than 200 community representatives at the 18th Annual Community Welfare Council meeting. 1958 Leo Rennert. 'Redeveloper Urges Urban Attractiveness', unidentified newspaper clipping, box 1, folder 3, Capitol Towers IV 1082, Wurster/WBE Collection.

44. 'Diversifying the Redevelopment', *Progressive Architecture* 43 (March 1962): pp. 143-44.

45. Edward Larrabee Barnes worked in Los Angeles for the industrial designer Henry Dreyfuss designing prototypes for mass-produced homes directly after World

War II. In 1949, Barnes opened his own office in Manhattan. It should be noted that due to the newness of the Title I program, the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency (SRA) was compelled to search beyond Sacramento for experienced sponsors to bid for fifteen blocks of the Capitol Mall pilot redevelopment area. Scheuer was one of the most experienced in the program, one of only a half-dozen large-scale developers keenly seeking sponsorship of urban renewal projects.

46. Edward Larrabee Barnes, *Edward Larrabee Barnes, Architect*, intro. Peter Blake (New York: Rizzoli, 1994), p. 18.

47. 'Diversifying the Redevelopment', *Progressive Architecture* 43 (March 1962): p. 143.

48. Reiss, p. 365.

49. Edward Larrabee Barnes to Donn Emmons, 16 April 1959, Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley.

50. Balconies, but not bathrooms, were defined as rooms by the FHA.

51. 'P/A Sixth Annual Design Awards', *Progressive Architecture* 40 (January 1959): p. 111.

52. Bill Holden. 'West End Program Warmly Received: City Is Given Preview of New Look', *Sacramento Union*, 28 March 1958, box 1, folder 3, Wurster/WBE Collection.

53. 'P/A Sixth Annual Design Awards', p. 111.

54. James H. Scheuer, 'On Developing Proposals', in J. Marshall Miller (ed.), *New Life For Cities Around the World: International Handbook on Urban Renewal* (New York: Books International, 1959), p. 46.

55. 'Redevelopment: Progress Report from Here, There, Everywhere', *Journal of Housing* 15:3 (March 1958): p. 102.

56. 'We'll be operating in a goldfish bowl', stated Chairman Fred Read of the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency (SRA). Quoted in Bill Holden, 'New York Firm Gets Go-ahead On $15 Million West End Job: Five Blocks Of Slum to Be Razed', *Sacramento Union*, 14 January 1958, pp. 1-2, Capitol Towers IV 1082, Wurster/WBE Collection.

57. 'Capital's Redevelopment Wins A National Tribute', unidentified newspaper clipping, Capitol Towers IV 1082, Wurster/WBE Collection.

58. Scheuer, 'On Developing Proposals', 47

59. 'Delay On Redevelopment Proves Disappointing', unidentified newspaper clipping, Capitol Towers IV 1082, Wurster/WBE Collection.

60. Interstate highway and public housing programs exacerbated criticism of urban renewal. The 'new urbanism' design movement began in the early 1980s, promoting walkable, human-scale mixed-use development. Seaside, Florida, by Duany Plater-Zyberk and Co., is one example.

61. The program also attracted the design-conscious architects Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Paul Rudolph, Louis Kahn, and Chloethiel Woodard Smith. These architects achieved design of good quality in the program, but this was not the norm due to strict budget constraints and federal government regulations.

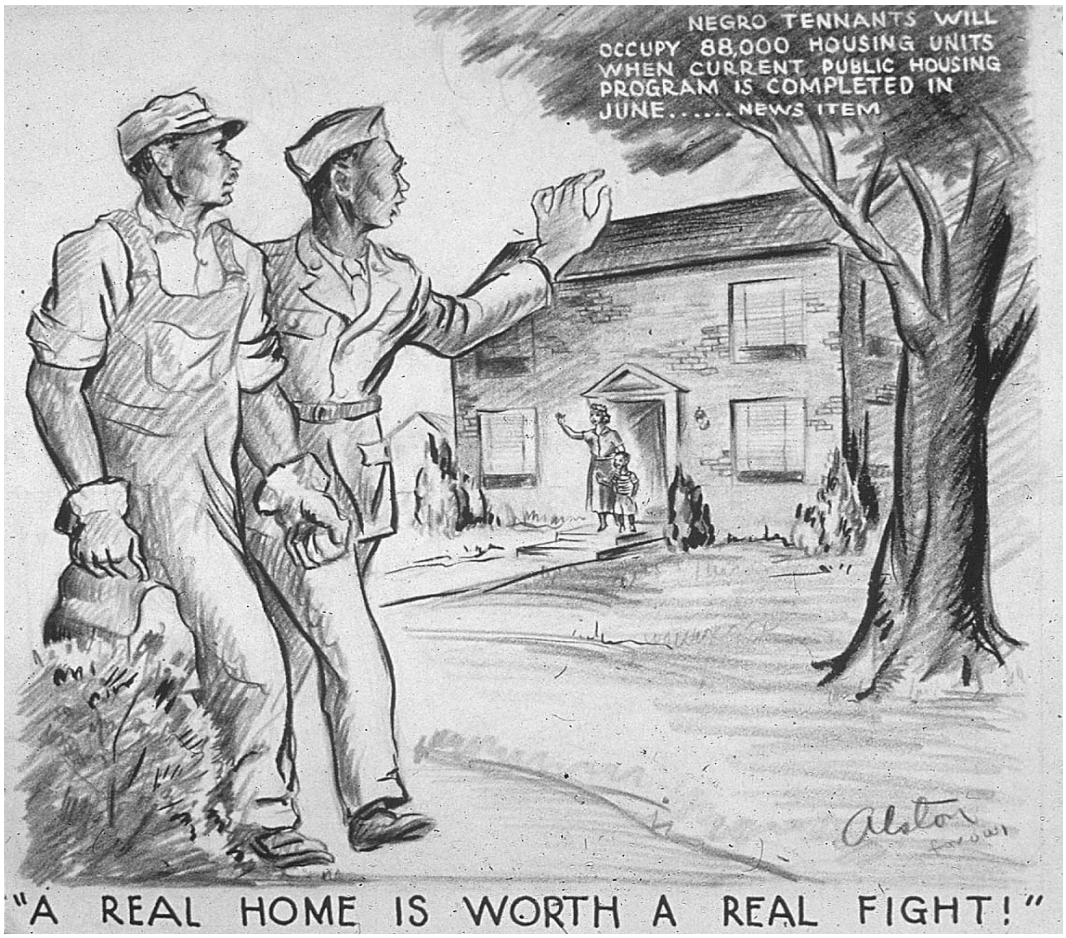
62. California Energy Commission, 'Shining Places: Sacramento and National Examples of Smart Growth', press release, June 2001, accessed 29 September 2007, www.energy.ca.gov/plants.

63. Ayn Rand, *The Fountainhead: Twenty-fifth Anniversary Edition* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968), p. 580.

CHAPTER 2

MARGIN OF LIFE: POST-WAR 'CONCERNED PHOTOGRAPHY' IN MEXICO AND GUATEMALA, 1947–1960

ANDRIANNA CAMPBELL and ILEANA SELEJAN



2.1
Charles Alston, *A Real Home is Worth a Real Fight!*, 1943. Graphite on paper.

In 1973, Cornell Capa produced an audio-visual presentation and book, *Toward the Margin of Life: From Primitive Man to Population Crisis* for the Center for Inter-American Relations. Despite the timing of the show and the publication, the impetus for the project began decades earlier, in the aftermath of World War II, when documentary photographers sought novel forms in order to focus closely on social concerns and ethical responsibilities. In the West, in the wake of the massive devastation and atrocities committed, photographers conceptualised image making as a means of collective witnessing, organising new modes of production and formatting layouts.[1] Out of this context, organisations like Magnum Photos emerged, aiming to support socially engaged independent photographers.[2] Illustrated magazines such as *Life*, *Picture Post*, and *Paris Match* published much of these photographers' purportedly humanistic and humanitarian work. These magazines reached readers in the United States, Europe, and beyond with their significant

international readership. Whether affiliated with independent cooperatives and agencies such as Magnum or Black Star, or employed directly by photo magazines and related publications, established photographers such as W. Eugene Smith, Robert Capa, and Henri Cartier-Bresson transitioned from war reportage to human-interest documentary forms, setting the course for the types of narrative storytelling that would characterise a whole range of photo-journalistic practices during the 1950s.

In *The Margin of Life* and two other exhibitions titled *The Concerned Photographer*, Cornell Capa advocated for and first coined the phrase 'concerned photography', a humanistic, socially committed approach to documentary photography.[3] Deeply affected by his brother Robert Capa's career and tragic death, by his own experiences as an Eastern European Jewish immigrant to France and later the United States, and by his travels in the United States and Latin America during the 1950s and 1960s, Cornell Capa argued for the preservation of 'individuality', 'truth', and 'human content' in 'humanitarian' photography, an approach he expanded upon in his practice and writing, as well as in aforementioned 'concerned photographer' exhibitions presented in New York in 1967 and 1972.[4] Following the tradition of social documentary from Jacob Riis to Lewis Hine and the Farm Security Administration, concerned photographers worked locally, but sought to contribute toward the creation of a global awareness. Unlike their above-mentioned predecessors, whose images aimed to reflect the displacement in the lives of the urban, primarily immigrant, poor in the United States, or the destitute rural population unequally affected by industry and modernisation, concerned photographers refocused their lenses to contextualise indigenous populations in rural settings outside of the United States and also sought out success stories of people of color who had expatriated from the United States to Mexico.

Capa's perspective with its emphasis on centre (the industrialised West) and the 'margin' (the slowly industrialising countries south of the border) can be seen in the pages of *Life* magazine, where his photographs and photo-essays were regularly published. Yet, groups that were marginalised in the United States such as African-Americans deliberately emulated the *Life* aesthetic in order to cater to a burgeoning black middle class and to disrupt the well-meaning and also demeaning correlations between power, periphery, and skin color. Photographers for *Ebony* and *Color* magazines depicted African Americans fleeing Jim Crowism for the idealised post-revolution mixed society of Mexico. These shared photographic formats and ideals can also be seen in the exhibition *The Family of Man*, which was organised by Edward Steichen and shown at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1955. The photographs, sourced to a great extent from the archives of *Life*, travelled under the auspices of the United States Information Agency (USIA) to thirty-eight countries around the world, including to Guatemala and Mexico. This essay explores the utopian aims of the photographic gaze abroad to Latin America and the promotion of the United States' cultural paradigms as depicted in popular magazines such as *Life*, *Color*, and *Ebony* culminating in the exhibition. Our project is a dialogic or anaphonic approach to collaboration, in which we juxtapose two pictorially documented case studies of

the postwar yearning for human kinship in order to blur the margins and to explicate the projection of racial identity in canonical and acanonical histories of this seldom considered period.

TERMINOLOGY

Through magazine commissions these American and European photographers sought to visualise the world 'outside' of their most immediately familiar cultural territory, yet not unproblematically. Re-evaluated now, in the context of expanded photographic practices following the demise of the picture press, 'concerned photography' encapsulates the global itinerancy of the photographer and the photographs themselves as agents in a transoceanic discourse.[5] The term can thus also be used broadly to note the changing approach to documentary photography in the Cold War era.

Concerned photographers looked to Mexico, Central and South America, regions relatively untouched by World War II. However, they were not the first to do so. Travel narratives exploring Mexico were prevalent in the late nineteenth century, starting with William H. Prescott's *History of the Conquering of Mexico*. Published in the United States and Great Britain in 1843, Prescott's history was animated by intricate engravings. Another pair of Americans, John Lloyd Stephens and Frederick Catherwood, travelled to Mexico and Central America in 1839 and 1841, after which they also published an elaborately illustrated text.

While these authors documented their travels with engravings, by the end of the century photography dominated as the medium for documenting *exotic* sites and people. Charles Lumholtz's trip to Mexico in 1890 generated one of the largest archives of ethnographic photography. His work was published serially in *Scribner's Magazine* and the *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* in 1894 and then republished in 1902 as *Unknown Mexico: A Record of Five Years' Exploration Among the Tribes of the Western Sierra Madre; in the Tierra Caliente of Tepic and Jalisco; and Among the Tarascos of Michoacan*.[6]

Lumholtz and his assistants took more than 2500 photographs, all of which employ typological representations of the indigenous body in appropriate costume. The subjects are either posed with a cultural artefact, to identify their ethnographic status, or a measuring stick, to gauge their height. These tropes Lumholtz borrowed from nineteenth-century engravings. A representative example of his work is *Tarahumare Family Camping Under a Tree*, which depicts a sleeping man next to a seated woman holding a young child. In the foreground, a pot is askew and almost toppled over. The caption reinforces Lumholtz's textual descriptions of the Tarahumara as not unrelated to ancient cave dwellers, and also as intelligent.[7] Some of their group do inhabit caves, but some camp, and others have moved on into homes. The photographs hold the tension of how to reconcile indigenous populations into a rapidly shifting present.

Lumholtz gave numerous lectures in London and New York in which he described the Tarahumara and the rapid differences of their cave-dwelling lifestyle. In Lumholtz's generation ethnographers did not question his stance, which approached habitation as progressive according to Western models. It is not until ethnographic Surrealists and, later, Structuralist anthropologists, Michel Leiris and Claude Levi-Strauss who used methodologies to introduce the concept of 'anthropological doubt', in which they positioned themselves in relationship to their subject instead of assuming an authorial stance.[8] Yet ethnographic Surrealists still found themselves unable to reconcile indigenous groups in the present, and could view them only as living in the past.[9] Though it could be hastily presumed that they shared with concerned photographers a humanist approach to the study of cultures, this is not the case. The grasp for an understanding of humanity marked a shared postwar aim; however figures such as Leiris relied on an anti-narrative approach. Leiris constructs his approach from the photomontage, which differs from the orderly presentations of the photo-essay.[10] Concerned photographers deviated from other ethnographic photographers primarily by eliminating any references to themselves, juxtaposing the past and the present, zooming in for close-cropped images, rarely showing contextual backgrounds, and conveying an informality of portraiture not seen in previous examples hailing back to the history of engraving.

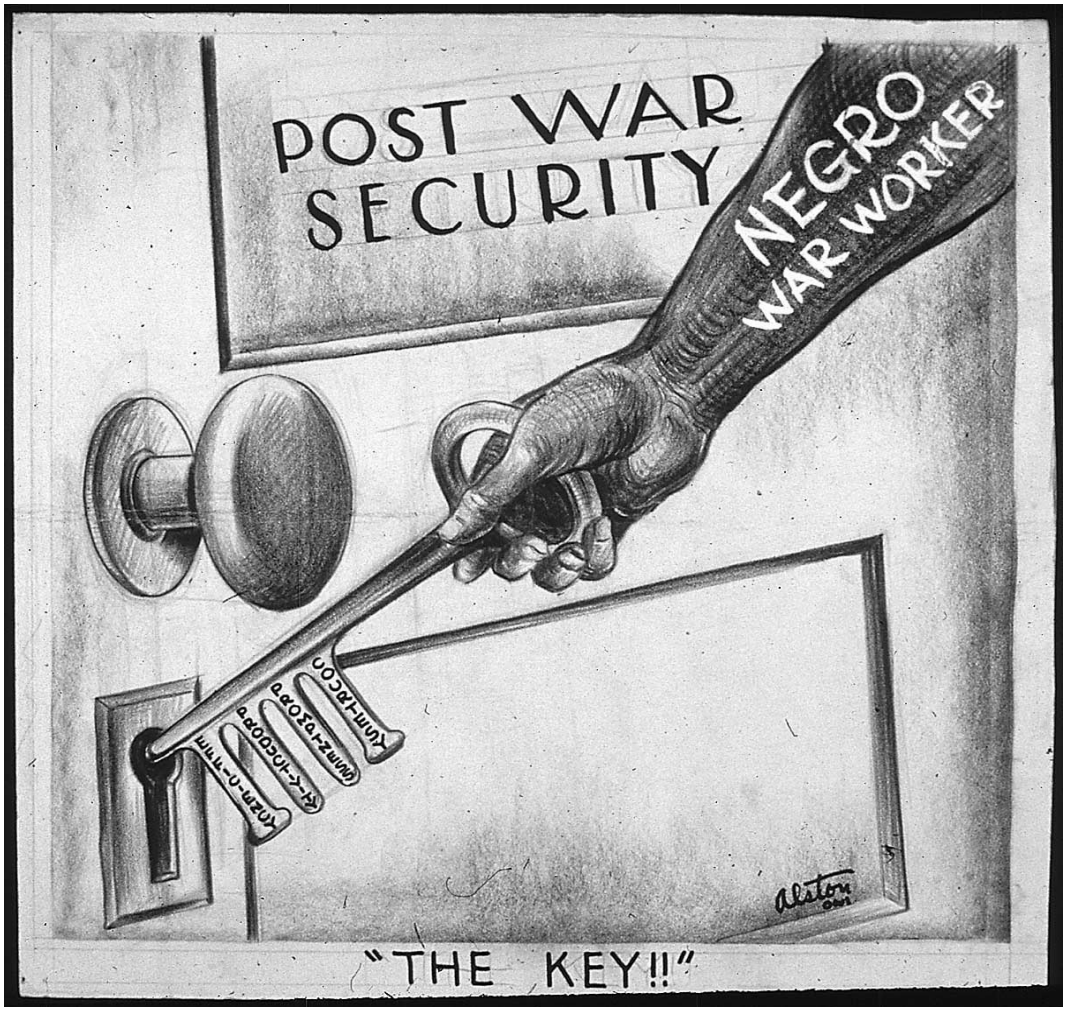
SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND IDENTITIES: COHABITATION UNDER MUTUAL THREAT

Although the phrase 'concerned photography' would be coined later, it was certainly a product of the Cold War and of the need to cohabitate under the mutual threat of a nuclear holocaust. This was the key impetus for reconsidering human relations outside of the developed world. The West, which defined itself as 'civilised', had failed to prevent almost two decades of war. The relative stability of the United States during the East–West standoff of the Cold War contradicted an anxious coming to grips with a new world order. Latin America became the proving grounds for superpower struggles. Technophilia, which we see evidenced in advertisements of a new Atomic Age, also belied the fear of mass genocide and anxieties about the modern and progressive.[11] New technological achievements revolutionised the marketplace, but photojournalists scrutinised the human element instead. The *Family of Man* exhibition presented a selection of 503 photographs, sourced from over six million photographs originating in 68 countries.[12] Organised thematically, the display converged around portraits of families, communities, couples, and individuals intended as representative of 'all' generations and races, setting out didactic narrative routes with the nuclear family at their centre. Steichen's thesis, 'the relationship of man to man . . . . alike in this world regardless of race, creed or color', was punctuated by a final photograph of species obliteration with an image of the atomic mushroom cloud.[13]

After the exhibition in New York, the show was packaged for travel, on a mission to promote American culture internationally.[14] Working with Museum of Modern Art curators through the museum's International Circulating Exhibitions Program, the USIA prepared several traveling versions of the show, the first two opening in Guatemala City, where the United States had been involved in a violent regime change only the year before, and in Berlin. The exhibitions were meant as a show of power and also perhaps as an effort to bolster relations within those regions. Propagandising Steichen's vision of a world finally and universally at peace in parallel with the expanding United States sphere of influence, the traveling exhibition became a staple for the type of 'soft diplomacy' the government promoted throughout the Cold War.[15] Yet despite the promulgation of universality and equality abroad, nowhere was the hypocrisy of United States foreign policy more pointed than in the legalised forced segregation of its own people.

During World War II, African American artists drummed up support for war bonds and for enlistment in the armed forces by making illustrations for the popular black press. The best examples of these are more than one hundred drawings by Charles Alston showing black soldiers fighting tyranny abroad so that they could return home to greater civil liberties and economic opportunities. Before the war, Alston's studio '306', located at 306 West 141st Street in New York, was a lodestone for the Harlem artistic community. As the carefree mood of the Jazz Age gave way to more sombre concerns, his propaganda illustrations revealed the era's democratic ideals.[16] *A Real Home is Worth a Real Fight* (1943) (fig. 2.1) juxtaposes two images of most-likely the same young black man—one as a worker and the other as a soldier. He waves goodbye to his primly dressed wife and son who are standing in front of a large colonial home. The caption for the illustration informs the reader that 88,000 homes are being built for black tenants, presumably in exchange for military service as fighting men. In order to have access to real homes, black service men must fight in the war for themselves and for their families. Another of Alston's illustration from 1943, *The Key* (fig. 2.2), shows the hand labelled 'negro worker' unlocking a door marked 'Post War Security'. On the key wards, the attributes 'efficiency', 'productivity', 'promptness', and 'courtesy' when inserted in the door will be how blacks access post-war security. While many black war workers expected an egalitarian postwar lifestyle as promised in wartime propaganda, their hopes quickly soured when they returned home to face continued racial discrimination.

The heady anticipation of the period can be seen in the shift from the radical politics seen in previously established and traditional black publications such as *The Crisis* juxtaposed with the sumptuous spreads in *Ebony* magazine. The latter founded in 1945, by John H. Johnson for a black readership, emulated *Life* magazine's lush displays of celebrity culture, corporate success stories, and focus on the nuclear family akin to the family group in *A Real Home is Worth a Real Fight*. *Ebony*'s photography continued the aims of war time propaganda while it also appropriated the concerned photographic style of Capa and *Life* with close-ups of informally posed subjects who were at ease in their new-found comfort.



2.2
Charles Alston, *The Key!!*, 1943. Graphite on paper.

Ebony's layouts adopted the photo-essay format in order to tell stories with sparse textual information. The intertextual relationship realised the narrative, which for our purposes begins in 1946, part of a seamless participation in the postwar elation. A steady flow of headlines in *Ebony* highlighted the movement of African Americans across the border to escape racial persecution. These articles were by no means the main fare. *Ebony* favoured the wholesome mainstream aspirations of its readership. We compare the articles explicitly about Mexico as an egalitarian escape for blacks alongside those that advocated it merely as a vacation getaway, will allow the interstices—ideas articulated implicitly—to also have weight. What is conveyed by both the explicit and the implicit message is the anxiety surrounding the second-class reality of African Americans in the United States.

Following the war, the photographic search to picture equitable human coexistence surfaced in the pages of *Life* and *Ebony* magazines. Concerned photography was a means by which photographers could assert the importance of a human family. A family, who when displayed in the photo-essay format or in an exhibition, could exist outside of ethnic, communal, and even national borders. Both *Life* and *Ebony* were socio-politically conservative magazines, but inevitably had to confront the ideals of revolutionary shifts occurring south of the border.

POLITICAL STRUCTURES AND IDENTITIES: IDEALS OF REVOLUTION

In the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution, government administrators aimed to upend the authoritarian and ethnically biased social policies inherited from colonial rule.[17] José Vasconcelos, a writer and politician, advocated ideologically reshaping the Mexican racial colonial hierarchy in order to support the largely heterogeneous makeup of Mexico in the 1920s. His book, *The Cosmic Race* (*La Raza Cósmica*), lauded the paragon of the

Mexican *mestizaje*, a mixed race people of European, African, and indigenous American background.[18] For Vasconcelos, this ethnic intermixture would lead to a true civilisation endowed with a vigorous intellect and spiritual adaptability. Moreover, he believed that racial hybridisation would ideally also bring cultural stability. Vasconcelos instituted re-education programs that conveyed this message throughout Mexico and abroad; however, despite his ideals, the continued destitution of the majority of Afro-Mexicans compared with Euro-Mexicans illustrated the difficulty of implementing his plans.[19]

These demographic conditions might seem less than ideal for immigrants looking south, but African Americans were not discouraged. Many were already the product of mixed-race unions. Because of the United States' unique implementation of the 'one-drop rule', all people with African ancestry were considered to be black, and therefore second-class citizens.[20] However, in Mexico, mixed-race individuals could see themselves automatically benefiting from living in Vasconcelos's ideal society. In theory, African Americans could live as their class, not their skin color, dictated. Racial identity in Mexico seemed at least more flexible, and the political establishment supported this rhetoric around race.

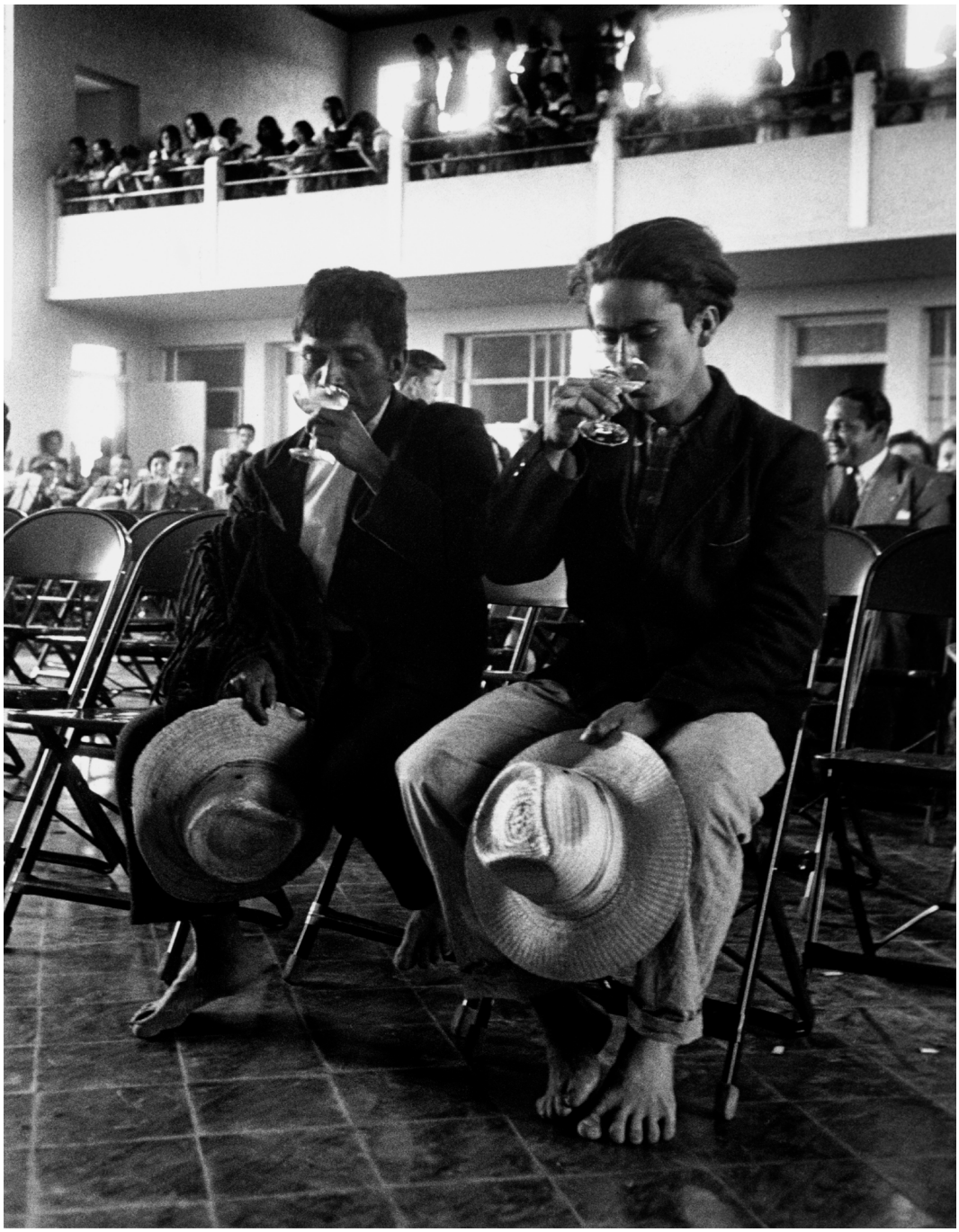
By mid-century, African Americans were attracted to the revolutionary sentiments radiating throughout the Americas. For instance, the popular singer Nat King Cole honeymooned in Mexico in 1948. *Ebony* sent photographer Griffith Davis to capture Cole and his wife, Marie Ellington, frolicking in Mexico City.[21] In these photographs there is little allusion to racial barriers. Centred on the page in a gold lame bathing suit, Ellington could be the wife of any celebrity. Cole looks up at her longingly from a lounge chair. A large palm tree hangs over them, serving as a *genius locus* of the tropics.[22] Even before the war, it was a well-known secret in the black community that Mexico was a destination for people of color. For example, Langston Hughes had spent a part of his childhood in Mexico, and he returned for a yearlong residence there in 1920. His father, James Hughes, was a practicing lawyer and property owner in Mexico, a position that would have been difficult to attain in the United States.[23] The elder Hughes was able to remain in Mexico during the revolution because of his skin color. It was this sense of opportunity coupled with postwar prosperity of returning black soldiers, artists, celebrities, and businessmen that made moving to Mexico an expression of revolutionary idealism.

A similar sense of light-heartedness and camaraderie can be seen in *Ebony's* article about Dorothy Michael, a Barnard College student who won a prestigious travel grant to study in Guatemala in 1959. On the first page, Michael is shown lifting a Mayan stelae in order to examine it; the caption reads, 'Mayan Indians erected huge structures, some the equivalent of 20-story buildings, when Europe was still submerged in the Dark Ages'.[24] In many ways, the photograph upends Lumholtz's chronology that has the Tarahumara never leaving their caves to make the step into true civilization. Additionally, in this photo-essay Michael is frequently juxtaposed with white classmates or shown instructing Guatemalan students, with no allusions to the country's current socio-political problems. The American intervention in Guatemala was well covered in the progressive black press. In March

1954, Paul Robeson denounced the United States government at an International Workers Order rally, specifically addressing the need to keep Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán, the Guatemalan leader, in power. However, in *Ebony's* pages, subversion is never direct, it is told through the lens of agency and empowerment.

Culturally linked by the Mayan communities in the Yucatan peninsula, Guatemala and Mexico were also politically in tune in the early 1950s. Former Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas praised the land reforms implemented by Guzmán as similar to the strides taken decades earlier in Mexico. Cornell Capa first travelled to Guatemala in 1953, on assignment for *Life* magazine, to document the redistribution of land and the impact of agrarian reforms on the indigenous population. His pictures were included in a photo-essay published in the 12 October 1953 issue of *Life* with the title 'The Red Outpost in Central America—Guatemala's Communists Thrive under Fellow-Traveler Government', accompanied by an equally polemical text.[25] The ultra-conservative anti-Communist fear mongering that dominated the contemporary popular press took precedence over the photographer's 'concern'. Capa's pictures became rhetorical devices, captioned to prove the subversive, high-risk, anti-American attitudes dominant in the previously subservient 'banana republic'.[26] As Dot Tuer has argued in a recent article, in this photo-essay 'concerned photography had become the handmaiden of propaganda'.[27] Conflicts of interest further threatened the position of the United Fruit Company in the country, leading to a CIA-supported coup, which ousted Árbenz in June 1954. While the former Mexican president Cárdenas was an adamant supporter of the coup, the current president Adolfo Tomás Ruiz Cortines was indifferent to the Guatemalan plight. The case was an early instance in the Cold 'theatre' of War in Latin America, illustrative of larger conflicts between McCarthy-era foreign policy and region-wide struggles for economic independence and reform.

Yet one must consider the value, and indeed the power of individual images over the text, and of the body of work as a whole over the editorial structure within which it was subsequently embedded. Capa's photo-reportage can be read alternatively, and hence two coinciding yet not entirely compatible narratives emerge. The photo-essay begins with a profile of Carlos Manuel Pellecer, a union organiser and activist for agrarian reform who was also a prominent political leader for the Árbenz administration. The photographer follows Pellecer's interactions with peasants, plantation workers, and their families in a strikingly impoverished but unspecific rural setting, occasioned by a land distribution ceremony following the implementation in 1952 of Decree 900. This new law required redistribution of sections of unused land larger than 224 acres to the peasant population. The reform remains a historic achievement that positively affected primarily indigenous groups, the largest of the majority land-deprived Guatemalan population. While the text of the *Life* photo-essay unequivocally inscribes the photographs as proof of Pellecer's self-serving Communist agenda, without the associated captions they merely show a charismatic leader at work.



2.3
Cornell Capa, Barefoot Peasants Drink Champagne at the Dedication of a School Built by the Reformist Government, Which Was Supported by the Communists, 1953.

The middle section of the essay addresses the delicate position of the United Fruit Company, recently affected by the very same land reform movement. The article states that large portions of the company's reserve land were expropriated by the Guatemalan government in 1952 and again in 1953: 'Now, though still making money, United Fruit talks about being forced to get out altogether'. In the photographs, modern facilities and housing provided for the workers are juxtaposed against a background of 'thatched native shacks' and squalor, the advancement of enterprise for future mutual benefit temporarily postponed.

The third section of the article pits the infrastructural failures of the 'obsessively nationalistic' Árbenz government against a landscape and a people unable to sustain growth and modernisation on their own. Finally, under the sub-title 'Champagne for the Peons', the essay concludes that against these challenges, coupled with the lack of support from the local business elites, Árbenz's socialist project is destined to fail. Yet the final word is left to a striking photograph captioned 'Peasants Sip Champagne Government Gave for School Dedication' (fig. 2.3). In the foreground, two seated *campesinos*, dressed in their

Sunday best, sip champagne from elegant glass cups. Both men have respectfully removed their broad-brimmed straw hats, revealing their groomed hair and clean-shaven faces. Their body language speaks to their modesty rather than humility. Barefoot yet dignified, the men maintain their poise despite the slightly clumsy attention given to proper bourgeois etiquette.

In the following years, Capa travelled repeatedly to Central and South America, where he focused on photographing poverty and the disenfranchisement of the lower classes, often the indigenous peoples, of Guatemala, Peru, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Ecuador.[28] Such prohibitive circumstances, he argued in his 1974 book *Margin of Life—Population and Poverty in the Americas*, were both directly caused by and contributed to the political instability in Central America.[29] Together with the remaining, albeit scant, documentary record, these photographs indicate a persistent interest throughout Capa's career in describing aspects of class, and a growing concern toward the peasant working class, in highlighting difference and inequality, whether economically or politically motivated. In concerned photography, the photographer turns his lens to the 'margins of life'—the austere black and white aesthetic, as well as the great attention to detail, serves to heighten the acute privation that unites the different social, economic, and political regions scrutinised. The type of direct emotional appeal deployed by Capa and fellow 'concerned' photographers was criticised as sentimental, if not exploitative, by later critics, most prominently Allan Sekula, who bemoaned the political inefficacy of humanist documentary—'the often expressionist liberalism of the find-a-bum school of concerned photography'.[30] When compared to that of the 1953 *Life* photo-essay, the tone of *Margin of Life* appears elegiac when not inflammatory, a call to action and raised concern. The book advocates for humanitarian engagement, seeking to raise awareness to living conditions in Honduras, El Salvador, and the whole of Central America, placing responsibility on United States interventionism and its support of authoritarian regimes. Reconsidered when released from the strictures of the edited essay, Capa's 1953 photographs from Guatemala take on a life of their own, beyond their illustrative function, building a discourse that runs parallel to the textual account.

AESTHETIC STRUCTURES AND IDENTITIES: THE PHOTO-ESSAY

After World War II, the photo-essay shifted from its prewar avant-garde format to a stand-in for mass consumption and tourist, celebrity, and automobile culture. However, in Mexico it allowed a slippage between worlds and at times a heretical approach to race and gender roles.[31] Beginning during the presidency of Miguel Alemán Valdés (1946–52) and continuing into the Cortines administration (1952–58), Mexico City underwent a profound demographic shift that saw increased population density as well as urbanisation, rampant consumption, and continuous new construction. Scholars such as Anne Rubenstein have chronicled this growth, which was accompanied by an increase in periodical publications,

BUSINESSMEN

Neon sign manufacturer George Brown erected $40,000 factory with 40 employes seven years ago. Now 75, he has rented out plant. He still imports and sells machinery from England.

Hotel owner William Huey "Butch" Lewis is perhaps best known U.S-born Negro in Mexico, once owned largest restaurant in Mexico City handling 600 diners. He now runs hotel and cafe at Cuernavaca.

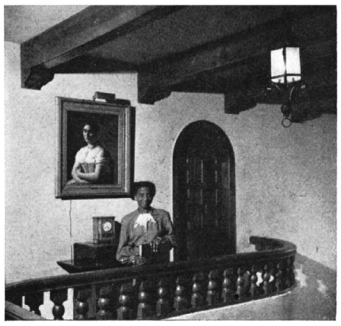
Radio repairman Lee Weaver runs shop in Mexico City. The 38-year-old ex-musician was Western Electric radar inspector during war, came to Mexico two years ago with $1,000 to open shop.

PENSIONERS

Former college teachers Dudley and Gertrude Woodard spend six months a year in Mexico City studying Mexican literature. He retired as Howard U. math department head in 1947, she as Minor Teachers College dean. They motored down in new Plymouth, have collected more than 100 books on Mexican literature.

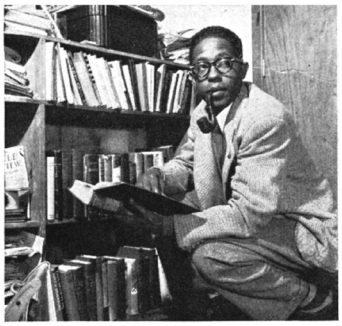
One-time American Club headwaiter Jose Joyner first came to Mexico 47 years ago as Pullman porter, later got waiter's job at Mexico City club composed of Americans. He worked at club 34 years, retired this Fall at age of 70. His wife is Mexican, has had seven children. Joyner is a deacon at Mexico City Baptist Church.

PROFESSIONALS



Housekeeper Gladys Wells runs luxurious home of millionaire racetrack boss Bruno Pagliai. Ex-Hall Johnson choir singer has charge of six Mexican servants, gets two-month vacation each year.

Veterinarian Paul Britten and his librarian wife, Bettye, came to Mexico year ago to work with Institute of Tropical Diseases. Formerly on A-bomb project, Britten returned to U. S. recently.



Steel import company manager George Maddox came from Detroit nine years ago, laid out machinery in new dry cleaning plant opened in Mexico recently. Wayne U. graduate, 35, has become naturalized Mexican.

14

2.4
Page from 'Mexico: U.S. Negro Migrants Find a Racial Oasis South of Dixie', Ebony (October 1948), p. 14.

the advent of telenovelas, the invention of a rich homegrown cinema, as well as the proliferation of cultural imports from the United States.[32] This period after the war is often analysed as a moment when the ideals of the Mexican Revolution are lost to the consumer culture of the West.[33] Yet, left-leaning American artists still flocked to Mexico City and, as explained above, many African Americans found a freedom of movement and expression in Mexico that was unrealised in even the more liberal Northeast states.

In an *Ebony* 1948 photo-essay, 'Mexico: U.S. Negro Migrants Find a Racial Oasis South of Dixie' (fig. 2.4), staff photographers picture African American businessmen, pensioners, professionals, students, and entertainers as brightly smiling and enjoying the 'fresh air of freedom' offered by Mexico.[34] The two-page spread shows blacks posed outside of the studio, informally with minimal contextual background information. The high-contrast images are accompanied by text that focuses on individual accomplishment.

Though the photo-essay portrays a wide range of ages and socioeconomic levels with which readers can identify such as the example of a World War II veteran who went to Mexico on the GI Bill in order to complete medical coursework. Black servicemen made up the majority of Mexican émigrés. By beginning with a radio repairman, a manufacturer, and a hotel owner and ending with a picture of a future doctor, the article implies that the future for an African American middle class rests with individuals who are willing to move away from the United States. While the article dedicates space to retirees and vacationers heading south, its main thrust is to locate a place for cultural mobility for African Americans in the postwar period. This was akin to *Ebony* magazine's editorial goals of 'taking pride in [Negro] men of means' rather than picturing 'slum dwellers, criminals, sharecroppers, and zoot suiters',[35] this article was emblematic of a nationwide push for upward mobility in postwar United States. Though the magazine's editorial voice was clearly outside of the progressive left-wing politics of older publications like *The Crisis*, it spoke to a certain zeitgeist of the period that spurred hundreds of blacks to move to Mexico City and generated a common expectation of what life would be like once there.

Mexico as a synecdoche for 'an African American oasis' appeared in both popular and more intellectual publications. For example, the article 'Paradise Down South' appeared in *The Crisis* in 1950.[36] Like the *Ebony* article, this story also featured an ex-serviceman, in this case, the Navy officer William Byers, who registered at the Escuela de Bellas Artes on the GI Bill.[37] The monthly subsidy made him a 'wealthy man' in San Miguel. The only point of departure between the two articles is that *The Crisis* article states Byers was the only black man in San Miguel while the *Ebony* author mentioned that over three hundred African Americans sought refuge in Mexico. Furthermore, these refugees aspired to a more egalitarian society, which became tethered to the aspirations of twelve million inhabitants of Mexico with African ancestry, who used their socioeconomic means to escape the discrimination faced by locals.

Paralleling the tension evoked in the *Ebony* title, here again, the utopian vision of a paradisiacal environment is presented in dichotomy with the actual environment of the racially violent Southern states. For if we cleave the title 'Paradise/Down South' in half, paradise is presented in opposition to down south. Analogously in 'Mexico: U.S. Negro Migrants Find a Racial Oasis South of Dixie', racial oasis is separated from south of Dixie. Mexico was often held up as an antidote to the poisonous conditions for blacks in the Jim Crow South. It is fitting, then, that the article directly following the latter Ebony article addresses violence in the South. In the case of the former 'Paradise Down South', which had been published in *The Crisis* has two quotes follow the article, the first by Lillian Smith and the second by José Marti:

> The South has been kept 'solid' a long time by this one-party system which depends for its staying power on the highly emotional beliefs in states' rights and segregation.

> There is no race hatred because there are no races. Weak thinkers lamp-thinkers, weave and produce races in the library, which the just, cordial and observing traveller seeks in vain to find in the justice of nature where the problem of the universal identity of man has been solved in turbulent appetite and vi[c]torious love.

Both quotes are from ardent opponents of state-sponsored racism. The first was written by Lillian Smith in 1949 about segregation in the American South and its psychological impact on both whites and blacks.[38] The second, by the Cuban poet and revolutionary José Marti, was published in 'Nuestra America', an essay that promoted better relations between Latin American countries as opposed to United States dominance in the Americas.[39] Marti believed that these interrelations rested on acknowledging the richness of a polyvalent ethnicity that combined Europeans, blacks, and indigenous people. Because these quotes follow the *Crisis* article, they present Mexico as just such an example of a mixed culture. It is an oasis, a paradise of mixture, and thus a release from the fear of racial violence. The *Crisis* article noted that Byers searched all over San Miguel, but '[t]here was not a hint of discrimination anywhere. He knew he must be in paradise'.[40] Byers's first-hand account, along with the *Ebony* and *Color* photographs and testimonials, acted like *local legends* for foreigners seeking an entryway into Mexico City communities.[41]

Ebony and *Life* in many ways upheld American foreign policy even if it came at the price of compromising their purported postwar ideals. In the early half of the century, photo-collage and the photo-essay had avant-garde associations with collage and montage, simultaneity, and punning in the poetry of Stéphane Mallarmé or in other instances with the progressive politics of John Heartfield. However by the 1950s, this became streamlined with an emphasis on high-contrast close-up photographs of individuals, informal poses, and captions that reinforced straightforward interpretations. It is easy to pigeonhole and dismiss these magazine layouts as the 'handmaiden' of United States propaganda, and yet we argue that there is more nuance here than such a reading suggests.

The black and indigenous figures in these spreads have carved out dignity and agency. Whether by finding sympathetic photographers like Capa in 'Peasants Sip Champagne Government Gave for School Dedication' or minority practitioners like Davis, the 'others' in these photographs maintain their pride and sense of accomplishment. In this way, photographers and subjects, alike, actively contributed to the formulation of an alternative place for otherness in mainstream American culture.

AESTHETIC STRUCTURES AND IDENTITIES: *THE FAMILY OF MAN*

Steichen may have been unaware of the political situation in Guatemala at the time *The Family of Man* began touring with the USIA. Almost a decade later, writing a memoir from his farmhouse in rural Connecticut, he contemplated fantastic accounts of indigenous people on a mythic march from exotic tropical landscapes to the proverbial white cube:

> A notable experience was reported from Guatemala. On the final day of the exhibition, a Sunday, several thousand Indians from the hills of Guatemala came on foot or muleback to see it. An American visitor said it was like a religious experience to see these barefoot country people who could not read or write walk silently through the exhibition gravely studying each picture with rapt attention.[42]

In fact, as several historians have remarked, after the closing of the exhibition in New York, Steichen's role in the planning of the subsequent traveling versions of the show was minimal.[43] While universal in scope, the exhibition was nonetheless planned with an American audience in mind. This projection was preserved to a great extent even in the slightly modified versions traveling abroad. Steichen had never visited Latin America, with the exception of Mexico, where in January and February 1938, he travelled on a cruise with his wife, Dana. It was one of the rare occasions when the photographer went on vacation, having recently withdrawn from his position as chief photographer for Condé Nast Publications.[44] A handful of photographs from the trip survive in the archives, with the only souvenir portrait of the couple taken by a commercial photographer in Chichén Itzá, Yucatan. In another instance, Dana playfully captured Steichen's overshadowed figure in an intimate, close crop, setting up his camera and tripod at the mouth of a petrified reptilian head, amongst the Mayan ruins.

Primarily a studio photographer and portraitist, working with cumbersome large-format cameras and equipment, Steichen deliberately travelled light, with a small 35mm camera loaded with colour Kodachrome film. Colour was a rather unusual choice for a professional at the time, although Steichen had been experimenting with the medium long-term. One of the surviving photographs from the trip shows a market scene purportedly in Pátzcuaro, Michoacán—although it is unclear whether Steichen travelled that far in the country.[45] Instead of monumental views of the ruins at Chichén Itzá or of the turquoise Caribbean Sea, Steichen zoomed in on the people.[46]

> There, everything was dazzling, exciting and new, and the Mexican sunlight was a real challenge to color film . . . . Most intriguing of all was Yucatan with its fabulous ruins and its record of the Mayan Indian civilization. The faces of the charming, and gentle twentieth century Mayans were duplicates of the frescoes of their ancestors. . . . [A]s I look back at my experience in Yucatan, I still feel curiosity and nostalgia. It is one place in which I have spent a little time that has left me with a strong desire to return.[47]

One sees in this group of pictures a consistent interest in what appeared to be 'authentically' Mexican, indigenous culture. This type of exoticising fantasy would later play a key part in staging *The Family of Man*, bringing together the diverse indigenous peoples of

Central and South America, under the one ahistorical, half-mythological category of the 'Indian' ancestor. The image is perhaps best embodied by Eugene V. Harris's photograph *Peruvian Flute* or *Peruvian Boy with Flute* (1954), which became the signature image for the exhibition, featured throughout its different sections, and reproduced on the cover of the catalogue, on posters, and other promotional materials.[48]

In a 1967 article called 'The Photographic Image of Underdevelopment' for the Havana–based journal *Punto de Vista* (Point of View), Edmundo Desnöes would write about this image of:

> the Peruvian Indian who smiles while playing his flute. It is symbolic—a romantic, ingenuous symbol of the unity of all peoples. It fails to consider that the Latin American Indian lives in abject poverty, simultaneously exploited and rejected and abandoned by the wealth of an industrial era. Children such as this Peruvian Indian rarely live to adulthood. Steichen thus distorts this image and wrenches it out of social reality.[49]

The curator's vision, Desnöes argues, while persuasively and romantically asserted through the selection of photographs and the superimposed narrative structures, cannot suspend the experience of acute inequality: 'Love in the jungle and in ignorance does not mean the same as in civilization amid comfortable surroundings'.[50] Most importantly, Desnöes chooses to place the exhibition within the broader category of 'Art', locating the individual photographs exclusively within the realm of the aesthetic—a space where the viewer is prompted, emotionally and cognitively, to experience fantasy as reality and reality as fantasy. Even the work of Manuel Alvarez Bravo, the only Latin American photographer included in the show, becomes 'cold', surrounded by clichés of the exoticism of the broader non-Western world rendered as one.[51] It was precisely the opposition to this apolitical and ahistorical stance, as well as the desire to overcome such stereotypical representations of Latin America that brought together the photographers, artists, and cultural actors who participated in the 1978 First Colloquium of Latin American Photographers in Mexico City—an important event that established, almost unanimously, the centrality of the social in the production of photographic work in the region and the existence of a transnational, indeed Latin American, cultural and aesthetic identity.

