

The role of the artist in a world of imminent breakdown

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Socially Engaged Participatory Practice

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‘Industrial transformation turned out to be a bubble of promise followed by lost livelihoods and damaged landscapes.

...capitalism entangles us with ideas of progress and with the spread of techniques of alienation that turn both humans and other beings into resources.’

Anna Tsing Lowenhaupt, *Mushroom at the end of the world: On the possibility of life in capitalist ruins*

SUSTAINABILITY

How to (re)define or (re)appropriate sustainability?

What is the role of the artist in this context, in relation to sustainability?

What does it mean for me, and in the context of my work?

Exploring triggers of displacement.

Working with participatory methods:

Photographic portraiture

Social actions

The aim:

Destabilize power relationships

Organise

Highlight the capacity of community to self-organise

Change stereotypes (culture)

Build confidence









The Roles We Play

Recognising the Contribution
of People in Poverty







Coming back to the questions:

How would you re-define or re-appropriate sustainability?

What is the role of the artist in this context, in relation to sustainability?

What does it mean for you, and in the context of your work?



Home from Home

photos by Eva Sajovic
texts by Sarah Butler









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ELEPHANT'S TRUMPET

Elephant's Trumpet is a collaboratively produced community newspaper that aims to organise, promote and share resources, ideas and concerns about Elephant & Castle shopping centre.

It brings together the voices of traders, local organisations, residents and users of the shopping centre in mutual support and solidarity, and campaigns for the communities that belong there.

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PROMOTE
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SEPTEMBER 2019 DEMOLITION DATE

Just before last Christmas the shopping centre owners, Delancey put forward a planning application to Southwark Council for the demolition and redevelopment of the shopping centre. Southwark Council will now decide whether or not to give Delancey permission for the redevelopment. It has said it will probably do so before the end of the year.

The application covers not just the shopping centre but the London College of Communication (LCC). This would also be demolished if permission is given. New shops, cafes, restaurants, bars, offices and nearly a thousand new homes are proposed for both sites. A new cinema, music venue and leisure facilities are also promised, along with a new entrance to the Northern line tube.

Delancey proposes to begin the redevelopment on the shopping centre site in September 2019, finishing in October 2014. Work would begin on the LCC site in June 2023, lasting until Sept 2027. People have been talking about the redevelopment of the shopping centre for many years and some are relieved that it now

appears to be happening. But nothing is decided yet and there are at least three big problems with Delancey's proposal.

First, Delancey's proposals for helping the shopping centre traders are not good enough. A business advisor, Tree Shepherd has been appointed, but other proposals, such as a 'relocation fund' are vague. There is also a lack of other premises for traders to move into and Delancey's proposals for affordable retail space, let at below market rates, are also poor. This should be 10% of the whole amount, Delancey is only offering 5%.

Finally, Delancey has not included any social rented housing in the housing it proposes to build. There are three good reasons for Southwark Council to reject Delancey's planning application. They break the rules for new developments.

In the meantime local people and traders have made over two hundred objections to Delancey's current plans. You can make an objection or comment yourself through this link below.

www.35percent.org/uptotheelephant/

TRADER'S DEPUTATION TO THE COUNCIL

Shopping centre traders made their case for practical support during the redevelopment of the

centre at a meeting of Southwark Council's Executive Committee. *Story continues on the next page*

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ISSUE 2

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Development dates, planning applications and more 1-4

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SHOPPING CENTRE DECISION DAY

DELANCEY'S PROPOSALS FOR THE NEW SHOPPING CENTRE - LATEST

Delancey's plan for the demolition of the shopping centre has been temporarily stopped in its tracks by a furious backlash from the local community.

Delancey's planning application was due to be considered on 18 December by Southwark Council, but was postponed until 16 January after local traders complained that it was too close to Christmas. The traders were joined by local councillors, centre-users and staff and students from the London College of Communication. Southwark Council was bombarded with objections.

Everyone was outraged by the attempt to sneak the highly controversial application through a meeting that traders and their supporters could not attend.

