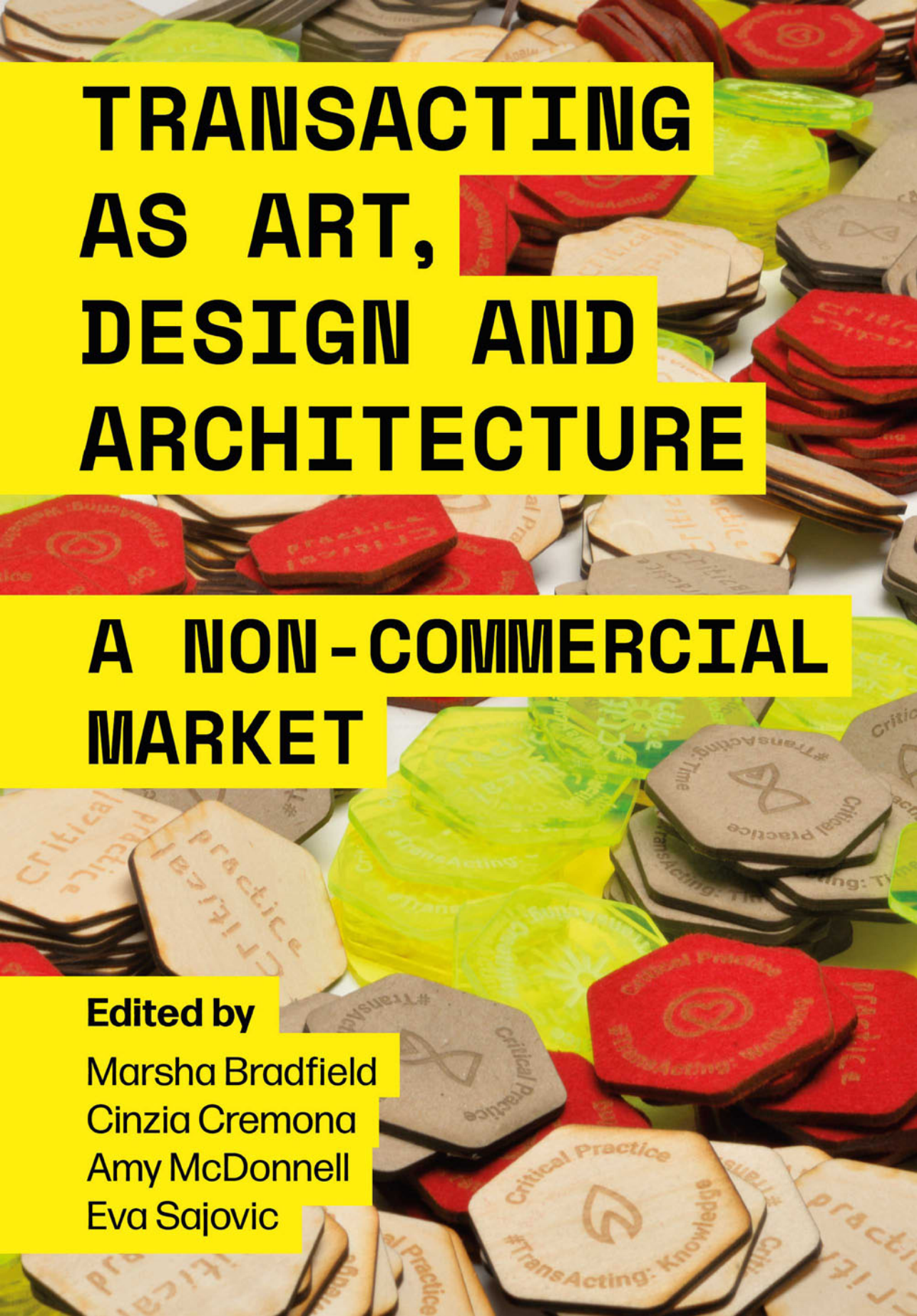

TRANSACTING AS ART, DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE

A NON-COMMERCIAL MARKET

Edited by

Marsha Bradfield
Cinzia Cremona
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With prismatic effect, this anthology spans art, design and architecture by refracting a single project. *#TransActing: A Market of Values* (henceforth *TransActing*) was a non-commercial pop-up market organized by Critical Practice in central London that took place in July 2015. We would like to thank all those involved, including the stallholders, both for their contributions to the market and their texts which comprise the section 'Stallholders' reflections'.