In 1958, three years into the exhibition's traveling record, Steichen would write, 'We have in photography a medium which communicates not only to us English-speaking peoples, but communicates equally to everybody throughout the world. It is the only universal language we have, the only one requiring no translation'.[52] The 'universal language' argument had already been brought in to bolster the apolitical character of the exhibition during its planning stages in 1954, and was reaffirmed by Steichen during the years of the USIA tour. The assertion was that the subject of the photographs was unambiguous, as was their placement within purportedly self-evident narrative structures, constructing

a panorama of human experience and of the world's peoples democratically allied. The brief captions assigned only included the name of the photographer, the country where the picture was taken, and the governmental or commercial agency that had commissioned the work. Transgressing this prescribed logic however, unscripted, parallel narratives of a yet inchoate First and Third World dynamic emerged throughout the show. For instance, Africa and Latin America were brought closer conceptually, if not dialogically, through primitivist stereotypes originating in the type of colonial anthropological photographic practices that had produced various forms of scientific and popular imagery during the previous century. Both regions were depicted as largely traditional pre-industrial cultures, modernised only in part.

Race became a universal category instead of a category of difference, flexed around the exoticism of all non-Western cultures, surveying the subaltern subject in areas of direct control, although with compassion and sympathy—however condescending that attitude may have been perceived to be. Several instances from the USIA tour reveal the extent to which unstated political implications were in fact very much present. Despite the resounding success demonstrated by the massive attendance numbers paraded by the USIA, in Johannesburg, to take a documented example, only whites were allowed to visit the show. During the summer of 1959, while another version of the exhibition was on view in Moscow's Sokolniki Park as part of the American National Exhibition, a Nigerian student, Theophilus Ucokonkwo, violently defaced four of the photographic panels, slashing through a sight he described in the Washington, DC–based magazine *Afro-American* as 'insulting, undignified and tendentious': 'The collection portrayed white Americans and other Europeans in dignified cultural states—wealthy, healthy and wise, and American and West Indian Negroes, Africans and Asiatics as comparatively social inferiors—sick, raggedy, destitute, and physically maladjusted. African men and women were portrayed either half clothed or naked'.[53] Even for the primary audiences of the exhibit, based in the United States, while some racial stereotypes were (arguably) contested, others were reinforced. Photographs by Roy DeCarava and Gordon Parks showed affirmative images of African Americans: families, couples, workers, and children inhabiting the same domestic spaces and participating in the same activities as their fellow white citizens. At the same time, their coexistence is never captured inside the picture frame.

Records attesting to the show's reception in Guatemala and in Mexico are scant. In Guatemala it was on view at the Palacio de Protocolo in Guatemala City between 25 August and 18 September 1955, coinciding with the first meeting of the Organisation of Central American States which was held in Antigua.[54] In direct contrast to the idyllic life shown in *The Family of Man*, the political situation in Guatemala was far from relaxed. It had barely been a year since the United States-supported coup had forced president Jacobo Árbenz to resign, sending him into exile in Europe. While newspapers ran smear campaigns against him, the new president, Carlos Castillo Armas, was securing power. Considered the first instance of direct conflict in the Cold War, the 1954 Guatemalan

coup was also the first of a series of violent interventions that were to characterise United States–Latin American relations throughout the next four decades.

In Mexico City the exhibition was open between 21 October and 20 November 1955. A cable sent out to the State Department by a locally dispatched public affairs officer expressed dissatisfaction with the show, despite its popularity, or precisely therefore, for lacking a clear political message:

> Surrounding the exhibit the United States Government promotes the idea of the brotherhood of men. On the level of idea alone, there is nothing in the exhibit that could not be promulgated equally by libertarian and anti-libertarian doctrines. . . . That is to say, the idea is one which the Communists might also have sought to propagate otherwise.[55]

Especially when compared to the fantastical message passed on to Steichen through the Guatemalan dispatch, this was a strikingly pragmatic bureaucratic response. Between 1938 and 1955 the photographer's romantic perspective on Latin America remained largely untouched, a story of survival and universal hope—whereby in an increasingly interconnected visual world, our distinctive cultural identities survive, and we witness a return of the repressed, indigenous communities reclaiming their land. The actuality of Cold War US-Latin American relations however greatly contradicted this stance.

During the 1980s, cultural critics such as Allan Sekula and Christopher Phillips, in following Roland Barthes, claimed that the universalist rhetoric employed by Steichen and taken up by the USIA was in fact symptomatic of the United States' imperialist, economically monopolising foreign policy, ideologically disguised as benevolent, humanist, and democratic.[56] Recent publications have reframed these postmodern critiques. For example, Jorge Ribalta argued that aside from its participation in a larger system of cultural diplomacy through the USIA, *The Family of Man* had lost its political momentum before it even came into being, due to the absolute separation between avant-garde aesthetics and politics in the aftermath of World War II.[57] Shifting the discussion to the field of human rights discourses and international programs during the 1950s, Ariella Azoulay proposed an analysis of the photographs in the exhibition 'as prescriptive statements claiming universal rights', reading it as 'an archive containing the visual proxy of the United Nations' 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights'.[58] Indeed, following Azoulay's lead, we may begin to rethink the exhibition as a multi-layered artefact that belongs largely to its time, yet which has achieved levels of significance beyond the influence of its original author and producers. Perhaps inadvertently, Steichen created an ethnographic object-installation, from within the institutional framework of the Museum of Modern Art, a prominent space of hegemonic culture and identity formation. Through the lens of Cornell Capa's work—his photographic output as well as his curatorial, ideological 'concerned photography' project—we may begin to reconsider this monumental installation as an expression of

a similar aesthetic of concern, albeit a precarious one. Read accordingly, one might indeed ask, as Capa did, whether *The Family of Man* mobilises a repetition of the postwar 'never again' in utopian discourse—the only space where it remained undefeated at the break of the Cold War.

CONCLUSION

> I went to Latin America as a concerned photographer, hoping that my work in that underreported area would prove to be a catalyst for positive change. . . . I was grieved by what I saw and became a partisan in that longest and most critical war of all, the war against poverty, ignorance, and oppression. I have never understood why the United States government, industry, and press continue to treat Latin America so badly.[59]

Capa went to Latin America as a concerned photographer. His goal there was to cover the region's turmoil, which he acknowledged stemmed from United States intervention. *Ebony* photographers who documented African Americans moving to Mexico also became partisans through their depictions of African Americans living a life that was not circumscribed by racial prejudice. These documentary photographers were not 'avant-garde', but rather worked for the mainstream press, a role that allowed them to present their images to a much wider audience. Perhaps by presenting these micro-photographic histories in parallel in the postwar moment, we can forge a mutual non-segregated history. Also of primary concern is tethering the aspirations of *Life* with the story of *Ebony*, a publication of equal importance, yet less known to scholars. In both histories, utopian ideals of cohabitation, transnationalism, and interracial interaction emerge. André Malraux suggests photography could show you a museum without walls, where images could be contained in the gallery but also in the serial that is disseminated around the globe. Through our case studies, we have sought to construct a dialogue that would introduce alternating authorship, improvisation, and a multivalent approach to visual history analysis—one that buttresses the case for collaborative histories as woven from multiple perspectives, in order to reconstruct and analyse a specific historical moment.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1. During the war years, *Life* magazine pictured the narrative arc of the war. Margaret Bourke-White's coverage of the siege in Moscow, Patton's campaigns and the liberation of Buchenwald, are examples of how the depravities of the war came to define it in public consciousness.

2. The founding of the United Nations, an organization dedicated to the promotion and safeguarding of peace and international cooperation, and their adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 reinforced the widespread concern with how stable governments (Western-backed) would ensure equality, freedom, and peaceful, productive human interaction. Furthermore, the United States emerged as a world superpower, exerting its dominance through both diplomacy and military force; this development coincided with the photographic drive on both sides of the Atlantic to interrogate social conditions in the developing world. The co-existence of less industrial nations, and their industrialized counterparts, was theorized at this crucial moment between World War II and the 'proper' start of the Cold War, as one of three worlds on one planet. The Third World came into being with the publication in 1952 of French anthropologist Alfred Sauvy's article 'Trois mondes, une planete' (Three Worlds, One Planet), in which he used this common denominator to demarcate those countries, many of which were former colonies, that were non-aligned, either with the West or the Soviet Bloc. Until the 1980s, when the hegemony imposed by the label began to be disputed, the Third World remained a core concept for defining relations between and within the hemispheres.

3. Cornell Capa, the brother of Robert Capa, was the associate director and, later, president of Magnum Photos (1956-60), as well as the founder of the International Fund for Concerned Photography (1966) and the International Center of Photography in New York (1974).

4. Cornell Capa (ed.), *The Concerned Photographer* (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1968).

5. Recent exhibitions of photography have explored the role of photographs as itinerant objects in transnational contexts; see Eduardo Cadava and Gabriela Nouzeilles (eds.), *The Itinerant Languages of Photography* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Art Museum, 2013), p. 36.

6. Carl Lumholtz, *Unknown Mexico: A Record of Five Years' Exploration Among the Tribes of the Western Sierra Madre; in the Tierra Caliente of Tepic and Jalisco; and Among the Tarascos of Michoacan* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902).

7. Lumholtz, *Unknown Mexico*, p. 168.

8. James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 245.

9. Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*, p. 245.

10. Michel Leiris, *L'age d'homme* (Paris: Gallimard) Trans. Richard Howard as Manhood (Berkeley: North Press, 1985), p. 15.

11. Siegfried Giedeon, *Mechanization Takes Command* (New York: Norton, 1969), p. v.

12. Eric Sandeen, *Picturing an Exhibition: The Family of Man and 1950s America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995).

13. Edward Steichen, '"Photography: Witness and Recorder of Humanity"', *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 41 (3): p. 161. The enlarged color transparency showed hydrogen bomb Mike (Operation Ivy) detonated in the Enewetak Atoll on 1 November 1952. Previously censored from the public, photographs and a film documenting the explosion were released only in 1954, published in the 19 April issue of *Life*. This sequence of images was titled 'Color Photographs Add Vivid Reality to Nation's Concept of H-Bomb'.

14. The USIA produced four versions of the exhibition, which from 1955 to 1962 traveled to thirty-eight countries (ninety-one shows), and were seen by an estimated nine million visitors. See Sandeen, *Picturing an Exhibition*, p. 95. A restored version is now installed in Luxembourg, and was included in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register in 2003.

15. The extent to which the exhibition participated in Cold War politics and cultural diplomacy has been expanded upon at length in seminal texts by Allan Sekula and Christopher Phillips. Eric Sandeen has shown direct ties between the USIA, the Museum of Modern Art and Nelson Rockefeller, who was a museum trustee and a major supporter of the show, also active in United States—Latin American relations from after WWII and through to the Nixon presidency. See, for instance, Sandeen, *Picturing an Exhibition*, 96.

16. For more detailed examination of Alston's cartoons, see Harry Amana, 'The Art of Propaganda: Charles Alston's World War II Editorial Cartoons for the Office of War Information and the Black Press', *American Journalism* 21 (2004): pp. 79–111.

17. Sumptuary laws limiting displays of wealth were common in colonial Mexico (New Spain). These limits were enforced based on a racial hierarchy from Spanish peninsulares on the top to indigenous and blacks on the bottom. See Edward Sullivan, *The Language of Objects in the Art of the Americas* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 58.

18. José Vasconcelos, *The Cosmic Race/La Raza Cósmica*, (trans.) Didier T. Jaén (1925; Los Angeles: California State University, Los Angeles, 1979). See also Esther Gabara, 'Recycled Photographs: Moving Still Images of Mexico City, 1950–2000', in Marcy E. Schwartz and Mary Beth

Tierney-Tello (eds.), *Photography and Writing in Latin America: Double Exposures* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), pp. 148–49.

19. A. Villarreal, 'Stratification by Skin Color in Contemporary Mexico', *American Sociological Review* 75:5 (2010): pp. 652–78.

20. Even following the end of slavery, this held true. Now African Americans are the only cultural minority in the United States to self-identify as black regardless of their dominant racial heritage.

21. See 'King Cole's Honeymoon Diary', *Ebony*, August 1948, pp. 24–28, and Adam Green, *Selling the Race: Culture, Community, and Black Chicago, 1940–1955* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 153.

22. Katherine Emma Manthorne, *Tropical Renaissance* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), pp. 134–35.

23. Langston Hughes, *Autobiography: The Big Sea*, (ed.) Joseph McLaren (St. Louis: University of Missouri Press, 2002), p. 55.

24. 'A Student's Journey Into the Past', *Ebony*, November 1959, p. 37.

25. 'The Red Outpost in Central America - Guatemala's Communists Thrive Under Fellow-Traveler Government,' *Life* (October 12, 1953), pp. 169-77. The issue can be found here https://books.google.com/books/about/LIFE.html?id=N0EEAAAAMBAJ, accessed 25 May 2017.

26. An important note here concerns the Tenth Inter-American Conference in Caracas in March 1954, where Guatemala was the single American republic (Mexico and Argentina abstained) to vote against the United States' motion to act against Communism and foreign intervention in hemispheric affairs. This was an updated version of the notorious Monroe doctrine which had previously served to justify United States interventions in regional as well as internal affairs in Central and South America.

27. See Dot Tuer, 'Cornell Capa Photographs Guatemala's Revolution', *In the Darkroom*, accessed 6 August 2013, http://inthedarkroom.org/coldwarcamera/cornell-capa-photographs-guatemalas-revolution.

28. Following an assignment for *Life* to photograph United States missionary work in Ecuador after five Evangelical Christian missionaries were killed by an isolated Huaorani tribe in 1956, Capa became interested in documenting endangered indigenous populations in the Amazonian basin. 'I felt that it was essential to make a photographic documentation of tribal life, as untouched as possible by modern civilization, before that life was eradicated forever. I also wanted to show the world the tragic disruption of that life as tribal people were transformed into pittance-earning peons, cheated by unscrupulous traders, and seduced by the call of cities with which they unprepared to deal'. Quoted in Cornell Capa, *Cornell Capa Photographs*, (ed.) Richard Whelan (Boston: Little, Brown, 1992), p. 152. See also Cornell Capa and Matthew Huxley, *Farewell to Eden* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964).

29. 'We have chosen to emphasize the darker side of the picture because we feel it is both more representative and more deserving of attention. In doing so we risk disappointing many of the people in Honduras and El Salvador who gave us generously of their time and assistance, and we risk incurring the hostility of public officials sensitive about the national image. We regret this, but believe that in the long run we will have done more good than harm; for North Americans must know what Central America looks like after a decade of the Alliance for Progress, and there are also many Central Americans who need to know . . . . Scholars, journalists, and photographers must probe, diagnose, and call attention to. We hope we have done this. We hope others will do what they have to do'. Cornell Capa and J. Mayone Stycos, *Margin of Life: Population and Poverty in the Americas* (New York: Grossman, 1974), p. 5.

30. Allan Sekula, 'Dismantling Modernism, Reinventing Documentary (Notes on the Politics of Representation)', *Massachusetts Review* 19:4 (1978): pp. 859–83.

31. Esther Gabara, *Errant Modernism: The Ethos of Photography in Mexico and Brazil* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), pp. 146–48.

32. Anne Rubenstein, 'Mass Media and Popular Culture in the Postrevolutionary Era', in William H. Beezley and Michael C. Meyer (eds.), *The Oxford History of Mexico* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 599–633.

33. Rubenstein, 'Mass Media and Popular Culture in the Postrevolutionary Era', pp. 620–21.

34. 'Mexico: U.S. Negro Migrants Find a Racial Oasis South of Dixie', *Ebony*, October 1948, p. 15.

35. 'Negroes Can Take Pride in Their Rich', *Ebony*, October 1948, p. 56. That same year Nat King Cole honeymooned in Mexico.

36. Minor Neal, 'Paradise Down South', *The Crisis*, April 1950, p. 231.

37. Ibid. There, he studies with David Siqueiros who is named as a 'famous Mexican muralist'.

38. Lillian Smith, *Killers of the Dream* (reprint, New York: W. W. Norton, 1994).

39. José Marti, 'Our America', *Revista Ilustrada* 2 (January 10, 1891): 1-6.

40. Neal, 'Paradise Down South', p. 231.

41. See 'How Negroes Fare in Mexico', *Color*, October 1953, pp. 13–15. This article is in the style of the Ebony piece. The conclusion of the article is that Mexico is place a race-blind society: 'So far as color and race goes, Mexicanos of Negro extraction fare just as well as anybody else'. The idea of city as a local legend is taken from Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 117. "[Cities] offer to store up rich silences and wordless stories… local legends (Legenda: what is to be read, but also what can be read) permit exits, ways of going out and coming back in, and thus habitable spaces."

42. Edward Steichen, *A Life in Photography* (New York: Doubleday, 1963), n.p.

43. 'Steichen surrendered control of the photographs and became an interested spectator, occasionally rendezvousing with *The Family of Man* as it toured the world'. Sandeen, *Picturing an* Exhibition, p. 97.

44. Steichen traveled with the New York and Cuba Mail Steamship Company, aboard the steamer 'Yucatan' from New York to Havana, and Veracruz, Mexico. Brief notes, business cards, postcards and travel paraphernalia from the trip are now preserved at the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York—as part of Steichen's personal archives, donated to the museum in the early 2000s.

45. Paul Strand had photographed Pátzcuaro and Michoacán during an extensive trip in 1932–34, as part of larger project to document the transformation of the country following the Revolution. Working in a straight, uninflected documentary manner, he sought to create a 'collective portrait' of modern Mexico, of individuals observed in their lived environment, both natural and built. See James Krippner, *Paul Strand in Mexico* (New York: Aperture, 2010). Productive parallels are to be drawn between Strand's and Steichen's perspectives on Mexico, despite the scarcity of remaining material.

46. One is reminded here of the historic European and North American popular interest in Mexico's pre-Columbian past. Prominent examples of photographic work include Claude-Joseph Désiré Charnay's mid-nineteenth-century travel albums, and later photo-books by Laura Gilpin (*Temples in Yucatan*, 1948) and Gisele Freund (*Mexique Précolombien*, 1954).

47. Steichen, *A Life in Photography*, section 11.

48. The photograph was taken in Pisac, Peru, in 1954 and had previously been published in the American magazine *Popular Photography*.

49. Desnöes, Edmundo. 'La imagen fotográfica del subdesarrollo' [The Photographic Image of Underdevelopment]. Translated by Julia Lesage. *Jump Cut* 33 (1988), pp. 69-81. Originally published in *Punto de Vista* (1967). Accessed August 25, 2016. http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/onlinessays/JC33folder/photoUndvtDesnoes.html.

50. Edmundo. 'La imagen fotográfica del subdesarrollo', pp. 69–81.

51. Edmundo. 'La imagen fotográfica del subdesarrollo', pp. 69–81.

52. Steichen, 'Photography', p. 160.

53. Quoted in Sandeen, *The Family of Man*, p. 155. Ucokonkwo had pleaded for the removal of the photographs with the Russian and United States exhibition organizers.

54. A Guatemalan diplomatic mission had previously seen the show in July at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. An agreement to travel the exhibit may have been brokered then. For an in-depth analysis of the Guatemala City tour see Eric Sandeen 'The Family of Man in Guatemala.' *Visual Studies* 30, no. 2 (June 2015): pp. 123-130.

55. USIA Mexico, Mexico City, to the United States Department of State, Washington, DC, cable, 3 January 1956, USIA archives; quoted in Sandeen, *The Family of Man*, p. 122.

56. See Roland Barthes, 'The Great Family of Man', in *Mythologies*, (trans.) Annette Lavers (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), pp. 100–2; Allan Sekula, 'The Traffic in Photographs', *Art Journal* 41:1 (Spring 1981), pp. 15–25; Christopher Phillips, 'The Judgment Seat of Photography', *October*, no. 22 (Autumn 1982), pp. 27–63.

57. 'The Western avant-garde in the Cold War is a State avant-garde, not related to any particular social movement and produced in a context in which propaganda had lost legitimacy. The postwar period favored discourses that diluted social tensions and antagonisms, such as the discourse of humanism that would dominate the Western scene and its new geopolitical order'. Jorge Ribalta, *Public Photographic Spaces: Exhibitions of Propaganda, from Pressa to The Family of Man, 1928–55* (Barcelona: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 2008), p. 23.

58. Ariella Azoulay, 'The Family of Man: A Universal Declaration of Human Rights', in Thomas Keenan and Tirdad Zolghadr (eds.), *The Human Snapshot* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2011), pp. 19–48.

59. Capa, *Cornell Capa Photographs*, p. 168.

ARTISTS' PROJECT:

WORK

DAVID KENNEDY CUTLER and SARA GREENBERGER RAFFERTY

ARTISTS' PROJECT: *WORK*

A CONVERSATION ABOUT *WORK*

DAVID KENNEDY CUTLER and SARA GREENBERGER RAFFERTY

AP1.1
Katherine Bernhardt, Sarah Crowner, TM Davy, Michelle Grabner, Joanne Greenbaum, Sara Greenberger Rafferty, David Kennedy Cutler, Michael Mahalchick, Eddie Martinez, Yuri Masnyj, Sam Moyer, Ian Pedigo, Kate Shepherd, and B. Wurtz, Work, 2013, installation view, Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery, New York.

Work *is an ongoing collaborative project about labour, value, and authorship in the art market that began as a studio assignment for students at Ox-Bow School of Art in Saugatuck, Michigan in the summer of 2012 for a class taught by artists Michelle Grabner and Sara Greenberger Rafferty. It was repeated on 25—26 June 2013 with a group of professional artists at Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery in Manhattan. In these two iterations the artists worked together to develop the composition for a painting that they then 'mass-produced' in an assembly line fashion, with each artist making the same mark or intervention on each canvas as it moved down the line. The paintings produced each had the same design, but, as Sara Greenberger Rafferty and David Kennedy Cutler explain in the following conversation, the nature of collaboration among artists yielded creative, non-identical results.*

David Kennedy Cutler: So, we're going to talk about your collaborative painting project called *Work* today. When did you conceive of *Work*?

Sara Greenberger Rafferty: *Work* was originally a class that Michelle Grabner and I planned in the summer of 2011. It was for a two-week class for the Ox-Bow School of Art in Saugatuck, Michigan, that would be held the next summer. We planned it around the

theme of work and labour after we were asked to co-teach the class. We were thinking about intersections between our artistic practices. The main thing that we saw was that we both have a specific work ethic that we could identify as a kind of Midwestern heritage.

We came up with the rubric together and within that framework I designed the experimental assignments. One of the assignments was an assembly line work produced by all the students and teachers in the class, which would take place toward the end of the two weeks.

Members of the class came up with proposals for what we should do, and then we negotiated, voted for this project, got supplies, and figured out how it was going to play out. It was very democratic. So it was really the class that specifically narrowed down the concept to one of making paintings on an assembly line, and then we came up with the framework of doing test runs and switching up the order of the different painting steps.

I thought it was a really great project—well, it was fun anyway, and I loved how the individual paintings were so bad but the group of paintings together was somehow compelling—and we decided to do it with 'real artists' the next summer, in 2013, for a show at Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery.

DKC: In the Lower East Side of New York. So your initial conception was an assembly line?

SGR: Yes.

DKC: That was the most basic framework, so then maybe an analogy could be an Occupy Wall Street–type dynamic. You all sat around with the class and the teachers, with no particular hierarchy, and created the structure?

SGR: No, actually. It's interesting because we had a previous day that was called the 'eight-hour workday'. In between meals, the students just showed up with materials and were told to not think about anything and just be productive or industrious for the day, to sit at their station with whatever tools they had on hand. We had a fifteen-minute break every four hours, and we took a group nature walk in the afternoon in order to fortify our wellbeing at work. The idea of the walk was from Michelle's research on corporate workplace wellness efforts.

When we got back from our wellness walk, there was a mutiny. People had made a sign stating that Michelle and I, as 'the bosses', were biased against women. It was really intense because we took it seriously, and we had to have a big talk, which our TA moderated while we were out of the building. It turned out that it was a joke, but obviously that element was lost on us—of course, I have a fear of an unconscious bias toward men due to the culture I live in. The class discussed it for many minutes without anyone coming forward to own the statement, and then our TA said, 'So, basically, no one takes responsibility and

this is just, like, bullshit?' And they responded, 'Yeah, we were just trying to see what would happen'. Which was actually kind of interesting. But that's the example of the non-hierarchical Occupy-style dynamic. We as the teachers had set up the program to think about all aspects of work and labour, and different sides, and being your own fabricator, being someone else's fabricator, doing mindless work versus the work of the mind, things like that. The students took it quite literally, so it influenced everything we did.

It was most evident in the assembly line because there were certain people who emerged as leaders, for lack of a better term, who were either more opinionated or more vocal or better at organising or cared more about this project. Because, you know, a lot of people think collaboration is dumb and it's not their own work so they don't invest as much in it. So it was interesting to see how that played out.

In the end it was a very telling experience, in the way that it unearthed or exposed a lot of different undercurrents of how people work together or don't work together, or make things harder or easier, or are more dominant or more submissive. That was all very interesting.

DKC: That makes me think about, in particular, when the actions are being performed within a circumscribed period of time, and also the fact that it was created at a residency program, which can have a summer camp–type feel within the arts community, as a way to get away from real life. I may have said this before in an e-mail to you, but I think it's interesting the way that *Work* functioned again at Klaus von Nichtssagend, as this idea of treating work as a pantomime of the commercial world, but also perhaps mixed with this escapism from real work.

SGR: Like play-acting.

DKC: Well, given the way that society is broken up, the way that we talk about roles, a lot of people, maybe even art dealers, still view what the artist does as an act of play instead of an act of work, when the artist might feel quite differently about it. So, it's interesting to make this structure where essentially the creation of the artwork is so explicitly work related, but for the artist themselves, possibly it's the most playful experience that they've participated in in a long while.

SGR: Right, because it was collaborative, because it was low stakes, because it was not 'your work', because it had permission to have an ugly outcome. A bad painting is just as good as a good painting in this case, because *Work* is about the volume and it's about the performance.

I think, also, one thing that's different from, let's say, a Chinese painting mill, is that the producers were also the conceivers, for lack of a better word. So the artists who were doing the labour of making the painting also had an equal stake in the design or

conceptual labour of the painting. And we know about design by committee, it's usually not good. I can't say that either the Ox-Bow- or von Nichtssagend-produced paintings would be considered good paintings. They're very inconsistent, because artists are terrible hired labour, in terms of doing the thing that they're told, because they get bored and in this case don't need the job. As artists, we are focused on the original and the one-off, and if it's an edition or something in multiples it's usually made by a machine, with a few key exceptions.

In both cases, the piece that was chosen for the assembly line to create was the only option that had something figurative. You think about the current market craze for abstraction and non-representational/non-objective painting, but there is also this sort of gravitational pull towards imagery and representation. I don't know if that has anything to do with *Work* as an exercise or collaboration, but that was something I noted both times.

DKC: Having participated in the second version, I think there was something in the collaborative nature of the project. Even though you had all these artistic egos in the room (and there were some big ones), you saw the way that so many people get competitive toward the quality of their work as individuals, as it was being abolished by the collaborative nature. Everyone wanted to preserve his or her style somehow in the painting, but that actually led to total chaos. And the figurative painting was essentially the only way you could, I think, pull back and—

SGR: Make the chaos make sense.

DKC: Yeah. And in one way, that figurative one, it allowed people to abolish their egos a little bit more, because I guess it's more fun for everyone, whereas the . . . I don't know what the division was in the group between abstract artists and figurative artists—

SGR: There were probably more artists not interested in figuration.

DKC: Yeah. And so when all these people are doing their moves, you end up with sort of mud.

SGR: The thing about the final painting, as god-awful as it is, it looks like its own thing, it looks like a whole thing, but I can focus in and see every individual artist with a kind of stamp, or as you said, a signature style. And I'm against signature styles anyway, but it was notable in version two because the previous year the students didn't care about that. They had no attachments. They would black out or eradicate someone else's work, or change their move in each version. And it could also be a New York art world thing where we were too polite. You could go to Berlin or Chicago or LA, and have someone at the end dominate the whole thing and just say, 'Thanks for this ground, I'm going to place my thing . . . if

this looks awful, I'm just going to make it into a black monochrome or something'. Some people were using the same move or approach for each turn in the test paintings, but the process also can't help but be improvisatory and the result of a reaction to what you've been handed.

The thing is, they're all good solutions, because it is about cooperative dynamics and it's totally artificial. So the most meaningful aspect for participants—and I think that it potentially gains more meaning the more we do things like this—is to just sort of see what the dynamics are.

Everyone had to stay in the same room and work together for two days. You realise how absurd it is that two workdays are exceptionally valuable, because we're all working so much to stay afloat in New York.

DKC: Right. And yet, so many people found it rewarding, even people who don't traditionally collaborate. I think that speaks also to the nature of collaboration, and the gallery, and the people you asked who were willing to do it.

Thinking about those two days, and correct me if I get this wrong, but the first day was broken up into a discussion of how to make this work and what the results would be. I could tell that you were after the idea of the factory paintings being produced, but depending on the group, anarchy could have ensued, and nothing would've happened at all, or—

SGR: Yeah, and that would have been fine.

DKC:—something would've been made. But I think people were very much drawn to the idea of making the thing in multiple, and then there was the decision . . . there was a lot of talk about . . . I can't remember, did we make the paintings first, or did we discuss what would ensue?

SGR: We made versions and then we voted. By the end of the first day, we voted and chose the one, and then we were to come in the next day ready to work with our stations. We had our stations set up.

DKC: But there was discussion as to how many we would make, how much they should cost, how they should be exhibited, what this meant, how complicated we should get in explaining it, how complicated we should make the metaphor—be more straightforward, be less straightforward. The structure and the metaphor really helped people get through it.

SGR: In a way . . . I was also just thinking about how I did the exercise again with the class this past fall at Hampshire College, and the assembly line that was chosen from all the different proposed assembly lines was a performance. It was pretty elaborate and then really weird, but we did it. Half the class didn't show up the day of the performance, which was interesting.

DKC: Performance anxiety?

SGR: Who knows? The performance was not that difficult. I think it was also because the class was made up of liberal arts students, not art students, and so there's more possibility of an anxiety around production. I found the art students are totally accustomed to making lots of stuff all the time, and I think the liberal arts students are just not as accustomed to being as prolific. I can't really explain it, but there's just a different scale of production, in terms of what they think a lot of work is or what making artwork is, and that's just kind of across the board. They maybe see it more as an assignment, and so they're interested in completing an assignment in terms of page count and things like that.

So they chose to do a performance. The idea was put forward by one of my most brilliant and difficult students. We were going to the museum, and we would stand in a single-file line, and the person at the front of the line would choose an artwork, and we would all look at the artwork while staying in line for as long as the first person in line felt like. And then the next person in line would choose the next artwork, we would walk to it, go upstairs or downstairs or whatever the case may be. And we did this with each person until they went to the end of the line. And it was kind of absurd because the person at the end of the line would have a really hard time seeing the artwork, but the instruction was to look at the artwork. I thought it was kind of a nice piece, and it was serious and kind of somber, but it was also ridiculous and humorous. I loved the idea of looking at a work as making a work, but it was totally different from the assembly line painting situation.

DKC: You're emerging with an experience instead of—

SGR: Yeah. There was no photography allowed, I think, in that museum. Also, we didn't have a documenter. I think a couple people took pictures from their phones at different points in the line.

DKC: And that was the group? The group decided that?

SGR: Yeah. The same way as the first class, everyone proposed an assembly line to do, we voted, and then we enacted the winning idea. We didn't do that with *Work* at Klaus. We said, we're going to replicate the version that the Ox-Bow students had designed. I originally wanted students or ex-students involved in the Klaus version. The gallery said no, I think, because they wanted to have a profitable show and they were basically the factory overseers. I was amiable to that because I was very cognisant of the fact that we were doing the piece in the context of a commercial gallery and that we were making merchandise. So I was very fine with the conceit of getting input about participants from the clients, if you will. But I also think it would be good to have a mix of artists, including artists with absolutely no market value. There were people with very different market values in the

collaboration, all levels, but everyone in the room had some market experience or exposure.

DKC: People who are considered professional artists by some sort of—

SGR: Rubric.

DKC: It's interesting that the metaphor, again, holds up, but that in academia, they give us the idea, and then business takes it for application, for profit, in the end.

SGR: Exactly.

DKC: The New York version is the least progressive of all of them.

SGR: Oh, yeah. We knew that from the start, we had no illusions because we were doing a gallery version.

But, in terms of the metaphor, one funny thing was that in the *New York Times* review, the last line by Roberta Smith was, 'The quality control was not very good', or something to that effect. I noticed that pretty much zero people texted or e-mailed me about the review, because I think it was also the way that people read and skim reviews to see if it's good or bad. I think colleagues who didn't really know about the project or weren't really thinking about it, hadn't seen the show, didn't know that the paintings were different and ugly, they felt like it was a total negative review, and so they didn't want to reach out to me. And I actually thought the review was amazing. I would've been horrified if she said that they were good paintings. Also, she was extending the metaphor to say that whoever was in charge of keeping the artists on task to make the products—the paintings—consistent was not doing it, which I think is a success in the framework of the collaboration, that no one was in charge, per se. Smith was saying they were bad paintings, while essentially endorsing the performance of collaboration. But it was just so funny to me to see how that subtlety did not reverberate in my wider community, who basically read it as a pan.

DKC: But, that also gets a little bit to the idea of collaboration, which is an allowance for that. Like, we all knew that the painting wasn't very good. In fact, the repetition of the painting is what made it interesting.

SGR: Yeah, which is why I wanted . . . again, the owners of the 'factory' wanted to sell the paintings individually, and I really wanted it to be one big piece, because I think it's compelling as one big piece made up of all the paintings produced on the assembly line. In both versions, I think the individual paintings are god-awful, but as a huge piece/installation, it becomes compelling and interesting.

DKC: But the interesting part is what transpired, which was a collaboration. So maybe we should use that as a bridge to start talking about collaboration more in general.

You're an artist who's interested in collaboration, and I am, as well. But we also have a lot of maintenance of our own egos, in that we make a lot of individualist things. We have collaborated on things together and we also collaborate with other people. Maybe, without getting too burdened by philosophical concerns, we should discuss the need to collaborate and why we do it.

SGR: I can't really explain what it is, but I'm pretty sure it came from a sort of . . . the excitement of discovery of art at a young age as kind of a secret society. I was an editor of an arts publication in high school. I'd say that's probably my first real collaboration, where you had to bring things together and discuss and it wasn't a unilateral situation. It was also classic group collaboration, where some people take on more of the labour and some people take on less, some people are responsible and some people are irresponsible or unreliable. I really loved that experience. You would show up after school on Wednesdays or whatever day and talk about art and feel like you had a community. I was on the tennis team and I only played doubles. I think in that case there was the comfort of being competitive from within a group, and the vulnerability of being out there on your own (like with the egos you referred to a minute ago) was diluted, so if you failed, you failed together, it wasn't just one person's fault. I'd be lying to say that's not in my collaborative DNA as well.

So it started there in high school, and then I think it extended to the idea of a group studio that you have in art school, or teaching and pedagogy, where artists are helping each other realise things.

Among my first successes after I got out of RISD [Rhode Island School of Design] was a performance called 'Sophie Spar', where I asked artists to make cheap artwork and sell it, kind of like the artists you see who set up little stations on the sidewalk where they make and see their work. That was a really good way to do an ambitious project early on, before I had fully developed my voice. And that just sort of expanded to doing the [annual art publication] *North Drive Press* and to doing different curatorial projects and projects with you and other friends and colleagues.

I think in other ways it's a selfish endeavour, because you're accessing and doubling or even more than doubling your resources, and also getting some sort of insight into how other people work.

I was just also recently listening to Leonard Lopate's interview of David Foster Wallace, from when *Infinite Jest* came out, and Wallace was saying something like, 'If you're a perfectionist, you don't do anything. You don't put anything out'. I think that collaboration, for me, really helps me get away from those perfectionist tendencies and just be pragmatic. And then I like bringing that experience back into my work.

I'm sure that's not everything, but that's a good overview. How about you?

DKC: I think about you as a teacher and someone who's engaging her students all the time, and even the way you described collaboration with an example of after-school clubs and stuff. You've always had an interest in pedagogy and academic environments. It's an area where you thrive, but you also simultaneously try to subvert given assumptions about it.

I think, inevitably, I have a little bit more of a love–hate relationship with academic environments. I consider myself a little bit more of a private learner or a self-learner. But I think there's something, there's an inherent need I have to break out of that individualist isolation in the studio and engage with other people. I think that it expands from all of the areas that I feel like I had to tragically give up as a private maker of art. Sort of those dreams that you, maybe, like—

SGR: Like having a band, or something like that?

DKC: Or even other things. You know, I had a zine in high school, and I worked with other people and we interviewed bands. Or the way that going to see shows, self-publishing, and organising events when you were that age was so integral to living and experiencing culture. Even the particular time when we grew up, as alternative music was blossoming, sort of this pre-internet—

SGR: Collectivism?

DKC: You had this way of engaging with people across the country and within your local community and finding each other through common interest, I think as a way of sharing. I guess, then, maybe I didn't really understand the notion that it was also archiving, and a way of collecting all those impulses and those feelings and those motivations, and just committing it to paper so that it wouldn't be fleeting and it wouldn't go away.

I think that with some of the collaborations that you and I have done together (and also with Ethan Greenbaum) it's really hard to be profound, because you're sort of diminishing or watering down your ideas, although you are gaining assets economically by pulling together to really try to make this thing. But what you are doing, essentially, is making this document of this time and this place, and there's something in that engagement that I think is important. There's also the feeling of the tactility of the document.

But more than anything, I think it's the unpredictability of the results that makes collaboration interesting. That you can essentially not know what you're getting into, and it can be stressful, and you have to end up being accommodating, and all of these other things. It's almost like a family dynamic in a world where you're isolated, where you get to pursue your own interests all the time. Collaboration is a way of inflicting restrictions on yourself again.

SGR: Yeah. I mean, I was thinking of the recent Jeff Koons comments, that he employs hundreds and hundreds of people, and thinking about that sort of paternalistic view of collaboration and work.

But I think you're right and I think that one thing you keep talking about is toiling on your own or doing your own individualistic thing, and I think, ultimately, art that's worth looking at has some sort of engagement with the social, even if it's anti-social. Just as a person, I'm quite sure that I would never want to be doing things only on behalf of myself, constantly, without any mediation or without any . . . like you said, making accommodations or compromises. I think artists are, at a certain level, indulged in simply being anti-social. I think sometimes that can be interesting, but I personally don't want to be so into my own thing that I take it too seriously and therefore kill the actual humanity of what I'm doing.

DKC: Yeah, it also seems like killing evolution. I think that sometimes, especially when you see artworks that are so dictated by capitalism, you lose that spirit of play that we were talking about before. Because each time that we collaborate, we learn something, and there's a sort of destabilisation that I think is really crucial.

I think that even if you look back in history, you see a time when artists (it could be visual artists or musicians, or a cross-genre) . . . you see the effects of working together or even being forced to work together. You even see, for instance, Philip Glass being paid by Richard Serra to help him in the studio. I mean, these are two people who are giants of their respective fields, and I'm sure there were commercial considerations in that situation . . . It's interesting that those ideas were swirling around in that moment. I think it's absolutely crucial that we have those collaborative moments now.

CHAPTER 3

'POINTS OF ORIGIN': FROM A HISTORY OF ALTERNATIVE ART TO A HISTORY OF ALTERNATIVE INSTITUTIONS

SOFIA GOTTI and MARKO ILIĆ

3.1
Sanja Iveković exhibition, 1970, installation view, SC Gallery, Zagreb, 14–30 March 1970.

Over the past two decades, both scholars and curators have focused considerable attention on art practices that occurred outside the frameworks provided by North American and Western European post-war art historical narratives. In view of the rapid and relentless commodification of Latin American and Eastern European art and archives since the 1990s, serious efforts have been made to recuperate the histories of alternative practices once omitted from linear and 'canonical' discourses. In the summer of 2009, for instance, the exhibition *Subversive Practices: Art under Conditions of Political Repression 60s–80s / South America / Europe* was launched by Stutggart's Kunstverein. The exhibition endeavoured to highlight art practices generated under conditions of military dictatorship and of communist and socialist regimes in South America and Europe, to 'thematise the heterogeneity and divergence of resistive artistic practices'.[1] Art developments from these peripheral spaces of agency (or 'off-centres', to borrow Argentine writer and researcher Ana Longoni's term) were gathered fundamentally due to their overtly political nature against existing political systems of power.[2] The curators of the exhibition, Iris Dressler and Hans D. Christ, had opted for a 'artificial cartography', threading together a selection of works that traversed a historical time frame of over sixty years and geographical categories beyond the margins of the Western canon.[3] Juxtaposing an expansive network of divergent locales and time-specific contexts of art production was aimed at the

negation of 'canonising codifications'—discourses marked by an art criticism nestled securely within the demands of the global art market, coupled with a desire to procure and purchase works.[4]

Subversive Practices does not stand alone as a mindful attempt to document 'conceptualism' as a global phenomenon, originating independently in different locations. In the same year as the exhibition's opening, the Museum of Modern Art in New York launched its Contemporary and Modern Art perspectives (C-Map) online research project, which continues to document narratives beyond the 'frameworks provided by Western European and North American avant-gardes', by gathering accounts and forging connections with 'histories, individuals and institutions that have often been little-known outside their countries of origin'.[5] In 2015, MoMA also hosted the ambitious *Transmissions: Art in Eastern Europe and Latin America, 1960–1980,* which surveyed parallels and networks among artists active in South America and Eastern Europe in the 1960s and 1970, and exhibited works that 'circumvented the political status quo through unorthodox and ephemeral forms of art', along with artistic gestures that sought to bring 'art into daily life to reach a wider public and to influence society'.[6]

More often than not, these expanded global art histories have been gathered together by curatorial appraisals through generalised terms such as 'conceptualism', 'pop', or 'performance art', with overarching affiliations towards 'political' perspectives.[7] Perhaps the most ground-breaking and now canonical re-evaluation of conceptual art was *Global Conceptualism, Points of Origin, 1950s-1980s,* held in 1999 at the Queens Museum of Art in New York, which delineated a clear distinction between conceptual art as a term denoting an 'essentially formalist practice developed in the wake of minimalism', and conceptualism, 'which broke decisively from the historical dependence of art on the physical form and its visual appreciation'.[8] In the exhibition, such practices from 'peripheral zones', were attributed, above all, a predominant political significance – conceptualism in these areas becoming the means for 'expanding art to function as an act of political engagement or resistance'.[9] The mere use of an artistic language, even a more 'universal' one, such as conceptualism in such ones, resulted in a specific function, role and meaning of a work in given conditions. In this evaluation, the alternative art of South America and Eastern Europe was always related to political and ideological issues in a more immediate way than in the West. In such zones, adopting an artistic language such as conceptualism resulted in a specific function, role, and meaning attributed to a work in given conditions.

While placing art production outside of North America and Western Europe in juxtaposition does indeed fracture linear narratives, it does so at the risk of presupposing a dualistic formula in which alternative art practices become individual and heroic acts of resistance and opposition, struggling against a despotic regime and its powerful ideological apparatus. In both Argentina and Yugoslavia, respectively, artists sustained footholds in international art developments and theory to establish an emancipatory resistance to an enclosed and dominant cultural superstructure. Buenos Aires' Instituto Torcuato di Tella,

considered one of the most influential centres of Argentina and Latin America between 1958 and 1970, became progressively established and attuned to international movements, redefining the historical dependence of art on visual appreciation. Similarly, Zagreb's Galerija Studentsog Centra [Students' Centre Gallery or SC Gallery], became, towards the late 1960s, a crucial site for experimental art practices that implemented a non-bureaucratised form of engagement, paralleling international developments towards the 'dematerialisation of art'.[10] Such practices paralleled the evolving standardisation of 'international art', but through the lens of their own cultural contexts. Yet, in both instances, alternative art was fostered under a system of controlled funding to become a pivotal forum of artistic experimentation, but, with time, they became neutralised spaces, overwhelmed by the dominance of a ruling cultural apparatus.

In our study, we want to avoid the binaries that establish a simple dualism between 'conformist' and 'non-conformist' art. We want to blur the boundaries between what constituted Argentina's and Yugoslavia's 'official' and 'unofficial' cultural spheres—to challenge their clearly defined thresholds—by acknowledging and detailing the various individuals and institutions implied in their fabrications. To reveal the complex and paradoxical social position of the alternative art practices, we will establish them within the institutional structures that secured their emergence and enabled their production. The study is formed of three sections: the first, mapping the respective institutions within domestic policies; the second, identifying what kind of artistic activity emerged from these institutions, and whether they were conditioned by the programmatic inclinations of the centres; the third, situating such case studies within contemporary art-historiographies on Latin American and South-Eastern Europe. In examining these two institutions in relation to local cultural policies and practices, the critical cross-comparative presents an attempt to evade the monochromatic treatment of 'off-central' art practices as victims of gloomy repression for a more multivalent and thorough analysis—one which resists a predetermined outlook. As such, we analyse practices and key developments as they occurred in their own contexts, and not in the context of their consequences.

IN THE CASES OF ARGENTINA AND YUGOSLAVIA, IS IT POSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH A CONNECTION BETWEEN DOMESTIC POLICY AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE 1960S?

In a period as complex as the 1960s in Argentina, the Instituto Torcuato Di Tella provides a formidable lens into the crossovers between artistic production and official cultural policy. The Institute, in fact, was founded in 1958 by the heir to an industrial empire in Argentina, the SIAM Di Tella Corporation, which had a lengthy history of collaboration with government initiatives. In addition, part of its funding came from foreign investors, such as the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, which importantly influenced the institute's identity. This strong financial relationship that tied the ITDT with the Argentine

government and the United States, was a significant factor in its operation. The institute emulated North American foundations and cultural institutions, whilst being closely linked to the country's political climate. In modern historiography, the Instituto Torcuato Di Tella is revered as the keystone of a multifaceted cultural itinerary, which in the 1960s propelled Argentine artists onto the international art scene. Housed in a modernist, air-conditioned building with a glass façade on the trendy Calle Florida (Florida Street), the Instituto Torcuato Di Tella (ITDT) was a reference point for young artists in the city, who gravitated there from the city's furthest *barrios* (neighbourhoods).

Guido Di Tella founded the ITDT on the tenth anniversary of his father Torcuato's death. Torcuato Di Tella (1892-1948) was an Italo-Argentinean entrepreneur (and avid art collector) who had built an industrial empire producing, at first, bread-making machines, then refrigerators and, ultimately, automobiles. The ITDT was therefore a memorial and a tribute to an icon who had helped shape the Argentina of 1960s, one heavily determined by the legacy of Peronism yet animated by a leap towards modernity.