A report about the application prepared for the meeting gives all the details of Delancey's plans. The report has been removed from the Council website, but still can tell us what the Council makes of Delancey's proposals. It recommends approving the application, but shows that Delancey's proposals breaks many of Southwark's planning rules.

On the demolition of the shopping centre the report says:

'The Charlie Chaplin Pub, the dentist and Davis, the newsagent, alongside the Connet Cinema, will all be knocked down.

'Delancey want to demolish the premises in Arches 6 and 7, but have no agreement for this from their owners Network Rail.

'Traders are right to think the shopping centre was being run down to prepare for demolition. It will take nearly 10 years for the development to be completed.

'The centre might not be demolished because Delancey has not yet got any funding for the development and still has to remove all the leaseholders.

The report also gives details the new shopping centre that Delancey wants to build:

'There will be very little increase in the amount of retail floorspace in the new centre.

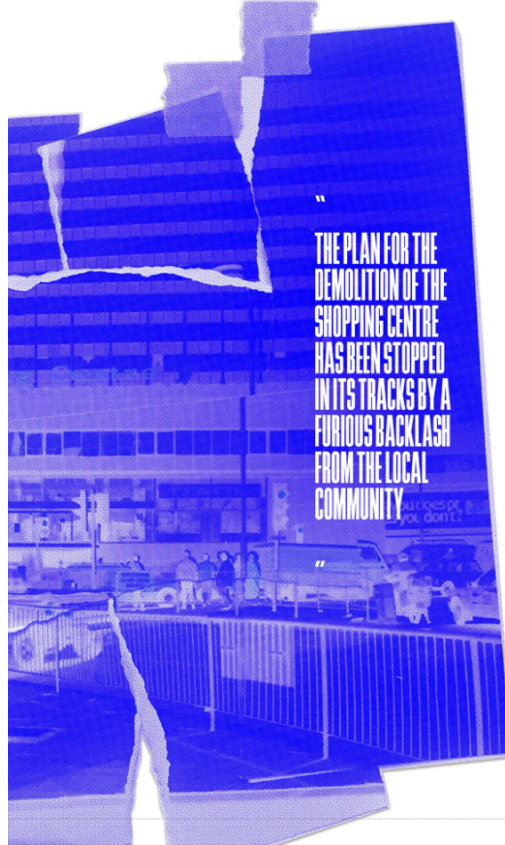
'Only half the required affordable retail units would be provided. Delancey has not given any explanation for this. Instead it wants pay Southwark £753,000, but this still breaks planning rules.

'There will be less leisure use space.

'There will be 36% affordable housing, but only 33 'social rented' homes, the cheapest with rent of £160pw and only on 3-year tenancies.

'There will be 979 homes and all will be rented, none for sale, breaking another Southwark planning rule.

Story continues on the next page







When is something not sustainable anymore?

What is the relationship between sustainability and making? Should we continue to make, should we stop making, is making of any use? Or should we be thinking about, and making in different ways?

‘Precarity is the condition of being vulnerable to others. Unpredictable encounters transform us; we are not in control, even of ourselves.’

Anna Tsing Lowenhaupt, *Mushroom at the end of the world: On the possibility of life in capitalist ruins*





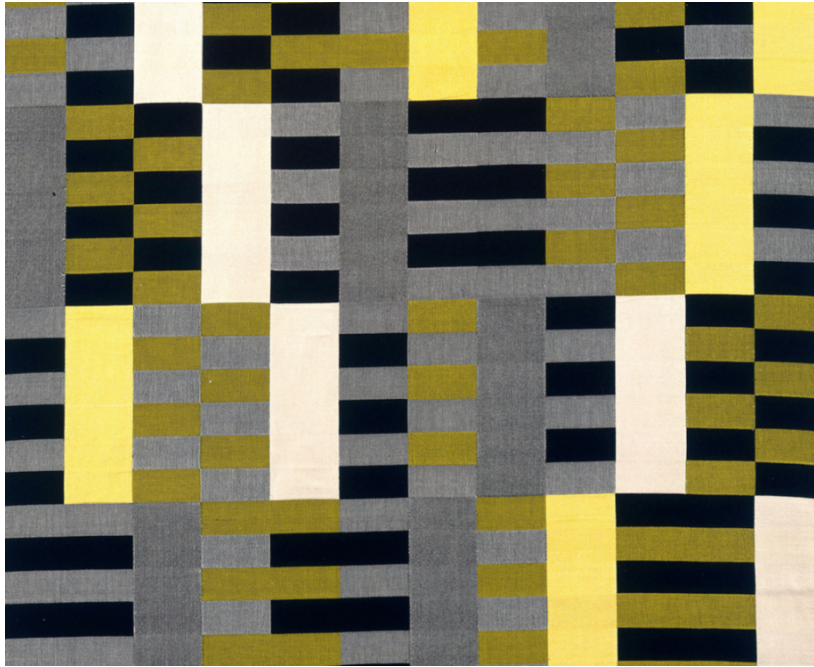
'Why do we make things? Why do we choose the spiritually, emotionally, and physically demanding work of bringing new objects into the world with creativity and skill?