As a research output, this anthology depends on the articles that serve to contextualize and elaborate *TransActing*. To the contributors of these texts, we express our deep appreciation. This also extends to Verina Gfader for her invaluable help in commissioning three of these texts on behalf of Critical Practice. These do important work in establishing the collection's common view that culture plays an integral role in how markets broker the values that they organize and produce.

TransActing as a project marked the culmination of five years of practice-based research, a sustained and dynamic season that brought together builds, cycle rides, hacks, seminars, screenings, walks, workshops, unconferences and other formats and events led by many generous and inspirational practitioners.

This programming was made possible thanks to support from Malcolm Quinn, associate dean of research and director of Camberwell, Chelsea, Wimbledon Graduate School (renamed Research at Camberwell, Chelsea, Wimbledon Colleges of Arts in 2018). Quinn's foreword to this publication exemplifies his long and strong support for Critical Practice and his regard for the cluster's work as vital to the rich research culture of the University of the Arts London.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support that *TransActing* received from Arts Council England and University of the Arts London. The administrative team of Research at Chelsea College of Arts – Claire Mokrauer-Madden, Gabriele Grigorjevaite, Ellie Pitkin, Wendy Short and Nick Tatchell – will always have a special place in our hearts. Furthermore, *TransActing* coalesced as the central project of Marsha Bradfield's postdoctoral fellowship (2013–15 based at Chelsea College of Arts). Without this opportunity, neither the market nor this publication would have been realized with such ambition. Critical Practice has also been core to Neil Cummings's research as professor of theory and practice in fine art based at Chelsea College of Arts. Words cannot express our sincerest thanks for his constant nurturing, organizing, mentoring, convening, provoking, advocating and so much more.

Many of us in Critical Practice resolutely identify with a generation of practice-based researchers whose ways of doing and being coalesced at Camberwell, Chelsea, Wimbledon Graduate School between 2005 and 2015. The personal and professional generosity of David Cross, Neil Cummings, Mary Anne Francis, Hayley Newman, Malcolm Quinn, Stephen Scrivener and others was indispensable to this rigorous and relevant community of practice.

Typifying the mixed economy that sustains Critical Practice, the paid labour of *TransActing* was dwarfed by unpaid and invisible work. Like most not-for-profit initiatives – and many for-profit ones too – our efforts rely on terrific good will, unbridled generosity and a complex economy of favours where we find ourselves perpetually in debt to each other. We would also like to express our deepest gratitude to all those who pitched in to help across *TransActing*'s many phases. Special mention goes to our collaborators Andrew Belfield, Andreas Lang, Carlotta Novella and other members of public works, the London-based art and design practice that collaborated with Critical Practice to develop the stall architecture and infrastructure.

FOREWORD

MALCOLM QUINN

#TransActing: A Market of Values was a collective work of art and one of a series of artistic practices that have taken place under the rubric of Critical Practice Research Cluster, which continues to demonstrate the importance of artistic research in the best and most meaningful sense of this term. The publication which has been developed from it shows us how markets first appeared within the aegis of traditions and social practices that determined their character, but also reveals that what we now call 'the market' determines the character of those same social practices. One of the social practices that is determined by the abstraction of 'the market' is the practice of art, in which all the apparatuses of scholarship, curation and exhibition feed into the price of art on the market.

No photograph of the interactions and exchanges that occurred during *TransActing* can convey the importance of an event that, firstly, managed to contain multiple frameworks of evaluation within a single space on a single day and secondly, brought the market into culture rather than taking culture to the market. *TransActing* offered something very different from our normal experience of using a single framework of evaluation across multiple sites on successive days. If I buy a magazine at the railway station on Friday, a pair of jeans at the shopping mall on Saturday and an avocado at the farmer's market on Sunday, I am bound by the laws of price at all times and in all places, even though I might like to think that the farmer's market is a more congenial and human-centred environment than the shopping mall. If, on the other hand, I negotiated my purchase of the newspaper, wheedled

the acquisition of my jeans and cajoled the avocado from the stall-holder, I would necessarily become more conscious of the social differences between negotiating, wheedling and cajoling than the prices that myself and the seller agreed upon. If all that negotiating, wheedling and cajoling happened in the same place on the same day, I might begin to experience an agoraphilia that would differ sharply from the agoraphobia promoted by the idea of 'contactless' shopping. Contactless shopping promotes a love of the market that is expressed as a fear of actual markets and real human transactions. Although it did not shy away from calculation, *TransActing* refused to link such assessment to a litany of prices. In this way, it showed that culture can love markets without loving and serving a market price. It put us back in touch with the actuality of a market and the reality of peer-to-peer exchange. The publication that has developed from it begins to establish a lexicon, a genealogy and emergent theories for the divergent ways and means of *TransActing* that developed within the *Market of Values*, as well as taking account of the different currencies of time, well-being and knowledge that flowed through it.