In 1958, the same year as the ITDT's establishment, the newly elected president Arturo Frondizi (in power between 1958 and 1963) had to fulfil the arduous task of conciliating the latent Peronists and the demanding upper classes, whose power had significantly (yet selectively) diminished during Peron's administration. Peron's populist policies had gained him the favour of the working classes; during Peron's first term, the GDP rose and minimum wages statistically increased (in most cases minimum wages were fixed). In the late 1940s, public services markedly improved, generating a phenomenon of urbanisation, which gave rise to one of the largest middle classes in the continent. Peron established widespread support among this new social stratus. The valuable improvement in infrastructure, however, was not homogeneous and it occurred in partnership with strict state control over press, private enterprises and a steady nationalisation of industries. It was only those close to Peron who were able to survive within the perilous industrial sector. Among these select few was Torcuato Di Tella, whose iconic refrigerator SIAM could be found in the majority of households, irrespective of class, becoming a symbol of the illusive 'bonanza years of Peronist prosperity and the democratisation of consumption'.[11] After 1955, however, Peron's inconsistent administration led to political isolation, soaring inflation, and a catastrophic economic crisis, the consequences of which would be felt for the following thirty years.

In this context, Frondizi implemented a new economic policy known as Developmentalism—a theory that placed economic growth at the centre of political agendas. In addition, Developmentalism followed the model of Western development, understood as a universal and all-encompassing example of progress. Developmentalism was promoted by the Washington-based International Development Association (IDA), created in 1960, which sought to support development in Third World countries, concomitantly to how the Marshall Plan supported Post-War reconstruction in Europe.[12] In the pursuit of counteracting Soviet influence and liberation movements such as Cuba's, US initiatives such as the

Marshall Plan and the IDA engendered the balance of power for the following decades.

Frondizi's developmentalism largely hinged on import substitution industrialisation. Investment in heavy industry, especially in motor vehicle production, was widely supported and once more, the SIAM Corporation held a privileged position. As a result, SIAM produced another, if not the most, iconic product of the 1960s—the Siam 1500—an affordable and practical automobile designed for the new middle class family, modelled after the BMC Farina. The ITDT and the SIAM 1500 both stand out as the products of business operations, products of dialogic collaborations with the government.

The collaboration of the Rockefeller, Ford, and Di Tella Foundations invites wide-ranging considerations. The Di Tella Foundation was the first large-scale initiative in Argentina to move from private to corporate sponsorship, following the model established decades before by families including the Fords and Rockefellers. Developmentalism invoked an alignment with Western canons of progress and prosperity. In parallel, the ITDT from the outset aspired to stride alongside the MoMA in New York, of which Nelson Rockefeller—one of its benefactors—was President between 1939-1958.[13] Furthermore, as the ITDT's closure later demonstrates, its operation was tightly linked to SIAM Di Tella Corporation's financial success, which in turn was largely dependent on support by government policies.[14]

In the same year as the Di Tella's inauguration and Frondizi's election, Yugoslavia's League of Communists announced their 1958 *Programme*, that according to philosopher Svetozar Stojanović marked the ideological culmination of the Federation's experience with self-managing socialism.[15] In its broadest possible definition, self-management is understood as a system that was intended to grant workers the autonomy to manage their own enterprises and factories, and eventually lead towards the 'withering away of the state'. The 1958 *Programme* emphasised the ultimate goal of this 'historical task': 'to transform the contemporary social scene, which bears all the marks of the transition period, into one in which classes, and all traces of exploitation and the oppression of man by man, will disappear'; to create a 'society without a state, classes or parties'.[16] In the cultural sphere, it would, according to the aforementioned *Programme*, enact 'the liberation of educational, scientific, artistic and cultural life from administrative intrusion'.[17]

Zagreb's Students' Centre was established in the same year as the newly declared *Programme* of 1958, and during the modest democratisation of Yugoslavia. A large complex including various amenities, it was intended to act as a socio-cultural base to a new generation of educated Yugoslav youth. Already in June 1957 a founding act was established, identifying a granted location for the centre (formerly serving the *Zagreb Fair* on Savskoj 25). Adaptations of the space began from late 1958. The renovated centre included a restaurant, the SC Club, classrooms, the SC Gallery (GSC), a Chamber Theatre (Teatar & TD) and Students' Services, all claiming direct responsibility for the welfare of students.

As a part of the wider anatomy of the Students' Centre, the SC Gallery generated its financial resources from the Head Office of its parent institution, making it an 'official' state

institution. But at its conception, the gallery was allocated a subservient position within the centre. In the academic year of 1962-63, the gallery's newly-established editorial board produced the first plan for its exhibition activities, which strictly complied to the 'didactic, informative intentions' emphasised in the institution's founding programming principles.[18]

Although emerging from a 'humble and somewhat unprofessional' mode of operation, the SC Gallery began to fulfil its obligations of opening cultural activity to a new generation in the mid 1960s, in part due to the co-operation of Želimir Koščević, who became Director of the space in 1966.[19] Already experienced in the museological sector, having previously worked in the city's Museum of Arts and Crafts, Koščević was a young art historian whose interests were shaped by Zagreb's New Tendencies art scene of the 1960s.[20] Coming to the SC Gallery, he was ultimately aware of the urge for 'the gallery to act differently, to take its own stand', and act against the premise that: 'A gallery should cater to the petty-bourgeois, who will enter its halls on a Sunday afternoon, feeling the greatest respect and piety for every mouldy piece of rag, for every polished plank, for every carefully cleaned pebble'.[21] What was being called for were new and experimental exhibition methods, which could overcome society's passive and 'petty-bourgeois' relationship to museums. Koščević was demanding the introduction of new concepts that could shake up a settled and established institutional climate, which had hitherto consisted mostly of museums 'already so mothy and dusty in their undisturbed following of provincial and bourgeois conceptions'.[22]

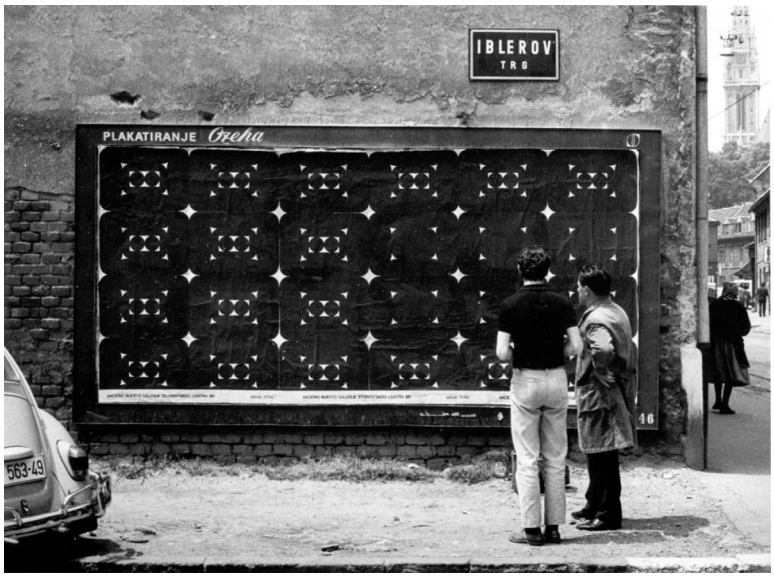
Naturally enough, such a rupture from convention was not easy. Yet, from 1969 the space began to cultivate a new generation of artists, which significantly differed from ones generally recognised in reputable galleries. At the end of 1968, the gallery began to print its *Newspaper*, published as a monthly broadsheet, which publicly disseminated and recorded information on exhibition activities, while setting down the theoretical implications of initiatives, beside events that were happening on the international art scene. The aforementioned publication also introduced a number of new, young and unknown artists to the public in June 1969, declaring a competition intended to 'encourage all explorations on a visual, plastic or any other field, to enable the realisation of progressive ideas tied within the listed areas'.[23] The principal aim of such a competition was to transform the gallery space into a living social organism, seeking out people to work within it, in order to transform it into a laboratory. For the first time in Zagreb, the traditional understanding of the gallery space—archival and pedagogical—and its relation to society—as a documentary memory-bank—was shifted to a more dynamic role, through social work that was no longer autocratic but based around a horizontal means of sharing.[24]

All the artists selected through the competition were then students of Zagreb's Academy of Fine Arts, and used the opportunity to explore their 'own development' rather than the 'clichés fostered by old school tasks'.[25] The group was referred to by young critic Davor Matičević as the 'new generation of Plastic Artists', because of their approach to solving the problem of the gallery space.[26] They were amongst the first to acknowledge

the possibilities of space as an 'accompanying element to the actual work', and a 'tangible p art of the plastic work'.[27] The material on display was only a 'background' or 'container' in installations that were intended to problematise the role of the artist, and place the spectator in the position of an active creator.[28] For the most part, these 'environments' were site-specific, perishable, and marked a part of the wider thought of their respective authors.[29] Accompanying documents, installation shots, and executed actions were further published and recorded in the gallery *Newspaper*, which acted as an exhibition catalogue of sorts.

The first 'environments' of the SC Gallery were primarily conceived with the aim of exploring the spatial dimensions of the gallery space, and through a goal of 'communicating' with the public. The most significant unifying ground between them was that they were all produced from industrial materials donated to the gallery by manufacturers of concrete, electrical equipment, paint, and plastic. For instance, Sanja Iveković's installation (fig. 3.1), exhibited in March 1970, questioned the surrounding space through manufactured materials, and embraced tactility and movement over immobility and permanence. A kilometre's length of plastic tubes, densely clustered together, and coloured in blue, red, and yellow, was suspended from the gallery's ceiling. Tangled and strewn around the space, the tubes produced a network of malleable forms, which the artist referred to as a 'spatial drawing'.[30] The *Untitled Environment* encouraged visitors to pass through it, to bend the tubes and consequently change the shape and composition of the work, and to play with the infinite possibilities of curves and combinations. Announced as a 'conceptual approach to an artistic problem', with the accompanying documentation, the work was placed in relation to aspects from everyday life—visually juxtaposed against the organised networks of an underground tube map, the musical notations of John Cage, and an enlarged diagram made from a microscopic examination of viruses.[31]

Emerging from a model of cooperation between contemporary artist and factory manufacturer, these installations were definitively 'non-artistic' in appearance. Rather than sending instructions for the construction of works to the industrial manufacturer, donated materials were simply arranged by the artist—assembled and displayed in a manner that was transient, changeable and interactive. Working in this capacity enabled artists to produce accessible, creative work, through fairly low financial provisions. Such a lively and unusual collaboration between artist and industrial manufacturer certainly complied with the tenets of Yugoslavia's ideological pillar of 'self-management'—a system which, idealistically, would fulfil Marx's 'higher phase', in which 'the division of labour has vanished, after labour has become not merely a means to live but has become itself the primary necessity of life'.[32] Just as the self-management ideology revolved around a humanist ideal in which the self-manager would not operate only in the economic sphere but in society-in-general, the new generation of artists endeavoured to implement a social project that overcame boundaries between the elite and the masses, in which the elite would abandon its area of isolated creativity and take on a relevant social role. In their SC Gallery



3.2
Boris Bućan and Davor Tomičić, *Akcija Total (Total Action)*, Zagreb, 16 June 1970.

environments, young artists endeavoured to experiment with mass-produced, manufactured material, with the possibilities of the machine—associated usually with 'automation' and 'alienation'—to enact a freedom of productivity, in a model that was essentially participative and collectivist, and creative and constructive. Rather than privileging functionalism (an economic category) that enacted mass 'depersonalisation' and 'standardisation' catering to wider consumption, environments such as Iveković's *Untitled Environment* appealed to the creative, implementing a synthesis between industries and artists, in order to contribute to the culture of everyday life.

WERE ARTISTIC PRACTICES EMERGING FROM THESE INSTITUTIONS AFFIRMATIVE OF OR OPPOSED TO THE LOCAL SOCIO-POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT?

With its unusual methods of practice, and despite minimal financial resources at its disposal, the SC Gallery began to represent an 'experimental catalyst for all those creators who expand our understanding of the visible world'.[33] By the late 1960s a series of landmark exhibitions had confirmed the gallery's independent and progressive ambitions, marking a watershed in the history of the so-called 'New Art Practice' in Yugoslavia. In April 1970, the gallery confirmed its progressive stance by collaborating with artists Boris Bućan and Davor Tomičić for *Akcija Total* [Total Action]—a radical gesture that was the first to leave the gallery space altogether, but according to Koščević, nevertheless a 'link in the series of actions conceived at the SC Gallery, whose global aim is the establishment of a connection between the artist toward society and society toward artist'.[34] *Akcija Total* was the outcome of a detailed and studious consideration of the possibilities of actions in the urban sphere, aimed at penetrating the art world's narrow field of influence, and a concept already conceived and elaborated upon in 1969. For the action, Bućan and Tomičić placed posters featuring a monochrome blue print, consisting of white geometric and symmetrical abstract forms, on advertising pillars, boxes, and billboards at various locations throughout the city (fig. 3.2). These locations became 'action spaces', in which the artists distributed leaflets featuring a 'draft decree on the democratisation of art'.[35]

With minimal intervention, *Akcija Total* marked an attempt to surpass institutional mechanisms which, according to the distributed *Draft Decree*, 'distorted, obscured, and hindered any discussion of the very idea of art'.[36] As the declaration emphasised, the action represented a gesture of protest against the 'bearers of disciplines like painting, graphics and applied arts', which 'are helpless to understand their own time, consciously mystifying their work [...] persistently trying to persuade us not to believe what we see, but to

rely on their clairvoyant guidance'.[37] It opposed the current status of art disciplines in Yugoslavia—a 'monstrous fabrication of thousands and thousands of paintings, and sculptures, countless luxury designs in applied arts, stupid architectural and urban projects and realisations, and even more stupid "critical" interpretations of all this'—that was impeding the possibility of 'broader social dimensions'.[38] More than ever, 'the conceptual strength of art' was necessary, only to be enacted through an extreme purging and abolition of all artistic disciplines:

> 1. the following is hereby abolished: painting, sculpture, graphic art, applied arts, industrial design, architecture and urban planning.
> 2. A ban is hereby placed on the following: all activity in the history of art and especially the so-called art criticism.
> 3. There shall be no exhibitions in galleries, museums or art pavilions.[39]

All criticisms pointed towards a significantly nepotistic Yugoslav art system, marked by domination and exploitation—from the discipline of 'art history' ('a hobby for leisurely Professors', representing nothing more than pure servility to a limited elite, who in turn 'accept and tolerate this discipline, not because of their spiritual needs, but for decorative needs'), to contemporary architecture (that, in the name of 'an imaginary collective consciousness' produced typified architecture and uniformity)'.[40] Such a struggle was most prevalent in the applied arts, which, as the *Decree* stressed, was conditioned by social groupings and class fractions:

> In a society that does not struggle any more to secure the bare minimum, but which fights hard to achieve a higher standard of living, the products of applied artists fit perfectly into the pattern of society's development. The by-product of this development is the ever increasing number of workers in tertiary activities, whose needs are exactly on the level of their luxury-seeking neighbours, and the luxury-seeking neighbour's neighbour. Such needs are again matchlessly satisfied through the industry of numerous artificiers [sic.] who are faithfully following the taste of their chosen clientele.[41]

How were such standards of bourgeois taste for 'luxury needs' possible in a society that allegedly identified itself as a democracy based on a material basis for the broadest masses of the working people?

Following a package of reforms that ensued from 1965, Yugoslavia had to face that its 'classless utopian society' was gradually developing social and class differences.[42] The 1965 reform sought to remove politics from economic-decision making while maintaining overall control over economy through broad economic plans: transforming the autarchic,

self-sustained, and full-employment economy of the 1950s into a more liberal and world-dependent economy, and introducing a principle of entrepreneurial risk. As a result of the new economic reforms, social relations among workers within production units were not dominated by the (working) masses, but by representatives of state political apparatuses and the technocratic elite, both of which participated in the economy and, consequently, appropriated the surplus value produced by workers.[43] Workers became a secondary aspect in the struggle between bureaucracy and technocracy—directors and other leaders of business enterprises and financial institutions who were seen as the core of a rising 'middle class', all consciously dissociating themselves from the lower social groups through higher incomes and individualised attitudes and lifestyles. Becoming an ever-increasingly divided society towards the end of the 1960s, historian Dušan Bilandžić observed that 'the masses were caught up in a fever of consumption and money-making: in every part of the country, peasants and workers were building houses and buying durable consumer goods, while the richer people were getting vacation houses, ever more expensive cars, and so forth'.[44]

Akcija Total confronted these conditions of 'alienation' and 'commodification' that had produced a clear stratification of Yugoslav society by interrupting the regular ebb and flow of life and engaging with the everyday citizen. Appropriating the definitive urban pockets of consumerist culture—advertising pillars and billboards—into the 'action place of the GSC', it called for forms of culture accessible to all. *Akcija Total* disturbed a bourgeois understanding of art, by confronting it with its favourite vocabulary: objectivity, neutrality, and contemplation. With a clearly outlined programme of action, it confronted a society based on an idea of a unique, homogenous public body, which was in fact conditioned by confrontations between various interest groups.

Among the earliest works to show an interest in public space, *Akcija Total* contained an undoubted ethical dimension. Between 1970 and 1971, the most discussed subject among Zagreb artists and theoreticians who supported progressive art trends was work that shaped the urban environment. A year after Bućan's and Tomičić's action, Zagreb's Gallery of Contemporary Art (GSU) organised the exhibition *Mogučnosti za 1971* (*Possibilities for 1971*), which assembled the new generation of Zagreb's 'plastic artists' first introduced to the public through the environments of the SC Gallery. Such a transferral from a 'parallel' youth space to the republic's largest contemporary art institution in itself demonstrates the expansive influence the SC Gallery was beginning to possess within Zagreb's cultural landscape. *Possibilities for 1971* built on the SC Gallery's developments—consisting of interventions, based on the 'enrichment or rearrangement' of Zagreb's *Gornji grad* (*Upper City*).[45] Above all, they were intended to point out the needs and possibilities for such 'activities at the present moment in our milieu'.[46] As the exhibition catalogue proclaimed, the authors felt driven:

> Towards the realisation of the social role of art in the present time. The significance of such works is that they are not made for sale, namely, since they don't have the character of goods, they cannot become a means for gaining profit. They ought to be the common property of all citizens, and socialist society, which, in principle striving for other aims in addition to material well-being, should be the promoter and buyer of the artistic activity.[47]

Seeking to 'realise the social role of the artist', the exhibits produced for the oldest part of the city were made from materials provided free of charge by industrial producers (listed on the back page of the exhibition catalogue)—a relationship that defined the physical construction of the exhibits, whose form had to further correspond with the 'simple technical conditions in that environment'.[48] As with the SC Gallery's environments, these works were conceived with an interest in the public, and therefore a 'democratic form of communication with audiences'.[49] They emerged from an empirical investigation into the public need for an organised, formulated, and planned space.

The work that most effectively achieved the constructive goal of serving the 'material well-being of citizens, and socialist society', was Iveković's *Prolaz* (*Passage*): a series of spiral-shaped neon tubes placed among the Zakmardijev passage, rhythmically arranged in the area between two squares to produce an illuminated 'rainbow'.[50] As Iveković recalls, she initially chose the passage since 'traffic is always quite lively, but wanted in some way to thematise the urban motion':

> The operation was pretty expensive and complicated. It was difficult to install all those neon tubes, and our contractor warned us of potential safety risks. When we finally assembled everything, the thing only lasted two days. The next day a notice was announced in the comments section of *Vjesnik*. In that article, the author emphasised how important it was that the passage was finally lit up, considering that girls from the local high school pass through there, and have experienced encounters of an uncomfortable kind. This comment led me to think about the social role of such interventions.[51]

Although perhaps inadvertently, Iveković's piece demonstrated the kind of social aims these interventions possessed—the 'euphoria of combining art with the machine for the general benefit of all citizens'.[52] This was a project conceived in sight of a particular location to fulfil a specific role, accompanied by a 'strong wish to build a better world'.[53]

Certainly, such a left position of 'raising consciousness'—arguably directed towards the transnational and cross-class quality of Yugoslavia's consumerism—was not exclusive to the Yugoslav art scene, but was aligned to the humanist orientation of Western Marxism: a position that according to Koščević was 'largely integrated into the worldview and modus operandi'.[54] Such perspectives gave a theoretical legitimacy to an art prac-

3.3
Art (According to Coca-Cola), 1972, from the Bućan Art series. Polycolor, canvas.

tice that was an 'authentic expression of the self-managing system'—which 'reflects on culture and art as a relevant social aim, and not as a production of consumer goods intended for the market.'[55]

Soon after these projects, however, commissions for urban environmental projects ceased to appear. According to Iveković, it seemed that such initiatives, 'suspended on an understanding of art which communicated "with the people"—close to the socialist concept—applied an artistic language that was so radically new that the audience was really limited'.[56] Many of the critics initially enthusiastic about art's interaction with the urban space now expressed disillusionment, identifying the failure of art in public space to truly succeed in its effort to reach the people. They also noted the indifference of the public and the failure of social institutions to take advantage of the artist's offer to act in the name of the public good. Instead, artists began to concern themselves with the media characteristics of the age – in a society where 'real socialism' had embraced the 'Western ideal of an unlimited wasteful material prosperity'.[57] This was a turn from urban interventions, to what Zagreb critic Davor Matičević described as the 'basic criteria of modern urban life': 'the false myths or pseudo-needs imposed on the consumer by mass media'.[58]

These 'false myths or pseudo-needs' had infiltrated Yugoslav society by way of the Western (capitalist) influences that came with the opening of the country's borders in the early 1960s. With the rise of unemployment that ensued as a consequence of the reforms of 1965, the phenomenon of Gastarbeiter emerged—the external migration of guest workers. With over a million citizens living and working in Western capitalist countries, open borders meant not only an unrestricted flow of people, but also of trade and of consumerist culture. Self-management was experiencing a serious crisis, not only in the sense that it was showing an increasingly capitalist form, but also in the fact it turned a large part of the population into guests of the capitalist West.

In February 1973, the SC Gallery installed an exhibition by Boris Bućan, that definitively marked an interpolation of images and labels from consumer society into the artistic sphere, questioning the accepted visual codes imposed upon the urban environment. In his *Bućan Art Series* (fig. 3.3), the artist appropriated the standard recognised format of canvas and covered it with logos of globally recognisable companies—Coca-Cola, Marlboro, Swiss Air etc.—ironically inscribing them with the word 'ART'. The title of the exhibi-

3.4
Marta Minujín and Ruben Santantonín (with the collaboration of Pablo Suárez, David Lamelas, Rodolfo Prayón, Floreal Amor and Leopoldo Maler), *La Menesunda, 1965*, Installation image, ITDT, 18 May – 6 June 1965.

tion paraphrased the quality of value—by using the word 'art', Bućan placed his work on the level of such notions as the various -isms, styles, and trends, replacing it with the awareness that it is the artist who determines the value criteria. The works manipulated a series of contradictions—the individual, hand-painted, 'auratic' canvas, pitted against the mass-printed corporate logo, art versus advertisement—in order to ultimately supersede formal questions. Replacing them was the iconographic hierarchy of signs from everyday life, communicating a critical attitude to the present state of society-at-large—a 'golden age' of deceptive prosperity, based on foreign credits, massive imports and a wasteful use of imported energy.[59] In an increasingly stratified and oppressive social climate, the once youthful optimism that drove the gallery's programmes was abandoned. From the mid-1970s onwards, artists previously working through the SC Gallery would begin to take matters into their own hands, seeking out new models of self-organisation, outside institutional parameters. For many, their initial idealism would eventually be substituted with an unwavering model of pessimism.

In Buenos Aires, meanwhile, the ITDT experienced a similar 'golden period' towards the late 1960s, during which it both fostered and hosted radical events that challenged the passive nature of the surrounding cultural climate. Among the most iconic events that took place at the ITDT, which established its reputation as a hub for pop art and happenings, were Marta Minujin and Ruben Santantonin's *La Menesunda* (fig. 3.4) and the Group's Arte De Los Medios de Comunicaciones Masivas (Mass Media and Communications Art Group) *Happening Para un Jabalí Defunto* (*Happening for a Dead Boar*), or *Anti-Happening* (fig. 3.5). *La Menesunda*, (translated by Ana Longoni as 'the drug on the market', by Marta Traba as 'the flop' and more commonly as 'the mash up') consisted a visual itinerary through 16 environments that would unsettle the viewer—such as enter-

EL MUNDO, DOMINGO 21 DE AGOSTO DE 1966

HAPPENING
PARA UN JABALI DIFUNTO

MANUEL MUJICA LAINEZ, obstruido pero no perdido en uno de sus laberintos.

MARILU MARINI, en un arrebato, rodeada por coparticipantes.

GRACIELA MARTINEZ desciende al nivel de los demás.

DALMIRO SAENZ, el cazador de jabalíes neuquinos, y Susana Muzzio.

EGLE MARTIN, fotografiada por Marta Minujín, mientras registra sus bases.

Edmundo E. Eichelbaum

3.5
Oscar Masotta, Eduardo Costa, Raúl Escari and Roberto Jacoby, *Happening Para un Jabalí Difunto*, 1966.

ing a room with a couple in bed, a beauty salon for visitors housed in a structure in the shape of a woman's head, and rooms filled with 10 television sets showing popular television programs at full volume. The experience concluded when visitors returned to the urban environment through a room drenched in the scent of fried foods. In a typewritten text with notes on the objectives of *La Menesunda*, Minujin wrote:

> Unaware of his or her intimate mechanisms, we would like to turn the viewer inside out, like a glove. We want the viewer to feel that previously unrecognised needs are recognised, like the need to touch, to listen, to feel art from the inside out as he moves through inner spaces…The system of La Menesunda contradicts the exhibition of individual works. It removes the viewer form the isolated thing.[60]

This statement was based on Constantin Stanislavski's notion of learning from within, in theatre the concept of feeling/experiencing before acting. Because it required overt physical participation as it set out to 'reawaken' the dormant sensibility of the viewer, *La Menesunda* marked a moment after which attitudes changed. *La Menesunda* is closely as-

sociated with pop in Argentina, especially due to objects employed in the construction of its environments: images drawn from the mass media, television sets, colourful mass-produced materials, neon lights.

Over 8000 visitors flooded in to see Minujin's curious environment, seeking to experience the irreverent yet playful spirit that pervaded the ITDT. Pop was thus calcified within the annals of the centre, and the term gained further gravitas as the years progressed. In 1966 the popular tabloid magazine *Primera Plana* published a feature on the so-called 'Pop Group', which included Marta Minujin, Ruben Santantonin and others, all artists closely associated to the ITDT. The front cover spread showed a photograph of the group standing over the word 'Pop' printed in large colourful characters. Pop became the symbol of youthful irreverence and provocation that became defining principles of the Di Tella.[61]

Whilst *La Menesunda* is closely associated to the term 'Pop', the second term that is most commonly coupled with the ITDT's history is 'Happening'. Minujin's *La Menesunda*, which, at first, she termed 'environment' (not happening), sparked great interest, and quickly many artists began to respond for this new genre. Oscar Masotta, prominent critic and intellectual, and artists Eduardo Costa, Raul Escari, and Roberto Jacoby, collectively known as the Grupo de los Medios, executed *Anti-happening* or *Happening para un Jabalí Difunto*: the first happening of its kind to take place independently of the ITDT. Masotta and the others generated a false information circuit with the complicity of newspapers. The group distributed false advertisements, which included a press release and photographs of venues of where the 'happening' was supposed to take place. Generating a commentary on the influence the mass media have on our perception of reality, the group observed how the non-existent happening was fed back into the media, as advertisements, and expectation proliferated. The work culminated with the press' recognition of the trickery, which occurred three-four months after the first advertisement was published.

Although happenings were publicised by the media (in magazines such as *Primera Plana*) as the new artistic form, until 1966 the term was seldom understood.[62] Despite being absorbed into the cultural language, both pop and happenings were imported terms. The term pop was originally applied to the art produced in Buenos Aires by Pierre Restany, the champion critic of French Nouveau Réalisme. In 1964 (soon after the opening of the 'Pop' Venice Biennale), Jorge Romero Brest, director of the ITDT, invited Restany to judge the yearly award.[63] Upon his return to Paris, Restany wrote the article *Buenos Aires and the New Humanism*. In this celebratory account of his experience of the Argentine Capital, Restany marked the presence of a freedom within the very fabric of the city. The most remarkable terminology that emerged from Restany's article is the term 'lunfardo', an ambiguous dialect, which he used to describe the particular and localised strain of Pop Art he witnessed emerging at the Di Tella.[64] 'Pop Lunfardo' was seen by the Di Tella artists as an international validation of their work, and was therefore adopted thereafter.[65]

Until 1967 Minujin had defined *La Menesunda* and many of her subsequent works as 'environments', not happenings, despite her frequent travels to Paris and New York.

The term was only fully absorbed in 1967 when Masotta and the others succeeded in organising the event at the ITDT *Sobre Happenings* (*About Happenings*), where happenings by Allan Kaprow, Michael Kirby, La Monte Young, and Carolee Schneeman were restaged.[66] The evening was a success. Of the 200 who were allowed into the ITDT, another 300 were waiting outside. Masotta and Eduardo Costa commented that spectators 'believed themselves to be witnessing something sensational'.[67]

Sobre Happenings was the result of a trip to New York where Masotta had witnessed in person happenings by Kaprow and others. Furthermore, the publication of Jim Dine and Michael Kirby's *Happenings* (1965) and Allan Kaprow, Jean-Jacques Lebel, and Gutai's volume *Assemblage, Environments & Happenings* (1966), was coupled by Masotta's *Happenings* (1967). Both terms therefore were applied a posteriori, signalling an effort to make specific local 'lunfardo' practices intelligible to wider international audiences and an alignment with the ITDT's original ambition to emulate institutions such as MoMA.

In conjunction with the political context, the blossoming practices identified with pop emerged immediately after the deposition of President Frondizi in 1963—largely due to his problematic diplomatic relations with Cuba, which led the military and the conservatives (supported by the United States) to fear the government's shift to the left. The new president, Arturo Illia, carried on Frondizi's policies with greater caution towards the industrial elites and to foreign investment. In 1964 the United States was Argentina's major investor, providing 56% of foreign capital in the country. In this period SIAM Corporation was undergoing unrestrained expansion due to renewed access to public credit (employee benefits and obligations) made available by Illia's policies. Consequently, the ITDT's funding was ample and stable.

Between 1965 and 1966, Illia promoted new labour policies, which jeopardised the stability of many corporations, including SIAM, which accumulated significant debt. A new wave of right wing radicalism led to a self-proclaimed 'Revolución Argentina' that established Juan Carlos Onganía as the head of a de facto military dictatorship. From 1966 all cultural activities and freedom of expression were closely monitored by the regime. It was common knowledge that men with long hair or people extravagantly dressed would be persecuted and sometimes arrested. In this context SIAM corporation encountered a phase of severe financial distress, which threatened the stability of the ITDT. Furthermore, the funding provided by the Ford Foundation had been cut back significantly due to the US's war effort in Vietnam. It was in this period that Happenings became a major form of expression. With works such as *Happening para un Jabalí Difunto*, it emerged how artists had begun to gradually seek alternative platforms to those provided by institutions such as the Di Tella.

On the orders of the ITDT's Board of Directors, the Institute was to remain a-political, so as to avoid any conflicts of interest. However, with the establishment of a military dictatorship, an apolitical stance became increasingly problematic. Dalila Puzzovio, who in the 1966 Di Tella prize exhibition had exhibited an eight meter wide portrait of herself in

a bikini—causing scandal among the conservatives—recalled how many visitors of the Di Tella almost feared her for her flamboyant outlook.[68] After 1966, however, as Kynaston McShine wrote in the catalogue essay to *Information* in 1970, 'if you are [an artist] in Argentina, you probably have had a neighbour who has been in jail for having long hair, or for not being "dressed' properly".[69]

In this context of financial strain on the administrative side, it was paramount for the ITDT to maintain its position at the forefront of artistic practices in the city. Given the success of *Sobre Happenings* and the wider use of the term, in 1967 Romero Brest strategically replaced the traditional prize (the International one was still in place) with *Experiencias Visuales* (*Visual Experiences*), which did not provide a pecuniary award. For the first edition of this 'experiment', Brest invited twelve artists to present 'situations', or 'experiences' at the Institute. At the opening conference of *Experiencias Visuales* '67 Romero Brest invited the viewers to 'suspend aesthetic judgement'. This 'suspension' sought to allow a more open comprehension of the events and to protect the Institute from waves of criticism, which could have further jeopardised the centre's funding. In an unpublished letter to his friend Mario Oks, Romero Brest explained why he 'flees polemics', understood as the antithesis of action: 'I loathe ideas when unaccompanied by action', foregrounding the premise behind *Experiencias Visuales*.[70]

Despite Romero Brest's caution, the following year's edition of *Experiencias Visuales*, provoked an outstanding reaction. The exhibition was censored and closed down by the police only a few days after the opening. The work that caused most distress was an untitled piece by Roberto Plate, which consisted of an empty bathroom stall that the viewer could enter. The work encouraged the public to write their opinions on the walls of the stall, which turned into a vessel for protest as anonymous graffiti that spoke out against the regime multiplied. Due to legal charges, the police censured the work by closing the cubicle with official seals and placing a policeman in front of it—censure thus became part of the work itself. Romero Brest was forced to eliminate the piece from the exhibition, which led all other artists to withdraw their works in protest and to burn them in a bonfire on the street.

After 1968 most of the ITDT's funding was withdrawn to avoid clashes with the regime and many artists distanced themselves from Romero Brest to embrace more politically active work. By 1969, Romero Brest had to cancel the centre's program and in 1970 its final closure was officialised. SIAM Corporation had spiralled into such debt that many assets, including large parts of the Di Tella Foundation's collection, had to be liquidated. In 1972 Romero Brest wrote, remembering 1964: 'How I wish you could have sustained optimism eight years later! Then I could foresee the militant shift towards politics of the youngest, almost always the most talented artists, or how that shift would determine the artist planet just short of the void'.[71] Brest's words pinpoint the impact of the political shifts, which ultimately caused the closure of the Instituto Torcuato Di Tella.

NEGOTIATING MULTIPLICITY: TOWARDS A (PARTIAL) CONCLUSION

Within current historiographies, the ITDT is closely associated with pop and happenings, seen as essential precursors of art practices in the late 1960s and early 1970s that are frequently collated under the umbrella term of 'conceptualism'. Longoni, whom we previously mentioned as one of the most important academic contributors in the field of Argentine alternative art, identifies the institute within a cultural itinerary that led to what she defines as 'the Argentine 1968': a period widely influenced by the intensification of a political climate that pushed several artists to seek alternative languages to subvert a notoriously oppressive regime.[72] Critic and intellectual, Oscar Masotta's lecture *After Pop We Dematerialise*, encouraged such systems of communication—surveying the shift in art practices from the artefact itself to a fundamental reliance on alternative communication systems—those of media and information circuits. Masotta drew inspiration from El Lissitsky's essay *The Future of the Book* (1926), in which, for instance the advent of the radio was examined as a manifestation of the 'dematerialisation' of social communication.[73] This particular text had just been republished in the *New Left Review*, which invites the speculation that both Masotta would have had renewed access to it.[74] Alongside the narrative of 'dematerialisation' it is vital to recognise connections with political and economic circumstances, which often dictated the operational status of any given institution.

Analysing the circumstances of the closure of the Di Tella, Andrea Giunta explains:

> Within this context of revolutionary emergency, art necessarily had to find itself in a new place and ask itself, once again, what its purpose was and which forms were best for facing the challenges implied by the revolution. At the end of the 1960s and the face of the radicalisation of the revolutionary movements in Latin America, the margin of ambiguity that was permissible at the beginning of the decade began to disappear. Artists, as well as the rest of society, had to define their positions.[75]

Giunta's perspective is invaluable in understanding how artists dealt with complex political situations. In the case of the ITDT, a greater interest in happenings as the new artistic medium occurred in conjunction with a decline in SIAM Corporation's financial situation, which provides a further avenue into understanding the cultural processes that developed in those years.

For Yugoslav artists, a left-wing orientation represented a natural and understandable line of activity. The activities of the SC Gallery and its affiliated artists paralleled Western artists' agendas, but as Iveković explains, the concept of an 'art which leaves the institutions and communicates with "the people" was much closer to a socialist idea of society'.[76] At its founding, the activity of the SC Gallery filled a void in the cultural life of Zagreb, by offering, for the first time, young artists the opportunity to publicly show their

work. The pioneering events organised through the gallery clearly marked a decisive period in Yugoslav New Art Practice, stubbornly charting avenues outside the conventional art system, through experiments that practiced a non-bureaucratised form of engagement. But the work of the SC Gallery was frequently subjected to a range of criticism, which regularly 'announced the immanent end and collapse of the gallery and its activity as an institution'.[77] In an increasingly stratified and oppressive social climate, it would seem that the SC Gallery took socialist ideology more seriously than the cynical political elite that was in power. But the local cultural apparatus refused to recognise the space, integral to the new social programme, as its own.

In this study, the ITDT and the SC gallery demonstrate various adjoining points and common grounds, regardless of the geo-political voids that separate them. From the outset the ITDT was envisioned as a centre for multidisciplinary experimentation, and the SC Gallery as a living social organism. Both institutions overtly responded to governmental stances towards cultural production and internationalism—developmentalism in the case of Argentina and self-managing socialism in Yugoslavia. Although their funding was sourced from opposing patronages (private vs. state), in both cases the artistic practices that emerged sought to challenge the stale distribution of art in the pursuit of revitalising a passive and rigid art system that catered to the petty-bourgeoisie. The collapse of both Di Tella, and the progressive neutralisation of the SC Gallery were both the results of complex socio-economic shifts in government policy.

A dialogue between two institutions as specific as the SC Gallery in Zagreb and the Instituto Torcuato Di Tella in Buenos Aires highlights significant similarities, which may characterise certain general aspects of institutions in the 1960s. It is upon these generalisations that many curatorial and scholarly enterprises draw upon, with the aim of establishing a globalised view of artistic practices. In exhibitions such as *Global Conceptualism*, the necessity to establish connections between works of art produced under disparate socio-political circumstances became a kind of unconscious. Both centres have been acknowledged as sites of (proto-)conceptual art practices, and referenced within catalogues rendering 'global' art histories. Within this paradigm, the term 'conceptualism' – a label that frequently permeates through global art narratives—is applied in order to solicit comparisons and analogies. Yet, it becomes apparent that only through analysing such practices with particular attention to socio-political conditions can a greater specificity be achieved when opting for a global and a cross-comparative approach to local art histories. As our study has demonstrated, examining the kinds of institutions that enabled alternative art activity to emerge and thrive provides one effective and precise way to address artistic agencies across different political climates from a shared vantage point.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1. Iris Dressler, 'Subversive Practices: Art Under Conditions of Political Repression: 60s-80s / South Amrican / Europe', in Iris Dressler and Hans D. Christ (eds.), *Subversive Practices: Art Under Conditions of Political Repression: 60s-80s / South Amrican / Europe*, (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2010), p.49.

2. Ana Longoni, 'Other Beginnings of Conceptualism (Argentinean and Latin-American)', *Papers d'Art*, no.93 (2007), ed. Fundació Espais d'Art Contemporani, Girona, Spain, p.202.

3. Dressler, 'Subversive Practices', p.49.

4. Dressler, 'Subversive Practices', p.56.

5. Also of crucial importance to the field of comparative studies between Latin American and Eastern Europe are *ArtMargins* and *ArtMargins Online*, which since 1999 have published scholarly articles and essays about 'art practices and visual culture in the emerging global margins.' Of particular significance to the comparative studies between the two regions was the Special Section on 'Artists' Network in Latin American and Eastern Europe' edited by Klara Kemp-Welch and Cristina Freire, *ArtMargins*, vol.1, Issue 2-3, (June-October 2012).

6. Exhibition abstract for *Transmissions: Art in Eastern Europe and Latin America, 1960–1980*, MoMA New York, 2015, accessible online: http://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/1532. Two essays were commissioned to supplement the exhibition. See Klara Kemp-Welch, 'Species of Spaces in Eastern European and Latin American Experimental Art', MoMA 2015, and Daniel R. Quiles, 'Mediate Media: Buenos Aires Conceptualism', MoMA 2015. Last accessed 10 May 2016.

7. Tate's Modern's *The World Goes Pop* and the Walker Art Centre's *International Pop*, both launched in 2015, are recent instances of exhibitions that have adopted 'global' outlooks to critically reassess 'canonical' art movements.

8. Luis Camnitzer et al., *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s–1980s*, (exh. cat. Queens Museum New York, 1999).

9. Camnitzer et al., *Global Conceptualism.*

10. Lucy R. Lippard and John Chandler, 'Six Years: The Dematerialisation of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972', *Art International*, vol. 12, no.2 (February 1968), pp.31-36.

11. Ruth Berins Collier and Samuel Handlin, *Reorganizing popular politics: participation and the new interest regime in Latin America* (University Park, Penn. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), p.143.

12. The support provided by the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations was made available in parallel with the IDA initiative.

13. Rockefeller served as United States Vice President from 1974 to 1977 under President Gerald R. Ford. Rockefeller had also subsidised the creation of the Museum of Modern Art in São Paulo and Rio De Janeiro in the late 1940s, among many other cultural initiatives. The 1960s witnessed an increase in the number of corporations willing to invest in culture: the Di Tella and Kaiser in Buenos Aires, General Electric in Montevideo, the Esso Colombiana in Bogota, and Steel Pacific in Chile.

14. John E. King, *El Di Tella y el desarrollo cultural argentino en la década del sesenta* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones de Arte Gaglianone, 1985), p.184.

15. Svetozar Stojanović, 'The June Student Movement and Social Revolution in Yugoslavia', *Praxis International Edition*, vol. 6, no.3-4, (Zagreb, 1970), p.398.

16. *Seventh Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia* (Ljubljana, 1958), translated and re-printed in Prelom Kolektiv (ed.), *SKC and Political Practices of Art. Retrospective 01* (Belgrade, 2010), p.63.

17. Kolektiv (ed.), *SKC and Political Practices of Art*, p. 63.

18. 'Izveštaj redakcije za likovno-izložbenu djelatnost studentskog centra' [A report on the exhibition activity of the Students' Centre], Zagreb, 27 November 1962, printed in Želimir Koščević (ed.), *Galerija Studentskog Centra*, (Zagreb, 1975), p.27. Unless otherwise noted, all translations to English are the author's own.

19. Želimir Koščević in conversation with Zvonko Maković, 'Bezobrazno nas ignoriraju' [They Insolently Ignore Us], *Studentski List*, Zagreb, Autumn 1971, translated in Koščević, *Galerija*, p.154.

20. From 1961, the New Tendencies movement produced kinetic and optical art made mostly from machine-manufactured material. Their work emerged as products of rigorous research, and were amongst the first to privilege the relevance of 'ideas' over the practical mastery of handcrafted objects. For a more detailed overview of the New Tendencies movement, see Martha Rosen (ed.), *A Little-Known Story About a Movement, a Magazine, and the Computer's Arrival in Art: New Tendencies and Bit International* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011) and Armin Medosch, *New Tendencies: Art at the Threshold of the Information Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016).

21. Koščević, 'Bezobrazno nas ignoriraju', p.154. Of particular importance also was Koščević's museological experience abroad, funded through scholarships administered through state institutions. According to him, the most important of these was his four month visit in 1969 to the Moderna Museet in Stockholm—an institution which at the time was directed by Pontus Hultén, and whose innovative curatorial approach bolstered Koščević's own quest for new and experimental methods to art practices. Interview with the author, Samobor, Croatia, December 2014.

22. Koščević Bezobrazno, p.154.

23. 'Galerija studentskog centra objavljuje i raspisuje' [The SC Gallery Announces and Invites], *Novine GSC*, no. 5 (Zagreb, 1968-69), p.20.

24. Angel Kalenberg, 'The Artist and the Museum', *Studio International* (September 1972). Reprinted in *Novine GSC*, no.39 (November 1972), p.157.

25. Davor Matičević, 'Predgovor' [Introduction], in *Inovacije u Hrvatskoj umjetnosti sedamdesetih godina*, [Innovation in Croatian art in the 1970s], (exh. cat., Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, 1982), p.96.

26. Matičević, 'Predgovor'.

27. Zvonko Maković, 'Sanja Iveković', *Novine GSC*, no. 17 (Zagreb, March 1970), p.51.

28. Ješa Denegri, 'Art in the Past Decade: General Characteristics of New Trends in Art', in Marijan Susovski (ed.), *The New Art Practice in Yugoslavia, 1966-1978*, (exh. cat., GSU, Zagreb, 1978), p.5.

29. Želimir Koščević, 'Bućan-Art', *Novine GSC*, no. 40, (January 1973), n.p.

30. Maković, 'Sanja Iveković', p.51.

31. Maković, 'Sanja Iveković', p.51.

32. Karl Marx, quoted by J.B. Tito, *Workers Manage Factories in Yugoslavia*, (pamphlet, Belgrade, 1950), pp.4-43.

33. Anon., 'Akcija Total', *15 Dana: Ćasopis za Kuluturu I Umetnosti* [15 Days: Magazine of Culture and Art], No.8-9, Belgrade (November/December 1970), p.8.

34. Anon., 'Akcija Total', p.8.

35. Boris Bućan & Davor Tomičić, 'Akcija "Total": nacrt dekreta o demokratizacii umjetnosti (s obrazloženjem), [Draft Decree on the Democratisation of Art], *Novine GSC*, no. 22 (April 1970), p.81.

36. Bućan & Tomičić, 'Akcija "Total"', p.81.

37. Bućan & Tomičić, 'Akcija "Total"', p.81.

38. Bućan & Tomičić, 'Akcija "Total"', p.81.

39. Bućan & Tomičić, 'Akcija "Total"', p.81.

40. Bućan & Tomičić, 'Akcija "Total"', p.81.

41. Bućan & Tomičić, 'Akcija "Total"', p.81.

42. Ivana Bago and Antonia Majaca, 'Dissociative Association, Dionysian Socialism, Non-Action and Delayed Audience. Between Action and Exodus in the Art of the 1960s and 1970s in the Socialist Republic of Croatia', in Ivana Bago, Antonia Majaca, & Vesna Vuković (eds.), *Removed from the Crowd: Unexpected Encounters I*, (Zagreb: BLOK and DeLVe, 2011), p.285.

43. Gal Kirn, 'From the Primacy of Partisan Politics to the Post-Fordist Tendency in Yugoslav Self-Managing Socialism', in G. Kirn (ed.), *Post-Fordism and its Discontents*, (Maastricht, 2010), p.281.

44. Dušan Bilandžić, *Historija Socijalističke Federativne Republike Jugoslavije, glavni procesi* [History of the SFRY: Key Processes], (Zagreb, 1979), p.394. Translated in P. H. Patterson, *Bought and Sold: Living and Losing the Good Life in Socialist Yugoslavia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), p.303.

45. Davor Matičevic, 'Predgovor' [Introduction], *Mogučnosti za 1971*, (exh. cat., Galerija Suvremene Umetnosti, Zagreb, 1971), p.3.

46. Matičevic, 'Predgovor', p.3.

47. Matičevic, 'Predgovor', p.3.

48. Matičevic, 'Predgovor', p.3.

49. Matičevic, 'Predgovor', p.3.

50. Matičevic, 'Predgovor', p.3.

51. Sanja Iveković, '"Žive skulpture i medijske interakcije": Razgovarale Nataša Govedić i Suzana Marjanić' [Living Sculpture and Media Interaction: Discussion with Nataša Govedić and Suzana Marjanić], *Zarez*, pp.bys powerful ideological apparatuss become indidivual and heroic acts of resistance and opposition, struggling against a despoti, pp.12-14.

52. Matičevic, 'Predgovor', p.12.

53. Ibid.

54. Želimir Koščević, 'We Succeeded in Creating a Beautiful and Instructive Thing That's Inevitably Been Irredeemably Lost, But Such is Life,' *Newspaper Galerija Nova*, no. 18, December 2008.