*Through considering the work of my own hands, through the practical education of a life in craft, and through the shared experience of others – all seem to lead back to one fundamental truth: **we practice contemporary craft as a process of self-transformation.** Why this should be so and what its ramifications are, not only for craft and other creative fields, but **also for understanding our own humanity.**'*

Peter Korn, *Why we make things and why it matters?*

‘We touch things to assure ourselves of reality.’

Anni Albers, *On Weaving*



Anni Albers in her studio





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‘By the mid twentieth century the concept of the shaman had been transformed into a metaphor for the artist; the artist is now identified as someone on the edge of madness who can ascend or descend into realms of unconsciousness unavailable to others and bring back gifts for the community in the form of works of art’

Esther Pasztory

By the mid 20th century the politics of work transmuted into the politics of self transformation..

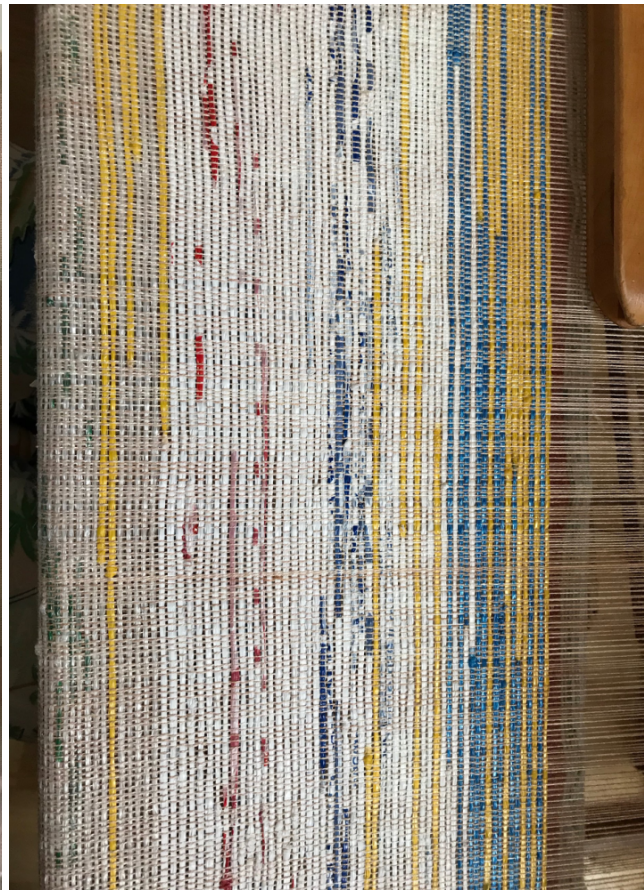
How can we make in more sustainable and self-sufficient ways, using, for instance what we can grow ourselves? To transform ourselves and impact on others. Do we have a responsibility to do that in the context of climate breakdown?











What other questions emerge?

What does it mean to 'live outside the system', to be self-sufficient, or self-sustaining? What does it take? Is that what we should be doing or striving towards? Or should we instead be working with or within the system to change it? Is the kind of detachment from 'the system' of capitalist production and consumption productive or counter-productive?