PREFACE

MARSHA BRADFIELD

This publication has been a long time in coming. So much has happened since the Editorial Committee first met in the fall of 2015: Brexit; COVID-19; climate crisis; Black Lives Matter; escalating cyber-attacks and online/offline hate; growing political division; rising authoritarianism and widespread civil unrest – not to mention a new space race. These and other chaotic developments are being crushed together in the death grip of what sociologists call the Matthew effect, a term coined by the American sociologist Robert King Merton in 1968. Today many readers will be more familiar with the abbreviated and secularised version of Matthew 25:29: 'The rich get richer and the poor get poorer'.

Faced with this yawning disparity, financial prophets preach strategies to get on and stay on the right side of this divide. But this is not a book about markets for those seeking get-rich-quick advice. It does not teach a competitive edge for leveraging your personal portfolio or maximising shareholder value. At least not in a conventional capitalist sense.

Transacting as Art, Design and Architecture: A Non-Commercial Market is instead dedicated to all those people who have the courage and conviction to grapple with axiology (the study of value and valuation) at a time when so much we have taken for granted is under review and subject to forces beyond our control. This anthology has been assembled for those who, in their quest for understanding, may bring with them a vexed sense of authorial self-worth and individual agency, a curiosity about the power of art, design and architecture to produce rich and relevant meaning,

and a faith that experimental forms of collaborative cultural production offer viable alternatives to a status quo, especially when this is determined by the prices and profits of capitalism. This book is also for those who want to learn more about the range of values that brings together and holds together the likes of Critical Practice Research Cluster and its expanded network.

This is important because the cluster's heterogeneous value system is foundational to its attempt to practice cultural production through art, design and architecture in ways that are useful further afield. Some of the context and insights offered in this book will resonate with those working at the intersection of social practice and practice-based/led research. For readers new to this area, it will be helpful to acknowledge at the outset the many ambiguities and the incompleteness of work like Critical Practice's. This connects to embracing contradiction as something that must be negotiated but may not be resolved. For instance, holding openness as a core value can make tying off projects like this book sometimes tough.

It is my hope that a little historical perspective will help to put right any misassumptions about what else caused the delay of this publication. In the years of its becoming, which began with an editorial commitment to include the texts and images of as many contributors as possible, our belief in the reach and relevance of this collection never wavered. On occasion, though, our energy waned. When communities like Critical Practice constellate and reconstellate to advance understanding of pressing social issues like our current crisis in axiology and to involve new publics in this effort, we do so not in some dedicated sphere but immersed in life at large. As such we are beholden to a complex context that is saturated with day-to-day drama and competing demands. For sure, my own practice is riven by these challenges. To make sense of them compels me to think with growing care about how value is produced, by who and for whom; and crucially, when this occurs, what makes this value significant and what is the true cost of this creative enterprise. The latter is especially hard to ascertain as many externalities only emerge with time and in response to circumstance.

There is still a tendency to judge artists and other cultural producers for their ability to make commodities instead of making change. My own approach to evaluating the work of Critical Practice is to prioritise the process that propels the cluster's open-ended and inclusive approach. The choices we make and the value system

that guides them should take pride of place. Outputs like this book can only ever offer a partial representation, however polyphonic this may aspire to be. More vital are outcomes like the cluster's ethos. Embodied in *Transacting as Art, Design and Architecture: A Non-Commercial Market*, this creative spirit can be channelled by anyone intent on embracing re-evaluation as an ongoing and dynamic process to support critical change.

I have learned a great deal from working with Critical Practice and from working with the content of this publication. My deepest thanks go to all those involved. May our effort and enthusiasm conjure up more equitable worlds in the making. Above all, this book is a story of a community: a coming together in a joint process of re-evaluation that made so much seem possible.

Marsha Bradfield is the lead editor of this publication and has been a member of Critical Practice since 2006. This preface was written in London on 19 July 2021 (so-called 'Freedom Day' from COVID-19).