55. Iveković, 'Žive skulpture', p.12. Notions of alienation became central to the thoughts of the international Left of the 1960s: in large part through Herbert Marcuse, one of the most widely read theorists of the time, first published in Yugoslavia in 1965. Marcuse's central idea that contemporary capitalist and technological society promotes one-dimensional thinking, reducing people's developmental opportunities, had particular resonance to the system of self-management. In the summer of 1968, Marcuse attended the Korcčula Summer School for the second time. The theme of the 1968 School meeting, which took place in August, was 'Marx and Revolution', and Marcuse's presentation was entitled 'The Realm of Freedom and the Realm

of Necessity: Reconsidered', during which he again emphasised that: 'Human freedom in a true sense is possible only beyond the realm of necessity [...] beyond the conditions of full automation, where the immediate producer is "dissociated" from the material process of production, and becomes a free "subject", in the sense that he can play with, experiment with the technical material, with the possibilities of the machine and of the things produced and transformed by the machines.' See Herbert Marcuse, *The Realm of Freedom and the Realm of Necessity: A Reconsideration*, (Korčula, 1969), available online: http://www.marcuse.org/herbert/pubs/60spubs/69praxis/69praxis7pagePDF.pdf.

56. Sanja Iveković, 'Feminism, Activism and Historicisation: Sanja Iveković Talks to Antonia Majača', *N.paradoxa: International Feminist Art Journal*, Vol. 23 (January 2009), p.6.

57. Mihailo Marković, *Democratic Socialism: Theory and Practice*, (New York, 1982), p.178.

58. Davor Matičević, *Sanja Iveković: Dokumenti, 1949-1976*, (exh. cat., GSU, Zagreb, 1976), n.p.

59. Predrag Marković, 'Where Have all the Flowers Gone?: Yugoslav Culture in the 1970s', in Marie-Janine Calic, Dietmar Neutatz, & Julia Obertreis (eds.), *The Crisis of Socialist Modernity: The Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in the 1970s*, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), p.133.

60. Marta Minujín, Ruben Santantonín, Jorge Romero Brest, Flyer distributed for the presentation of *La Menesunda*, held at the Instituto Torcuato Di Tella, Buenos Aires, May 26-June 13, 1965. Reproduced in Inés Katzenstein, *Listen, Here, Now!: Argentine Art of the 1960s: Writings of the Avant-Garde* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2004).

61. The very notion of 'culture as provocation' gave the title to a monograph published on Romero Brest after his death with contributions by Pierre Restany and many of the Di Tella artists. Jorge Romero Brest, Edgardo Giménez, and Alfredo Arias. Jorge Romero Brest: la cultura como provocación. [Argentina]: [Edición Edgardo Giménez], 2006.

62. This was especially true of tabloid magazines as *Primera Plana*, widely publicised the new medium, because of Marta Minujín's interventions in the media such as *La Cabalcada*, and *Sucesos Plasticos*, 1964.

63. In 1964 the US pavilion curated by Alan Solomon, featuring the work of several pop artists, had received severe criticism. On that occasion, the Cardinal of Venice prohibited all Catholics from visiting the exhibition. Jorge Romero Brest had visited the exposition and had subsequently written a lengthy text with his reflections on pop art, titled 'La Coyunctura Actual', reproduced in Gonzalo M. Aguilar, Rodrigo Alonso, and Paulo Herkenhoff, *Arte De Contradicciones: Pop, Realismos Y Política, Brasil - Argentina 1960*, (Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 2012), p.177.

64. Jorge Luis Borges explains the origins of this coloured term in the book *The Language of Argentines*, 1935. At the end of the nineteenth century in Buenos Aires, thieves used to call themselves *lunfardos*. *Lunfardo* or *lunfa* came to mean the secret code they used, which was complicated by multiple meanings and word plays. Many tango lyrics are peppered with *lunfardismo*, which gradually became a typical expression of porteño identity. Pierre Restany, 'Buenos Aires y el Nuevo humanismo', originally published in the magazine *Planeta*, n. 5 (Buenos Aires, 1965). Reproduced in Aguilar et. al. *Arte de contradicciones*, p. 222.

65. The term Pop Lunfardo reappears in various texts and correspondences of the period. In a letter to Peter Townsend, director of the magazine *Studio International* in 1960, Romero Brest cites Restany's definition within an account of the Argentine artistic landscape of the previous decade. The letter is reproduced in Inés Katzenstein (ed.), *Listen, here, now! Argentine art of the 1960s: writings of the avant-garde* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2004), p.133.

66. Oscar Masotta, 'Happening: reflexiones y relato', in Masotta, *Happenings* (Buenos Aires: Editorial J. Alvarez, 1967), reproduced in Katzenstein, *Listen, here, now!*, p.206.

67. Masotta, 'Happening: reflexiones y relato', p.206.

68. Recorded interview with Sofia Gotti, Buenos Aires, 14 January 2012.

69. Kynaston McShine, *Information* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1970).

70. Jorge Romero Brest, 'Why I Flee Polemics', Unpublished letter to Mario Oks, 1966, in complementary CD to Jorge Romero Brest, Edgardo Giménez, and Alfredo Arias, *Jorge Romero Brest: La Cultura Como Provocación* (Buenos Aires: Edición Edgardo Giménez, 2006).

71. Jorge Romero Brest, quoted by Andrea Giunta in *Jorge Romero Brest: rewriting Modernism* in Katzenstein, *Listen, Here, Now!*, p.87.

72. Ana Longoni and Mariano Mestman. *Del Di Tella a "Tucumán Arde": vanguardia artística y política en el '68 argentino* (Buenos Aires, El Cielo por Asalto, 2000).

73. This lecture thus predated Lucy Lippard and John Chandler's celebrated 'Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object', by a year.

74. El Lissitsky, 'The future of the book', *New Left Review* I/41, (January-February 1967).

75. Andrea Giunta, 'Jorge Romero Brest', p.78.

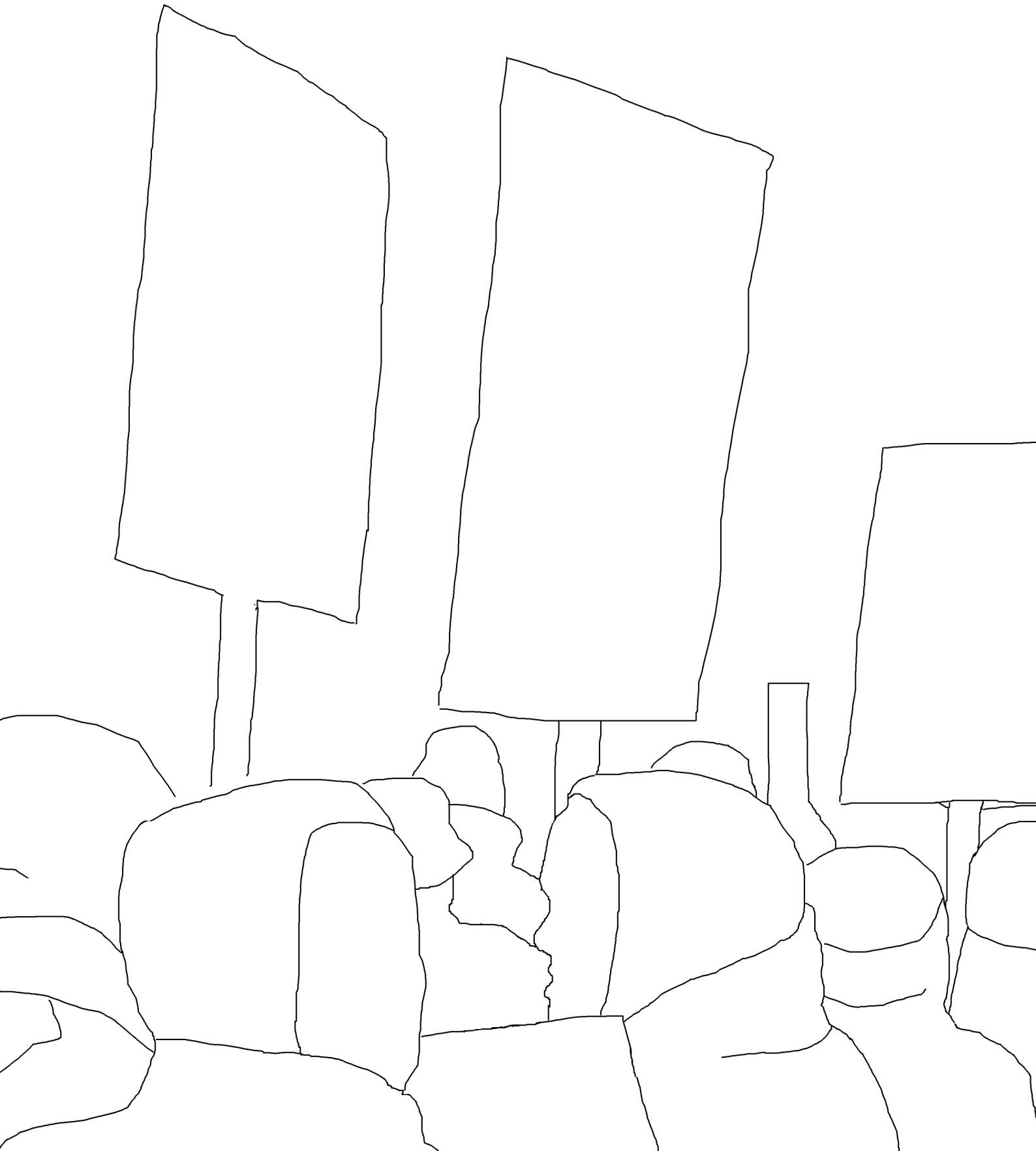
76. Sanja Iveković, 'Sanja Iveković in Conversation with Antonia Majača', *The Collection Book, Thyssen-Bornemsiza Art Contemporary* (Vienna, 2008).

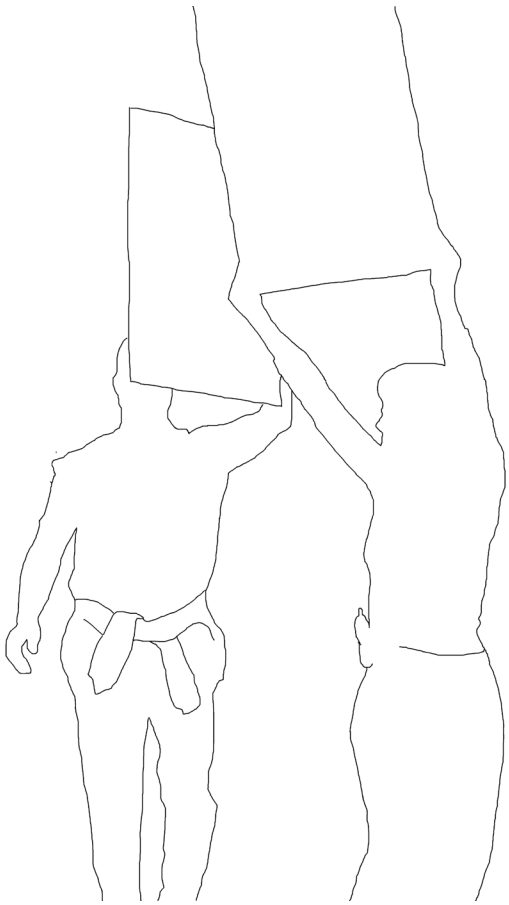
77. Koščević, *Galerija Studentskog Centra*, n.p.

ARTISTS' PROJECT:

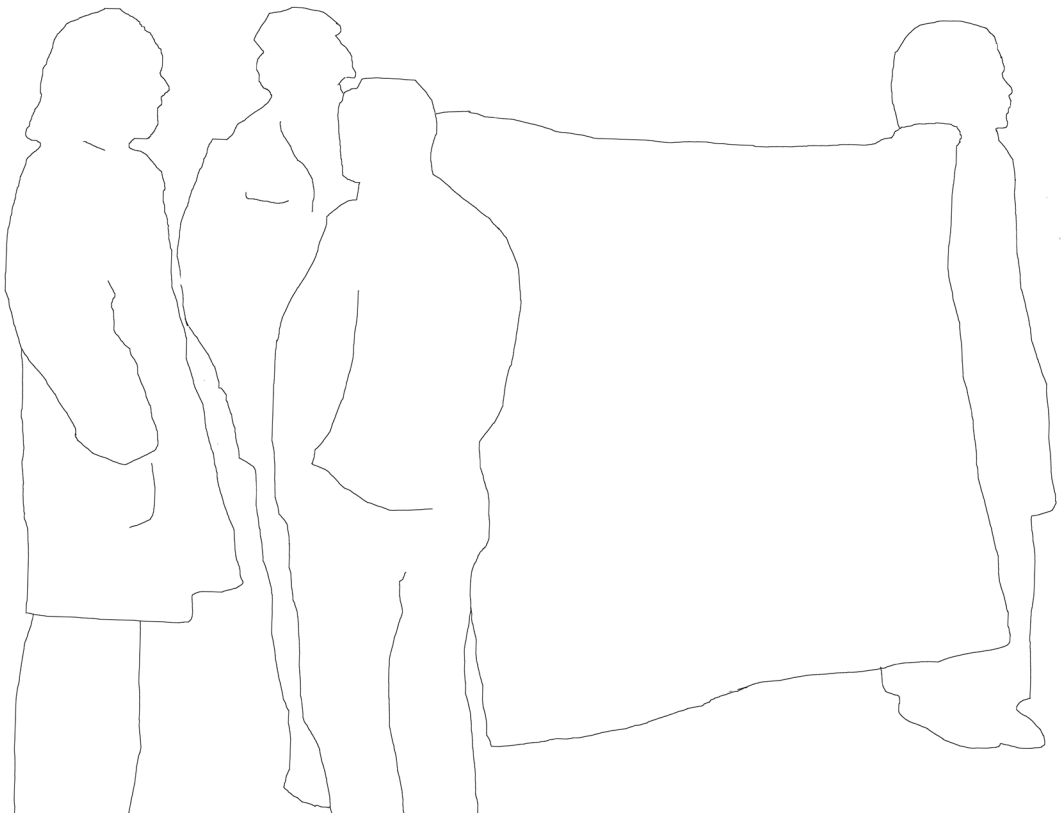
IN TIMES LIKE THESE, ONLY CRIMINALS REMAIN SILENT

ANDREA GEYER and SHARON HAYES



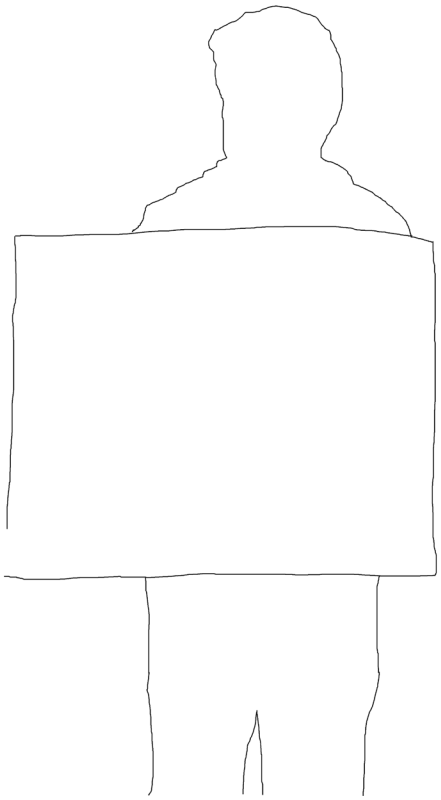


Have you ever taken a poll before? Do you have one opinion or many opinions? Do you feel that some people have opinions about almost everything, other people have opinions about just some things, and still other people have very few opinions? What about you? Would you say polls are very useful or not useful at all? Do you pay a lot of attention to the results of polls or none at all? Do you talk to people, read the newspaper or watch TV? How many days in the past week did you watch the national network news on TV? How long does it take for you to form your opinion? Do you think your opinions are heard or that no one listens to you? Are you a part of something called public opinion? Do you think you learn more talking with one person or talking with a crowd of people? Do you listen to other people's opinion or do you shut your ears? Do you value the opinion of an ordinary person more, less or the same as that of an expert? Has someone else's opinion about an election influenced the way you've voted once, twice, many times or not at all? How do you feel when an opinion is voiced loudly or repetitively? How do you feel when someone refuses to offer an opinion? In general would you say that your opinion has changed a lot, a little or not much in the last 10 years? Do you know why it changed or is it a complete mystery? Have you ever offered your opinion to someone without being asked to do so? Have you ever had to listen to someone's opinion against your will? Do you often remain silent? Are you intimidated a lot, a little or not at all? Do you think that when most people are speaking they are giving an opinion or speaking the truth? What does the statement "speak your mind" mean to you? Is it more important to speak or to be heard? Do you agree that the truth about a specific issue lies between the many opinions on that issue? Does it matter to agree? How do you handle alienation? How often would you say you've felt afraid, very often, fairly often, occasionally, or rarely? Do you feel you can merge in a crowd? Do you feel you are an independent thinker? Do you make up your mind and just do things? A lot or a little? Often or rarely?

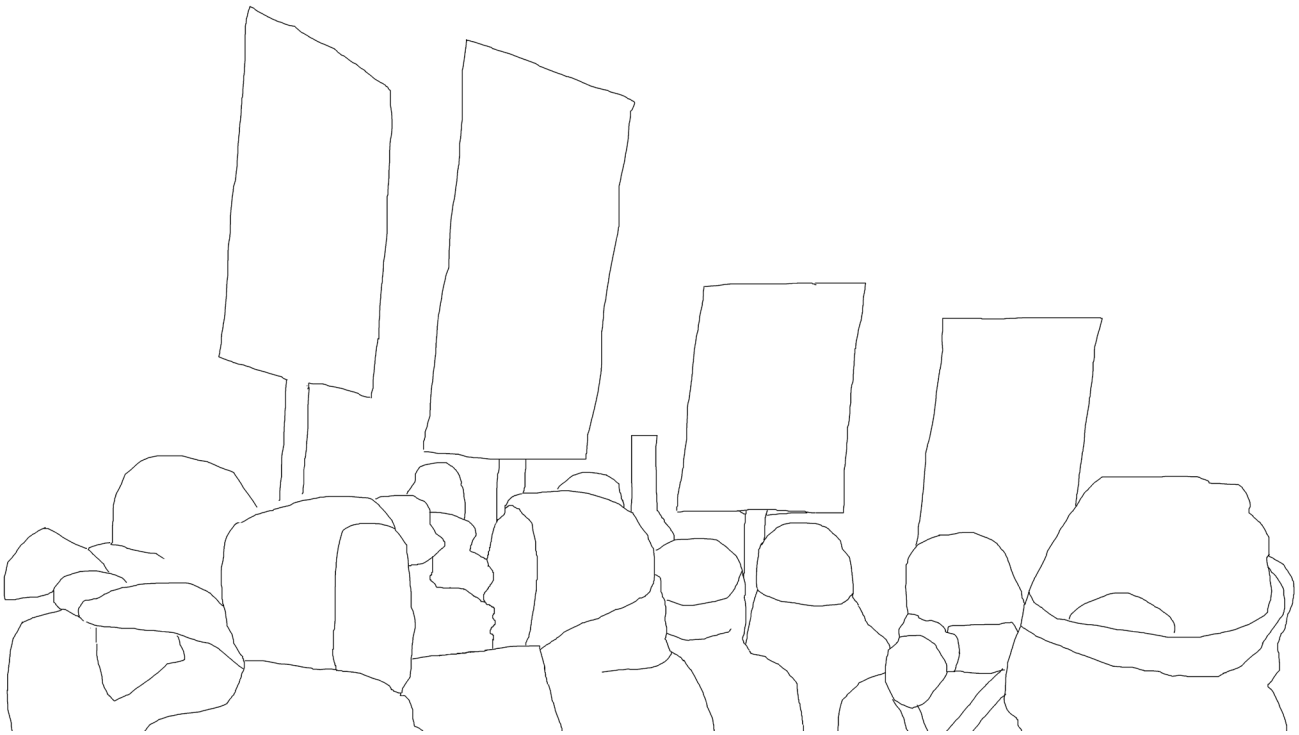


What do you believe in? Do you believe in justice? What about love? Do you believe in God? Do you believe in a Supreme Being? How many goddesses do you believe in? Do you think the spirit helps us recognize truth? Are you very religious? What part did religion play in your family? Do you think families can be together forever? Did you go to religious services on a regular basis? Do you remember the first time you prayed? Do you remember the first story told? Do you believe in the mother creator? Do you take Saturday off? Do you take Sunday off? Why is it wrong to eat meat today? Are you covered? Are you wearing your Sunday's best? Is the body something to be rigidly disciplined or something to be pampered? Where do you feel safe? Are you still religious? Are you loyal? Are you loyal to the law? Are you loyal to your god? Are you loyal to your family? Are you loyal to your government? Do you read the Qur'an? What else do you read? Do you feel prepared? Do you know the scripts intimately? Do you understand? Do you think the holy ghost helps us recognize truth? Do you ask questions? Do you tell? Do you listen? But truly, do you know? What does religion do for us? What does it do for you? How do you achieve enlightenment? Do you feel it? Do you let yourself be moved by the breath? Does belief keep you alive? Are you psychic? What is the difference between thinking and believing? Do you know why this day is different from all the rest? Do you follow? Do you use other people's sacred ceremonies? Do you abuse other people's spiritual practices? Do you smoke a pipe? Are you aware of the border? Do you have faith? How do you survive? Do you see the end? Do you see the beginning? Do you believe in paradise? Do you believe in life after death? Do you believe in sacrifice? Do you believe in authority? Why are some people reborn in happy destinations and others are reborn in unhappy destinations? Do others call you spiritual? Do you ever mourn? Do you celebrate? Do you believe in angels? Have you ever felt the presence of a ghost? Do you avoid sacred places? Holy sites? Do you go there? With whom?

Who are you with? Are you with a group? Why are you here? Who do you speak for? What do you stand for? Can you identify yourself? Where do you live? Have you lived there for more than 2 years? Where do you work? How much money do you make? Can I see your badge? Do you have documentation? Who do you represent? Are you authorized to make decisions? Who is the spokesperson for your group? How will I know who is who? You are authorized to speak on behalf of whom? Who do you report to? Do you have a partner? Why are you by yourself? Are you nervous? Why are you acting suspicious? What do you want? Do you have a permit? Why are you asking me these questions? Are you qualified? Where are your manners? Where are your values? Do you have a goal? And why are you here? Did you read the report? What do you believe in? What do you know? Why then did you stay? Do you know your rights? Are you prepared? Do you understand your responsibility? Are you taking responsibility? What are your duties? What are you trying to do? Are you taking a position? Can you take my position? Can you sit here? Are you a witness? Are you a victim? How are you organized? Are you a member of a party? What are you looking for? Who told you to say that? Don't you think I know my rights? What are your politics? Are you active? Who are you speaking to? Do you think your actions have consequences? Why don't you turn around? Are you speaking to me? What does it mean to express yourself? When you speak whose interests are you talking about? Were you told to represent those interests? Are you an investor? Are you clever? Are you proud? Do you prefer to be around like-minded people? Do you have friends? Do you agree with everyone? Do you talk or do you act? Do you follow others? Do you take the lead? Why are you upset? Are you complaining? Do you complain regularly? Who do you complain to? Are you considerate in your choices? Do you find it easy to be impartial? Would you call yourself a group? Do see yourself as one, two or more? Would you call yourself a crowd or an audience?



When was I born? What do you recall about my childhood? Where did we live? Did I go to school? How long did I attend school? How long did you stay? What do you remember about my parents? Did the family move around? What is my favorite childhood memory? What styles of clothing did children wear then? Did we have any special traditions? Are there any heirlooms that have been passed down from one generation to another? When did I leave home? Why did I leave and where did I go? When did you leave? How did your life change when I left home? How did I meet my partner? Did you feel grown up? Did age matter to me? Was I close? Were you scared? What are the significant historical events that took place during my lifetime? Did my parents have strong political feelings? What kind of people where they? Were there wars, natural disasters, or political changes? When was I first aware of political conditions? How did these events affect me? What was my first word? Who was my favorite president? Why? How was your life different after the war? For whom did you cast your first vote? When did I vote? How old was I then? Did I immigrate? Who came with you? Did I act ambivalently? Did I talk about those things? Where did I come from and how did I travel? Where and when did I arrive? Did we move from the coast inland? How long did the trip take? What was the biggest change I faced? Did I have a difficult time adjusting? Did you ever wish you had never left? What was the biggest adjustment you had to make? What did we do for a living? Did my mother work outside the home? Was your family financially comfortable? What was your favorite thing? How old was I when I got my first job? What other jobs have I had during my life? What physical characteristics do people in my family share? Which family member do I resemble? Did I know my grandparents or great-grandparents? What were their names? Where did they live? What church did they attend? Were they kind? Why did they move from one location to another? Did I always follow? How far away do I live from where you were born? Do I feel at home?



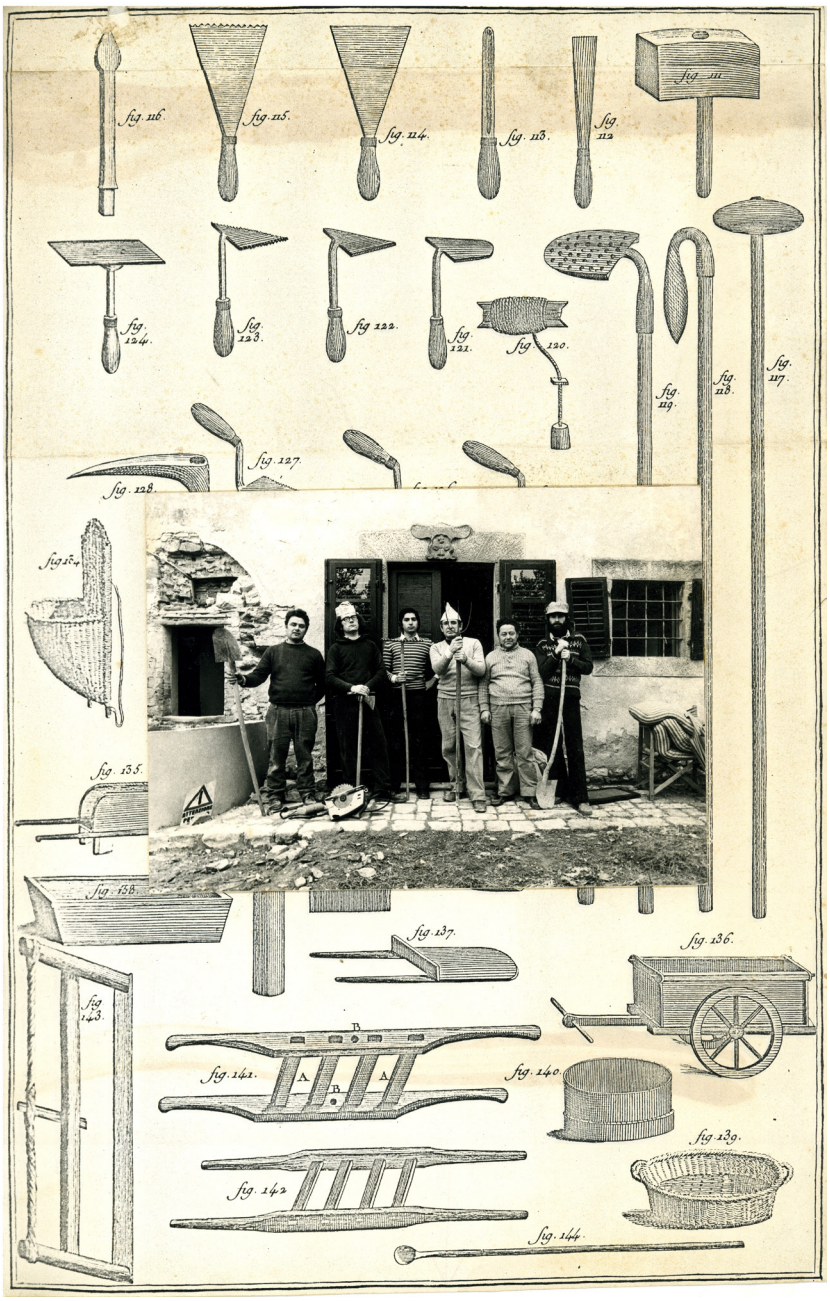
What brings you here today? Is this a good time to talk? Can we talk for a second? Do you have three hours? Are you a journalist? Are you familiar with this place? Are you familiar with the language? What are you investigating? Would you say you're outspoken? Is someone listening? Do you see anyone you want to talk to? Do you think they care? How do you feel about being right here, right now? Are you ashamed? Are you content? Do you lie? How do you feel about it? How do you think about it? How did you come to that conclusion? What do you want to say? What do you do when you're not talking to me? Do you work for the government? Are you an observer? Are you a lawyer? Do you think I know what I want to ask you? Is he with you? Are you with the department? Did you discover a story? What's your angle? Why are you filming? You think you know what you're filming? Are you in the frame? Do you feel a part of something? Are you embraced? Do you have a community? Did you have any doubts about coming here? How can I put this? Have you ever been rejected? Ignored? Are you taking notes? How do you make yourself heard? Do you have sense of what that means? Who do you want to be? Do you want to talk to this guy? Why are you focusing on this group? Do you think other people think the same way you do? Why is it important to speak? Is it necessary to shout? What does it mean to express yourself? Who are you talking about? Are you a psychiatrist? Do you think the world circles around you? Do you think if you were rich and privileged you'd be there today? Do you think people would talk to us if we were wearing suits? Do you think people listen differently if you are alone? Do you speak differently when you are alone? Do you think many people are informed? Is there anything you would like to ask me? What? Do you feel guilty? Is this going to last? Do you want it to last? Did you participate this time? Do you think the state is us? Do you think the government can represent you? Do you have a message? Do you think a song can speak for you? Can you speak for others?

AP2.1
Andrea Geyer and Sharon Hayes, *In Times Like These, Only Criminals Remain Silent*, 2005. 5 double-sided newsprint posters.

CHAPTER 4

DESCHOOLING, MANUAL LABOUR, AND EMANCIPATION: THE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN OF GLOBAL TOOLS, 1973–75

SARA CATENACCI and JACOPO GALIMBERTI



4.1
Page from *Global Tools Bulletin* 2 (January 1975).

In front of a country house door, a group of men pose for a picture (fig. 4.1). Some are holding shovels and others pitchforks, but they are not farmers returning home after a hard day at work. Rather, the picture depicts Global Tools, a collective of Italian architects and designers, during a four-day seminar in Sambuca Val di Pesa, a small village in the

Al di fuori del design

GLOBAL TOOLS SCUOLA DI NON-ARCHITETTURA

In un seminario svoltosi in novembre a Sambuca è stata definita l'attività della scuola per il 1975 / **Global Tools, a school of non-architecture: its future activity has been discussed and defined during a seminar held in November at Sambuca near Florence**

On All Souls' and also All Saints' there was a big gathering of Global Tools at Sambuca near Florence: on hearing the "call" there was a general desertion of books, booklets, manifestos, manuals, reviews, and sundry mimeographed sheets on the part of the Archizoom and Superstudio groups, Ettorino and Nanda, Buti and wife, the Zziggurats, the 9999s, the UFOs, Casabella, Gianni Pettena, Ugo La Pietra, the Neapolitans Alison and Dalisi, Franco Castelli, as well as friends, volunteers, people just curious... humanity, varied and dispersed along the hill running parallel to the highway to Siena. In the grip of an early cold wave, in an old house that, though abandoned, was fully equipped with fire, cables, tapes, recorders, rolls of film, chestnuts, delicatessen spreads, firewood, vegetables, pasta, beds, tables, plates and glasses, a few dogs chasing children, etc... were come seventy people; the gravelled parkway obstructed with cars, rubble and bushes, and then the final departure of a balloon and its recovery, followed by a new departure and flight beyond the clouds...

This, then, was the official birth of the final project for the first Italian counter-school of architecture (or non-architecture; or again non-school), the first attempt at a cultural Directory or guide to provisional and private laboratories in town, an agency for the spread throughout society of all creative activities connected with the use of constructional techniques and of all the sub-architectonic systems for characterizing the environment:

Andrea Branzi
TECNOLOGIA O EUTANASIA

Per la festa dei Morti, ma anche per quella di Tutti i Santi, grande raduno a Sambuca, vicino a Firenze, della Global Tools: al richiamo convenuto escono da libri, opuscoli, manifesti, manuali, riviste, ciclostilati diversi, gli Archizoom, i Superstudio, Ettorino e la Nanda, Buti e Signora, gli Zziggurat, i 9999, gli Ufo, Casabella, Gianni Pettena, Ugo La Pietra, i napoletani Alison e Dalisi, Franco Castelli, amici, volontari, curiosi, umanità varia e dispersa sul poggio lungo la superstrada per Siena.
Stretti dalla morsa di un freddo precoce dentro una casa colonica disabitata ma attrezzata di fuochi e cavi tapes, registratori, rotolini fotografici, castagne, salumi, legname, verdure, paste, letti, tavoli, piatti e bicchieri, alcuni cani che rincorrono bambini, presenti quasi settanta persone, parcheggi di ghiaia intasati di macchine, ruderi e cespugli, e partenza finale di una mongolfiera e suo recupero, sua nuova partenza e viaggio in alto oltre le nuvole...
Nasce ufficialmente il progetto finale della prima contro-scuola italiana di architettura, (o non architettura), (o non scuola, primo tentativo di pagine gialle della cultura, prontuario di laboratori provvisori e privati nella città, agenzie di diffusione nella società di tutte le attività creative legate all'uso di tecniche costruttive e di tutti i sistemi sotto-architettonici di identità dell'ambiente: "Una, due, cento, mille Global Tools...".
La struttura funzionante nasce dall'idea di una segreteria che mette in contatto chiunque lo desideri, con tutti i luoghi, le persone, i gruppi, che lavorano nella direzione definita come liberazione dell'uomo dalla cultura, intesa come tecnologia e codice che estranea l'individuo dal libero uso della propria creatività. In questo senso verrà preparato un piano di possibilità stagionali da offrire, perché no?, come ginnastica di recupero, come spedizione in uno strato inesplorato delle risorse umane e creative di una città (si potranno imparare sistemi volutamente imperfetti e anche sartoria, strutture instabili e anche taglio dei capelli, archeologia del futuro e anche falegnameria, viaggi come comunicazione e anche la tecnica della cartapesta...).
La sede della scuola non esiste (esiste l'indirizzo della segreteria: via Brera 9, Milano), ma esistono tante scuole quanti sono i luoghi

"One, two; a hundred, a thousand Global Tools..."
The operational structure springs from the idea of a secretariat that puts anyone who wishes in contact with all the places, persons, groups working in the direction defined as the liberation of man from culture conceived as a technology and code that inhibits the individual's free use of his own creativity. In this sense a plan of seasonal possibilities will be prepared, to be offered — why not? — as curative exercises, as expeditions in an unexplored layer of the human and creative resources of a city (deliberately imperfect systems can be learned, as well as tailoring, unstable structures and also haircutting, the archaeology of the future and also historical carpentry, travelling as communication and also the techniques of papier-mâché...). The school has no particular site (but the address of the secretarial offices is Via Brera 9, Milan), yet there are as many schools as there are places where the courses take place — Milan, Florence, Naples, but also small towns and big cities, which we will unite in a new league of free cities: Vienna, Berlin, New York, Toronto, San Francisco, Bergamo, Forlì, etc. The problem of "founding a school" coincides this time with the problem of "freeing oneself from school", of teaching to learn, of organizing in order to guarantee discontinuity, of making contacts in order to spread one's personal case, with taking one's place in history in order to remain a pure phenomenon. We now have the discovery of

Casabella 397/1975 17

4.2
Global Tools seminar, Sambuca Val di Pesa – Adolfo Natalini and Franco Raggi during the clay workshop
(1-4 November 1974), unknown photographer.

4.3
'Global Tools scuola di non-architettura' from *Casabella*, no. 397 (January 1975), article featuring pictures of the workshops held during Global Tools seminar in Sambuca Val di Pesa (1-4 November 1974).

countryside near Florence. The image was accompanied by written reports of the experienced and appeared in the second issue of the group's bulletin, which was published in January 1975. Other photographs show the designers and architects carving wood, digging holes in the ground, moving stones, carrying work tools, and conversing around a wooden table in the house's main room (figs. 4.2 and 4.3). The manual activities depicted in these photographs stood in stark contrast to the standard images characterising designers and architects within the framework of industrial production. The singularity of the collective's self-fashioning, their rudimentary implements, combined with the rural setting of their meeting, emerges even more strongly when compared to the *Linea Italiana* (Italian line), a sophisticated vocabulary of shapes developed by several Italian designers, which gained worldwide commercial success and prestige in the 1960s. Despite this apparent disparity, some Global Tools members, such as Ettore Sottsass, were among the foremost symbols of the *Linea Italiana*.

Global Tools was founded on 12 January 1973 in the office of the Italian architectural magazine *Casabella*, a seminal event that was covered in *Casabella*'s May 1973 issue (fig. 4.4). The collective was made up of individuals (Remo Buti, Riccardo Dalisi, Adalberto Dal Lago, Ugo La Pietra, Gaetano Pesce, Gianni Pettana, and Ettore Sottsass, Jr.), groups (Archizoom Associati, Gruppo 9999, Superstudio, UFO, Zziggurat) and the *Casabella* editorial team.[1] These practitioners were among the representatives of Italian 'radical architecture', to borrow the term coined by the art critic Germano Celant in 1972.[2] 'Radical' architects had begun working around the mid-1960s, mostly in Florence, Turin, and Milan. The umbrella term 'radical architecture' had the merit of illuminating their shared questioning of the architectural discipline's core tenets, despite the diversity of both their production and their cultural backgrounds. The critical approach of 'radical' architects, who often also worked as designers, constituted a reaction to modern architecture's functionalist diktats, which had been largely contested already in the mid-1950s

4.4
Adolfo Natalini, Cover design for *Casabella* 377 (May 1973).

and had experienced a definitive decline in the 1960s, especially following the dissolution of the Congrès internationaux d'architecture modern (CIAM) in 1959. In order to challenge the long-lasting prominence of modernism in the schools of architecture in Italy and abroad, 'radical' architects devised experimental conceits and strategies, which they described as *'superarchitettura'* (superarchitecture), *'architettura inconscia'* (unconscious architecture), *'architettura disequilibrante'* (unbalancing architecture), *'architettura concettuale'* (conceptual architecture), *'architettura eventuale'* (possible architecture), and *'progettazione di comportamento'* (behavioural planning).[3] Relying on irony and provocation, they aimed to

dismantle the traditional principles and applications of architecture, city planning, furniture, and product design. According to one of their members, Andrea Branzi, rather than design human environments embodying unattainable ideals and goals, 'radical' architects' utopian projects exposed and examined the contradictions of the architectural discipline and existing society.[4]

Current scholarship has explored the relationship between the 'radical' architects' proposals and 1960s Italian society, contemporary philosophical and political thought.[5] In particular, scholars have explored the connections between *operaismo* (a heterodox strand of 1960's Leninism) and Archizoom's 'critical utopias'.[6] Likewise, some studies have concentrated on the influential role played by Umberto Eco, a member of the School of Architecture at the University of Florence between 1966 and 1969, whose theories of semiotics and communication informed the sardonic performances of the UFO group.[7] These strands of research on 'radical architects' have identified the Italian specificities of these projects as well as their connections to the architectural utopias developed in Europe and the United States in the same decade, from Hans Hollein's 'Alles ist Architektur' manifesto, to the techno-pop proposals of Archigram and the actions of the Utopie group and of Yona Friedman, and, finally, to the Californian counter-cultural initiatives by Ant Farm, Anne Halprin and Lawrence Halprin, and others.[8] However, the short-lived experience of Global Tools, which can be seen as the final stage of 'radical' architecture and design, remains largely unstudied.[9] The group's name, its members' cultural backgrounds, its focus on manual labour, and, finally, its decision to set up a collaborative project based on a 'school' model all deserve further investigation. These issues will be discussed in the following and linked to the social and political conjunctures of Italy in the 1970s.

FROM 'RADICAL ARCHITECTURE' TO GLOBAL TOOLS

The future members of Global Tools were mostly designers and architects, but they had already extensively engaged with artistic media and activities in the 1960s. Ugo La Pietra, Gianni Pettena, and UFO organised happenings and actions. UFO participated in the 1968 student protests, utilising inflatable objects, and staged a provocative 'ritual' during the IV Premio di pittura Masaccio (4th Masaccio Art Prize) in San Giovanni Val d'Arno. Pettena participated in the same event, polemically reframing the town's thirteenth-century city hall façade with a pattern of oblique stripes.[10] The intense collaboration and personal friendship among architects, designers, and artists occasionally materialised in experimental showcases. For instance, two night clubs, the Florentine Space Electronic (whose interior was designed by Gruppo 9999), and the Turinese Piper (whose interior was designed by Giorgio Ceretti, Pietro Derossi, and Riccardo Rosso), presented works, performances, concerts, and art exhibitions ranging from theatrical works by the New York–based Living Theatre to work by Italian Arte Povera artists. While these artists/architects/designers were active mostly in Italy, a lively exchange with northern

4.5
Gruppo 9999, Design for *Vegetable Garden House* (bedroom section), for the exhibition *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape; Achievements and Problems of Italian Design*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1972. Collage of cut colour slides on Plexiglas, originally mounted in a retro illuminated light box.

European and American groups had been integral to their work. Nonetheless, it was only in New York, and specifically at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), that their multifarious experimentations acquired international fame and their work came to be described as 'radical architecture'.

The MoMA show *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape* took place in 1972 and was meant to be a design exhibition, showcasing the forefront of Italian design. Yet the exhibition developed an expanded notion of design, articulating its complex connections to social, political, and ecological concerns.[11] It is not surprising that the exhibitors presented short films, photonovels and what the curator of the exhibition, Emilio Ambasz, called 'counter-environments' (fig. 4.5); in other words, environments that were specifically produced for

the exhibition and staged a visual commentary upon, and criticism of, the status of design and urban planning at the beginning of the 1970s.[12] Ambasz, divided the exhibition into sections such as 'conformist', 'reformist', and 'contestation'; these terms were intended to define the different positions of the designers with regard to industry and production relations in an attempt to introduce the American public to the social and political dimensions the exhibits encoded.[13] By the same token, Celant defined the exhibitors as 'radicals' and their production as 'radical architecture' in the exhibition catalogue.[14] Celant's designation and Ambasz's curatorial policies collided with the exhibition's market-minded display as well as its heavy dependence on corporate and government sponsorship.[15] The 'radical' architects may have been seen as ambiguous, if not opportunistic, from an outsider's perspective. Indeed, the display included both their polemical 'counter-environments' as well as the furniture they designed for renowned manufacturers such as Poltronova and Gufram. Yet, this tension was not necessarily seen as a contradiction by insiders. As Global Tools members Adolfo Natalini and Branzi later explained, conceptual architecture, sociopolitical commitment, and market-oriented design were not antithetical concepts in Italy.[16] Rather, many young architects experimented with furniture design, mainly due to high levels of unemployment. Likewise, little specialised industry and training for furniture design existed in the 1960s, so Italian design firms, which still relied predominantly on low-scale production, often hired young and ambitious architects. This situation allowed for informal relationships and fruitful partnerships between employers and young practitioners, enabling the latter to enter the market of luxury objects without necessarily renouncing their critical attitude.

Global Tools was launched shortly after the MoMA show. On one level, *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape* granted international visibility to 'radical architecture', but on another level, this acclaim came late, as the composite network of architects and designers were increasingly producing different, and at times incompatible, works.[17] Archizoom member Branzi referred to this predicament in autumn 1972, proposing that 'radical' architects adopt a 'long-term strategy': 'One thing we should all be committed to is a confrontation over theses of vital importance which enable us to draw up the premises for more incisive work . . . which is no call to order, but a preparation for the final attack'.[18] A few weeks later, this final attack against what they perceived as the architectural establishment, and particularly the Italian movement Tendenza, was waged under the standard of Global Tools.[19] While the formation of a collective enabled the 'radicals' to join forces, it was not unrelated to economic concerns. As argued by Paola Navone and Bruno Orlandoni in 1974, the foundation of Global Tools partly served as an appealing brand that promoted the work of its members in the art world, which had discovered the 'radicals' at MoMA.[20]

With the appointment of Alessandro Mendini as editor-in-chief in 1970, *Casabella* magazine acted as the main outlet for the 'radicals'. In 1973, Mendini intensified his collaboration, taking part in Global Tools activities directly.[21] La Pietra's magazine *Progettare in più* also joined the cause, promoting Global Tools's initiatives. The group received financial

support from the owner of the Milanese gallery L'uomo e l'arte, which paid for the publication of the two bulletins issued by Global Tools in 1974 and 1975.[22] The group defined itself as a 'system of laboratories . . . dedicated to promoting the study and the use of natural technical materials and their relative behavioural characteristics'. Its collaborative endeavours were closely related to the goal of achieving the 'individual's liberation—first psychologically and then materially—from the system of needs which a closed circuit culture induces in him, bartering them for [the] individual's own autonomous choices'.[23] The members of Global Tools believed that individuals could attain true autonomy through 'the free development of individual creativity' and the 'ideological refounding of manual labour'.[24] Initially relying on organisational models common to associations, the group created a technical committee, which was responsible for the creation of what they defined as a 'school' and for its teaching programmes and workshops. In particular the workshops would be implemented by subgroups, named according to themes: 'The Body', 'Construction', 'Communication', 'Survival', and 'Theory'. Germano Celant and fellow artists were supposed to take part in the work. The workshops, which were implemented by small subgroups, should have evolved into a proper network of 'schools', but this ambitious and almost utopian project never took place. Mendini, Davide Mosconi, and Franco Raggi taught a workshop on 'The Body' in 1975, and only Franco Vaccari contributed to the 'Communication' subgroup, whose sole output consisted of photographic documentation of its members' trip on the Rhine River.[25] By 1974 the Florentine groups 9999 and Superstudio had already moved away from Global Tools, and the group disbanded in 1975. Mendini resigned from *Casabella* in the same year.[26]

Global Tools started its activities at a moment of crucial change in both industrial production and national politics. In order to tease out the cultural and political subtexts of Global Tools' work and the way in which their work intersected with these broader shifts in politics and culture, it is helpful to discuss in detail some key notions summarising the group's ambitions—namely, the 'ideological refounding of manual labour', 'poor technique', and 'simple technology'—as well as the name Global Tools.

GLOBAL TOOLS' CONCEPTUAL TOOLS

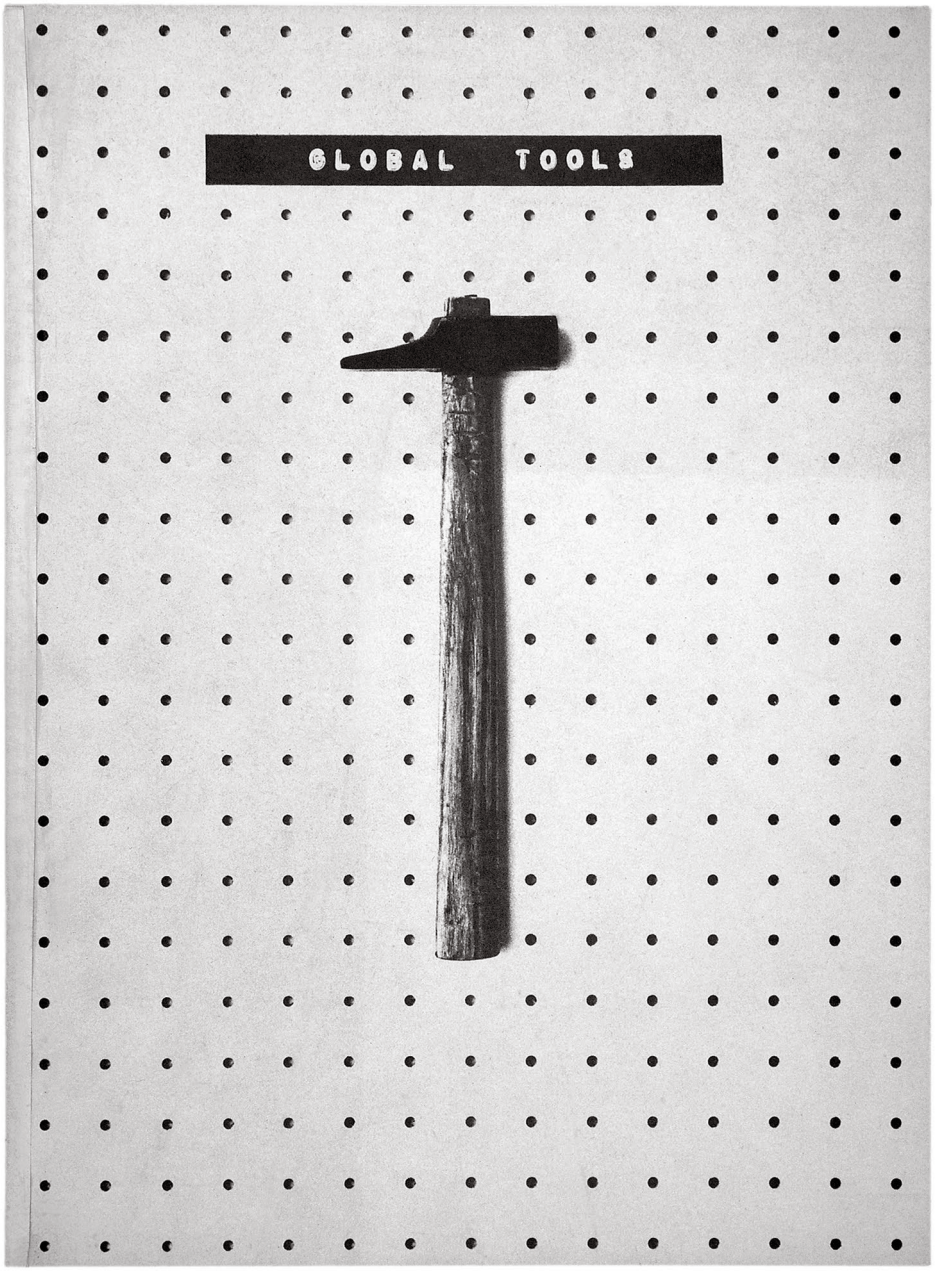
Global Tools was founded during a period that witnessed major changes in industrial production. In the spring of 1973, workers went on strike and eventually shut down the Fiat factory in Turin, one of Italy's most important manufacturers. The protest appeared as a demonstration of strength, and resulted in salary rises and new worker rights. However, the occupation turned out to be the swan song of the Italian factory-based working class. The following autumn, the oil embargo put a definitive end to the virtually full employment that had marked the previous fifteen years. The policy of redundancy came to be a key weapon in the hands of capital, allowing management to dismiss combative workers on economic grounds. What is more, the development of new technologies, the resulting

possibility of outsourcing, and an increasingly global market economy further fragmented the traditional working class. By late 1973, when Global Tools's project gained momentum, it was increasingly clear that capitalism and its chief mode of production, Taylorism, would never be the same. An unprecedented political and cultural situation was about to unfold.[27]

The major militant organisations that emerged during the 1968-1969 period tended to anchor their revolutionary ambitions on the figure of the factory worker. By 1974, however, they all had either dissolved or experienced crises, which culminated in 1975 with the formation of the Democrazia Proletaria (Proletarian Democracy) party.[28] The party gained more than 550,000 votes in the 1976 political elections; however, that number amounted only to a disappointing 1.5 % of the total vote. Furthermore, the participation in the elections contradicted the extra-parliamentary activism that had characterised the far left until that point. This decision can hardly be understood without considering the impact of the Chilean coup on 11 September 1973. This tragic event shocked the Italian left, because the Chilean situation presented affinities with the Italian one, including a strong, if contentious, leftist camp and the presence of neo-fascist groups partly supported by the Italian secret service.[29] Neo-fascists had already tried to implement their political designs in 1969, when a bomb killed seventeen people in Milan. This attack initiated the so-called 'strategy of tension', which consisted of producing false evidence that the culprits were anarchist in order to pressure the government into passing emergency laws. When the public became aware of this plot, whose instigators remain unknown, all of the leftist organisations momentarily rallied under the banner of anti-fascism. In this period of economic and social upheaval, politics informed every aspect of Italian culture. The Global Tools phrase 'ideological refounding of manual labour' should be located within this context. In particular, the key term 'ideological' and its derivatives pervaded not only political discourse, but also art, education, cultural production, leisure time, and intimate relationships.

The way Global Tools used this phrase is partly the result of this politicisation of society. Yet, it also mirrors the anthropological nuances with which the term was imbued. 'Ideology' conflated not only the phraseology of Marxism but also that of the social sciences, where it occasionally indicated a complex and consistent set of values and beliefs.[30] Not all of the Global Tools members were Marxist; rather, the ambivalence of the term 'ideological' helped to create consensus around key ideas. The word *rifondazione* (refounding), which suggests both a profound renewal of the *status quo* and a return to the basis or origins, facilitated agreement. This semantic ambiguity was at the core of Global Tools, which combined Marxism with a quest for a hippy-minded, holistic approach to the environment (the latter being perhaps predominant). The photograph of a hammer on the cover of Global Tools's first bulletin can be framed within these tensions (fig. 4.6). If a hammer and a sickle was a symbol laden with rhetoric, the close-up of a hammer by itself typified a self-effacing return to the actual life of labourers and craftsmen.

Members of Global Tools were fascinated by artisan tools and techniques, rural material culture, the reuse of salvaged material and, not least, the autarkic life of some



4.6
Cover design for *Global Tools Bulletin* 1 (June 1974).

individuals. For example, the group Superstudio (whose member were also part of Global Tools) presented a sort of ethnographic study of a farmer named Zeno at the 1978 Venice Biennale.[31] In order to contextualise these interests, which are well summarised by the concept of 'manual labour', it is necessary to discuss the emergence of folklore and new political subjectivities in 1970s Italy.

The study of folklore has a long tradition in Italian culture. Folklore's significance already constituted a subject of debate for prominent philosophers such as Benedetto Croce and Antonio Gramsci in the first half of the twentieth century. In particular, Gramsci's observations on folklore appeared in his *Prison Notebooks*, published between 1948 and 1951. On one hand, Gramsci acknowledged that folklore was not to be seen as a repository of quaint traits. Those who embodied folklore, he argued, were the legitimate representatives of a genuine disavowal of 'official culture'.[32] Yet, on the other hand, their 'class instinct' was immature and needed to be channelled toward the appropriate emancipatory struggles of the Communist Party. Apart from Gramsci's meditations, the interest in folklore was also sparked by the perceived concern that industrialisation would lead to the loss of ancestral traditions and crafts. Italian folklorists tended to focus on southern Italy, where the lack or delay of industrialisation had allowed traditions and crafts to survive. This

persistent and widespread fascination with Italian folklore accounts for Global Tools's exploration of manual labour. The collective deemed labourers, with their deft hands and related expertise, to be unwitting custodians of ancestral knowledge, although perhaps more pristine for their supposed lack of formal training. Global Tools rejected the criticism that they were resurrecting the myths of the noble savage, Arcadia, and the Luddite, or Gian Battista Vico's simplistic theses about the decay of imagination in civilised people.[33] However, it is apparent that their research was tainted with what can be viewed as primitivism; that is, an idealisation of skills, implements, and forms of expression that can also be seen as stemming from ignorance, dilettantism, or degraded forms of products originally participating in 'official culture'.[34]

This romantic interest in the rustic and the humble as reservoirs of less alienated forms of life was accompanied by a discovery of subjects and regions left uncharted by the far left's geography. The factory workers' struggle of 1969 resulted in political victories and a new labour law of 1970, momentarily halting the workers' protest. As a result, the militant group called Lotta Continua (Continuous Fight), the most enthusiastic advocate of the masses' 'revolutionary spontaneity', tried to extend its activity to southern Italy, notably Naples, where the virtual absence of large plants forced the activists to redefine their theories and modes of interventions. In 1971, Lotta Continua began integrating figures such the unemployed, the housewife, and the lumpen-proletariat into an approach still largely predicated on the male factory worker. The focus on these subjectivities, their abilities, and their urges for rebellion grew even stronger with the onset of the oil crisis, which generated widespread unemployment even in the country's industrialised north. Through the slogan '*Riprendiamoci la città*' (Let's Take Back the City), which suggested the re-appropriation of urban spaces, and the theories about the advent of a new political and technical 'class composition', meaning the emergence of a novel type of working class grappling with new production relations, large components of the far left attempted to politicise the proletariat and the lumpen-proletariat outside the factory, regardless of its positioning within the production process and even its refusal of work. This focus on the lumpen-proletariat resonated with Global Tools's fascination with self-sufficiency, creative responses to hardship, and secession from mainstream society.[35] As Global Tools member Andrea Branzi observed, the cult of popular wisdom and its primeval traditions came to be a dangerous domain after War World II because of the Fascists' praise of rural life and essentialist discourses linking *Italianità* to *Latinità* (Italyness and Latinity).[36] By contrast, in the early 1970s the radical left's move away from hard-line Leninism opened up new territories for both militantism and imagination.

One exception was Maoism. After the summer of 1968, the activists of Servire il popolo (Serving the People) headed to southern Italy in order to politice impoverished farmers, using the example of Mao's recruitment of peasants and the poor. Although Servire il popolo had lost its initial thrust by 1974, Maoism remained a major reference point from which to envisage a revolutionary subject alternative to the factory worker. It does not come as a

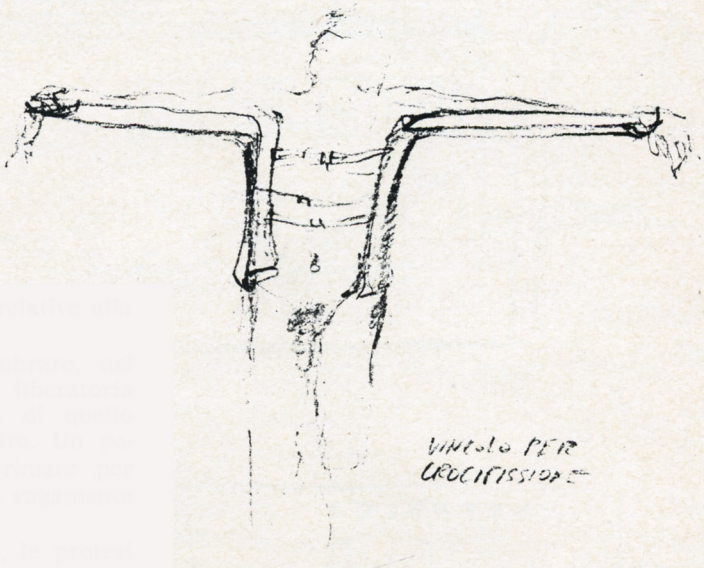
GLOBAL TOOLS

Milano - giugno '75

IL CORPO E I VINCOLI
THE BODY AND THE BONDS

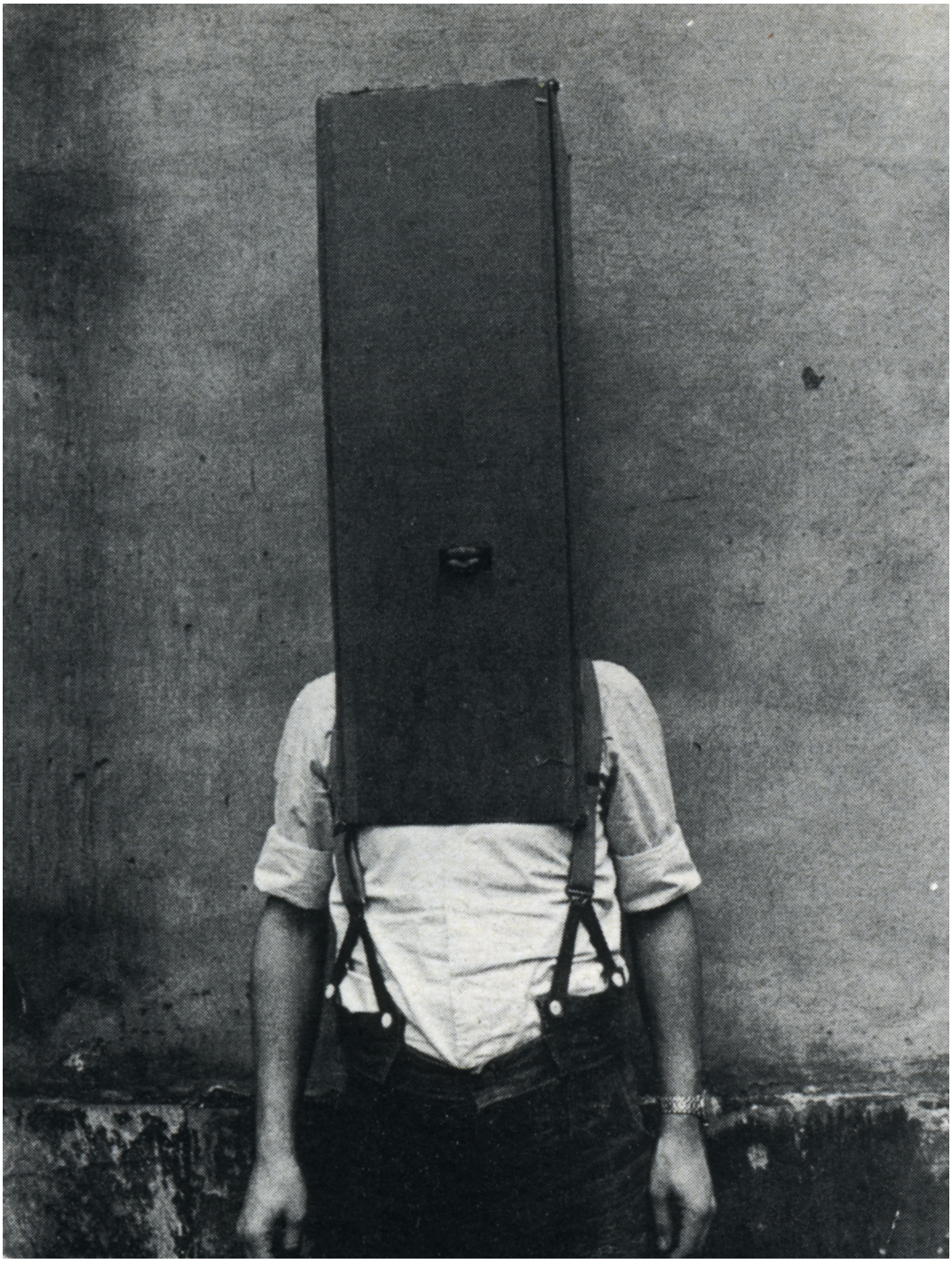
L'uso anomalo del corpo come strumento conoscitivo. Azioni-oggetti-progetti (in)utili

The anomalous use of the body as an instrument for knowledge. Actions-objects-useful(less) projects



2

4.7
Page from *Casabella* with poster from Global Tools Workshop 'The Body and the Bonds', Milan, June 1975, and drawing by Franco Raggi. *Casabella* 411 (March 1976).



4.8
Franco Raggi at Global Tools Workshop 'The Body and the Bonds', Milan, June 1975.

surprise that several Global Tools members, such as Carlo Guenzi and Franco Raggi, were Maoist-minded. The latter, in particular, expressed rapt admiration for Chinese design in the pages of *Casabella*.[37] Nonetheless, this unconditional eulogy, written after a two-week trip to China, can arguably be located within the *longue durée* of twentieth-century primitivism. Global Tools's combination of radical politics, primitivism, romanticism, and ethnology, as well as ecologist and hippy culture, might appear unusual. And yet, from an artistic perspective, the post-1968 phase was informed by a high degree of syncretism, of which documentas curated by Harald Szeemann in 1972, provides a good example. Alongside conceptual art, this exhibition showed works by *Geisteskranken* (the mentally ill), kitsch objects labelled 'trivial realism', agit-prop figuration, the work of Maoist painter Jörg Immendorf, and devotional images from the nineteenth century.

Unlike Italian revolutionaries, Global Tools were not seeking revolutionary subjects, but rather revolutionary bodies capable of radically altering their relationship with the environment. Global Tools saw the body as an ultimate form of architecture, an object of analysis enabling a departure from the narrow disciplinary field to which architecture

4.9
Riccardo Dalisi's Workshop, Rione Traiano, Naples, ca. 1972–74.

was confined (figs. 4.7 and 4.8). The human body proved to be the ideal common ground on which to bring together the diverse tendencies of the group. In their bulletins and the *Casabella* articles linked to their research, they invoked the body as the locus where a hidden political and creative potential awaited to be liberated. But whose body/architecture? Certainly not the body of the numbed consumer, and even less so that of the factory worker for whom 1950s/1960s capitalism had turned the modernist ideal of *Existenzminimum* into an experience of social and sensual deprivation. Rather, Global Tools envisioned to bodies capable of sleeping in the open, fasting bodies resistant to all sorts of adversities, bodies experiencing a mystical unity of mind and muscle, bodies that developed ancestral techniques for meditation, and bodies alien to shame and disregardful of the bourgeois idea of beauty. They provided, albeit in passing, some examples that revealed both an idealisation of the unknown as well as the typically male (all but one of the Global Tools members were male) desire for a heroic, indestructible physique. They evoked or offered illustrations of the nomad (notably the bushman), the cowboy, the hitchhiker, the judo fighter, the yoga practitioner, the hippy, the autarkic farmer, the Buddhist monk, the eighteenth-century Shaker, and, not least, the Camden squatter, to whom *Casabella* devoted an article in 1974.[38]

In the article 'The Body: A Natural Object', Global Tools member and *Casabella* director Alessandro Mendini equated nudity with freedom and authenticity and went on to suggest the moral bankruptcy of the West, remarking that, 'the only . . . image of mass nudity that the Western age has been able to produce is that of Jews being herded into Nazi death camps'.[39] However, there was an undoubtedly Western tradition that might have appealed to Global Tools members. This was Cynicism, a philosophical trend spanning almost one thousand years, from the mid-fourth century BCE to the fifth century CE.[40] With their cult of individual self-sufficiency, frugality (*euteleia*), non-conformism (including nakedness), and refusal of intellectual sophistication, the Cynics might have been part of Global Tools's pantheon. Diogenes' decision to sleep in a *pithos* (a storage jar

for wine) and to get rid of his glass – his only design piece, so to speak – after seeing a child drinking from his hands could be considered one of the Western precedents of Global Tools' provocative approach to architecture and design.

An instructive example illuminating the divergences, but also the will to compromise, within Global Tools is the dialogue between two of its members, Branzi and Riccardo Dalisi. In 1971 Dalisi began conducting research into the most indigent boroughs and housing developments of Naples.[41] His interventions included supplying tools and found material to local children and encouraging them to collaborate in the construction of everyday objects and simple architectural structures of their own invention (fig. 4.9). At the same time, Dalisi examined the way in which the local lumpen-proletariat rearranged their domestic interiors, discovering that, beyond the superficial aping of bourgeois households, their vernacular architecture showed similarities to Pompeian houses.[42] He called the idiosyncratic tricks and skills he saw in action '*tecnica povera*' (literally, poor technique). The adjective *povera* carried with it positive connotations. Along the lines of Arte Povera, it suggested the dignified humility of the poor and the refusal of unnecessarily sophisticated machineries.

Branzi was one of the founding members of Archizoom, a group of architects and designers informed by a type of Italian Marxism called *operaismo*.[43] Branzi sympathised with Dalisi in the article he wrote about him, and yet his praise was mixed with scepticism. He lauded Dalisi's 'spontaneous . . . didactic' and his 'exploration in an as yet unexplored field of energy', but he also highlighted the shortcomings of Dalisi's research.[44] What was his goal, he wondered, if the empowerment of the lumpen-proletariat did not aim at any political outcome? The risk was falling back into a populist aestheticising of misery, transforming poverty into a 'possible cultural category'. Some recent commentators see Branzi's approval of Dalisi's endeavours as slightly opportunistic, but his meditations can also be explained in a different way.[45] One of the key principles of *operaismo* is that the working class should not elaborate a working-class culture antithetical to bourgeois culture. This would prove ineffective, as capitalism has provided enough evidence of its capability of co-opting counterculture, making it just another niche in the cultural market. Early 1960s *operaismo* was adamant in this respect: the working class should demand a higher salary and less work, and it should up the ante every time capitalists were willing to make concessions.[46] In Marxist terms, Dalisi focused on the re-appropriation of use value, whereas *operaismo* emphasised the role of the exchange value of the labour force.[47] However, the changes brought about by the new technical and political 'class composition' made *operaisti* acknowledge the political significance of appropriative strategies implemented outside the workplace. In the early 1970s, one of their struggles pertained to the severance of salary from productivity, a concept that was based partly on the idea that wealth was increasingly generated outside the factory by collectively produced knowledge. But capitalists and land owners, as Branzi argued in a 1974 text, had always used working-class and peasant practical knowledge to their ends.[48] The specifics of mid-1970s Italian political debates

brought closer some anti-dogmatic leftists such as Branzi and Dalisi. Thus, there is no conflict in the fact that in 1973 Branzi and his wife, Nicoletta Branzi, created a series of embroideries and tapestries, challenging the conventional definition of design but also stressing the progressive implications of manual labour. However, the uneasy cohabitation of Dalisi's *tecnica povera* and Marxism within Global Tools resulted in the group's shift from *tecnica povera* to what they defined as *tecnologia semplice* (simple technology). This development was meant to convey the need for a more systematic approach than Dalisi's overly 'spontaneous' methodology.[49]

If the nuances of the word 'tool' are now clearer, the term 'global' still needs to be discussed. 'Global' was a relatively new word in the early 1970s; after all, the first image of the whole earth as seen from space was released only in 1968. The blue sphere presented in this image strengthened the sense of belonging to humanity, especially in circles steeped in Beat and hippy culture like Global Tools, whose founding member Ettore Sottssas was a friend of Allen Ginsberg. The term 'global' was also a key notion in *War and Peace in the Global Village* (1968) by Marshall McLuhan, an author whose theories were discussed by Global Tools. A further element accounting for the group's name was the *Whole Earth Catalog* (1968–72).[50] This California-based catalogue listed and advertised numerous environmentally friendly products and tools intended to support a sustainable lifestyle. The publication stands out as one of the most celebrated products of late 1960s California counter-culture. The catalogue was very popular among Italian architects, and Global Tools included a plate depicting manual tools from the *Architecture Maçonnerie* (architectural masonry) section of the *Encyclopédie* in its bulletin.[51] This selection reminded *Casabella*'s readers that humanism, progressive culture, and technique were inextricably linked.

LEARNING TOOLS

In the conclusion of his article 'Radical Story', Franco Raggi introduced Global Tools as a new stage in the experiments of what Ambasz called the Italian 'counter-design' avant-garde.[52] Particularly, he stressed the importance of Global Tools's 'school' model as 'a collective project in continuous transformation and continually subjected to verification', which appeared to them 'to be the instrument best suited for overcoming the impasse of that "secret cultural society" carried by the specialised [architectural] reviews'. Finally, he summarised the goals of the collective:

> To make it possible to transmit and expand an experience while leaving it open to eventual developments; to make the results known in a kind of collective laboratory; [to come] out of the dark secrets of the [design] studios to suggest, even in general terms, an alternative to traditional education, but not a [definitive] model.

4.10
Gruppo 9999, S-Space (Separate School for Expanded Conceptual Architecture) Indoor Jam Session No. 1, 1970, Space Electronic, Florence (participating students: Massimo De Cristoforo, Anna Pia Pusteria, Andra Ponzi, Vanna Taiti, Paolo Demanicus, Margie Paganelli, Paola Troise, Gianna Scoino).

This interest in anti-authoritarian education and its connection with the 'development of free individual creativity' also needs to be discussed.

Education was a central topic for an architectural movement that was, in Piero Frassinelli's words, 'born in the occupied university', as was the case of 'radical architecture'.[53] The first occupations began in 1963 in Florence and Milan, yet at the beginning of the 1970s the students' unrest was still a pressing concern. In 1968, the students of the School of Architecture at the University of Milan promoted a series of self-managed didactic activities that re-shaped the teaching programmes, which were partly supported by the head of the department. This experimentation based on teamwork, multidisciplinary research, and social commitment lasted three years, until 1971, when the Italian education minister replaced the department head and expelled the professors involved in what were defined as 'counter-classes'.[54] The protests that occurred in the aftermath of the minister's intervention were documented in the magazines *In* and *Casabella*.[55] The occupation and self-management of the School of Architecture at the University of Milan was only one of numerous attempts to convince Italian universities to engage with alternative pedagogy. The first and most important of these others was the 'Negative University' of Trento, where the students of the sociology department rewrote the teaching programmes and set up classes contradictory to the institutional ones.[56] On the whole, these were years of extremely vital, if controversial, experimentations with alternative pedagogies, both inside and outside the university. Adolfo Natalini's assertion that the activity of Superstudio had always been 'pedagogical', even before the inception of Global Tools, should be embedded in this context.[57] Aside from Natalini's appointment as a university teaching assistant, Superstudio's first didactic endeavour was the S-Space (Separate School for Expanded Conceptual Architecture), founded in 1970 in collaboration with Gruppo 9999. The multidisciplinary workshops of the S-Space were usually held at the Florence night

4.11
Gruppo 9999 and Superstudio, Space Mondial Festival No. 1: Life, Death and Miracles of Architecture, 1971, installation view (ground floor), Space Electronic, Florence.

club Space Electronic. These experiences were intended to be a sensual re-appropriation of space, and they conflated ephemeral projects, performances, electronic music, samples of natural sounds, and videos (fig. 4.10).[58] The S-Space activities culminated in 1971 with the organisation of the international S-Space Mondial [*sic*] Festival, which also featured the participation of the British group Street Farmer and the California collectives Ant Farm and Portola Institute, the latter of which was involved with the *Whole Earth Catalog* (figs. 4.11 and 4.12).[59] The following year, Superstudio published the storyboard for the film *Education* in *Casabella*. *Education* should have been the second film of the series entitled *Five Fundamental Acts*, which introduced an expanded, holistic concept of architecture. Combining the tone of a fairy tale with a university lecture in information technology and anthropology, the film described the origins of the 'ritual' of education, its repressive nature, and, not least, the resulting struggles between the youngest and the eldest generations.[60] When Global Tools was founded, Natalini was teaching at the School of Architecture at the University of Florence. In 1973, he began teaching a series of courses that involved the students in a kind of ethnographic rediscovery of handicraft tools and objects produced in the Tuscan countryside. These courses later developed into the research project entitled 'Extra-urban Material Culture'.[61] His presence in the preparatory meetings to organise Global Tools's didactic method can thus be seen as the logical consequence of his previous undertakings. These meetings initially resulted in a document listing a number of 'tools' for an '*autoeducazione creativa*' (self-education through creativity). This first tentative outcome was indebted to both Superstudio's interest in education and the 'spontaneous' method adopted by Dalisi in his workshops in Naples.[62]

Another key reference should be mentioned in order to further clarify Global Tools's pronounced interest in pedagogy. Its members drew from the idea of a 'non-school', theorised by the libertarian Christian thinker Ivan Illich.[63] The collective abandoned the approach related to the *autoeducazione creativa*, drafted in its first internal documents, partly because some Global Tools members intended to follow more closely Illich's theories of 'deschooling'. Andrea Branzi was the first to underline the importance of Illich's writings, which were translated into Italian between 1972 and 1974.[64] At the beginning of

4.12
Gruppo 9999 and Superstudio, Space Mondial Festival No. 1: Life, Death and Miracles of Architecture, 1971, installation view (first floor), Space Electronic, Florence.

the 1970s, the popularity of libertarian pedagogies, which encompassed education, politics, and ecology, was not limited to Illich's theories. For example, Dalisi was informed by Paulo Freire's influential book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, as was the case of many teachers and 'art workers' (artists, musicians, and actors) engaging with similar experiences in the villages of southern Italy and the suburbs of Milan and Turin. However, if these figures were active in the context of marginalised communities and used creativity as a means of attaining social emancipation, Global Tools's interpretation of Illich's critique of the educational system and society at large was directed toward the 'liberation' of the professional designer from both his/her role in the production system and his/her isolation within a cultivated bourgeois elite.[65]

Viewing the school system as a repressive institution in which pupils were 'lectured' into the passive acceptance of a service (teaching) in lieu of a value (learning), Illich argued for a permanent self-directed education relying on collaborative relationships and autonomous 'learning webs'. In his book *Deschooling Society*, he suggested four different

non-institutional approaches promoting access to educational tools: 'Reference Services to Educational Objects', 'Skill Exchange', 'Peer-Matching', and 'Reference Services to Educators-at-Large'.[66] Slightly modified to suit Global Tools's needs, these are the same points detailed by Raggi in his article 'Radical Story'. In the conclusion of his book, Illich read from a reverse perspective the Greek myth of Prometheus (the name literally means 'fore-thought'), who stole fire/technology from the gods, and his brother Epimetheus ('after-thought'), who distributed the gods' good traits to the animals but, in his generosity, forgot to save some for human beings. The theorist illuminated the figure of Epimetheus, who was also Pandora's husband and custodian of her gifts, defining him as an individual who 'remains freely convivial with the world while the progenitor of the new world, Prometheus, remains bound and chained by his own creative deed'.[67] Illich's stress on the need for the 'rebirth of the Epimethean man' was in tune with Global Tools's retreat into the countryside, as well as its fascination with the products of de-skilled labour. Illich's critique of both modern industrial society and revolutionary 'Promethean' humanism appealed to those 'radical' designers in search of a less contentious relationship with society than that proposed by Marxism.

TODAY'S TOOLS

Global Tools emerged as a response to the crisis of 'radical architecture', which paradoxically coincided with the acclaim of 'radical architecture' in New York in 1972. Simultaneously, the collective engaged directly and indirectly with broader issues, including the political, cultural, and economic situation generated by the oil crisis. Global Tools's focus on collaborative didactic, manual labour, the body, and the Epimethean man can hardly be fully comprehended without the specificities of early 1970s Italian society. Nonetheless, the group's experience provides valuable insights into more recent artistic practices, including current attempts to merge art and design methodologies, as well as artistic endeavours predicated on the establishment of collaborative networks and convivial practices. A good example is Sarah Pierce and Annie Fletcher's *Paraeducation Department* project, begun in Rotterdam in 2004, which represents a flexible platform for the communal exploration of the creative and political potential of education. Anton Vidokle's *unitednationplaza* and *Night School* projects, originally intended for Manifesta 6 in Cyprus (2006) but never realised there, were both similarly developed as temporary art schools. The meetings for Vidokle's projects took place in Berlin and New York with the collaboration of Boris Groys, Jalal Toufic, Liam Gillick, Martha Rosler, Natascha Sadr Haghighian, Nikolaus Hirsch, Tirdad Zolghadr, and Walid Raad.[68] In the late 1990s, artists J. Morgan Puett and Mark Dion founded the rural community Mildred's Lane in Beach Lake, Pennsylvania. This community's pedagogical strategies address issues relating to the 'environment, systems of labo[u]r, forms of dwelling, clothing apparatuses, and inventive domesticating; all of which are form[s] [of] an ethics of comportment—and are embodied in *workstyles*'.[69]

Finally, it is possible to mention the artist Fernando García-Dory's collaborative project *Inland/Campo Adentro*, which began in 2010 and is structured as a kind of anarchic para-institution that aims to support cultural and social change in the use of land. *Inland/Campo Adentro* promotes activities in specific rural locations, opens branch offices, artists' residencies, and schools for craftsmen and peasants. The project connects associations and activists from different nations, challenging a stereotypical vision of the rural, and the current neo-pastoral trends that go with it, by fostering opportunities to think bottom-up about self-generated economies.

These participative works partly originate in the reassessment of pedagogical methodologies elaborated by the libertarian thinkers who emerged in the 1970s. In particular, they confirm the current relevance of a holistic/ecological approach to art practice and design, which was explored by Global Tools. Today, just as in the 1970s, these practices understand the aesthetic as a component of a broader ethical investigation that relates education to the pursuit of happiness. The art historian Fabio Belloni has recently defined 1970s projects akin to Global Tools as pursuing 'eudemonia'.[70] This term can probably be used also to describe these more recent endeavours, which merge pragmatic and visionary aspects. After all, as the philosopher and historian of art Wladyslaw Tatarkiewicz wrote about happiness in 1966: 'Imagination often means as much as, or more than experience, anticipation means as much as, or more than the present with all its reality. And thus happiness is also determined by things which never were and never will be.'[71]

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1. Archizoom Associati included Andrea Branzi, Gilberto Corretti, Paolo Deganello, Massimo Morozzi, Dario Bartolini, and Lucia Bartolini. The editorial team of *Casabella* was composed of the magazine's editor-in-chief Alessandro Mendini, Carlo Guenzi, Enrico Bona, Franco Raggi, and Luciano Boschini. Gruppo 9999 included Giorgio Birelli, Carlo Caldini, Fabrizio Fiumi, and Paolo Galli. Superstudio was formed by Adolfo Natalini, Piero Frassinelli, Alessandro Magris, Roberto Magris, and Cristiano Toraldo di Francia, and in the 1970s Alessandro Poli was also included as a collaborator. The UFO's were composed of Carlo Bachi, Lapo Binazzi, Patrizia Cammeo, Riccardo Forese, and Titti Maschietto. The group Zziggurat included Alberto Breschi, Giuliano Fiorenzuoli, Roberto Pecchioli, Nanni Cargiaghe, and Gigi Gavini.

2. Germano Celant, 'Radical Architecture', in Emilio Ambasz (ed.), *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape; Achievements and Problems of Italian Design* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1972), pp. 380–82. Published in *In* in 1971, the first version of Celant's text did not yet use the term 'radical architecture'.

3. Ugo La Pietra, 'L'architettura radicale è morta: viva l'architettura radicale', *Spazio Arte* 10/11 (June–October 1977), p. 2.

4. Andrea Branzi, introduction to *Architettura 'radicale'*, by Paola Navone and Bruno Orlandoni (Milan: Documenti di Casabella, 1974), pp. 7–15.

5. Peter Lang, 'Suicidal Desires', in Peter Lang and William Menking (eds.), *Superstudio: Life Without Objects* (Milan: Skira, 2003), pp. 31–51.

6. Pier Vittorio Aureli, *The Project of Autonomy*: *Politics and Architecture Within and Against Capitalism* (Amsterdam: Buell Centre, 2008); Amit Wolf, '*Discorsi per Immagini*: Of Political and Architectural Experimentation', *California Italian Studies* 3:2 (2012), eScholarship, http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/8dg290qj.

7. Amit Wolf, '*Superurbeffimero* n. 7: Umberto Eco's *Semiologia* and the Architectural Rituals of the UFO', *California Italian Studies* 2:2 (2011), eScholarship, http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/8q61n35f.

8. Milco Carboni and Tim Powell, 'Sconfinamenti', in Gianni Pettena (ed.), *Radicals: Architettura e design 1960/75* (Venice: La Biennale di Venezia, 1996), pp. 42–43; Martin Van Schaik and Otakar Máčel (eds.), *Exit Utopia: Architectural Provocations, 1956–1976* (Munich: Prestel, 2005).

9. This essay was completed in June 2014, prior to the publication of the first book devoted to Global Tools, Valerio Borgonuovo and Silvia Franceschini (eds.), *Global Tools, 1973–1975* (Istanbul: SALT/Garanti Kültür AŞ, 2015). Aside from a few brief accounts discussing Global Tools's activities, such as Andrea Branzi, *Il design italiano, 1964–2000*, rev. ed. (Milan: Electa, 2008), pp. 166–68, few scholars have focused on the work of the collective. Two important sources are Catharine Rossi, 'Crafting Modern Design in Italy, from Post-War to Postmodernism' (PhD thesis, Royal College of Art, 2011), pp. 391–413; and Marion Arnoux and Jean Baptiste Dardel, 'La Global Tools: Fin de l'utopie radicale', *Azimuts* 30 (2008): pp. 68–81.

10. Tommaso Trini, 'Masaccio a UFO', *Domus* 466 (September 1968), pp. 55–56; Gianni Pettena, *L'Anarchitetto: Portrait of The Artist as a Young Architect* (1973; repr., Rimini: Guaraldi, 2010).

11. For a similar approach, see Barbara Kamprad (ed.), *Design als Postulat am Beispiel italien: Katalog und Anthologie zur Ausstellung im IDZ Berlin* (Berlin: Internationales Design Zentrum, 1973); Luca Palazzoli (ed.), *Gli abiti dell'imperatore* (Milan: Galleria Luca Palazzoli, 1974); Giovanni M. Accame and Carlo Guenzi (eds.), *Avanguardie e cultura popolare* (Bologna: Galleria d'arte moderna, 1975).

12. These films have been recently recovered and were shown at the Graham Foundation's exhibition *Environments and Counter Environments: "Italy: The New Domestic Landscape"; MoMA 1972* (2013), curated by Peter Lang, Luca Molinari, and Mark Wasiuta; Emilio Ambasz, 'Environments: Introduction', in *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape*, pp. 137–38.

13. William Menking, 'The Revolt of the Object', in *Superstudio: Life Without Objects*, pp. 53–63.

14. Celant, 'Radical Architecture', pp. 380–382.

15. Rossi, 'Crafting Modern Design in Italy', pp. 350–56.

16. Menking, 'The Revolt of the Object', p. 60; 'Interview with Andrea Branzi', by Olympia Kazi, in Beatriz Colomina and Craig Buckley (eds.), *Clip Stamp Fold: The Radical Architecture of Little Magazines* (Barcellona: Actar, 2010), pp. 249–51.

17. Peter Lang and William Menking, 'Only Architecture Will Be Our Lives', in *Superstudio: Life Without Objects*, p. 25; Adolfo Natalini, 'Com'era ancora bella l'architettura nel 1966…', *Spazio Arte* 4 (June–October 1977), p. 7.

18. Andrea Branzi, 'Strategia dei tempi lunghi', *Casabella* 370 (October 1972): p. 13. All of the quotations from *Casabella* use the magazine's original English translation.

19. Andrea Branzi, 'Architettura disegnata', *Data* 23 (October–November 1976), pp. 72–73. Among the practitioners of Tendenza were Carlo Aymonino, Ezio Bonfanti, Giargio Grassi, and Massimo Scolari. These architects were informed by Aldo Rossi's and Manfredo Tafuri's theories. The movement was largely present at the XV Milan Triennale in 1973.

20. Navone and Orlandoni, *Architettura 'radicale'*, pp. 82–83. In 1973 all Global Tools's members participated in the large exhibition entitled *Contemporanea* in Rome; they were included in a section curated by Mendini; Bruno Mantura (ed.), *Contemporanea. Roma, Parcheggio di Villa Borghese*, 11.1973/2.1974 (Rome: Incontri internazionali d'arte, 1973), pp. 289–332.

21. 'Interview with Alessandro Mendini', by Olympia Kazi, in *Clip Stamp Fold*, pp. 389–92.

22. Minutes of the Global Tools meeting, Milan, 22–23 June 1974, Riccardo Dalisi Archive, Naples.

23. Franco Raggi, 'Radical Story: The History and Aim of Negative Thinking in Radical Design since 1968: The Avant-garde Role Between Disciplinary Evasion and Commitment', *Casabella* 382 (October 1973): p. 45. Translation in the magazine slightly modified by the authors.

24. 'Global Tools: Documento 1', *Casabella* 377 (May 1973): p. 4; 'Global Tools: Programma 1975; Falegnameria storica', *Global Tools* 1 (June 1974): n.p.

25. The 'Communication' group included Giudo Arra, Ugo La Pietra, Gianni Pettena, and Franco Vaccari. See *Global Tools* 1 (June 1974): n.p.; and Franco Vaccari, *Viaggio sul Reno, settembre 1974* (Brescia: Nuovi Strumenti, 1974).

26. Minutes of the Global Tools meeting, Milan, 22–23 June 1974, Riccardo Dalisi Archive, Naples; Natalini, 'Com'era ancora bella l'architettura nel 1966…', p. 10.

27. See, for instance, the sections on 1970s Italy in Gerd-Rainer Horn, *The Spirit of '68: Rebellion in Western Europe and North America, 1956–1976* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 77–92 and pp. 111–117.

28. Robert Lumley, *States of Emergency: Cultures of Revolt in Italy from 1968 to 1978* (New York: Verso, 1990).

29. Daniele Ganser, *NATO's Secret Armies: Operation GLADIO and Terrorism in Western Europe* (London: Frank Cass, 2005).

30. For example, this is how the term is used in Louis Dumont, *Homo aequalis: Genèse et épanouissement de l'idéologie économique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1977). See also Clifford Geertz, 'Ideology as a Cultural System' (1964), in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (London: Hutchinson, 1975), pp. 193-233.

31. Piero Frassinelli and Adolfo Natalini, *Superstudio: La moglie di Lot e la coscienza di Zeno* (Venice: La Biennale di Venezia, 1978); Lara Vinca Masini (ed.), *Utopia e crisi dell'antinatura: Momenti e intenzioni architettoniche in Italia—Topologia e morfogenesi* (Venice: La Biennale di Venezia, 1978), pp. 35–39.

32. For Gramsci on folklore, see Alberto Maria Cirese, *Intellettuali, folklore e instinto di classe* (Turini: Einaui, 1976), pp. 67–104.

33. Antonio D'Auria, 'L'ideologia artigiana', *Casabella* 389 (May 1974): pp. 10–12; Marco Dezzi Bardeschi, 'Il solino di Golia: Per una psicanalisi dell'avanguardia; Note a margine della mostra "Avanguardia e cultura popolare" Bologna 1975', *Casabella* 402 (June 1975): pp. 6–7.

34. Alberto Maria Cirese, 'Per una nozione scientifica di arte popolare', in Francesca Frattini (ed.), *Arte popolare moderna* (Bologna: Cappelli Editore, 1966), pp. 11–21; and Catharine Rossi, 'Crafting a Design Counterculture: The Pastoral and the Primitive in Italian Radical Design, 1972–1976', in Grace Lees-Maffei and Kjetil Fallan (eds.), *Made in Italy: Rethinking a Century of Italian Design* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 145–60.

35. 'Conversazione fra Binazzi, Branzi, Celant, La Pietra, Mendini, Natalini, Raggi, Sottsass Jr.', *Global Tools* 1 (June 1974): n. p.

36. Andrea Branzi, 'Avanguardie e produzione intellettuale di massa', in Accame and Guenzi, *Avanguardie e cultura popolare*, p. 52. See also Michelangelo Sabatino, *Pride in Modesty: Modernist Architecture and the Vernacular Tradition in Italy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010).

37. Franco Raggi, 'China 14–30 May 1974: A Traveller's Report', *Casabella* 400 (April 1975): pp. 32–45.

38. Alessandro Mendini, 'The Body: A Natural Object', *Casabella* 399 (March 1975): p. 5; Filippo Allison, 'Le comunità: Oggetti e comportamento', in *Avanguardie e cultura popolare*, pp. 113–17; Superstudio, 'Essi sono quello che noi non siamo', in *Avanguardie e cultura popolare*, pp. 106–12; Carlo Fontana, 'Squatting 1960–1973', *Casabella*, no. 389 (May 1974), pp. 4, 12–13. See also the quarterly architectural magazine *Lotus*, whose eighth number (1974) was devoted to communities and communes. This issue featured an article by Oswald Mathias Ungers and Liselotte Ungers, 'Le comuni del nuovo mondo', which was based on their earlier book *Kommunen in der Neuen Welt, 1740–1971* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1972).

39. Mendini, 'The Body', p. 5.

40. William Desmond, *Cynics* (Stocksfield: Acumen, 2006).

41. Riccardo Dalisi, 'La tecnica povera in rivolta: La cultura del sottoproletariato', *Casabella* 365 (May 1972): pp. 28–34; Riccardo Dalisi, 'Creative Participation is Possible', *Casabella*, no. 368–69 (August–September 1972), pp. 95–99; Riccardo Dalisi, 'Minimal Technology and Desperate Productivity', *Casabella* 382 (October 1973): pp. 46–47; Riccardo Dalisi, 'Minimal Technology', *Casabella* 386 (February 1974): pp. 43–45.

42. Riccardo Dalisi, 'L'appropriazione contro la progettazione', *In* 13 (Autumn 1974), pp. 11–12.

43. Wright Steve, *Storming Heaven: Class Composition and Struggle in Italian Autonomist Marxism* (London: Pluto Press, 2002).

44. Andrea Branzi, 'Minimal Technology', *Casabella* 385 (January 1974): p. 6.

45. Mary Louise Lobsinger, 'Domestic Environments: Italian Neo-Avant-garde Design and the Politics of Post-Materialism', in Robin Schuldenfrei (ed.), *Atomic Dwelling:*

Anxiety, Domesticity, and Postwar Architecture (London: Routledge, 2012), p. 191.

46. Mario Tronti, *Operai e capitale* (Turin: Einaudi, 1966).

47. See, for example, Ennio Chiggio's *operaista* critique to Global Tools's position in 'C'è un'alternativa a una alternativa?', *In* 13 (Autumn 1974): pp. 53–54.

48. Branzi, 'Avanguardie e produzione intellettuale di massa', p. 52.

49. Filippo Allison, Andrea Branzi, Riccardo Dalisi, Ettore Sottsass, 'Co-n-stru-t-z-ion-e', *Global Tools* 1 (June 1974): n.p.

50. Fred Turner, *From Counterculture to Cyberculture: Stewart Brand, the Whole Earth Network, and the Rise of Digital Utopianism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

51. Catharine Rossi, 'Crafting Modern Design in Italy', pp. 403–4.

52. Raggi, 'Radical Story', p. 45.

53. Piero Frassinelli's testimony reported in Lang, 'Suicidal Desires', p. 45.

54. Marco Biraghi, 'Università: La facoltà di Architettura del Politecnico di Milano (1963–1974)', in *Italia 60/70: Una stagione dell'architettura* (Padova: Il Poligrafo, 2010), pp. 87–97.

55. 'La facoltà di architettura nel processo di dequalificazione', Mario Sartori and Paolo Spada (eds.), special issue, *In* 9 (February–March 1973).

56. Horn, *The Spirit of '68*, pp. 74–83.

57. Natalini, 'Com'era ancora bella l'architettura nel 1966…', p. 10.

58. 'S-Space–Outdoor–Dawn in the Pool 1970', 'S-Space–Outdoor Control of Sonorous Trees 1970', 'S-Space–Indoor Jam Session n. 1', in Fabrizio Fiumi, Paolo Galli, Carlo Caldini, and Giorgio Birelli, *Ricordi di architettura e di decorazione arte moderna* (Florence: Tipolitografia G. Capponi, 1972), pp. 175–98.

59. 'S-Space Mondial Festival n. 1 Florence Italy', in Fiumi, Galli, Caldini, and Birelli, *Ricordi di architettura*, pp. 245–70; Alexandra Brown, 'A Night at the Space Electronic, or the Radical Architectures of 1971's "Vita, Morte e Miracoli dell'Architettura"', in *29th Annual Conference of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand: Fabrication; Myth, Nature, Heritage* (Australia: SAHANZ, 2012), Griffith University, http://hdl.handle.net/10072/48822.

60. Superstudio, 'Vita educazione cerimonia amore morte: Cinque storie del Superstudio; Educazione', *Casabella* 372 (May 1972): pp. 27–31.

61. Adolfo Natalini, *Cultura materiale extraurbana* (Florence: Alinea, 1983); 2A+P/A, '"La coscienza di Zeno": Notes on a Work by Superstudio', *San Rocco* 8 (Winter 2013): pp. 6–13.

62. Minutes of Global Tools meeting at Archizoom studio in Florence, 13 February 1973, Riccardo Dalisi Archive, Naples; and 'Tipologia didattica', note attached to the minutes of the Global Tools meeting, 13 March 1973, Riccardo Dalisi Archive, Naples. Remo Buti, Riccardo Dalisi, Adolfo Natalini, and Roberto Pecchioli were in charge of drafting this note.

63. This influence was made clear in Superstudio, 'Nota 1: Tipologia didattica', *Casabella* 379 (July 1973): p. 44.

64. Andrea Branzi, 'L'abolizione della scuola', *Casabella*, no. 373 (January 1973): p. 10; Ivan Illich, *Descolarizzare la società: Per una alternativa all'istituzione scolastica* (Milan: Mondadori 1972); Ivan Illich, *Rovesciare le istituzioni: Un 'messaggio' o una 'sfida'* (Rome: Armando 1973); Ivan Illich, *La convivialità* (Milan: Mondadori 1974).

65. Paulo Freire, *La pedagogia degli oppressi* (Milan: Mondadori, 1971). For the circulation of Freire's and other libertarian pedagogical theories in Italy in the 1970s, see Maria Luisa Tornesello, *Il sogno di una scuola: Lotte ed esperienze negli anni Settanta; Contro scuola, tempo pieno, 150 ore* (Pistoia: Petite Plaisance, 2006).

66. Joseph Todd, 'From Deschooling to Unschooling: Rethinking Anarchopedagogy after Ivan Illich', in Robert H. Haworth (ed.), *Anarchist Pedagogies: Collective Actions, Theories, and Critical Reflections on Education* (Oakland: PM Press, 2012), pp. 69–85.

67. Richard Kahn, 'Anarchic Epimetheanism: The Pedagogy of Ivan Illich', in Randall Amster (ed.), *Contemporary Anarchist Studies: An Introductory Anthology of Anarchy in the Academy* (London: Routledge, 2009), p. 128.

68. Alex Coles (ed.), *Design and Art* (London: Whitechapel, 2007); Paul O'Neill and Mick Wilson (eds.), *Curating and the Educational Turn*, Occasional Table (London: Open Editions, 2010); Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politic of Spectatorship* (London: Verso, 2012), pp. 241–74.

69. 'Workstyles and the Ethics of Comportment', Mildred's Lane, accessed 18 April 2014, http://mildredslane.com/philosophy#home.

70. Fabio Belloni, *Impegno, ricerca, azione: Militanza artistica in Italia, 1968–1972* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2015), p. 34. Belloni borrows the term from art critic Filiberto Menna, who argued for a 'linea eudemonistica' (eudemonic trend) in modern culture in his book *Profezia di una società estetica: Saggio sull'avanguardia artistica e il movimento dell'architettura moderna* (Rome: Lerici, 1968).

71. Wladyslaw Tatarkiewicz, 'Happiness and Time', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 27:1 (September 1966): p. 8.

ARTISTS' PROJECT:

BREAKDOWN

ANDRIANNA CAMPBELL

ARTISTS' PROJECT: *BREAKDOWN*

A CONVERSATION WITH LIZ MAGIC LASER AND SIMONE LEIGH

ANDRIANNA CAMPBELL

AP3.1
Liz Magic Laser and Simone Leigh, in collaboration with Alicia Hall Moran, *BREAKDOWN* (video stills), 2011. Single-channel video, 8 min.

In 2011, Simone Leigh and Liz Magic Laser made a video titled Breakdown, *in collaboration with Alicia Hall Moran. They derived the video's script from numerous source materials, including nineteenth-century texts and photographs on hysteria; Charlotte Perkins Gilman's 1892 feminist short story 'The Yellow Wallpaper' and its various adaptions in the arts; the 1977 television satirical soap opera* Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman*; Anthony Harvey's 1967 film adaption of Amiri Baraka's play* The Dutchman; *and the contemporary television reality show* Intervention. *Contributing Editor Andrianna Campbell spoke with Leigh and Laser about their ideas, their improvisations, their working relationship, and why* Breakdown *manages to highlight the potential pitfalls and possible boundary transgressions of collaboration.*

Andrianna Campbell: I wanted to discuss *Breakdown* with both of you because it hits upon many of the issues with regard to collaboration that are featured in this book. How did the video come about?

AP3.2
Liz Magic Laser and Simone Leigh, in collaboration with Alicia Hall Moran, *BREAKDOWN* (video still), 2011. Single-channel video, 8 min.

Liz Magic Laser: I guess we can start right about at the beginning.

Simone Leigh: In the church?

LML: Yes, in the Cathedral St. John the Divine in New York where Simone and I met in 2005. Sarah Olson, an artist, organised an exhibition of our work that was shown at St. John the Divine, Columbia University, and Union Theological Center, and we both had work hanging, I think, at two out of those three places. Then we were in a symposium together. At the time I was really excited about Simone's work, and I think she wasn't so into what I was doing. Despite this we became friends.

SL: It's so funny to me that you thought I didn't like your work but yet wanted to collaborate. I don't think you know that I was on the panel for judging the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC) Artist Residency program, so when you applied I got to see all of your new work including the Brecht play that you were doing in the ATMs, the yoga you were doing on motorcycles, and environments in general. I loved all of it.

LML: So after reconnecting in 2008, almost a year later, Simone started curating this series at Recess, when that space in SoHo first opened. She invited me to do two performances for her program. This second project was the genesis of our collaborations. At that point, we began having conversations about developing a video project together.

SL: Then and even now, people continue to find it surprising that we've collaborated on a few different things. I was super excited when I saw the new work, and so when I got the opportunity to do the project at Recess you were one of the first people I wanted to work with. The title, *Be Black Baby Party*, came from Brian DePalma's first film, *Hi Mom*, which he made while he was still in film school. Robert DeNiro is in it, and it's so early that even

AP3.3
Liz Magic Laser and Simone Leigh, in collaboration with Alicia Hall Moran, *BREAKDOWN* (video still), 2011. Single-channel video, 8 min.

DeNiro's name is misspelled in the credits. The film features 1970s New York, which is startling to see. Really strangely in the middle of the film, it breaks from colour to black and white. In the movie, these young black radicals are walking around and are asking people to come to their 'Be Black Baby' event. And then the film breaks in the middle to a flashback or bleed back to their event, which is akin to a horror show.

LML: My understanding of the horror show was that it was basically an immersive theatre performance. In the world of the film, the radicals stage an avant-garde theatre performance in a brownstone in Harlem.

SL: The scene is really horrifying. The audience in the film are white theatre-goers who are forced to eat 'black food' and then they're assaulted in a variety of ways. Even now it's startling and I was shocked at how contemporary it felt. I sent this clip to a few artists and asked them to respond, and that was the first *Be Black Baby Party*. There were four more after that. That was the first work that Liz and I collaborated on.

LML: At the time, I was working on a performance called *Flight* where six actors restaged chase scenes from films on staircases. I staged it on the staircase at MoMA PS1 in Queens and later in Times Square. I chose scenes that aimed to elicit fear in the audience. Then I restaged twenty-four scenes at a fast pace such that the actors switched roles and became alternately villain and victim, pursuer and pursued. It was a very violent piece. When I got this prompt from Simone, I was in rehearsals for *Flight*. I watched the *Hi Mom!* film and started to think about how to apply this tactic of montaging a script to the theme of identity construction. I came to think about film trailers and how they typically use a 'neutral' white male voiceover.

AC: Perhaps even naturalising identity formation in the viewing subject?

LML: Yes. The film trailer tends to presume subjects who are predominately white male subjects, and is constantly 'othering' bodies outside of that neutral zone. For Simone's first *Be Black Baby* night I staged an interactive performance called *Preview* since the script was entirely adapted from previews. I looked specifically for trailers that questioned identity. For instance, the trailer for *Memento* performs this direct address to the audience, prompting the viewer to imagine a total loss of identity by asking questions like, 'What if you woke up and didn't even remember your own name?' For *Preview*, I had a white male actor, Max Woertendyke, pretty intensely accosting people at the event with these questions. He would stare into a person's eyes or touch someone's face while questioning their sense of self.

SL: Wasn't it supposed to be a pregnant woman at one point?

LML: Yes, at first I thought it was going to be a pregnant actress I had worked with before, and later I decided the performer should embody the neutral blank presumptuousness.

SL: A white noise, always in the background, which is taken for the natural.

LML: Yes. I wanted the performer to question everyone else except himself. I think that was in early 2010 and then the following year you invited me for the second *Be Black Baby* event which was Michael Jackson themed. I did a polemic slide show lecture comparing MJ's childhood to Lewis Hine's photographs of exploited child labourers. Around that time, we started talking about doing a fullyfledged collaboration. We realised the montage approach I used for *Flight* and *Preview* had something in common with your approach to the hybrid bullet-breast ceramic pieces you were making at the time; and this montaging or remixing became our primary approach to *Breakdown.*

SL: As someone who has primarily done sculpture, *Breakdown* drew from my interest in montage, but also built on my intellectual interests and my relationships with people I had collaborated with for *Be Black Baby Party.* During all of this, Liz and I were invited to backroom conversations about the creation of a performance department at the Museum of Modern Art. There we met Alicia Hall Moran, the opera singer, who had done other collaborations with artists. Alicia would become the sole performer in *Breakdown.*

AC: Let's discuss Alicia Hall Moran, because when you see her at first in the video you think this is the voice and perhaps the body of the author. Then you realise that there are two authors, one of whom is black and the other white, so already your assumptions of the autobiographical nature of the work are disrupted. Collaboration seems like a means to disrupt the one-to-one relationship between the author and the subject. Is this something you sought to address in *Breakdown*?

LML: After doing these two events in dialogue together, we started talking about collaborating. Pretty quickly we arrived at this crossover interest in a visceral female aesthetic, which I think Simone has been developing in quite a unique way for many years, her own iconography.

SL: An iconography of what a black woman could be. . ..

LML: Pretty quickly we began discussing hysteria. I just had written a paper about hysteria cases in the nineteenth century.

SL: It was about hysteria and photography!

LML: Right, right, the photographs of hysteria cases have been read as women performing for the camera. In my paper I questioned the assertion that women were faking it and asked what that model of theatrics being performed for the camera meant. I took issue with this idea that the women were acting, were performing and that this was 'theatre'. I took a more embodied notion of performance and theatre, mainly looking to Antonin Artaud and his ideas about the theatre of cruelty as a more authentic performance that is not fraudulent, but is actually the performance that erupts when someone has nothing left but their body, when the incarcerated body has no other way to express its resistance. I found research that predominantly focused on black male prisoners, which I believe is the manifestation of hysteria today. We can see accusations of 'faking it' with these prisoners' pseudo-seizures. After someone has a seizure in prison, they are hooked up to an EKG monitor. Their brain activity shows that they're not truly having a seizure, but the prisoners really believe they are. They're probably having a quite intense panic attack.

SL: This panic attack has its own legitimacy.

LML: Yes. And so when we talked about the historical cases of hysteria and these current pseudo-seizures, and then a variety of representations of breakdowns, we decided to focus on the performance of rupture.

SL: So Liz had already written this paper, which I wasn't aware of. But for me, the beginning is when Claire Barliant wrote a piece about Mary Hartman for the contemporary art magazine *East of Borneo*. I had been aware of Mary Hartman when I was younger. She was not on television by the time I was of age, but I did remember the expression 'Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman'. I didn't really remember what it was about. Claire explained how unique this character was on television and the strangeness of the 1970s. Also, she mentioned that Chantal Akerman's *Jeanne Dielman* had been created in the same year. For me that was a very intense collapsing of time because I had been a disciple of *Jeanne*

Dielman. This is one of my favourite pieces ever made. It was really confusing and complicated for me to realise they had been made in the same year. And then there was a Turkish film that Liz was interested in, what was it called?

LML: I met an actress in Turkey who had starred in this film called *Forty Square Meters of Germany*. It was a film adaptation of 'The Yellow Wallpaper', but the characters were Turkish immigrants living in Berlin. She played this wife locked in the apartment. So when Simone brought up 'The Yellow Wallpaper', I looked back at that story, and we were trading materials. I sent her my essay on hysteria and she sent me Claire's article, and *Forty Square Meters* became one the films that we drew on as well.

SL: Claire's article was called 'From the Yellow Waxy Buildup to a Nervous Breakdown: The Fleeting Existence of Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman'. It brought me back to my interest in women's studies. Working with 'The Yellow Wallpaper' was very important to me. So after a while of really admiring each other's work, we finally had something. After our meeting with Alicia, we thought that she was really talented and intelligent and could pull this off. But then we rehearsed this piece for a long time, there were a lot of… I don't know how to call it, not failures, but not successes, in the process.

AC: Why was there so little success in the rehearsals? I saw the video, but until you sent me the script, I could not discern how much improvisation was in the final work, and I wonder why you gave the performer so much agency in her performance.

SL: I've tried really hard in everything I do to not maintain that the artists are the only authors in the work. It's important to me. I don't want to speak for Liz.

LML: I totally agree.

SL: That was important from the beginning. That would have always been a big deal for me. We both felt that way.

LML: I agree. I collaborate with actors and dancers and other professionals as performers, quite often, and they are fully a part of the process. I push for their names to be recognised or mentioned in the publication of the work. I have to be rather pushy about it.

SL: Yes, there is often pushback from curators and institutions.

LML: Uh huh. People always say there's no space, and I say, well, then don't include a courtesy line. The courtesy is to the performer I'm collaborating with.

AC: Could you discuss the aesthetics of fragmentation, montage, and breakdown in the recording of the performance? What about the disjointed music and the mental breakdown of the performer and how that relates to the title?

SL: Well, in the music? That was the thing that saved us. We were in rehearsals with Alicia and things didn't feel quite right. Then we decided to start following her around for her gigs as a musician. When we asked her to sing the script that we had written, it was like magic. It was so much sadder when she started singing it. We also asked her to sing it in a particular way. I was interested in representing as many African American song styles as possible.

LML: Yes, from my perspective, I had already worked with performers a number of times so I didn't have the expectation of it working right away. Simone was saying, 'Why didn't this work?' I think for her it was more perplexing that we didn't nail it in the first rehearsal sessions, but for me, this was a more organic and smooth workshopping process than I usually get to have. Usually there is time pressure, but in this case, we were doing this of our own accord. So there wasn't a specific deadline, which meant that we would do two rehearsals one week and then maybe we wouldn't meet for a few weeks. There were many gaps, which actually allowed for a creative process to unfold, for all of us to rethink it, then for us to go see Alicia's shows. The music was the turning point in *Breakdown*, because we found very specific references for the singing style. For the different segments, we had very specific stage directions about hitting high notes, the cadence, and the references to the style of each segment—from guttural to a very high-pitched yelp, and from an arpeggio to a more guttural voice and then to an A note. We have notes to Alicia saying, 'You should say this with the cadence of saying "Amen", but you are actually saying "I've been performing my whole life".'

AC: Would you discuss the periodisation in terms of the nervous breakdown peaking in the 1970s, which Claire talks about in her article, and the ways of performing hysteria that Liz noticed in the nineteenth-century photographs? Are there shifts in the way we now embody feminine public displays of emotion and loss of sanity? Are there different ways of seeing or receiving this feminine loss of control, and does *Breakdown* propose another contemporary lineage?

LML: It's a difficult comparison to make because we know those cases from photographs and writing. Hysteria is frozen in the photographs, but is described in writing as a sort of freezing up, of a rigor mortis or paralysis in the state of shock. However, in the writings of Jean-Martin Charcot, we see the mention and the description of a cry. We can't hear it. It has to resonate from this frozen image. Whereas *Mary Hartman* provides a very different representation of the breakdown because of the use of the moving image.

SL: For me, and I think also for Liz, the issue was really empathy. We have so much empathy for these characters–from the hysteria cases and 'The Yellow Wallpaper' through *Mary Hartman*—it brings up the question, What would it mean if these characters were raced? What would it mean if they were black women? Would we have empathy for them?

LML: We were interested in how the different representations of the female hysteric were for the most part overwrought and grotesque. Simone brought this reality show called *Intervention* into the mix, which capitalised on the crying fits of alcoholics and drug addicts. The show featured a 'diverse' array of addicts with more than a few episodes focused on black women. The line 'I've been performing my whole life' came from a woman on that show. That show, and reality television at large, takes hysterical displays and melodramatic female utterance to the level of a grotesque hyperbole. It is too much for the viewer to take in—the viewer is fascinated but it eventually makes us shrink away. We worked with those cringe-worthy expressions but Alicia performed them with such virtuosity. She can make us hear those unpalatable utterances and receive those expressions because of her virtuosic delivery.

SL: One of the ways in which Alicia was a true collaborator was that she and I had long conversations—you might even call them arguments—about whether or not she would represent this idea of catching the spirit, or shouting, or losing it in church.

LML: Oh, I remember that. We had so many conversations about that.

SL: So many. In the end, we decided not to do it. I really, you know, have to hand it to Alicia. I think she was right. Bringing the spirit into the conversation was a means to shine a light on or illuminate an alternate way of performing that was not too facile to understand. It would have been distracting and it would have given people maybe a crutch to rest on, that this is a representation of black women doing 'black woman things' again. The strangeness of the piece has to do with not relying on traditional ideas. Church is really the only place where black women are allowed to lose control. So I do think she was right, that the disobedience isn't as effective when brought into that context. So that was a decision we made, and even when we went into New Covenant Temple (the church where *Breakdown* was filmed), we made sure there were no crosses in the video. Neither Liz nor I are interested in Christianity anyway. We made sure that there wasn't a sense that we were in a church, because we didn't want to bring that content of 'church shouting' or 'losing it in church' into the work at all.

AC: Church as a place where black female hysteria is acceptable is a consistent trope, but your appropriation from *Intervention* does manage to contextualise breaking down now in the contemporary moment as occurring in our communal spaces, which today are

television and social media. I was wondering about Alicia's dress. There is an immediate connection to me in the way she was put together with Michelle Obama. It could be because of the fact that she was wearing a sleeveless dress, and there was all that hoopla about Michelle's arms in a sleeveless dress.

SL: With the arms?

AC: With the arms. Michelle is one of the few black women who is not an actress or a sports figure, who is in the public eye, but has to be in the public eye in a very conservative way. How did you choose to dress Alicia? Is she also performing the way she is dressed? Did you give any instruction?

LML: We definitely had her bring in a number of different options, but we wanted to frame her as an opera singer so that she would almost look like she was going to perform at Lincoln Center.

AC: Of course, so not as a stereotypical miscreant, or a church lady with an ornate hat and florally over-the-top outfit. . ..

SL: She chose this black dress. We brought a black and white dress because for a long time we were focused on the Eve character in *The Dutchman*. Alicia brought a black-and-white striped dress that was similar to what she wore on a daily basis. Afterwards, I asked her why she didn't bring an opera gown, and she said, 'Why would I do that?' I said to a certain extent this is a self-portrait. And she said, 'How would I know that?'

(*Everyone laughs*)

SL: I hadn't really thought about it being a self-portrait until she didn't show up in an opera gown. Then I thought, 'Why aren't you yourself today, Alicia?'

LML: We filmed every rehearsal and tried out different performance styles, from opera to jazz musicians like Betty Carter. Then we had Alicia mimic the breakdowns from *Intervention*, at a very basic bodily level: losing control of one's own body. The same went with the costumes. We had her bring several choices each time. It was a constant conversation and—Alicia has such a unique and fast-paced mind—every time we would give her direction, she was off and running, you know, ten miles a minute. That was one of the reasons we highlighted her name prominently because it was such a collaborative process.

AC: I really like your approach, that you were thinking that this is a self-portrait and that she was thinking 'Oh, but you are the authors'. The collaboration for this project happened

in an in-between space where she was allowed and even encouraged to bring part of herself to the project. What she brought was outside the realm of expectation of what an opera singer would look like. It seemed that for all three of you, collaboration not only came out of an affinity for the source material, but also for the process itself. Bringing this back to the themes of the book, I wanted to talk about what has happened in the past five years. Do parts of this project resonate for you as you've gone off and worked on individual projects? Are there themes here that you keep coming back to? Or do you see it as very much of a moment where you came together and worked on this and it didn't really have an impact on future individual projects?

LML: There was an economy of means in *Breakdown*. We brought so many ideas into the conversation, and then we really took the time to pare this back down, such that it was a lightly edited film because it was mostly edited through the rehearsal process. The paring things down, or economy of means, that we arrived at in conversation has definitely stuck with me.

SL: Yes, this project took nine months, and I don't really have a singular artwork that I have worked on for that period of time. I've worked on ideas for years, but I don't know a single artwork that I've spent nine months creating. Even if there were breaks, the breaks weren't really breaks. I was thinking about *Breakdown* when we weren't rehearsing. It was kismet because all three of us had completely different careers by the end of that year. We would never have had nine months to do this ever again.

LML: It was also a friendship. It was a social thing where we met up on a regular basis. Where we would have lunch together and drinks after. There was something very healthy about the piece and the process of it. We all had these other deadlines that were more anxiety ridden, and this was this thing we were doing on the side, in a very committed way, that had a healthier pace.

SL: The social time was very much a part of this piece. I am very melancholic about the loss of that sort of expansive time that allows for collaboration, because it's very much a time capsule of what we could do and where we were with ideas in our work. Alicia went on to become this Broadway star. She was Bess in *Porgie and Bess* within a few months. Then she also did the Whitney Biennial and then and then and then. It's just very precious to me, this film, because we couldn't do it again. There's no way.

AC: Was anxiety about time what pushed you to finish *Breakdown*?

SL: Yes, I had the deadline of the Studio Museum show, and at the end of that, Alicia said to me, 'This thing needs to lay an egg right now'.

LML: She said it just like that: 'This has to happen now!'

SL: We knew we were done then. We decided on a final location. Liz had been really keen on doing it in the subway because the gorgeous film *The Dutchman* was filmed in the subway, and also Liz's work involved happenstance and a sort of unknown between the interaction with the audience. I'm not like that at all. This is a place where we are really differ. I didn't want to do it on the subway also because I'm a mom. I didn't want to get arrested because I think it's uncool when you get arrested when you're a mom. We ended up shooting the final cut in my mother's church, which was a better idea than what either one of us would have come up with on our own. That was my favourite part of collaborating, it was the feeling that the ideas we developed together were stronger than the things we could have done in the echo chamber of our own studios.

LML: Completely. This project has been shown so many times in New York and all over the country. People are drawn to it, perhaps the multiplicity of voices, sources, and styles means that audiences can see more than we could've imagined. Collaboration is very much a conversation. When the dialogue becomes the process, there are moments when the cross-wiring carries more meaning than the individual components.

CHAPTER 5

MAKING ART WITH YOUR KIDS: GENERATION, COOPERATION, AND DESIRE IN PARENT-CHILD ARTWORK OF THE 1970S

MEREDITH A. BROWN, ORIANA FOX, and FRANCES JACOBUS-PARKER

5.1
Mierle Laderman Ukeles, *Dressing to Go Out/Undressing to Go In*, 1973. Black-and-white photographs mounted on foam core, chain, dust rag.

Mierle Laderman Ukeles's 1969 'Manifesto for Maintenance Art' famously proposed that unpaid and low-wage labour be considered a form of artistic practice.[1] In many of her subsequent Maintenance Art pieces, the artist documented herself or others performing such work in public spaces, including city streets, businesses, and museums. Yet the circumstances that inspired the manifesto were deeply personal: after the birth of her first child in 1968, Ukeles was enraged by her sense that her labours as a mother were not only invisible and unspeakable to those around her, but that they also rendered her irrelevant to

the artistic avant-garde.[2] Many of her earliest Maintenance Art works featured her daily activities as a parent. In *Maintenance Art: Personal Time Studies: Log* (1973), she recorded how she spent her day, demonstrating the competition for her time between childcare and attempts to work. *Dressing to Go Out/Undressing to Come In* (1973; fig. 5.1) consists of photographs of her children as they put on and take off their winter wear. Such Maintenance Art works developed directly out of her attempt to reconcile and make visible the acutely interactive and interdependent labour of child raising with her work as an artist. As a parent, her artistic practice became, by necessity, collaborative. It is this particular and perhaps paradoxical form of collaboration that we examine here.

In the following case studies and discussion, we consider instances from the 1970s of artistic collaboration between parents and children. While examples of this phenomenon can be found throughout art history, its prevalence in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s reflects the convergence of two related shifts that informed much of the era's art. Rather than create monumental, permanent objects, many artists turned to ephemeral and 'de-skilled' forms of art making, including performance and conceptual art, to explore everyday activities in and as art. At the same time, the social movements of the late 1960s brought heightened political consciousness to the art world, with the women's liberation movement in particular redefining politics to include the shared personal experiences of women and, to some extent, minorities. Artists influenced by the women's movement asserted the personal not only as political but also as a valid subject matter for art.[3] By analysing parent–child art practices of the 1970s, we hope to focus on the particular issues such work raises. We also hope that such an examination will illuminate the complexities of multi-person artistic labour, and the relational and cooperative nature of all artistic practice.

Nearly forty-five years since Ukeles logged the time she spent labouring as a parent and as an artist, issues around parenting and economies of labour not only remain pivotal to feminist discourse but also continue to carry currency in the mainstream media and to provoke conversations in academia and the art world. A number of recent publications and conferences have addressed the topic of parenthood–specifically motherhood–and artistic practice: to list some recent examples, the books *Feminist Art and the Maternal* (2009) by Andrea Liss and *The M Word: Real Mothers in Contemporary Art* (2011), edited by Myrel Chernick and Jennie Klein, and the conferences 'House, Work, ArtWork: Feminism', 'Art History's New Domesticities', and 'Motherhood and Creativity' (all 2015).[4] This text resonates with this current scholarly interest in maternal work and creative practice. At the same time it responds to the need, as articulated by Helena Reckitt and other scholars, for a critical and historical approach to ideas about collaboration and relationality in contemporary art—especially concerning issues of power, agency, and socioeconomic status.[5]

In each of the cases we explore below, the parent–artists make evident the porous boundary between art and life, working with their own children to engage with

concepts such as maternal and paternal identity, infantile dependency, parent–child relationality, and mortality. These artworks point to the complex nature of artistic collaboration between parent and child in which the figure of the child often becomes both aesthetic medium and willing participant. Some parent–artists look to their infant children as conceptual objects of investigation, while others engage older offspring in performances and collaborative projects. Regardless of the age of the children involved, all the projects raise questions about labour, creativity, and desire, and put pressure on definitions of and assumptions about collaboration and agency in art.

CASE STUDIES: A BRIEF LOOK AT SOME PARENT–CHILD COLLABORATIONS

Mary Kelly (b. 1941, USA)
Post-Partum Document, 1973–79.
mixed media, crayon, pencil on paper, resin, slate.

KwieKulik (Zofia Kulik, b. 1947, Poland, and Przemyslaw Kwiek, b. 1945, Poland; the couple worked together 1971–87)
Działania z Dobromierzem (Activities with Dobromierz), 1972–74.
35mm photographic slides and negatives.

Mary Kelly's *Post-Partum Document* records her son's infancy from birth, focusing on the process of weaning at around six months of age through his learning to speak and eventually to write at age five. The documents that make up this project include various 'specimens' that she analysed from a Lacanian psychoanalytic perspective. Kelly's intention was to make visible the 'last stronghold of the heterosexual imperative': the care of infants as a labour performed predominantly by mothers. Her aim was also to '"picture" the woman as subject of her own desire' by visualising the mother's fetishisation of the child and avoiding the objectification of the female form or the patriarchal recuperation of such imagery.[6] Therefore, *Post-Partum Document* does not include any photographs; however, one snapshot of Kelly with her toddler son seated in her lap holding the tape recorder microphone, taken by the husband/father, Ray Barrie, is included in press materials and in the book version of the project.

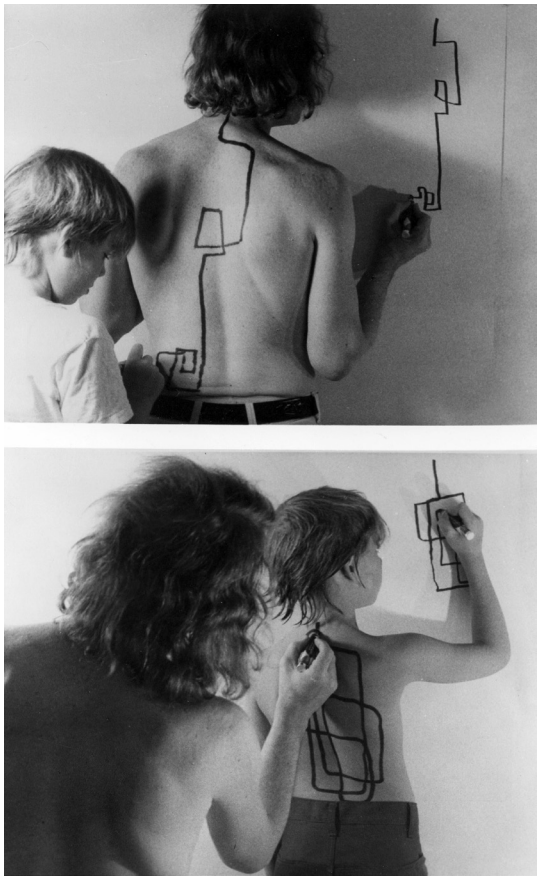
Another familial project, *Activities with Dobromierz* (fig. 5.2), is a series of more than 800 photographs taken by the artistic working couple known as KwieKulik. For two years ago the duo captured their son Dobromierz as an object amongst other objects such as onions, boxes, buckets, books, and red fabric in strange and carefully constructed constellations inside and outside their home. KwieKulik's intentions were no less academic than Kelly's, involving a calculated (pseudo?) scientific investigation of a different timbre. They were attempting to test mathematical theorems using the art of sculptural installation,

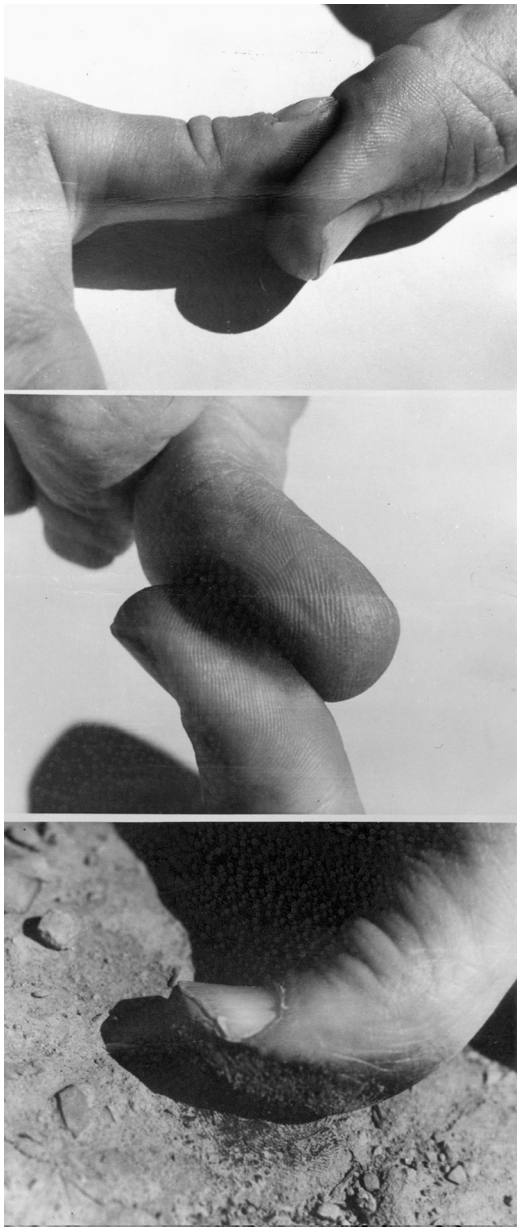
5.2
KwieKulik, *Działania z Dobromierzem* (*Activities with Dobromierz*) (detail 06-08), 1972–74. 35mm photographic slide.

and in doing so they 'proved that the limited number of spatial relations between objects (there are ten basic relations) can produce an infinite number of Aesthetic Time–Effects'.[7]

These geographically distinct but temporally overlapping artistic projects conflate domestic labour with artistic work: in Kelly's case, fulfilling Anglo-American feminist aspirations, and in KwieKulik's circumstances in communist Poland, taking full advantage of the domestic realm as a space of freedom. While Kelly highlighted the imbalance in the division of domestic labour in the Western world by carrying out the roles of mother and artist simultaneously, KwieKulik used the domestic realm as a respite from communist power and the hackwork of their day jobs. By animating the social realm with formalist experiments, KwieKulik used their private experience and space not only to critique modernism but also to advocate a new role for artists in society. As mentioned above, one of Kelly's stated intentions behind *Post-Partum Document* was to show that the fetishisation of infancy is the preoccupation of the mother and the expression of her womanly desire.[8] While capturing babyhood is not a stated goal of *Activities with Dobromierz*, what other creative means for fetishising infancy is more commonplace than the photo album? After all, the process of documenting KwieKulik's 'scientific' proof meant that they could take an infinite number of photographs of their baby boy.

—Oriana Fox





5.3
Dennis Oppenheim, *2-Stage Transfer Drawing (Advancing to a Future State* and *Returning to a Past State)*, 1971. Black and white photographs, text.

5.4
Dennis Oppenheim, *Identity Transfer*, 1970. Black and white photographs, text.

Dennis Oppenheim (1938–2011, USA)
2- Stage Transfer Drawing. (Advancing to a Future State), 1971.
Erik to Dennis Oppenheim. 1971. Boise, Idaho.
As Erik runs a marker along my back, I attempt to duplicate the movement on the wall. His activity stimulates a kinetic response from my sensory system. He is, therefore, drawing through me. Sensory retardation or disorientation makes up the discrepancy between the two drawings, and could be seen as elements that are activated during this procedure. Because Erik is my offspring, and we share similar biological ingredients, my back (as surface) can be seen as a mature version of his own...in a sense, he contacts a future state.

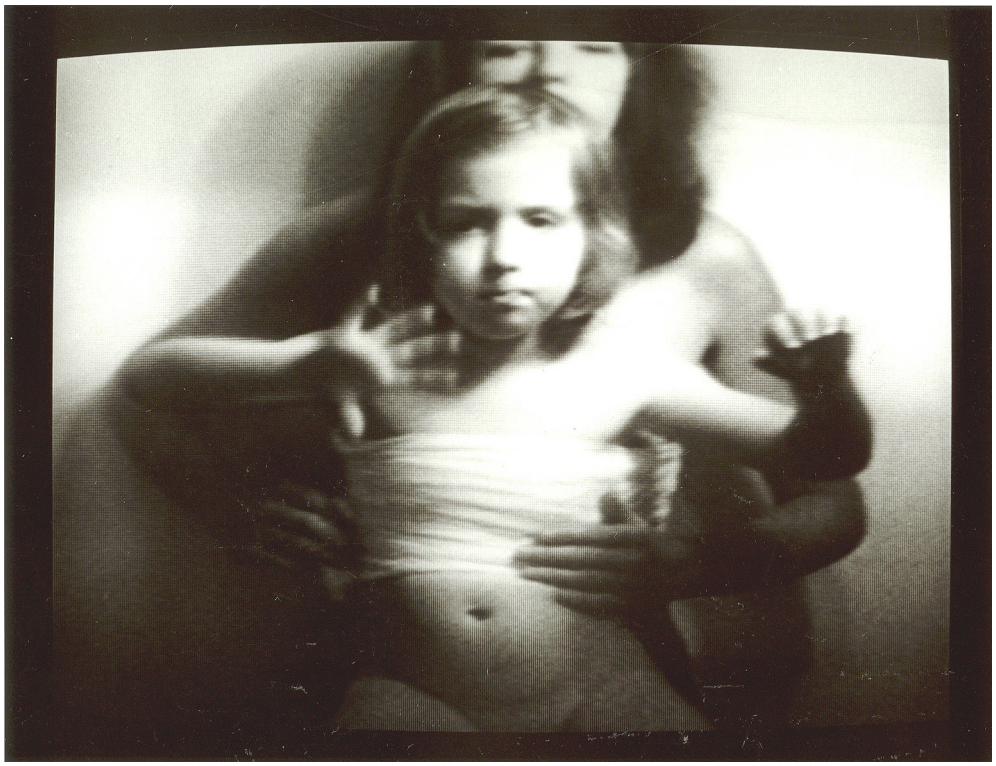
2- Stage Transfer Drawing. (Returning to a Past State), 1971.
Dennis to Erik Oppenheim. 1971. Boise, Idaho.
As I run a marker along Erik's back, he attempts to duplicate the movement on the wall. My activity stimulates a kinetic response from his memory system. I am, therefore, drawing through him. Sensory retardation or disorientation makes up the discrepancy between the two drawings, and could be seen as elements that are activated during this procedure. Because Erik is my offspring, and we share similar biological ingredients, his back (as surface) can be seen as an immature version of my own....in a sense, I make contact with a past state.

Identity Transfer, 1970.
Kristin Oppenheim to Dennis Oppenheim, Dennis Oppenheim to David Oppenheim, David Oppenheim terminated, soil. September, Oakland, California.
My daughter Kristin transfers the papillary ridges of her thumb onto my thumb. I then transfer this print to my father's thumb and he terminates the process by transferring it onto the ground. It is a linear regression going back through the members of a family until an impasse is reached.

Working at the same time as explicitly feminist artists, Dennis Oppenheim moved from making large-scale earthworks to more contained pieces with and about his body by the early 1970s. These body works soon shifted into explorations of the intertwining of identity and temporality through genetic material as Oppenheim began to make art with his three young children in an ongoing series of conceptual works in the 1970s. In *Identity Transfer* (fig. 5.3), for example, Oppenheim literalised the transmission of genetic material. Kristin Oppenheim, the artist's ten-year-old daughter, presses her thumb into her father's, transferring her thumbprint onto his. The artist then transfers this print, now a combination of Kristin's unique print with Oppenheim's own, to his father's thumb. His father, unable to transfer the print any further up the patrilineal line, presses the print of his thumb, now 'mixed' with that of his son and granddaughter, into the ground. In this conceptual performance, a marker of individual identity is passed from one generation to the previous one, transferring coded information through genetically related bodily material and linking that lineage back to the earth, the dust of creation.

Similarly, in *Two-Stage Transfer Drawing* (fig. 5.3), two filmed and photographed performances made in 1971, the artist and his young son stand with their backs to the camera, both naked to the waist. In the first stage, Erik Oppenheim uses a dark marker to draw on the skin of his father's back while Dennis attempts to replicate the drawing he feels on his back onto a paper on the wall. Father and son then switch places and Dennis draws on Erik's much smaller back as Erik attempts to duplicate his father's movements on the wall. While both Oppenheims produce the drawings, the work belongs to the father. He uses the material body of his son to make contact in the present with both an imagined future and a lost past; the two stages of this transfer drawing are subtitled 'Advancing to a Future State' and 'Returning to a Past State'. Oppenheim accompanies the work with descriptive captions that present the actions in genetic and temporal relations, so that his son's body is an 'immature' version of his own that creates a portal to a 'past state'.[9] In using his son's body, Oppenheim moves forward and backward through time—enacting a desire for immortality. These genetic extensions raise questions about the relationship of a father to his children and exist in a space of imaginary atemporality.

—Meredith A. Brown



5.5
Ulrike Rosenbach, *Einwicklung mit Julia (Wrapping Julia)* (video still), 1972. Black-and-white video, 8 min.

Ulrike Rosenbach (b. 1943, Germany)
Einwicklung mit Julia (*Wrapping Julia*), 1972.
Videotape, black-and-white, sound, 5 min.

Martha Rosler (b. 1943, USA)
Domination and the Everyday, 1978.
Videotape, colour, sound, 32 min.

In *Einwicklung mit Julia* (*Wrapping Julia*) (fig 5.5), Ulrike Rosenbach sits facing the camera with her young daughter on her lap, their torsos naked; the camera frames them from the waist up. Over the course of the video, Rosenbach unwinds a roll of gauze and wraps it around herself and across her daughter's chest; with each pass, Julia lifts her arms to accommodate the fabric, and the action is accompanied by the rhythmic sound of their breathing. Lucy Lippard has characterised *Wrapping Julia* as a 'reverse birth piece, involving the cutting of the umbilical cord, the grafting of child to self'.[10] Yet, in addition to evoking a pre-birth state of bodily connection, the action also suggests the complexity of the relationship between mother and child. In describing the piece, Rosenbach explained that she and her daughter 'are in any case inseparably joined', a phrasing that conveys both the physical joining of two bodies and the unchangeable familial bond through which they are already always connected.[11] The wrapping action renders the 'maternal bond' as a physical act of binding or even bandaging (the title is sometimes translated as *Bandage with Julia)*, suggesting the ambivalence, vulnerability, and interdependence inherent in the mother–child relationship.

Martha Rosler's video *Domination and the Everyday* presents a more complex and intertextual view of parental life. Over the course of the video, a disparate array of text, images, and audio overlap and intermingle: excerpts from a text on class struggle crawl beneath a montage of disparate images ranging from family snapshots to ads to a media photo of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, while on the audio track we hear Rosler interacting with her young son and, in the background, a radio interview of gallerist Irving Blum. As we struggle to keep up with and decipher these various elements, we are thrust into the space of what Rosler describes as 'an artist–mother's *This is Your Life*', in which the

business of art, theories of political economy, and the daily realities of childcare all compete for our attention.[12] This flow of decontextualised and fragmented material flouts narrative and cinematic logic, and instead positions us as eavesdroppers to a scenario we can never fully access.

Both Rosler and Rosenbach made other works that featured their children, and combined performance and new media to explore and upend cultural representations of gender, especially in relation to tropes of femininity.[13] Where Rosenbach's performances tend to take the form of rituals that reinterpret timeless figures drawn from myth and religion, Rosler's videos demonstrate day-to-day activities while revealing their imbrication in systems of power and representation.

—Frances Jacobus-Parker

A DISCUSSION: WHAT TO DO WITH THE PRAM IN THE HALL

Frances Jacobus-Parker: Meredith and Oriana, I'd like to start this discussion by asking you each to explain your interest in the topic of parent–artists collaborating with their children. What started you (together, separately) thinking about these kinds of practices? Were there particular artists you were thinking of? And was the framework of 'collaboration' part of your interest from the beginning?

Meredith A. Brown: We began this discussion very casually about six years ago. Oriana put together a programme of feminist performance art at Tate Modern in 2009 called Once More with Feeling that, as she described it, 'appropriated gestures, language, and concepts from the history of live art in order to highlight the legacy of the field's forerunners and comment on how their work has been reinterpreted, subverted, or perhaps even ignored by contemporary women's performance practice'.[14] As she was planning the event we began to ask questions about artist–mothers who use their children in their artwork, the power relationship there, and how that relates to feminism. We were both very interested in Mary Kelly's *Post-Partum Document* and what role her son, Kelly Barrie, had as a co-author, or if that term could even be applied to him. The project charts the first six years of Kelly Barrie's life; as an infant, he obviously couldn't consent to participating in the work, but as he got older his participation as subject/object in the work must have become clearer to both the son and mother. Does the project then become a collaboration? How does the mother–child relationship, which is necessarily hierarchical, function when the work of art and the artist are explicitly feminist? These questions piqued my interest in the parent–child art-making relationship, especially around issues of power and desire. Oriana, as an artist who has used both her children and her parents in her art, has a different relationship to these questions, I think. At Once More with Feeling she did a performance called *The Ties That Bind* in which she reenacted feminist performances that involved binding in some way; for part of that performance she tied her divorced parents

together with a rope for three hours, following Linda Montano and Tehching Hseih's *Art/Life: One Year Performance* (1983–84). As she tied them together she remarked that every child of divorced parents, even after she has become an adult, always secretly wants her parents to get back together, so she literally enacted that desire in the name of art.

Oriana Fox: My recollection is that the first time Meredith and I discussed artist–parents who include their child/ren in their work was while I was very much in the initial research phase prior to the Tate event. It was actually during a break from the ReActFeminism conference at the Akademie der Kunst in Berlin in January 2009. Meredith brought up her interest in the ethical implications specifically of parent–artists including infants in their art making. The key example I recall she had in mind was Leah Lublin's *Mon fils* (*My Son*) (1968), in which Lublin brought her infant into the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris and took care of him there for the duration of the exhibition in the same manner she would have at home. Lublin's work is one of many feminist artworks that compares domestic with artistic labour and provokes questions about the divide between public and private realms. Art historian Helen Molesworth highlights labour as a shared theme and point of convergence between feminist artworks previously interpreted only in terms of opposition and contrast—that is, pieces pitted against one another in the now hackneyed essentialism debates.[15] As Meredith has mentioned, part of my intention in creating the Once More with Feeling event was to create meaningful links between feminist artists working in different geographic and temporal locations and, in so doing, defy the canonisation of 1970s feminist art as distinct from what came after. Perhaps as proof of Molesworth's point (and the continued irresolution of the issue of childcare in terms of its provision and value), Lublin's piece immediately brings to mind the contemporary practice of a (fittingly) collaborative London-based group called The Enemies of Good Art, who take their name from a line in Cyril Connolly's 1938 novel *Enemies of Promise*: 'There is no more sombre enemy of good art than the pram in the hall'. Spearheaded by the artist Martina Mullaney, the Enemies stage collective actions in public galleries 'to investigate the possibilities of combining art practice and family commitments'.[16] What these practices foreground for me, in addition to or perhaps more so than questions of ethics and collaboration per se, are questions to do with the continued devaluation of childcare in both personal life and the wider sociopolitical realm. I think the inclusion of children in artworks almost always speaks to this personal/political concern, i.e. that society depends on un/low-paid labour for its reproduction, whether or not the works created by artist–parents propose a viable solution (as the Enemies are in part consciously striving to do).

MAB: You're right, Oriana, our discussions around this topic did begin at the ReActFeminism conference in Berlin and continued to percolate as we saw each other at various exhibitions, conferences, and talks about feminist art practice in the intervening years. In keeping with this discussion of the origins of our interest in the topic of parent–child

collaboration, it may be worth noting that it was the *WACK!* exhibition of 2007 that brought Lublin's work to my attention. Likewise, it was a talk by Bojana Pejic at the ReActFeminism conference that made us aware of the very different context for work produced by artists (concerned with gender representation) in Eastern Europe. So in order to compare works by artists from varied contexts working with these shared concerns or at least similar participatory-cum-collaborative methods, it may go without saying that contextualisation is not only crucial, but also very generative, especially in terms of how the works make evident the interplay of the artist(s) and their specific sociopolitical circumstances.

I think it's also worth noting here that with our case studies we have fallen into the trap that exhibitions like *WACK!* and other recent reconsiderations of 1970s feminism in art have been criticised for, which is a focus on white subjects. Although our case studies do address different geographic and political contexts and gender difference, all of the artists we discuss are white. There were, and continue to be, artists of colour who make art with their children or with other mothers and children.

OF: Take, for example, the African American artist Maren Hassinger, whose video *Lives* (1978) documents the similarity in movement between mothers and their children.

FJP: Hassinger is a great artist to think about in terms of feminist collaboration—she's worked with Senga Nengudi for many decades, and in 2011 started a joint practice with her adult daughter, Ava, called 'Matriarch'. Interestingly, *Lives* included Hassinger's mother, not her child, so in that case the adult artist was the 'child' of the pair.[17] Faith Ringgold also made works with her mother, Willi Posey, in the 1970s, and we could think also of Betye Saar's collaborative projects with her adult daughters, Alison and Lezley. (These collaborations between parents and adult children warrant more thought.) But to return to the issue of exclusions, without excusing our own failure as scholars to include artists of colour in this conversation from the start, I also think it might be worth considering the possibility that the kind of practices we are looking at may have been structurally more possible or more accessible to some women than others. And I mean this not only in terms of race but also class.

MAB: Yes, I think that's a factor, and one compacted by the forces that determine whether an artist is included in exhibitions and art histories (then and now). But the whitewashing both of art history and of feminist history is not a tendency in which we should allow ourselves to be complicit. That our case studies reinscribed those exclusions is a shortcoming, and one I hope we will be able to address more fully in the future.

OF: Agreed!

FJP: To return to your explanations of your initial interest in this subject—you've both brought up terms and issues that could be loosely divided into two categories. On the one hand, we have questions of ethics, desire, and consent that primarily concern the one-to-one relationship between parent and child, and the degree of each individual's agency and power within that relationship. On the other, we have questions that are, broadly speaking, more to do with power in an expanded social field—and especially to do with the valuation, visibility, and gendering of certain kinds of labour related to child raising. (Oriana, I think you spell this out in your discussion of the Enemies). While these two areas of concern are of course intertwined, there's an interesting way in which, together, they outline a key tension we've been circling around in our discussions and writing thus far, which we could summarise as the agency of the child in relation to the parent versus the agency of the parent in relation to the world. We all in our different ways come to this topic because of our feminism, and our interest in feminist artworks, and I think we want to read and value these various artworks as feminist. Yet raising questions of ethics and consent complicates this issue. Meredith, this is I think what you're getting at when you ask, 'How does the mother–child relationship, which is necessarily hierarchical, come into play when the work of art and the artist are explicitly feminist?'

Meredith, your interest in Dennis Oppenheim's work provided us with a productive stumbling block, in that he is the rare father–artist of the group we initially selected as case studies, and some, though not all, of our arguments about the feminism of the other projects faltered around Oppenheim. Could you explain a bit about his work?

MAB: In the early 1970s, as Oppenheim's interest in exploring materiality developed, the conceptually based interventions in the land he'd been making since the early 1960s turned inward as he began to use his body as the medium for his work. In 1971 he explained his interest in the human body as a kind of perpetually changing material: 'Our bodies are constantly generating material, building surfaces, changing physiognomy'.[18] This interpretation of the body becomes interesting for our discussion when Oppenheim, as a biological father, started using the bodies of his three children as constituted material generated by his body, as genetic and physical extensions of himself.

Much of the work Oppenheim produced with his children makes explicit his desire to extend his own body, to de-center the 'self' and loosen its boundaries, which, of course, many artists sought to do in the early 1970s. In this way, these Oppenheim works relate to Montano and Hseih's *Art/Life: One Year Performance* and Oriana's reinterpretation of that work in *The Tie That Binds*. Oppenheim, however, conceptualised his parental identity as a *hereditary* extension of himself, of his patrilineal line. And rather than physically fuse the child to the parent as Rosenbach does in *Wrapping Julia*, bringing her daughter back to a state of oneness with her maternal body, Oppenheim, whose paternal body never physically carried his children, instead makes use of his parental body and those of his children as a genetic tie. In at least one instance he extended this hereditary binding and identity

conflation to three generations. As described in the case study, *Identity Transfer* involved the artist's ten-year-old daughter pressing her thumb into her father's, who transferred this new, 'mixed' print to his father, who then pressed his thumb to the ground. Here the classic indicator of identity is moved from one generation to the previous, transferring unique information from one related body to the next, in a way, blurring the identities of grandfather, father, and daughter, which is not so far afield from the identification–confusion that feminist artists like Rosenbach explored with their kids. Oppenheim, however, was working from a different sort of physical relationship. As art historian Thomas McEvilley put it, Oppenheim's body art pieces made with his children 'became a pooling place for the genetic stream'.[19] These genetic extensions raise questions about the relationship of a father to his children, which is something I'm interested in thinking about through feminism. How does the work of an artist–father compare to that of an artist–mother? Where do questions of labour and domesticity come into play? Can we think of Oppenheim's work with his kids as engaging with feminism, or as work made possible by feminist questions? What we do we make of Oppenheim's decision to use his daughter, rather than his son, in this 'identity transfer' up the patriarchal line? Oriana, you've expressed some reservations about including Oppenheim in this discussion because he doesn't explicitly address the public/private, personal/political split that we generally associate with art informed by feminism from this period, as demonstrated in Kelly's *Post-Partum Document*, for example. Frances, where do you weigh in on this issue?

FJP: I see Oppenheim's work as providing a productive corrective in our discussion, in that the presence of an artist–father prevents us from falling back on easy arguments made purely along gender lines. For example, I don't know that Rosenbach's *Wrapping Julia* explicitly addresses the public/private, personal/political split any more than Oppenheim's *Transfer* works do, and yet we readily read the former as 'feminist art' because it was made by a woman who is a self-professed feminist. To put it a different way, if Oppenheim were a woman, would we be questioning the relevance of the piece to our discussion? (Surely not.) That said, the fact that Rosenbach *is* a woman and Oppenheim a man matters very much—both because gender matters socially, politically, and economically, and because the (art) historical representation of motherhood is freighted in a way that the representation of fatherhood is not. Likewise, the conjuring of the 'child' as a source of inspiration and creative guidance has a long art historical lineage, but one almost entirely evoked by male artists. For the historical avant-garde, the figure of the child could be 'othered' just like the figure of the 'primitive', and the two were often positioned together as providing a glimpse into a state of being untouched by history and culture. But that kind of abstract exoticising of the realm of childhood is far removed from the day-to-day labours and routines of parenting.

Perhaps we can think of it as more of a risk, or a different kind of risk, for a woman artist in the 1970s to make work with and about her children than it was for a man. I'm reminded of a quip Lucy Lippard made about Pop: that if the first Pop artist had been a

woman, the movement 'might never have gotten out of the kitchen' because the domestic objects pictured belonged to traditionally feminised domains.[20] Of course, there were plenty of women Pop artists, but the point Lippard is making, or the point I take, is the way in which the use of domestic imagery by male Pop artists read as transgressive, humorous, and novel. To turn one's relationship with one's child into the raw material for one's work is, of course, something women have long done, often out of necessity. What it is to make artwork with one's child as a father versus as a mother at this particular time? And how do other forms of privilege figure into the equation?

The risks of the figuration/picturing of the relationship between mother and child are of primary interest to Mary Kelly's piece. In her preface to the published version of *Post-Partum Document*, she wrote that 'it seemed crucial, not in the sense of a moral imperative, but as an historical strategy, to avoid the literal figuration of mother and child, to avoid any means of representation which risked recuperation as a "slice of life"'.[21] For Kelly, this concern about representing herself with her child is bound up in the idea of the fetish. Her strategy in the work is to lay bare both the mother's fetishisation of the child and to avoid certain kinds of representation altogether.

In contrast with Kelly, Oppenheim is unconcerned with such questions. The risk simply isn't there. I'm not sure what to make of the way his series explicitly aligns artistic production with sexual reproduction. Is this a reiteration of the heroic masculine ideal of creative production, now coupled with the heroic masculine ideal of procreation (the phallic paintbrush reiterated)? Similarly, the idea of the child's body as a version of one's own past is reminiscent of the historical avant-garde's paradigm of the child. But I also want to hold on to Oppenheim's works, as I think they are more complex than that, and because they prevent us from collapsing the figure of the parent with the figure of the mother. I like the question you frame, Meredith, about whether this is work made possible by feminist questions. It strikes me as work made possible by a turn to the body as medium, and performance art related to the personal—i.e. work pioneered by feminist performance artists.

OF: Frances, I just want to say that I think your question about the gender of the artist is very interesting. In some ways I agree completely that if Oppenheim were a woman I might not be questioning the work's feminism and that is absolutely to do with the risk that you have articulated. However, Oppenheim's concern with immortality does strike me as particularly masculine, or as different from a particularly feminist concern. Immortality is a feminist issue insofar as maintaining legacies is a primary concern of so many feminist artists and art historians, but that is specifically in terms of remembering and recognising the contribution to history of women and of people of colour, protecting it from erasure. Oppenheim's performances do not speak to me of those issues, nor do they particularly tackle (inter)dependence, or the relational or domesticity (which you mentioned) that I see as the feminist issues that the other artists we have listed so far in one way or another address. I would also add that I have written elsewhere about the predominance of binding

as a metaphor in the work of feminist artists, particularly in representing familial bonds.[22] Rosenbach's piece is a great example of this trope. In general, feminist artists seem more concerned with lived ties (dependencies, connections) rather than just genetic ones, as Oppenheim is.

FJP: I want to go back to the issues of representation that Kelly points to–especially as I know that Oriana's doctoral thesis seeks to problematise this equation of representation with naturalisation.[23] Kelly's strategy for avoiding the possibility of her work being read as a 'slice of life', i.e. re-naturalised and de-historicised, is to avoid picturing herself and her son altogether. (Nancy Spero and Lorna Simpson have also used this strategy in their work, regarding the picturing of women's bodies.) What's striking about the range of examples we've collected in our research is that while many of the artists are interested in destabilising and challenging representations of motherhood handed down to them by myth, religion, history, popular culture, and so on, they each arrive at strategies that are very different from Kelly's prohibition on picturing. That is, there's a huge range in these works in terms of how and whether representation is used as a strategy of resistance. For Rosenbach, as for many other artists at the time, the picturing of women's bodies—both their own and those of others—was a key strategy. In a statement made in 1975, Rosenbach defined feminist art as the artistic elucidation of a woman's historical role: 'as a mother, a housewife, a woman prostituted by men, as a saint, virgin, witch. . . . I work with myself in front of a camera. Each time it's a presentation of myself, I show my psychic conditions, which depend on the obstructing force of social structures. It is an exposure of my own self'.[24]

Valie Export, in a discussion of her own and Rosenbach's performances of the 1970s, explained that in the use of images of women 'the body was both thematised and brought into question as the locus of woman's identity. It was unmasked as historical coding'.[25] Export and Rosenbach suggest that such picturing can be a means of de-naturalising the representation of women, and of deconstructing an essentialist equation of body and identity. I think this idea applies equally to many works from the 1970s in which the artist–mother represents herself with her child.

Oriana, I know you've thought a lot about the variable of the representation of the child as it plays out in the projects by Kelly and KwieKulik. Do you think that KwieKulik's project avoids the pitfalls that concern Kelly? Or must we ask different questions of that piece? And how do we reckon with the vastly different status of feminism and politics in general in Poland at the time?

OF: In order to address your first question, I need to respond to the second. Because of the context in which KwieKulik worked, their relationship to feminism is tenuous at best; Polish artists' relationship to feminism generally is questionable in that there was no equivalent feminist movement in Eastern Europe to the one that occurred in the West.[26] In

one of the few texts written about gender issues in the work of KwieKulik, Ewa Majewska stated:

> Viewing KwieKulik's works today, we can certainly notice in them an accurate diagnosis of certain dimensions of an alienation, based on the exclusion and depreciation of women, of society as a whole, and it can be said that the duo's work fulfills certain postulates of feminism, although this was probably not directly intended by the artists.[27]

Majewska (alongside other critics) comments on the duo's moves 'towards an integration, rather than separation, of the private and public'.[28] It is in this way (among others) that their work relates to feminist theoretical goals and debates. Their intention was to undermine alienating, state-imposed distinctions that defined 'the common' as separate from private life, and to rejuvenate emancipatory politics of socialism to which the Polish communist regime only gave lip service. One of the ways they did this was to open up their home as a gallery space and to make work that mixed elements of their personal lives with parts of their professional lives—*Activities* being one key example. Similar to feminist theorists and artists, KwieKulik wanted to problematise the distinction between public and private in a move towards emancipation, but what KwieKulik was striving for liberation from was government control rather than patriarchy per se. Hence, they also share with feminist artists the goals of transforming the definition of politics and altering life itself through performance and other experiments, rather than advancing aesthetics alone. It is therefore the case that feminist and communist concerns overlap. Their questioning of the notion of individual authorship is another example. KwieKulik's belief in collective work 'free from the problem of authorship, from worries over "what is whose" and "who did what"' can be interpreted as in alignment with the feminist project of questioning the lone male genius model of art history.[29]

To return to your other question Frances, regarding the issue of naturalisation, the image of the mother and child is wholly avoided by KwieKulik's *Activities* because when the parents are depicted the actions they perform are for the most part so odd that they avoid being read as a 'slice of life'—even though that may be what in fact they are. By integrating everyday objects with the 'grammar of modernist–formalist logic' they aimed to 'demonstrate how beautifully clarifying a change in methodology can transform the aesthetic value and social constellation of a situation'.[30] In other words, they wanted to alter (and elevate) the everyday in a way not wholly dissimilar from how Kelly sought to revalue women's work—in Kelly's case by framing domestic life with the trappings of science and the formal qualities of treasured artefacts. In a way, Molesworth's proposition that focusing on labour as a shared theme to provide a way to connect works previously considered antithetical is applicable here, too. Furthermore, the overwhelming impact of the *Activities* collection is one of disruption of normality, the antithesis of naturalisation. Ironically, the

singularity of that iconic image of Kelly with her son and the tape recorder makes that image perhaps more dangerously close to what the artist sought so hard to avoid.

MAB: It's interesting to think about KwieKulik's work functioning as a potentially feminist challenge to authorship, particularly in light of Kwiek's very similar single-authored work with his daughter from a previous marriage, which might shed some light on how we view Oppenheim's work in relation to feminism. But I want to bring us back to an issue that I'm still struggling with a little in the context of all this work, and that is this question of consent. If we operate under the assumption that collaboration is consensual, or, to be more specific, feminist collaboration is consensual, then what do we make of these projects as collaborations when the infants cannot consent to participate?

OF: One way to think about this might be through the use of photography to picture the child. I'm interested in this fact in terms of the issue of the child's role as co-collaborator and in terms of consent. Queer theorist Michael Warner argues that '[i]dentity politics . . . seem to many people a way of overcoming both the denial of public existence that is so often the form of domination and the incoherence of the experience that domination creates, an experience that often feels more like invisibility than like the kind of privacy you value'.[31]

I am curious about the line drawn between overcoming invisibility and protecting the privacy one values. Warner goes on to explain, 'it is often thought, especially by outsiders, that the public display of private matters is a debased narcissism, a collapse of decorum . . . [b]ut in a counterpublic setting, such a display often has the aim of transformation'.[32] Kelly's *Post-Partum Document* is an example of a feminist project that was perceived at the time of its original display to be 'a collapse of decorum' or a 'debased narcissism', to use Warner's terminology, but which had 'the aim of transformation'—i.e. staking the claim that maternal experience was a valid subject matter for art and highlighting that domestic labour is done primarily by women. At the same time that Kelly literally puts dirty laundry on show, she also protects some aspects of her and her son's privacy—namely their image. Kelly's consistent strategy to avoid patriarchal specularisation is to never photograph the body, but to use stand-ins. In thinking about this tactic in light of our current investigation into the idea of consent in a non-peer collaboration, Kelly's effort to represent life experience without photographic documentation could be read as protective. Even though as a minor, Baby K's consent was not required, perhaps Kelly's choice to refrain demonstrates concern for her son's inability to consent to participate.[33] In short, *Post-Partum Document* is an excellent example of an artist riding the line between defying cultural norms of public and private whilst at the same time protecting the privacy she values. Nevertheless, the issue of consent may be a red herring here, because in making *Post-Partum Document* Kelly did not ask her son to do anything other than what he would do without the existence of the work of art. Kelly featuring her child in this artwork does not highlight the child's

vulnerability (as a less ethical or more personally revealing project might have done), but instead points to the dependency of all artists on others in order to create, again weighing in on the debates over sole authorship.

MAB: Oriana, your assertion that Kelly's decision not to include photographs in her work might signal a protective impulse on her part intrigues me and inclines me to think of *Post-Partum Document* as a single-authored, non-collaborative work, which was the discussion that brought us to this topic, while KwieKulik's photographic capturing of Dobromierz's physical responses to the situations in which they placed him makes him appear to be *more* a part of the project.

I wonder now, though, if this issue of consent isn't really beside the point? It seems to me that what makes all of these projects useful to think about from a feminist perspective are the various ways in which they engage with the domestic. If we consider children to be part of the domestic sphere, then in some way all of the works we've been discussing deal with the concerns of being an artist and living a domestic life. Thinking this way, looking at Oppenheim's *Transfer Drawings* as one manner for engaging the professional within the domestic—bringing the father's work as an artist home to his children's bodies—links it to Kelly's project of bringing the domestic into the professional setting, the gallery. They are not exactly inverse, but I do think they are related.

OF: I think that's a fair comparison between Kelly's and Oppenheim's works. I also think that your point about Kwiek's prior work is one that should be followed up on, in part because it relates to all the questions raised around Oppenheim's work. In the feminist appraisal of KwieKulik's work it is mentioned that one potentially feminist aspect of their art is the way it makes care or parental work (especially the role of a father) visible and public, which is interestingly something that is not true at all of *Post-Partum Document*.[34] This leads me to some other questions I have about how these artists conflate domestic and professional labour and what that means about their relative value both socially and economically. Making art is similar to the work of bringing up a child; the words 'work' or 'labour' don't seem completely appropriate. Perhaps because they are both labours of love it's somehow justifiable that they are not well remunerated. As a society we don't want people having children just so they can benefit financially. Similarly, art made for commercial purpose alone can be seen as lacking merit, if not soul. Moreover, without the emotional investment the labour of the mother/artist can be transformed from an act of desire and pleasure to sheer drudgery. This kind of work requires empathy and identification, but to say it should have lesser economic compensation because of that doesn't seem right either. What do you think we can glean from these case studies about the artists' implied stance on the value of (domestic/parental/artistic) labour? As Majewska again has noted, emotions are relatively hidden within KwieKulik's imagery (except for the captured expressions of their son). Are they equating art work and childcare in a cold and

calculating way? Kelly wants to make the viewer aware of the sexual division of labour upon which our society stands, but to what end? To (re)value motherhood? To put a price on domestic labour? To encourage the sharing of domestic responsibility? Does the solution of blurring the boundaries between work and life, private and public offered up by KwieKulik or any of the other artists we've been discussing stand up any better to feminist scrutiny in terms of (re)valorising care work? What are your thoughts on this?

MAB: It is my understanding that part of Kelly's aim in framing *Post-Partum Document* in the way she did—that is, using the forms of minimalism and the language of conceptualism, Benjamin Buchloh's oft-cited 'aesthetics of administration'—to document her experience of motherhood and the labour of mothering was precisely to render the female *work of caring* visible as a subject of high art, to validate it in that way, really for the first time.

FJP: I don't think Rosler's work exactly valorises care labour, but it does take on issues of economics and feminism quite explicitly. *Domination and the Everyday* combines art-market talk (on the radio), texts on class struggle and oppression, and Rosler's voice as she tends to and talks with her young son. Rosler has articulated this juxtaposition as a demonstration of the ways in which theoretical abstractions 'don't have the kind of reality that feeding your child does', and I think that formulation brings out something really interesting.[35] The video does not privilege domestic labour, but instead positions it as simply the most immediate reality among many realities. There is Pinochet on TV and there is class struggle and there is the art market—and one might care very much about all of these things—but then in front of you right now there is your kid and he needs to be fed. Another work, her *From the PTA, the High School, and the City of Del Mar* (1977), poses mother and son as literally needing to be fed—as the recipients of food donations (handed to them by a benevolent, disembodied entity that imposes its assumption of Christianity onto the Jewish family). To come back to your question, Oriana, I think what many of these works do is make visible, show, represent the relationship between parent and child as a reality that exists alongside and intersects with the many other realities with which the artist engages.

We've circled around the socioeconomics of domestic (or maintenance) labour at various points in our conversation, but I think it's worth coming back to explicitly, for as much as this work is coded as 'women's', it's also coded as 'working class'. How does the socioeconomic position of the artist determine whether the performance and reception of such labour *as art* is possible? We know Ukeles cleaned the museum floor for a performance, but we have no idea who cleaned the museum floor all those other days. Second-wave feminism was critiqued for its focus on the issues and voices of middle-class white women; it's worth considering how these artworks also make visible the labour of certain subjects while obscuring that of others—the many people for whom maintenance or care work is a profession.

MAB: That's a good point, Frances, and one worth thinking about more since, like

'women's work', maintenance and care work is often invisible and undervalued. The class component you bring up is critical and one that's especially important to think about in the midst of our current hyper-commercialised global contemporary art market, with art fairs taking place seemingly everywhere from Basel to New Delhi. But I fear I'm about to take us down a path that may lead us too far astray from our original topic, so I'll stop myself there and switch gears to discuss media. Oriana has talked a bit about the role of media in *Post-Partum Document* and *Activities with Dobromierz*. Frances, I wonder if you have any thoughts about how the moving image informs this discussion we're having, since you've mentioned some of Rosler's and Rosenbach's video works. In particular, I'm wondering about how time functions in the various projects we've brought up, both in terms of the works that occupy real time—the videos—and the works that document the passage of time—photography and written records.

FJP: As media, video and film are especially bound up with 1970s discourses around voyeurism and gendered looking—we might think of Laura Mulvey's essay 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' (1975). (And, for that matter, her film with Peter Wollen, *Riddles of the Sphinx* (1977), which attempts to produce alternative/feminist cinema by focusing not only on the gaze of the woman, but the gaze of the woman as mother and caregiver.) The works of both Rosler and Rosenbach treat the interaction between parent and child as a site of the intersection of, and tension between, public and private spheres. Both use video as a means to critique dominant representations of motherhood and artistic production—and their complex imbrication for women artists. However, for Rosenbach, her own body and that of her child serve as the primary medium, while video plays a secondary, documentary role. In contrast, Rosler's *Domination* makes use of video's capacity to simultaneously present image, audio, and text in order to preclude the very possibility of coherent representation. Video thus allows her to place the parental relationship into a complex socioeconomic field of references—from photographs to radio interviews—but it also places the viewer in the position of the parent–artist whose attention and time is torn in many directions at once. The two works also put video to work in very different ways in relation to time. Rosenbach's relatively short work shows the repetition of an action (wrapping) that, in its repetition and its strangeness, reads as a kind of symbolic ritual. Rosler's video is long and varied, immersing us in a granular, disorienting, everyday time in which everything or nothing may be significant. *From the PTA, the High School, and the City of Del Mar* is much more coherent from a narrative perspective than *Domination*, but it also positions mother and child as embedded in and subject to broader social and economic forces.

Thinking back over the evolution of our ideas for this discussion, the medium of the works has been of less concern than the relationships between the individuals involved in the making of the works—we've been concerned with the idea of non-peer collaborations and parent–child works rather than, say, photography. And yet what these discussions reveal is the way in which the medium is inextricably linked to these attempts to

understand collaboration. Media such as painting and drawing allow for the involvement of multiple 'hands'—it's easier to see the Oppenheim projects as collaborative because the child's mark making or other physical production becomes part of the work. Likewise, with *Post-Partum Document*. But photography and video leave us in more ambiguous territory. To what extent is the person being represented by the camera a participant in his or her own representation? One could argue that any portrait is a collaboration of sorts, but we are interested in works that attempt to be more explicitly collaborative. At an early stage of this project we amassed lists of parent–child artworks and ended up with a separate list of bodies of work in which parents photographed their children. But the extent to which each of these could be considered 'collaborative' would need to be parsed on a case-by-case basis, with each raising different challenges to that concept. In terms of the relationship between medium and time, most—if not all—of the photographic works we considered consisted of many images made over time. Perhaps the duration of the project (rather than the medium) also shapes our understanding of whether a work is in some way collaborative.

OF: A better word to describe the exchanges between artist–parent and child in the creation of art might perhaps be 'cooperation', defined by sociologist Richard Sennett as those situations 'in which [all] the participants benefit from the encounter'. In the case of an artist making art with her/his infant child, the artist's cooperation is formal while the child's is informal; the child does it 'without self-consciously thinking "I'm cooperating"'.[36] Sennett's interest in cooperation stems from a desire to promote social bonds, specifically those among groups that are societally pitted against one another. He uses Montaigne's description of playing with his cat—'When I am playing with my cat, how do I know she is not playing with me?'—as exemplary of that exchange.[37] We are unable to fully comprehend the Other, yet we participate in shared activity for the sake of mutual pleasure and/or (often) to sustain life. Artists who make work with their children point to the dependency of all artists on others in order to create and, in blurring the boundaries between art and life, highlight the necessity of cooperation for both artistic and literal survival.[38]

FJP: Ukeles's manifesto rejected the avant-garde's fantasies of self-sufficiency and autonomy, asserting that the work of maintenance is interactive and inter-subjective and thus demonstrating the artist's fundamental dependence on others and on a broader social sphere. Many of these works we've addressed represent repetition and duration—either in the form of a repeated action (wrapping, putting clothes on and off) or through their documentation of the day-in, day-out as it evolves over time (*Post-Partum Document*, *Domination*). These are the daily rituals of caregiving. Various artists in the 1970s made work that turned parenting into the subject of ritual—Mary Beth Edelson, perhaps Oppenheim, too. In many of these works, the repetition of an action, or the documentation of repetition, and sometimes the performance of the repetition as a kind of ritual, serves

as a way to bring the everyday labour of caregiving and domesticity into the space of the artwork. These works enact a 'picturing' of repetitive, constant labour that is otherwise often unacknowledged or literally unseen, and also offer a means to deconstruct maternal archetypes. Repetition and ritual become a way to thematise and also unmask as historically coded the relationships of parents to children and the day-to-day work of caregiving. I think it's important to read *all* of these works, even the most ritualistic, as potentially engaging with strategies of distanciation, rather than being simply earnest/essential/unsophisticated. Lucy Lippard suggested a connection between the prevalence of ritual in art of the 1970s and an interest in the politics of social relations more broadly, in part as a result of the women's movement.[39] In rendering the relationship between parent and child visible via public performance or documentation, these works not only present parenting as a form of ritual but also enact a kind of ground zero of the relationship between self and other. That is, they foreground the inherent asymmetry and interdependence of *any* relationship, cooperative or not.

OF: Helena Reckitt and I were recently talking about how the mainstream art world has been changing with the 'pedagogical turn' and the interest in socially engaged practice (this book being another example of revaluing collaborative practice). However, much of the recent critical and scholarly attention has focused on male artists who follow an avant-garde model. I'm interested in the valuing of a specifically feminist legacy of collaboration (or feminists working both with and within the domestic sphere).

FJP: As we wrap up, I'd like to revisit the question that, in way, started this project as a whole. What do we gain by considering these works through the lens of 'collaboration'?

MAB: Well, one important reason to consider what it might mean to call this work collaborative that has come up several times over the course of this discussion, and one that was a driving force in this whole transatlantic collaborative research project on collaboration, is to provide yet another challenge to the patriarchal myth of the solo (white) (male) genius toiling away in solitude in his studio (or in the case of scholars, his office), since this myth seems to somehow persist despite so much evidence to the contrary. Beyond that, however, I think it's useful to think about the agency of children in work made—or perhaps initiated is a better word—by their parents in light of greater feminist questions around interdependence and relationality. As this discussion has revealed, it's a complicated issue and I suspect we've only just scratched the surface.

OF: To paraphrase the response of artists Komar and Melamid to the question of how exactly they collaborate (posed after a lecture I witnessed), they said that everything is a collaboration—when you use a paint brush you may be collaborating with the horse that

gave its hair for the bristles. Although I was unsatisfied with that answer at the time, now it seems very fitting.

FJP: Thinking and writing about these works has made me aware of how inadequate the word 'collaboration' is for describing the range of art practices in which there are multiple actors. The category of works we selected really stretches that term, perhaps to a breaking point. It's notable that none of the parent–artists here list their children as co-artists, suggesting we're placing them in a category with which they don't identify. I hope putting pressure on the term in this way indirectly challenges the false binaries that are often constructed by art history between 'individual' and 'collaborative' artwork. When does involvement become authorship, and who gets to decide?

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

---

1. Mierle Laderman Ukeles, 'Manifesto for Maintenance Art, 1969! Proposal for an Exhibition, 'Care' (1969), in Nina Horisaki-Christens et al. (eds), *Maintenance Required* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2013), pp. 118-21. First published in excerpted form in Jack Burnham, 'Problems of Criticism, IX: Art and Technology', *Artforum International* (January 1971): p. 41.

2. Tom Finkelpearl, 'Interview: Mierle Laderman Ukeles on Maintenance and Sanitation Art' (1996), in Tom Finkelpearl, *Dialogues in Public Art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), pp. 302–5. For an account of the relation between Ukeles's Maintenance Art and motherhood, see Andrea Liss, *Feminist Art and the Maternal* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), pp. 43–67.

3. For a more in-depth explanation of the impact of radical politics and the women's movement on North American art in the 1960s and 1970s, see Jayne Wark, *Radical Gestures: Feminism and Performance Art in North America* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006), pp. 11–26.

4. See Liss, *Feminist Art*; Myrel Chernick and Jennie Klein (eds.), *The M Word: Real Mothers in Contemporary Art* (Toronto: Demeter Press, 2011). The conference 'House, Work, Artwork: Feminism and Art History's New Domesticities' (held at the University of Birmingham on 3–4 July 2015) was organised by Jo Applin and Aca Berry and co-sponsored by the University of Birmingham, the University of York, and the *Oxford Art Journal*. The 'Maternal Structures' conference (held at London South Bank University, 1–2 June 2015) was organised by Elena Marchevska and Valeria Walkerdine and sponsored by the Center for Media and Culture Research and the School of Arts and Creative Industries at London South Bank University. Other examples of this recent trend include Melissa Gordon and Marina Vishmidt's three-part series of artist-led magazines (*Labour* [2011]; *Persona* [2013]; and *WE (not I)* [2015]); their four-part series of gatherings of female artists ('A Conversation to Know if There is a Conversation to be Had') held in New York, Amsterdam, Berlin, and London between 2010 and 2012; and 'WE (Not I)', a series of collaborative meetings, presentations and events involving female artists, writers and curators held at the London

art spaces South London Gallery, Flat Time House, Cubitt, and Raven Row from 27 April to 2 May 2015 and at Artists Space in New York from September 30 to October 3, 2015.

5. Helena Reckitt, 'Forgotten Relations: Feminist Artists and Relational Aesthetics', in Angela Dimitrakaki and Lara Perry (eds.), *Politics in a Glass: Case Feminism, Exhibition Cultures and Curatorial Transgressions* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), pp. 131–56. For a brief overview of recent collaborative practice and the need for its critical assessment, see Tom Holert, 'Joint Ventures. On the State of Collaboration', *Artforum International* 49:6 (February 2011): pp. 158–61, p. 252.

6. Mary Kelly, introduction to *Post-Partum Document* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), p. xxi.

7. Lukasz Ronduda and Georg Schöllhammer (eds.), *Zofia Kulik and Przemyslaw Kwiek: KwieKulik* (Zurich: JRP Ringier, 2013), p. 131.

8. Kelly, *Post-Partum Document*, p. xix.

9. Quoted in Alanna Heiss, *Dennis Oppenheim Selected Works, 1967–1990: And the Mind Grew Fingers* (New York: P.S. 1 and Harry N. Abrams, 1992), p. 72.

10. Lucy R. Lippard, 'The Past as Target of the Future', in *Ulrike Rosenbach: Video and Performance Art* (Boston: Institute of Contemporary Art, 1983), n.p.

11. 'Rosenbach, Ulrike: Wrapping with Julia', Media Art Net (2004), accessed March 6, 2016, http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/works/einwicklung-mit-julia/.

12. Rosler's description for *Domination and the Everyday* appears in the list of works for Catherine de Zegher ed., *Martha Rosler: Positions in the Life World* (Birmingham: Ikon Gallery, 1998), 297.

13. For example, Rosler's *From the PTA, the High School, and the City of Del Mar* (1977) also features her son, Joshua. Many of Rosenbach's subsequent performances, such as *Motherlove* (1977) and *The Solitary Stroller Hagazussa* (1979), feature her daughter and/or maternal thematics.

14. 'Once More with Feeling', Oriana Fox, accessed 16 June 2014, http://www.orianafox.com/blog/2009/06/once-more-with-feeling/.

15. See Helen Molesworth, 'Housework and Artwork', *October* 92 (Spring 2000): pp. 71–97.

16. 'About', Enemies of Good Art, accessed 1 September 2015, http://www.enemiesofgoodart.org/.

17. Maren Hassinger, e-mail message to Frances Jacobus-Parker, December 4, 2015.

18. 'Interview with Dennis Oppenheim', by Willoughby Sharp, in Germano Celant (ed.), *Dennis Oppenheim: Explorations* (Milan: Charta, 2001), p. 119.

19. Thomas McEvilley, 'The Rightness of Wrongness: Modernism and its Alter-Ego in the Work of Dennis Oppenheim', in Heiss, *Dennis Oppenheim Selected Works*, p. 33.

20. Lucy R. Lippard, 'Household Images in Art' (1973), in *From the Center: Feminist Essays on Women's Art* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1976), pp. 56–59.

21. Kelly, *Post-Partum Document*, p. xxi.

22. Oriana Fox, 'Talking Cunts and Seeing Eyeballs: Bringing Feminist Performance Art Images to Life', in Oriana Fox and C. Troy (eds.), *The Moon: Women Watch Themselves Being Looked At* (London: CT Editions, 2009), p. 4.

23. Fox argues that many examples of feminist performance art were attempts by the artists at having an *experience* of living a new kind of feminist life (and documenting it), rather than *depicting* a new 'naturalised' image of womanhood or motherhood per se. Oriana Fox, 'Feminist Performance Art Can Change Your Life For The Better: Self-disclosure as a Therapeutic Practice of Freedom' (working title) (PhD thesis, Goldsmith's, University of London, forthcoming).

24. Ulrike Rosenbach, untitled statement (1975), in Peter Selz and Christine Stiles (eds.), *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), pp. 885–86.

25. Valie Export, 'Persona, Proto-Performance, Politics: A Preface', (trans.) Jamie Daniel, *Discourse* 14:2 (Spring 1992): p. 33.

26. See Martina Pachmanová, 'In? Out? In Between: Some Notes on the Invisibility of a Nascent Eastern European Feminist and Gender Discourse in Contemporary Art Theory', in Bojana Pejic (ed.), *Gender Check: A Reader: Art and Gender in Eastern Europe Since the 1960s* (Cologne: Buchhandlung Walther Konig, 2010), pp. 241–48.

27. Ewa Majewska, 'The Gender Issue in the Works of KwieKulik: Cherchez le femme', in Lukasz Ronduda and Georg Schöllhammer (eds.), *Zofia Kulik and Przemyslaw Kwiek: KwieKulik* (Zurich: JRP Ringier, 2013), pp. 518–19.

28. Majewska, 'The Gender Issue in the Works of KwieKulik: Cherchez le femme', pp. 518–19.

29. Ronduda, Kukasz, 'Art, Love, Politics, Science' in Ronduda and Schöllhammer, *Zofia Kulik*, p. 12.

30. Georg, Schollhammer, 'KwieKuilk: Form is a Fact of Society' in Ronduda and Schöllhammer, *Zofia Kulik*, p. 89.

31. Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002), p. 26.

32. Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, p. 62.

33. Years later, Kelly collaborated with her then-adult son, Kelly Barrie, at the 2008 Sydney Biennial in a kind of reconsideration of *Post-Partum Document*. Ruth Skilbeck, 'World Exclusive: "A Secret Agreement": Mary Kelly and Kelly Barrie', The Daily Fugue: Ruth Skilbeck's Inflight Notes, posted 11 June 2011, accessed 1 September 2015, http://www.ruthskilbeck.com/2011/06/world-exclusive-mary-kelly-and-kelly.html.

34. Majewska, 'Gender Issue', p. 519.

35. 'Interview with Martha Rosler', by Jane Weinstock, *October* 17 (1981): p. 94.

36. Richard Sennett, *Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Cooperation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), p. 5.

37. Sennett, *Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Cooperation*, p. 274.

38. Sennett, *Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Cooperation*, p. 2.

39. Lucy R. Lippard, 'The Pains and Pleasures of Rebirth: Women's Body Art' (1976), in *From the Center*, pp. 121–38. See also Lucy R. Lippard, *Overlay: Contemporary Art and the Art of Prehistory* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), pp. 159–195.

CHAPTER 6

COLLABORATION IS NOT AN ALTERNATIVE: ARTISTS WORKING TOGETHER IN LONDON AND NEW YORK, 1974–1981

FIONA ANDERSON and AMY TOBIN

6.1
Group Material, *The People's Choice (Arroz con Mango)*, 1981, installation view, 244 East 13th Street, New York.

In the 1970s, collaboration gained traction as a strategy for making and displaying art outside institutional spaces as well as a political tactic to oppose the isolation of the artist and commodification of the artwork. Collective artists' organisations such as Collaborative Projects Inc. (Colab) and Group Material in New York, and the Women's Free Arts Alliance, the Women's Workshop of the Artists' Union, and the Woman Artists' collective in London utilised collaboration as a catalyst for action and as a basis for both professional and intimate support. These activities increasingly took place within neglected or abandoned urban sites, in which relationships between group members acted like bonds securing them in a meaningful space, while their collective energy provided a vital creative environment. Consequently, collaborative spaces such as these have been viewed as alternatives to the more concrete support of commercial galleries and museums. This line of thinking follows a simplistic definition of 'alternatives' as existing outside established institutions and therefore as inherently critical of them. Yet in what sense did being outside the museum or gallery space engender critique beyond an oppositional position? In this essay we destabilise the association of collaboration with 'alternative' or countercultural forms and challenge the perceived synonymity between the 'alternative' and the politically oppositional, in order to investigate the distinct reasons artists worked together in London and New York.

The distinct, but disconnected geography we cover aims to connect practices and sites that have not been placed in dialogue before and which do not always sit easily together. Just as they are not proximate in space, neither are they contemporaneous—as our New York examples fall a generation after our London ones. The case studies fall broadly into two contexts: artist-run spaces in 1970s London and art collectives and storefront exhibitions in late 1970s and early 1980s New York. In London, these case studies include *Hang Up, Put Down, Stand Up* (1974), an exhibition jointly organised by members of the Women's Workshop of the Artists' Union and Woman Artist's Collective, and the activities of the Women's Free Arts Alliance; and in New York, Colab's *Times Square Show* (1980) and Group Material's *Arroz con Mango* (*The People's Choice*) (1981; fig. 6.1). Each case study offers an example of artists working together or with an audience in the production of artworks as well as in the formation of spaces to make and display art that attempts to resist institutional socioeconomic forces. We investigate how collaborations at the level of production created new spaces or modes for display and how these collaborations affected artistic practices. By bringing together these examples from different spatial and temporal coordinates, we hope to resituate these practices within their specific socioeconomic and cultural contexts and provoke a dialogue that moves beyond the rhetoric of synonymity.

By taking these case studies out of their immediate context and placing them in relation to projects from another city, we can begin to consider them on different terms, which will open up new interpretations. While these works have been previously judged according to the categories of longevity, funding success, and audience engagement, we will look at them according to more fluid themes of space, community, and site. This fluidity is

informed by Miwon Kwon's analysis of the shift in public art in the 1970s. Kwon argues that during that time the public sphere or site was conceived less 'in physical and spatial terms' as 'a cultural framework defined by the institutions of art', and the collaborative was no longer 'a noun/object but a verb/process'.[1] There are as many, if not more, discontinuities than there are affinities between the case studies we have chosen. This is both a product of our approach to writing collaboratively as well as a conscious methodology used to break apart the homogeneity at the heart of the often invoked, but rarely challenged, descriptor 'alternative'.

'ALTERNATIVE' TO WHAT AND TO WHOM?

The word 'alternative' has been frequently invoked in analyses of art created and exhibited outside the traditional institutions, but the word is especially pervasive in discussions of the art scene in 1970s and 1980s New York. Lauren Rosati and Mary Anne Staniszewski's *Alternative Histories: New York Art Spaces, 1960 to 2010* (2012) offers an encyclopaedic history of self-managed and anti-institutional art spaces in the late twentieth century, aiming to '[bridge] neighborhoods, decades and themes' under the familiar, unifying banner of the 'alternative'.[2] *Alternative Art, New York, 1965–1985* (2003) edited by the artist Julie Ault, a founding member of Group Material, offers a similarly unifying history, perhaps because of its comparable geographical and temporal focus.[3] On the other hand, Gregory Sholette and Blake Stimson's *Collectivism After Modernism* (2006) presents a range of case studies that look beyond New York, approaching collectivity as a methodological thematic that joins the projects together as 'alternatives' but failing to interrogate how collectivity functions at different sites.[4] Kathy Battista's *Renegotiating the Body: Feminist Art in 1970s London* (2012) groups together a number of site-related practices by women artists in a chapter entitled 'Alternative Spaces for Feminist Art', clustering widely diverse practices, spaces, and media (including publications) together under the general category 'alternative'.[5]

Recently the term 'alternative' has received some clarification in studies that focus on particular spaces, sites, or practices as well as in publications that privilege other terms such as 'artist-run' or 'self-organised'. With these projects in mind we can begin to parse out some distinctions. For instance, Stine Hebert and Anne Szefer Karlsen's book *Self-Organised* (2013) presents a range of definitions. David Blamey defines the term 'self-organised' to mean how 'individuals can operate independently from institutional and corporate structures', although Karlsen qualifies his definition in relation to more recent practices suggesting 'that self-organisation as part of an opposing dichotomy isn't any longer possible'.[6] In Gabriele Detterer and Maurizio Nanucci's *Artist-Run Spaces* (2012), Detterer suggests that the artist-run spaces of the 1960s and 1970s 'were linked by a common goal: the basic idea of free affiliation and exchange between avant-garde artists in order to engage with experimental art practices'.[7] Although Herbert and Karlson seek to address more

contemporary iterations of the 'alternative', their analysis of self-organisation marks an important distinction from Detterer's discussion of artist-run spaces. In the latter the position of the artist as organiser is privileged, and each contribution to the volume includes the voice of an artist in this role, whereas the former includes artists as well as curators, theorists, and critics, untethering 'alternative' activities from the creative process.

Temporality is another important distinction. In *Self-Organised*, the duration of the projects under discussion is not a factor, whereas *Artist-Run Spaces* primarily considers organisations that continue into the present day or have had a long-lasting impact in terms of archival presence or publications. With only this limited comparison, a complex taxonomy of the alternative already begins to emerge, one that separates artist-run, self-organised, or anti-institutional long-term gallery-based projects from shorter-term, organic, and community-driven ones. Although these distinctions are by no means concrete it is the aim of this essay to clarify the factors at play in collaborative artists' collectives and spaces in order to construct a new frame of analysis that, for those in London, problematises the absence of many of these cases from art historical narratives and, for those in New York, interrogates the kinds of art historical and sociocultural criticisms levelled against them.

FROM GROUP MEETING TO GROUP SHOW: *HANG UP, PUT DOWN, STAND UP*

In London self-organised exhibitions often developed from collaborations between women involved in pre-existing groups and organisations. One of the earliest shows of women's work in London, *Hang Up, Put Down, Stand Up* (1974), was initiated by members of the Women's Workshop of the Artists' Union (WWAU), an off-shoot of the Artists' Union that paralleled the relationship of the Ad Hoc Women's Committee to the Art Worker's Coalition in New York.[8] The exhibition occurred at a moment when some members of the WWAU wanted to split off from the Artists' Union to form a parallel group that would be more focused on discussing their own artistic practices rather than fair pay for artists, which was the union's primary concern. Whereas the union provided much needed space to discuss these issues, what eventually became the Woman Artists' Collective (WAC) provided a self-organised infrastructure to support its members' work, with the exhibition the first instance of this intention.[9] The shared space of the group show offered a format that radically countered the curator-led thematic or solo shows of both the mainstream and 'alternative' art worlds.[10] The exhibition site Art Meeting Place, in Covent Garden, reflected this anti-institutional directive.[11] *Hang Up* was one among many exciting exhibitions in the early 1970s, for example in the same year *c. 7,500*, a group show of conceptual works made by women, curated by Lucy Lippard, toured to London. That exhibition took place at Garage gallery, also in Covent Garden, after an agreement with the Royal College of Art fell through. While both shows brought artists together to exhibit the vitality and

diversity of women's art practices, there are important differences between their respective mobilisation of the group exhibition as a site for collaboration.

c. 7,500 was the fourth iteration in the series of 'numbers shows' selected by Lippard and named, arbitrarily, after the population of the cities in which the shows originated.[12] The exhibitions channelled Lippard's understanding of conceptual art as a democratic strategy: the works were made of inexpensive materials and therefore easy to pack and tour internationally. However, unlike earlier shows in Seattle, Vancouver, and Buenos Aires, *c. 7,500* retained the same title and roster of works throughout the tour. The exhibition did not respond to each location, as the previous shows had, instead it acted as a travelling manifesto that 'articulate[d] a new, woman-centric Conceptual art'.[13]

c. 7,500 was one of the first all-women exhibitions in London in the 1970s, yet it attracted an unprecedented negative response from the women's art movement in the UK. The show was criticised by Caroline Tisdall in the *Guardian*, and many British artists and writers resented the Arts Council of Great Britain's support of a group show of American women artists.[14] The show received a positive and in-depth review in *Spare Rib*, yet the critic Rozsika Parker still commented:

> Of course the danger is that the Arts Council will feel that they've now had their women's show, when the group of women who are trying to organise a large show of English artists' work are still finding it absolutely impossible to procure the space or the money for the project. Exhibitions like those organised by the Women's Workshop of the Artist Union [sic.]–with the artists present to explain their decision to exhibit together–are badly needed.[15]

As Parker's critique suggests, another problem with the exhibition was the absence of the artists themselves, arguably exaggerated by the show's location in the newly formed Garage gallery. Kathy Battista has described Garage as 'the first properly organised and designed alternative gallery in London', yet it was initiated neither by artists nor protagonists in the cultural field, but by the designer and businessman Terence Conran.[16] The gallery formed part of his case to save the buildings of Covent Garden from being razed as part of the Greater London Council's plans for urban regeneration. The gallery programming, then, served to transform the function of the building and, as such, the local area, from commerce to culture. The art not only changed the space, but also the context affected the artwork commissioned and performed there. The idea of abandoned space was fundamentally linked to the experimental artistic practices that took place there. The director of Garage, Antony Stokes, suggested that it tread an indeterminate line between 'alternative' and mainstream, falling 'between a publicly funded space and a commercial space'.[17]

In some ways the sleek design of Garage gallery correlates to Lippard's aim for *c. 7,500* to show the quality and diversity of women's conceptual art practices.[18] Rather than find a

6.2
c. 7,500 exhibition, Garage, London. 16 November – 16 December 1973.

space outside the mainstream that had rejected or restricted women's art, Lippard battled for a space within it or, in the case of Garage, evocative of it (fig. 6.2). Lippard's desire to show women's work 'within the mainstream' resonates, although does not collude, with the cultural capital Conran sought to foster in Covent Garden in the 1970s.[19] The design of Garage borrowed the language of the modern art gallery to add caché to the previous commercial function of the area. Likewise, the clean white walls framed the works on display in Lippard's exhibition with stark formality, evoking the previous exhibitions in the numbers series and other international displays of conceptual art. *c. 7,500* and Garage both sought a 'slice of the pie'—although Lippard soon after repudiated this type of exhibition as 'rotten' and cast-off in favour of different curatorial strategies.[20] However, for its audience of local women artists *c. 7,500*'s sleek display presented too great a contrast to the borrowed walls of libraries and community centres where many women had shown since the early 1970s.

Hang Up, Put Down, Stand Up, which took place down the road at 48 Earlham Street in June the same year, was an altogether different show. The exhibition was not funded by the Arts Council, as *c. 7,500* was, but by the Greater London Arts Association. It included a variety of media, but having no central selector or curator and forming part of the open programme of events and activities at Art Meeting Place, it presented a stark contrast

to the curated programme of displays at the Garage. It is not the aim of this comparison to draw a value judgement between this exhibition and *c. 7,500* that proves one more 'alternative' than another. But whereas Lippard's selection legitimated women artists' conceptual work, the WAC show brought artist-led group organisation to bear on the structure of the exhibition, bringing its feminist politics to the fore.

The association of Lippard's show with Garage gallery and the WAC exhibition with Art Meeting Place underscores this difference. Although located only a short distance apart and formed at the same moment during Covent Garden's decline as a working market, the two galleries demonstrated divergent approaches to the 'alternative' in 1970s London. In contrast to the Garage's board of trustees and designer spaces, Art Meeting Place was an altogether more contingent concern. According to John Sharkey the space became viable only after the Greater London Council had decided to retain the old buildings of the fruit and vegetable market and sell them off at 'giveaway prices'. The impetus behind Art Meeting Place was a 'shift from street frontage to a whole new building as an exhibition area run by us for ourselves and not by some establishment committee or Hampstead art group'.[21]

Despite the failure of the organisers to buy property on Covent Garden Art Meeting Place went ahead following Sharkey's plan.[22] The architecture of the industrial building—with no street-facing display windows—meant less visibility, but also privacy and arguably increased freedom. Adverts addressed to 'artists, musicians, film-makers, poets, etc.' were placed in different special-interest publications, offering people to use the space on their own terms, as well as attend its events and exhibitions. An advertisement written for *London Calling* announced:

> ART MEETING PLACE was started in May '74 by the Artists Meeting Group to provide an open resource for artists run by artists . . . [S]everal hundred individuals and groups have used facilities at AMP for exhibitions, performances, meetings and other activities.[23]

In this temporary space artists were free to realise exhibitions that did not participate in a particular cultural scene or answer to disciplinary boundaries or aesthetic expectations. The interdisciplinarity of the site offered the potential for alternative cultural forms to take root away from older, more mainstream institutions where genre boundaries were sustained and even formed part of their constitutions.[24]

In this way the open, collaborative ethos of Art Meeting Place functioned in a way akin to the philosopher Hannah Arendt's concept of the 'space of appearance'. This space is arbitrary, conditioned only by the process of coming together as a group, which constitutes the site of power. The space of appearance is associated with Arendt's understanding of the 'speech act' as a key entry point into the public sphere. It is by speaking in a group that the subject comes into formation in relation to others. She wrote: 'It is the space of appearance

in the widest sense of the word, namely, the space where I appear to others as they appear to me, where men exist not merely like other living or inanimate things but make their experience explicitly'.[25]

Arendt's theory helps articulate the different mode of encounter established at Art Meeting Place. The space was not defined solely by its physical manifestation, its programming, or the renown of its organisers, participants, or institutional identity. The public space of the building was articulated by those who met there and used it. Irit Rogoff has discussed Arendt's space of appearance in relation to the exhibition as a site, suggesting that a viewer's verbal response while in the gallery provides an opportunity to contest the discourse of cultural power executed there.[26] Through the speech act the viewer participates in the exhibition space.[27] Rogoff's discussion of Arendt's 'space of appearance' describes a disenfranchised and mobile sphere of action, rather than a democratic ideal, which parallels the organisational tactics of feminist-influenced artists in London.

The WAC show at Art Meeting Place could be seen – with Rogoff's reading of Arendt in mind – as an occupation. In gathering together on the occasion of a group exhibition the women constructed a 'space of appearance', a 'constitution of power' that is not simply a 'mode of representation' nor 'the concrete articulation of ideological space', but a site open to comment and response that allows feminist art practices to emerge in the relationships between the works in the show as well as from the responses of the exhibition's visitors.[28] This interactivity was evident in some of the works on display in the show, particularly an untitled piece by Sonia Knox composed of a large sheet of paper hung on the wall, on which visitors and artists could write messages or draw with the crayons provided. On the floor below this blank wallpaper Knox included a poem about the tense, passive feeling of waiting at home for her husband to return. The impromptu scrawls above disrupted the poem's metric: as Knox has commented, the point was to 'destroy my passivity, your passivity, with reaction'.[29]

Across the different works *Hang Up, Put Down, Stand Up* as a whole fostered personal engagement, encouraging discussion between artists and visitors and abandoning the look and curatorial framing of a commercial gallery or museum. In this way the content or form of the artwork was not necessarily what constituted feminism in the exhibition, rather it was the presence of the women artists and the openness of the space to gossip and discussion that contributed to its political effect, an effect produced by group work. Rozsika Parker's critique of *c. 7,500*—that the gallery space of Lippard's show was empty of its artist practitioners—bears this out.[30] As if to make this point more concretely in her *Spare Rib* review of the WAC exhibition, Parker gave the entirety of the magazine's arts section over to the collective voice of the women involved. The review included the exhibitors' answers to questions most frequently asked by the audience. The question-and-answer section, however, does not represent a single real-life exchange, but rather a compilation. The collectivising of the audience's questions and the artists' responses created a printed

'space of appearance' in which the artists come to define the power of their feminist art in relation to the viewers' provocations. For example, to the comment 'Much of the work seems unfinished', the artists responded:

> What does a well-packaged product convey? One can say things in a multitude of ways. It's really a question of conveying what one has to say in its most precise and economical way. It is this factor that should determine the image.[31]

The 'unfinished' nature of the work, which provides a barrier to the audience's understanding, is transformed into a definition of how the work of art should communicate in the 'most precise and economical way'. Consequently the process of question and answer redefines the art object. The response strips the artwork of its mystery and spirituality to render it an 'image' without the aura of ideology or institutional value. As such, the women locate communication as the focus of the exhibition, or as Parker suggested, in 'the exceptional atmosphere of the show. . . [i]t became a women's meeting place'.[32]

COLLABORATION AND REVITALISATION: *THE TIMES SQUARE SHOW*

In October 1980, Lucy Lippard published an exhibition review in *Artforum* using the thinly veiled pseudonym 'Anne Ominous'.[33] In the article, Lippard borrowed anonymity, albeit precariously, to critique the *Times Square Show*, a group exhibition organised by the artists collective Collaborative Projects Inc. (Colab) in an abandoned massage parlour in midtown Manhattan, and to question its legitimacy as both political commentary and 'alternative' space. Colab was founded in New York in 1977 and incorporated as a non-profit in 1978. Early members included Coleen Fitzgibbon, John Ahearn, Alan Moore, Tom Otterness, Walter Robinson, and Kiki Smith. Colab incorporated in part as a means of accessing the extensive federal arts funding available for group projects and artist-led spaces, which had increased tenfold under Brian O'Doherty's leadership of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). During the 1970s, Gerard Marzorati argued, 'there developed between avant-garde art practice and government support a relationship the likes of which modernism had never before witnessed'.[34]

Colab were motivated, too, by their concern at the increasing institutionalisation of early 'alternative' art spaces in the city, such as Jeffrey Lew's 112 Greene Street, which had been touted by federal authorities as an exemplary collective artistic venue; the Institute for Art and Urban Resources, founded by the curator Alanna Heiss in 1971; and Artists Space, a non-profit exhibition space which began as 'a pilot program in the form of a service organisation for artists by the New York State Council on the Arts'. The Institute for Art and Urban Resources opened the 'largest of the alternative spaces', PS1, in an abandoned school building in Queens in 1975.[35] According to Moore, Colab was formed in reaction to

these collective ventures and out of contempt for their federal appeal. The group 'largely evaded the discourse and prescriptions of the art left', such as the Art Workers Coalition and the Guerrilla Art Action Group, which had shaped the institutional format so popular with the NEA in this period.[36] Many Colab members felt that while the administrative set-up of these early alternative ventures was deeply politicised and successfully challenged the dominance of mainstream art venues, the exhibitions that they held did not.[37]

Colab, therefore, sought to engender politicised collaboration at every level of the creative and exhibition processes, conducting group business through large, open meetings, doing away with the curator/artist binary as many 'alternative' spaces had failed to do, and holding small exhibitions in members' apartments. These meetings, however, were frequently tense affairs, and a number of founding members left in 1979, largely to work on solo projects. In 1980, the group was strengthened by an influx of new members, after which Colab's exhibition interests expanded outwards. In January, the group occupied a vacant property on Delancey Street and launched the *Real Estate Show*, filling the building with artworks in a range of media that critiqued New York City housing policy and municipal policies of abandonment and neglect. The intervention was discovered and shut down by the municipal authorities within a day of its opening. After negotiations, the city offered Colab another vacant property for minimal rent, and this space became the non-profit arts space ABC No Rio, 'a place where artists work, an artist's situation, not a gallery, not a workshop', which remains open today.[38]

In June, Colab held the *Times Square Show* in an empty former massage parlour on West 41st Street in the Times Square area of Manhattan. The group's broad call for submissions solicited works that commented on the character of the local area, and hundreds of artists responded. The show brought together more established, gallery-affiliated artists, like the sculptor Joel Schapiro; young artists known in the East Village club scene, including Keith Haring, Kenny Scharf, and Jean-Michel Basquiat; and teenaged graffiti writers from the South Bronx, whose practice of moving through the city illegally on subway train cars fundamentally challenged dominant notions of the 'alternative', the site-specific, and the collaborative. Loosely curated by Colab members, the show displayed works in every available space and initially without the provision of artists' names. The works were arranged thematically, and Colab members viewed the show as a collaboration with both the residents and workers of Times Square's rundown spaces, its porn theatres and dirty magazine stores. Indeed, the only guideline for participating artists was that the work must comment on the area in which the building stood, resulting in, as Jeffrey Deitch noted in a review for *Art in America*, 'a startling variety of paintings, peep shows, sculpture, statues, model rooms, bundled clothing, and even a punching bag set up for practice'. The show was, he wrote, 'an illustration of that elusive process by which artists with a certain affinity somehow band together to form an unstructured but synergistic association which might almost be called a movement'.[39] That associative quality calls to mind Arendt's conception of the relationship between site and subject as conditioned by

the gathering together of a group. The character of the Times Square property was central to the show, but this character was understood as contingent and ephemeral, a collective construction and a collaboration with the imaginative space of Times Square as well as the literal topology of 42nd Street.

The *Times Square Show* was, however, also a collaboration with the economic and municipal authorities who sought to eradicate the area's seedy character. Colab sought permission from the building's owner and received funding from the NEA, the New York State Council for the Arts, Beard's Fund, Robert Burden, Anfour Corporation, National Video Industries, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, Spectacolor Inc., Sandra Devlin, Richard Savitsky, and 112 Workshop. In doing so, the group earned the praise of the 42nd Street Development Corporation, an independent body who spearheaded regeneration efforts in the area, for their assistance in the street's 'revitalisation'.[40] This sponsorship seems at odds with the ethos of the earlier *Real Estate Show*, which Colab argued in a 'manifesto or statement of intent' distributed at the opening, was an expression of 'solidarity with oppressed people, a recognition that mercantile and institutional structures oppress and distort artists' lives and works, and a recognition that artists, living and working in depressed communities, are compradors in the revaluation of property and the "whitening" of neighborhoods'.[41] Public engagement later that year included collaboration with the corporate forces that threatened the livelihoods of the people who lived and worked in and around the massage parlour that Colab appropriated.

It was the show's corporate financial backing that Lippard seized upon in her scathing review for *Artforum*. The problem, she identified, *is* 'political', but, she wondered, what exactly was the political issue foregrounded in this installation? A range of politicised issues were raised, she conceded, but 'it was often impossible to tell where the artists stood on them'. Lippard condemned the exhibition as the action of artistic 'pseudo-terrorists' which did not fit with the group's earlier statement of intent regarding the appropriation of municipally and commercially neglected spaces in the district.[42] In her opinion, Colab were 'identifying with the denizens of this chosen locale—envying them at the same time as colonising them, thus rebelling against the cleanliness and godlessness of the art-world-institutions, "alternate" and otherwise'.[43] Concerns about the show's corporate funding were cast in relief by the inclusion of a gift shop in the ground floor of the building, which sold what Lippard called 'chatchkas for the downwardly mobilised', including plaster models of rats by exhibiting artist Christy Rupp.[44] However, Moore has asserted that the 'new mode of collectivity' explored in the *Times Square Show*, which was characterised, in many ways, by the shop, was intentionally 'vernacular and opportunistic', a clear rejection of the 'rationalised, programmatic' collaboration of 'the organised left' of the AWC and Artists Space, exemplified by Lippard, a key figure in the foundation of the former.[45] For Colab, therefore, the rise of the 'alternative' space was a call not only to challenge the hegemony of mainstream galleries, but also to reject the orthodoxy of leftist exhibition spaces, which

were non-profit, but often relied on state and federal sponsorship to maintain their 'alternative' position.

Colab's spatial intervention in the transitional site of Times Square, teetering on the edge of corporate redevelopment in the late 1970s, and their economic networking with multiple corporate and government bodies that funded the show collaboratively were highly problematic in the sense that, as Lippard pointed to, they approached colonisation, rather than identification and support. Similarly, *Village Voice* critic Richard Goldstein, who championed the exhibition as the 'first radical show of the 1980s', worried that 'the trompe l'oeil approach to urban renewal might mean replacing the real thing with its representation, the real pornography with art about porn'. He found 'a vague foreboding among the artists in the *Times Square Show*, a sense . . . that 'we're caught up in a big game plan'.[46] This anxiety may have been connected to Colab's experiences with city authorities earlier that year. 'We got [ABC] No Rio', the group admitted a few years later, 'for closing the *Real Estate Show* down, for not reopening the *Real Estate Show*'. Asked about their engagement, as white artists, with local 'Hispanic artists' at ABC No Rio, for example, the group replied that Hispanics might not be 'particularly oriented towards No Rio anyway, because No Rio is basically an outgrowth of white, middle-class artists who have certain responses to the situation in which they find themselves, and it's directly related to alternative spaces, an attempt by artists to have their own situation, but it's still within the art world structure'.[47]

Although Colab were committed to creating 'their own situation', an experimental 'laboratory for art ideas', they were 'still within the art world structure', exceeding Arendt's 'space of appearance' as they occupied the very real site of 156 Rivington Street.

As federal and state funding for art collectives declined in the mid-1980s under the Reagan administration, the number of dealer-led galleries in the city expanded rapidly: 124 such galleries opened in the East Village between 1981 and 1986.[48] By demonstrating that a collaborative, non-institutional, 'mass esthetic [sic.]'[49] could garner critical, commercial, and community interest, the *Times Square Show* had a major impact on the burgeoning East Village arts scene, including the kinds of art spaces that developed there—small, commercial galleries like Civilian Warfare, which sought to 'cultivate exactly the angst-ridden ambience that its name' and location implied while regularly selling to wealthy collectors.[50] Brian Wallis has traced the development of 'alternative' arts spaces in New York by way of three waves, the final one taking place between 1981 and 1983, in the wake of the *Times Square Show*, the work of 'a third generation of artists [who] founded alternatives to the alternatives in the form of commercial galleries in the East Village'.[51] This 'alternative' was then reabsorbed by the NEA. In 1983, the NEA's director of visual arts, the painter Benny Andrews, put forward suggestions for 'a program aimed at providing alternative spaces with a mechanism for selling the work they show'.[52] The direction of 'alternative' resistance is fundamental to understanding the impact of these anti-institutional, collaborative gestures. At the *Times Square Show*, as Goldstein's critique suggests, Colab had been

trying to create an alternative to the 'alternative' by occupying a space without institutional or leftist art-world connections, only to find that the parameters of the 'alternative' and the anti-institutional had shifted, just as Times Square itself had transitioned from a red-light district to an emerging corporate zone.

THE WOMEN'S FREE ARTS ALLIANCE: FROM SITE SPECIFICITY TO A COMMUNITY IN ADMINISTRATION

In contrast to WAC and Colab, who exhibited in the centrally-located contested sites of Covent Garden and Times Square, the Women's Free Arts Alliance (WFAA) utilised the quieter spaces of North London—Chalk Farm and Regents Park—to initiate a community of women connected through shared creative activities. In the early years of the organisation the women involved did not share the professional identity of 'artist', although this would change later in the decade. In this section we consider the communality and multidisciplinarity of the organisation between 1975 and 1976, focusing on the loose network of friends and acquaintances who came together to create a space for women's creative practice.[53]

The first activity of the WFAA was an exhibition titled *Sweet Sixteen and Never Been Shown* (1975), which took place in an abandoned piano warehouse on King Henry's Road, squatted and shared by members Joanna Walton and Kathy Nairne. The building was large and tall with dramatic open spaces that could easily accommodate group meetings, classes, the display of large artworks and performances. *Sweet Sixteen* was a temporary, immersive environment spread across the building, from a pink sensorial corridor at the door, to music played on pots and pans from the kitchen, to a trapeze performance in the attic space. The separation of the artist group from the audience group, so obviously delineated in *Hang Up*, was much more diffuse in *Sweet Sixteen*. And unlike *Hang Up* this exhibition included diverse artists working alone and in groups, including Rose English, Kate Walker, Mary Sergeant, Linda Mallet, Shirley Reed, Carol MacNicoll, Irene Kai, and Cathy Nicholson. This collective environment disrupted any coherent utterance. As if to extend this open attitude, the pink corridor served the metaphorical function of cleansing the visitor of outside perceptions and ushering them into the shared space, the new world of the exhibition.[54]

If *Sweet Sixteen and Never Been Shown* launched the Women's Free Arts Alliance, the group's move to Cambridge Terrace Mews later that year marked its development. The WFAA paid a reduced rent for the building and funding from the Greater London Council and the Gulbenkian Foundation supported a nominal wage for both Nairne and Walton. The building's small rooms and working hours provided an 'open resource' for women distinct from the warehouse on King Henry's Road, which had the benefit of large spaces and non-mainstream domestic set-up but was restricted to members of the, albeit extended, kinship network.

The move from warehouse to mews building also signalled a shift in the form and function of the artistic activity of the WFAA. The small spaces of the mews, along with the alliance's limited open hours, required an administrative structure that could support a larger body of activities as well as attract the funding necessary to initiate these projects and advertise them to ever wider audiences. The building became a resource for a changing and expanding alliance of women. This multi-disciplinarity was fostered by a schedule that allowed different women to participate in multiple ways. As such administration was crucial for establishing and maintaining relationships between the group and its audience. The WFAA expanded their understanding of what and for whom an arts organisation could be by reducing the importance of the exhibition as a central organising principle. Crucial to this process was the 'community' facilitated in the shared spaces of the mews building. As an early WFAA poster stated:

> Women are able to support each other in breaking out of old habits of thinking and feeling which limit, and in discovering new ways of living which are more satisfying. We are gaining great strength from finding how much we share insights, hopes and growth together.[55]

Crucial to this growth was the provision of a space outside the home, which would provide an 'alternative' to the domestic environment and to family life. In 1975 and 1976 the WFAA sought to break down social, economic, and cultural boundaries between women in order develop new relational identities. In contrast to the dialogue between artist and viewer in *Hang Up*, the WFAA 'community' was dependent on longer-term relationships, which developed through the habitual use of the building. In Arendt's terms, working together and remaining together generated and was generated by power, or in other words, the strength of organisation. The power the group, however, was not that of cultural intervention or redefinition, but a kind of self-reflexive *empowerment* that fostered a widening network of exchange and participation.

This open alliance of such 'healthy vitality' also had its limitations.[56] Although the alliance embraced feminist organisational politics, it was distinct from both the fixed structure of the WWAU and the discursive quality of the WAC. Likewise its activities rarely intervened in either local or national political issues, and although some of the exhibitions were socially directed this focus was not central to the WFAA community. Yet neither was membership rooted in the geographical locale around Cambridge Terrace Mews; WFAA workshops were advertised in the London-based listings paper *City Limits* and the women's self-defence classes at the alliance even made the front cover of the national magazine *Spare Rib*.[57]

The WFAA community was contingent on the women's attendance at exhibitions and events. In this way the identity of the 'community' was as much subject to the process of definition and redefinition as were its individual members. The organisation pushed at the

boundaries of what art could achieve for women already engaged with feminist politics, while remaining closed to the grassroots politicisation of women in the local geographic area, who made use of the food cooperative that operated out of the alliance's building but not the classes or exhibitions. Paying close attention to the aims and objectives of the alliance suggests how 'community' was mobilised differently by organisations outside mainstream culture. Importantly the 'alternative' that the WFAA provided between 1975 and 1976 was not an entirely open structure. It was an arts centre with an experimental creative agenda that sought out and brought together a diverse group, but one already oriented to forming new perspectives.

THINGS THAT DO NOT GO TOGETHER: GROUP MATERIAL AND IDEOLOGICAL COLLABORATION

The New York downtown collective Group Material was founded in 1979 by the artists Hannah Alderfelder, Julie Ault, Patrick Brennan, Beth Jaker, Marybeth Nelson, Tim Rollins, and Peter Szypulai, among others, and in its commitment to a politicised notion of a perpetual 'alternative' this group provides an interesting point of comparison with the WFAA and the WAC. Group Material owed much to the curatorial 'alternatives' and collective organisational strategies highlighted by Colab in their early exhibitions, including the *Times Square Show*. They also learned from the example of Fashion Moda, a non-commercial community arts space in the South Bronx, which is perhaps best known as one of the venues for the casting of John Ahearn's sculpture series the *South Bronx Hall of Fame* in the late 1970s. Initially renting a storefront space at 244 East 13th Street in the East Village, Group Material expanded on the collective dynamic of Colab's exhibitions but sought to challenge Colab's definition of community engagement as collaborative art production by inviting local residents, rather than artists, to participate in temporary exhibitions that addressed the area's decay and approaching gentrification.

Group Material's outlook was deeply political at the level of ideology. Their approach to exhibitions tended towards conceptual practices in the mode of earlier institutional critiques, such as those explored by Hans Haacke in works such as *MoMA Poll* (1970) and the unrealised *Guggenheim Museum Visitors Profile* (1971). Haacke's 1971 work was rejected by the Guggenheim director Thomas Messer on the grounds that the museum space 'is non-political, is apolitical, and [is] not concerned with political and social issues' and therefore a political survey would be 'out of bounds'. His duty as director was, as he saw it, to ensure that 'an alien substance [does not enter] the Museum organism'.[58] Working from within what he saw as the contaminated museum space itself, Haacke attempted to expose the imperial political forces active in the funding and curatorial decision making in mainstream museums. In contrast, for Group Material, shaped by the examples of Fashion Moda and Colab, genuine political critique could not take place within the space of the museum. Rather, it must take the form of an active and collective sociocultural engagement with

local communities that prioritised collaboration over the production of art objects, saleable or otherwise.

In a flyer announcing their union in October 1979, Group Material members addressed the subject of 'cultural activism emergent in the work of artists, collectives, and non-artists in the U.S. and abroad'.[59] 'As artists and workers', they stated, echoing the rhetoric of the Art Workers Coalition in their November 1970 'Statement of Demands', 'we want to maintain control over our work, directing our energies to the demands of social conditions as opposed to the demands of the art market'.[60] Group Material viewed collaboration not as a means of accessing federal or state funding, but as a valuable political strategy, distinct from what they saw as the corporate pandering that Colab engaged in when they sought approval and funding for the *Times Square Show*. Critiquing traditional exhibition practices and preceding 'alternative' collective management strategies that often inadvertently imitated or intentionally reflected hegemonic organisational models, Group Material 'invite[d] everyone to question the *entire culture* we have taken for granted'.[61] In one sense, this stance was a means of protecting itself against the shifting boundaries of funding and finance that Richard Goldstein pointed to in his analysis of the *Times Square Show*. Ideology, Goldstein argued, 'equips these artists to control the presentation of their work', and genuine engagement with residents local to the storefront space was a crucial component of this discursive strategy.[62]

For their first exhibition, *The People's Choice* (later known as *Arroz con Mango*) in 1980, Group Material invited local residents to bring in works of personal value, which were then displayed in the storefront space with notes indicating each object's sentimental, rather than monetary, value. Neighbours brought in family photographs, toys, religious objects, a postcard with a reproduction of a Rembrandt painting, and a copy of the poster for Robert Morris's 1974 *Labyrinths* exhibition, which featured the artist posing in leather and chains. Writing in *Artforum*, Thomas Lawson described the resulting exhibition as a 'narrative of everyday life, a folk tale'.[63] Lawson's description was not a commentary on the local community or a representation of the community by an artist, but the local community itself, the treasured objects themselves, rather than stand-ins for them. The Spanish title, which translates as 'rice with mango', refers to a Cuban expression meaning 'what a mess', or, more idiomatically, 'things that do not go together'. Through this exhibition Group Material were committed to, as Lippard has written of Fashion Moda, enabling 'communication between two cultures that rarely understand each other'.[64] For David Deitcher, Group Material's 'display methods', which focused on the suggestive connections between objects rather than on the objects themselves, demonstrated 'the cultural significance of all social products and cultural practices when juxtaposed and situated in suggested ways'.[65] The various items were displayed neatly in the white-walled storefront space. Garish devotional objects and toys appeared somewhat out of place in the clinical environment of the mock white cube, the stark background drawing out the distinctions between the cultural strategies of the local community and those of galleries. Playing

with this disconnection was key to Group Material's conviction that, according to Richard Goldstein of the *Village Voice*, 'only analysis can save artists from becoming victims of their own enthusiasm'.[66] Highlighting the aesthetic discontinuity of these 'things that do not go together', Group Material emphasised their sociocultural relationality. The arrangement of these objects, Deitcher argued, spoke to Group Material's discursive conception of 'site', opening 'culture' up to 'forms of expression that belong to culturally and economically marginalised groups' through in-depth curatorial collaboration.[67] In *The People's Choice*, Group Material 'attempted to restore the public dimension to such spaces by temporarily transforming the terms of the discourse that usually takes place there', enabling *The People's Choice* to function as both art exhibition and political statement simultaneously.[68]

In 1981, Group Material lost the East 13th Street space, and their analysis of the discursive potential of public space and site moved in a new direction. Reluctant to occupy a new storefront, since an increasing number of small commercial galleries were opening up in similar venues in the early 1980s, and '[disdaining] identification with alternative spaces', which they viewed as the 'children' of larger commercial galleries in SoHo and further uptown, Group Material decided not to occupy a single space at all.[69] They focused instead on organising temporary exhibitions in a range of public sites, including the Taller Latinoamericano space on 21st Street, PS1 in Queens, the subway, and billboards. Their exhibitions were directed towards specific political events, for instance, political self-determination in Latin America and the HIV/AIDS crisis. The format was always collaborative, and exhibitions and spatial interventions such as subway and billboard poster projects were often selected and designed by way of a roundtable discussion. 'Group Material wants to occupy that most vital of alternative spaces', members stated in a flyer handed out at an exhibition in 1981, 'that wall-less expanse that bars artists and their work from the crucial social concerns of the American working class'.[70] Unlike Colab, whose site-specific exhibitions led to the foundation of ABC No Rio, Group Material's search for a site that engendered genuine collaboration with a broad public motivated the collective to abandon a singular site altogether and to engage with 'site' on the level of ideology. As the *Village Voice* critic Kim Levin noted, Group Material's fundamental aim was to 'demonstrate how art is dependent on a social context for its meaning'.[71] Group Material's spatial dematerialisation enacted their claim that meaning is itself collaboratively produced; its production is a discursive situation that is not necessarily connected with a physical site and, indeed, gains much from not being tethered to one at all. Not only were these shifting spatial interventions an alternative to the now well-established format of the non-profit arts space, focused in and on a single location, but also, by prioritising collaboration with a range of sites and demographics, each of Group Material's projects offered an alternative to the one preceding it.

CONCLUSION

The appropriation and contingency of site and community in each of these case studies evidences the vitality of collaboration. However, collaboration between artists does not always signify political resistance or offer a genuine 'alternative' to hegemonic authorities, artistic and otherwise. Instead a collaborative engagement with local communities and urban sites outside gallery and museum networks can create a 'space of appearance' within which resistance can be imagined and performed, in a dialogic mode that is distinct from the oppositional rhetoric of the 'alternative'. Hannah Arendt suggested that '[w]hat keeps people together after the fleeting moment of action has passed (what we today call organisation) and what at the same time they keep alive through remaining together, is power'.[72] This kind of power exceeds particular spaces and individuals and is distributed *between* them rather than *by* them.

What for Arendt is organisation, and for Herbert and Karlsen self-organisation, we would like to term 'self-determination', a category that invokes the perpetual relationality engendered by working together to provide alternatives to mainstream systems of power and to methodological stasis. Each of these groups demonstrated, through their work in abandoned spaces and deprived urban communities, that organisational power is established and maintained through collaboration, and must therefore be continually critiqued from within the collective in order to offer a genuine 'alternative'. As these examples have shown, in London and New York in the late 1970s and early 1980s, genuine artistic alterity was explored not through the administrative practice of self-organisation, but by way of a performative self-determination that came into being through working together.

All references in *Courtauld Books Online* are hyperlinked. To navigate to a footnote, click on the reference number in the body of the text. To return back to the main text, click on the number at the beginning of the footnote.

1. Miwon Kwon, 'One Place after Another: Notes on Site Specificity', *October* 80 (Spring 1997): p. 91.

2. Lauren Rosati and Mary Anne Staniszewski (eds.), *Alternative Histories: New York Art Spaces, 1960 to 2010* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2012), p. 9.

3. Julie Ault (ed.), *Alternative Art, New York, 1965–1985: A Cultural Politics Book for the Social Text Collective* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

4. Gregory Sholette and Blake Stimson (eds.), *Collectivism After Modernism: The Art of Social Imagination after 1945* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

5. Kathy Battista, *Renegotiating the Body: Feminist Art in 1970s London* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012).

6. Stine Hebert, Anne Szefer Karlsen and David Blamey, 'Introduction' in *Self-Organised*, Stine Hebert and Anne Szefer Karlsen (eds.), *Self-Organised* (London: Open Editions, 2013), p. 11.

7. Gabriele Detterer, 'The Spirit and Culture of Artist-Run Spaces', in Gabriele Detterer and Maurizio Nanucci (eds.), *Artist-Run Spaces: Nonprofit Collective Organisations in the 1960s and 1970s* (Zurich: JRP Ringier, 2012), p.12.

8. For a discussion of these two New York groups, see Julia Bryan Wilson, *Art Workers: Radical Art in the Vietnam War Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

9. According to participating artist Sonia Knox, the formation of the WAC did not mean the dissolution of the WWAU and the process was not acrimonious. Rather, the WAC provided a different experience and context for discussion. The exhibition poster and catalogue refer to the exhibition as a product of the WWAU. Knox has suggested that this was because the WAC had not yet settled on a name; Sonia Knox, in conversation with the author, 15 September 2015. Through the article we will refer to this henceforth as a WAC exhibition because its ethos was more commensurate with the working process of the subgroup rather than the larger group.

10. Alexis Hunter, 'Curating as an Aesthetic Experience', unpublished manuscript, date unknown, Alexis Hunter artist file, Women's Art Library, Goldsmiths College, University of London.

11. The exhibition included Pauline Barry, Celia Edmonds, Deborah Halstead, Margaret Harrison, Roberta Henderson, Alexis Hunter, Jane Low, Tina Keane, Mary Kelly, Sonia Knox, Sue Madden, Liz Moore, Diane Olsen, Hannah [Mary] O'Shea, Alene Strasbourg and Deborah Halsey Stern.

12. *c. 7,500* originated at the California Institute of Arts in Valencia, California in 1973–4.

13. Cornelia Butler, 'Women–Concept–Art: Lucy R. Lippard's Numbers Shows', in Lucy R. Lippard et al. (eds.), *From Conceptualism to Feminism: Lucy Lippard's Numbers Shows, 1969–74* (London: Afterall, 2011), p. 68.

14. Caroline Tisdall, 'Women Artists', *Guardian*, 24 April 1974.

15. Rozsika Parker, 'Art Has No Sex but Artists Do' (1974), in Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock (eds.), *Framing Feminism: Art and the Women's Movement, 1970–1985* (London: Pandora, 1987), pp. 194–96.

16. Battista, *Renegotiating the Body*, p. 120.

17. Antony Stokes, quoted in Battista, *Renegotiating the Body*, p. 120.

18. Butler, 'Women–Concept–Art', pp. 68–69.

19. 'Lucy R. Lippard in Correspondence with Antony Hudek', in Lippard et al., *From Conceptualism to Feminism*, p. 71.

20. Lucy R. Lippard, 'An Anatomy of an Annual', *Hayward Annual II* (1978), np. Lippard's later exhibitions experimented with curatorial design. For instance, *Issue: Social Strategies by Women Artists* (London, Institute of Contemporary Art, 1980) sought correlations between the works whilst emphasising each work's specificity, so the gallery wall would function like the page of a newspaper.

21. John Sharkey, 'Artists Meeting Place: Creative Destroyer to Artists Meeting Place or Art Meeting Place to AMP', The Centre of Attention, accessed 26 February 2014, http://www.thecentreofattention.org/dgamp.html

22. Sharkey left the organising committee before it was realised.

23. Sharkey, 'Artists Meeting Place'.

24. In this way, it was similar to Arts Lab at 182 Drury Lane (1967–69), started by Jim Haynes. Both spaces fostered interdisciplinarity, but what was experimental in the earlier space became structural for Art Meeting Place.

25. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, (Chicago Il.: University of Chicago Press, 1998) (first edition 1958), p. 200.

26. Irit Rogoff, 'Looking Away: Participations in Visual Culture', in Gavin Butt (ed.), *After Criticism: New Responses to Art and Performance* (London: Blackwell, 2005), pp. 117–134.

27. Rogoff, 'Looking Away', p. 122.

28. Rogoff, 'Looking Away', p. 125.

29. Knox, conversation with the author.

30. Although there was a programme of associated events in which women could participate, none of the exhibiting artists, who all lived in the United States, were able to attend the show.

31. Rozsika Parker, 'Exhibition at the Arts Meeting Place' (1974), in Parker and Pollock, *Framing Feminism*, p. 159.

32. Parker and WWAU artists, 'Exhibition at the Arts Meeting Place', pp. 159–60.

33. Anne Ominous [Lucy R. Lippard], 'Sex and Death and Shock and Schlock: A Long Review of the *Times Square Show*', *Artforum* 19 (October 1980): p. 50-55.

34. Gerard Marzorati, 'The Arts Endowment in Transition', *Art in America* 71 (March 1983): p. 9. See also Grant Kester, 'Rhetorical Questions: The Alternative Arts Sector and the Imaginary Public', *Afterimage* 20:6 (January 199): pp. 10–16.

35. PS1 was formally acquired by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in January 2000.

36. Alan Moore, *Art Gangs: Protest and Counterculture in New York City* (New York: Autonomedia Books, 2011).

37. Donald Newman's *Nigger Drawings* show at Artists Space in 1979 was a stark reminder of the exclusionary curatorial practices that even anti-institutional spaces could give rise to. See Steven C. Dubin, *Arresting Images: Impolitic Art and Uncivil Actions* (New York: Routledge, 1992)

38. Shelley Leavitt, 'ABC No Rio', *BOMB* 2 (Winter 1982), accessed 16 March 2016, http://bombmagazine.org/article/34/abc-no-rio.

39. Jeffrey Deitch, 'A Report from the Times Square Show', *Art in America* 68:7 (September 1980): p. 12.

40. Joseph Morningstar, 42nd Street Development Corporation, quoted in David Deitcher, 'Polarity Rules', in Ault, *Alternative Art*, p. 220.

41. The Real Estate Show, 'Manifesto or Statement of Intent', quoted in Robert Siegle, *Suburban Ambush: Downtown Writing and the Fiction of Insurgency*, Parallax: Re-visions of Culture and Society (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 14.

42. Lippard, 'Sex and Death', p. 53

43. Lippard, 'Sex and Death', p. 52.

44. Lippard, 'Sex and Death', p. 51.

45. Moore, *Art Gangs*, p. 81.

46. Richard Goldstein, 'The First Radical Art Show of the '80s', *Village Voice*, June 16, 1980, p. 32.

47. Leavitt, 'ABC No Rio'.

48. Gwen Allen, *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), p. 192.

49. Kim Levin, quoted in Moore, *Art Gangs*, p. 102.

50. Dan Cameron, *East Village USA* (New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art, 2004), p. 51.

51. Brian Wallis, 'Public Funding and Alternative Spaces', in Ault, *Alternative Art*, p. 167.

52. Marzorati, 'The Arts Endowment in Transition', p. 13.

53. See Catherine Elwes and Amy Tobin (2015), ''Women's Images of Men' Seminar ICA: 14 October 1980' in *MIRAJ*, vol.4, no.1–2 294–311.

54. Su Braden, 'Self-Exposure' (1975), in Parker and Pollock, *Framing Feminism*, p. 163.

55. WFAA poster, c. 1974, personal collection of Kathy Nairne, London.

56. Braden, 'Self-Exposure', p. 163.

57. The February 1977 issue of *Spare Rib* featured Kathy Nairne on the cover.

58. Hans Haacke, 'Lessons Learned', *Tate Papers*, no. 12 (2009), Landmark Exhibitions Issue, http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/12/lessons-learned.

59. Rosati and Staniszewski, *Alternative Histories*, p. 194.

60. Rosati and Staniszewski, *Alternative Histories*, p. 194.

61. Group Material inaugural flyer (1979) in Rosati and Staniszewski, *Alternative Histories*, p. 194. Emphasis added.

62. Goldstein, 'Enter the Anti-Space', *Village Voice*, November 11, 1980, quoted in Moore, *Art Gangs*, p. 111.

63. Thomas Lawson, 'The People's Choice: Group Material', *Artforum* 19:8 (April 1981), p. 67.

64. Lucy Lippard, "Real Estate and Real Art a la Fashion Moda," *Seven Days Magazine* (April 1980) http://www.lehman.cuny.edu/vpadvance/artgallery/gallery/talkback/fmlippard.html.

65. David Deitcher, 'Polarity Rules: Looking at Whitney Annuals and Biennials, 1968–2000', in Ault, *Alternative Art*, pp. 220–1.

66. Richard Goldstein, 'Enter the Anti-Space', *Village Voice*, 5 November 1980.

67. David Deitcher, 'Social Aesthetics,' in *Democracy: A Project by Group Material*, ed. Brian Wallis (New York: Dia Art Foundation, 1990), p. 22.

68. David Deitcher, 'Social Aesthetics', p. 22.

69. Moore, *Art Gangs*, p. 116.

70. Quoted in Moore, *Art Gangs*, p. 116.

71. Kim Levin, 'The Whitney Laundry', *Village Voice* 9 (April 1985).

72. Arendt, *Human Condition*, p. 201.

AFTERWORD

BEGINNING 'THE ENDS'

ALEXANDER NEMEROV and RICHARD MEYER

A.1
Robert Mapplethorpe, *American Flag*, 1977, black-and-white photograph.

On 7 November 2014, Alexander Nemerov and Richard Meyer addressed an international audience of established and emerging scholars to open the conference 'The Ends of American Art' at Stanford University. The conference went on to explore new possibilities for thinking about, performing, producing, and writing the history of American art. In their short presentations, Nemerov and then Meyer took up the subject of the Robert Mapplethorpe photograph American Flag *(1977). Their interpretations could not have been more different, with Nemerov citing the ways in which the past trails into the present, presenting us with a slow unraveling rather than a distinct end, and Meyer looking to the end of the exceptionalism that has defined the 'Americanness' of American art*

as a place to begin again, this time without those exclusions. While Nemerov and Meyer are now experimenting with a collaboratively written project, at the time of the conference their presentations were written separately, though intended to be presented together, one following the other, to demonstrate how interwoven approaches can enrich an understanding of any single work of art and of the borders demarcated by the field of art history in general. The Collaborations and Its (Dis) Contents *project—both the collaborative research group and this resulting compendium—has also been concerned with these issues. We hope the 'alternative methods of interpretation and modes of writing' (Meyer's words) presented in this book will encourage other experiments in collaborative intellectual production and creative approaches to the interpretation of art and its history.*

—The Editors

Robert Mapplethorpe's *American Flag* dates to the year after America's Bicentennial, to the time of the tall ships in New York Harbor and other patriotic festivities; it also dates to the time when New York City was in deep financial difficulty: 'Ford to City: Drop Dead', ran the famous *New York Daily News* headline of 1975. Baseball player Rick Monday, playing for the Chicago Cubs in Los Angeles in 1976, had rescued an American flag from two protesters, a man and his 11-year-old son, who had run on to the field and tried to set fire to it there in an act of protest. The tattered stars and stripes—still flying, the stuff of Francis Scott Key's National Anthem—seemed worn around the edges and worn thin, at the beginning of its end.

But those frayed edges, almost liquid in the photograph's soft light, make the flag into something soft and delicate, floating and dissolving in the sky, coming apart at the seams (nowhere more so than in that tendril stripe at the upper corner that bends back toward the flag pole). The flag is polymorphously erotic in its portrayal of decay. Like a calla lily on its stem, it droops and stands, the artist attentive to folds and furls, a sensuous deterioration.

It is a haunting image, an image that makes me think of what it is to contemplate the end of something—Mapplethorpe thinking of America at an apparent endpoint, post-Watergate, after the fall of Saigon, you name it—but also what it is to contemplate an end that does not end, a kind of slow unraveling or spilling as if the flag were one of those balloons or apples Harold Edgerton used to photograph with the bullet speeding through them, the whole thing shredding to tatters much quicker than a blink, yet here the same shredding so soft and slow and infinitely prolonged.

Historians deal in endings, in periods, in years, such as 1975, 1976, 1977; yet what photographs like this one suggest is that works of art portray their times at such a slow state that their disintegration is erotic, a pleasurable suspension of both belief and disbelief; a disintegration so languid and sensual that it goes beyond melancholy and makes me think that the past—the various endpoints of it—is not so much a matter of endings as of

infinitely gradated dissolutions. 'My' artist, sometimes people say, designating the person they are studying; or they speak of a 'felt' connection to the past—some carryover, at any rate, from then to now: these are signs of encountering a past without end.

And if that flag should have flown backward, in reverse, x-rayed upon the façade of a building, as it was at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, on a warm night in June 1989, when I was there, I think of the way our own pasts, as historians, become themselves the streamers of some long-flowing reach from then to now—call them personal histories—and how these histories, themselves never ending, make for a long light, a projection, a project, that is both clarified into distinctiveness at forgotten moments—giving a lecture, say, or a talk—and carried forward as a continual nighttime dream, written on an institutional screen, indelible as well as ephemeral, a continually unfolding standard of who we are and what we represent. So that there is no end of the past, and no end of who we have been, when we look back to things that trail forward to where we are today.

—Alexander Nemerov

The American standard of national symbolism has become torn and tattered. The flag has frayed so badly that the right edge of its uppermost stripe has partially split off from the rest. A slender strip of cloth curls up and back like a jagged fabric fish hook.

This photograph was taken by Robert Mapplethorpe on Fire Island in 1977. That same year, he initiated the sexually explicit *X Portfolio* that would come, more than a decade later, to play a central role within the culture wars over federally funded art, homoeroticism, and the limits of artistic freedom in this country.

There is, however, no homoeroticism on display in this photograph. Would that we could slide down Mapplethorpe's flag pole to glimpse the pleasure seekers on the beach at Fire Island in 1977, or better yet, to visit the Meat Rack, the wooded cruising area between the Pines and Cherry Grove, the primary gay communities on Fire Island. On any summer night in the Meat Rack, one could witness scenes of priapic worship and carnal collectivity no less extravagant than the queer kink and leather fetishism Mapplethorpe was photographing in Manhattan at around the same time.

A photograph of the stars and stripes flying majestically in the wind would have held little interest to Mapplethorpe, whether in 1977 or at any other moment in his career. It was the fraying of the national standard, the unraveling of the fabric of America, that attracted his pictorial attention.

Threadbare and partially translucent, Mapplethorpe's flag embodies the tenuousness of America and the outdatedness of its triumphalist narratives. It was for this reason that it was chosen as the last of ten photographs projected fifty feet high onto the façade of the Corcoran Gallery of Art on the evening of 30 June 1989, the night before Mapplethorpe's retrospective, *The Perfect Moment*, was to have opened at the Corcoran. Exiled from the

legitimate space of display on the interior walls of the gallery, Mapplethorpe's work reappeared, like a giant phantasm, to haunt and indict the institution that exiled it.

So what does Mapplethorpe's *American Flag* have to say in this context of our gathering here today? First, the picture says 'no' to a history of American art exclusively devoted to elite forms of painting and sculpture. Second, where Mapplethorpe refused the patriotic fervor and proud nationalism typically summoned by the flag, this conference refuses the exclusions and exceptionalism that structure the stale question of "What is American about American art?" We do not wish to secure the borders and batten down the hatches of Americanism by attending only to native-born artists or by isolating the history of art and visual culture in the United States from the broader context of the continent or the hemisphere, or from the global exchanges of which American art has always been part.

This conference proposes a 'new Americanism' that invites alternative methods of interpretation and modes of writing, experiments in scholarly description and curatorial display, and a willingness to step outside conventional protocols and intellectual paradigms. We want to open the field to images, objects, and histories that lie beyond (or below) the reach of traditional scholarly practice. In announcing the 'ends of American art,' we hope over the next two days to forge a place from which to begin again.

—Richard Meyer

PHOTOGRAPH CREDITS

Photograph courtesy of Farm Security Administration, Office of War Information Photograph Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, DC: 1.1

Photograph courtesy of Fran Violich Collection, Visual Resources Center, College of Environmental Design, UC Berkeley: 1.2

Photograph courtesy of Sirlin Studios: 1.3

Photograph by Marci Muhlestein Clark: 1.4

Photograph courtesy of Office for Emergency Management, Office of War Information, Domestic Operations Branch, News Bureau, National Archives, Washington, DC: 2.1

Photograph courtesy of Office for Emergency Management, Office of War Information, Domestic Operations Branch, News Bureau, National Archives, Washington, DC: 2.2

© Cornell Capa/Magnum Photos: 2.3

Photographs courtesy of EBONY Media Operations, LLC, All rights reserved: 2.4

Photographs courtesy of Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery, New York: cover, AP1.1

Photographs courtesy of the Fine Arts Archive at the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb: 3.1, 3.2

Photography courtesy of Marinko Sudac Collection, Zagreb: 3.3

Photograph courtesy of Marta Minujin: 3.4

Reproduced with permission of Eduardo Costa: 3.5

© Andrea Geyer and Sharon Hayes: AP2.1

Photograph courtesy of Archive Ugo La Pietra, Milan: 4.1

Photograph courtesy of Adolfo Natalini/Superstudio Archive, Florence: 4.2

Photograph courtesy of *Casabella*: 4.3

Photographs Courtesy of Franco Raggi and *Casabella*, Milan: 4.4, 4.7, 4.8

Photographs courtesy of 9999 Archive Carlo Caldini, Florence: 4.5, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12

Photograph courtesy of Archive Ugo La Pietra, Milan: 4.6

Photograph courtesy of Archive Riccardo Dalisi, Naples: 4.9

Photographs courtesy of the artists: AP3.1, AP3.2, AP3.3

Photograph by Jeffrey Sturges; Courtesy of Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York: 5.1

Photograph courtesy of Kulik KwieKulik Foundation: 5.2

© Courtesy of the Dennis Oppenheim Estate: 5.3, 5.4

© Ulrike Rosenbach/Bildkunst Bonn: 5.5

Photograph courtesy of Group Material and Four Corners Books: 6.1

Photograph courtesy of the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Lucy R. Lippard papers, 1930s-2010, bulk, 1960s-1990: 6.2

© Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation. Used by permission: A.1