INTRODUCTION
TRADING IN SOCIAL GOOD

MARSHA BRADFIELD
CINZIA CREMONA
VERINA GFADER

Public markets are as ancient as they are universal. Zones for civic and other activity, they host buying, selling and socializing. In 2017, the Greater London Authority (GLA) identified around 280 retail markets in the UK's capital city. Some specialize in particular goods and services (antiques, fish, etc.), whilst others offer wares of all sorts. Roughly half are run by local authorities and half are privately operated (GLA 2017a: 34). London's oldest market was also once one of Europe's largest markets. It was located on the site of the Roman forum, not far from where the magnificent Leadenhall Market is today, which dates back to the fourteenth century (GLA 2017a: 33). In recent years, pop-up markets have used flash-retailing to launch trends in fashion, food and more. For London's current mayor, Sadiq Khan, 'London's bustling markets symbolize our openness to the world' (GLA 2017a: 5). Witness the range of goods they trade, the traders who work in these many markets and the diverse communities they serve (GLA 2017a: 13). This makes the health and vibrancy of London's markets essential to the city's status as a hub for international trade.

In the wake of Brexit and its uncertain consequences for the UK's trade relations with the EU and beyond, more questions are raised than are answered. Whilst it is difficult to compare the restructuring of international trade agreements to evaluating the costs and benefits of local markets, tackling the latter may well yield results that are more immediately meaningful for the stakeholders involved. This and growing concerns about the health of high streets (GLA 2017b) helps to account for the founding of London Markets' Board in 2017, the first ever strategic vehicle to oversee the capital's markets (GLA 2017a: 6).

More immediately relevant than *why* this body was established is *what* its formative findings have brought to light. Research like that published in *Understanding London's Markets* (GLA 2017a) broadly chimes with work done on markets by the Institute for Place Management at Manchester Metropolitan University (2015) and, more recently, the Markets 4 People research project through the University of Leeds and the New Economics Foundation (2018–20). As global markets expand and local markets struggle in the face of online shopping, this burgeoning body of research keys into growing awareness that markets generate value that far exceeds economic return. In the shorter term, they are more than just opportunities for employment and consumption; markets are also places for individuals to assemble and interact. In the longer term, markets do more than prime property prices through regeneration and gentrification; they also contribute to a sense of community and place. Simply put, there is growing appreciation for retail and other local markets as generating a much broader and more nuanced range of values, especially those connected to social good.

#TransActing: A Market of Values anticipated this re-evaluation of the market, not through desk or field research but through creative practice. As a culmination, *TransActing* marked the end of five years of collaborative research on value, values, valorization and evaluation that was realized by Critical Practice (discussed below) in association with University of the Arts London. As an event, *TransActing* took place in central London in July of 2015. It is perhaps best described as a 'meta market' because *TransActing* used the market's format (traders/stallholders, stalls and a milling crowd) to evaluate its many and varied benefits as a social form. These include, for instance, the ways in which a market's cultural, locational, inclusive and economic aspects interrelate, with this

nexus being a growing source of interest for research on markets more generally (Watson and Studdert 2006). Only a few of *TransActing*'s sixty plus stalls offered goods or services for sale. The exception being food and drink to be enjoyed onsite and one stall that rented a pitch to sell toys at market price. Most traders were explicitly focused on exploring ideas and practices of evaluation. These were designed to critically reflect on and challenge the growing monoculture of economic value, replete with a meshwork of transactions that may become increasingly abstract but have very real consequences for all the stakeholders involved, the people – human stakeholders – but nonhuman ones too: the environment, the public infrastructure, etc.

By activating *TransActing* as a market, Critical Practice joined an illustrious set of artists who have used the market as a template for creative practices. We can think, for instance, of Surasi Kusolwong's *Market* (1999–present). A popular spectacle on the biennial circuit, *Market* uses music, materials and movement with kaleidoscopic effect to heighten the retail experience. More recently, Kathrin Böhm has deployed the trade show format to explore group exhibition and art as exchange (2019). *Trade Show* comes under the umbrella of the Centre for Plausible Economies and its preoccupation with the economy as a site of artistic intervention (*Company Drinks* 2019). Most iconically, between 1973 and 2012, Martha Rosler toured different iterations of the installation/performance *Meta-Monumental Garage Sale* (1973–ongoing), exploring how 'our cultural and aesthetic transactions' are differently anchored by economic values (Deutsche et al. 2018: 80). Varying selections of second-hand objects filled the flea-market-like stalls and customers were invited to haggle and engage with the potential narratives suggested by the items for sale. Rosler retained authorship of the project and control of the trade. Moreover, transactions were limited by the conventions of 'real world' garage sales.

Instead of competing for sales, the traders in *TransActing* competed for the attention of the milling crowd. Both groups exchanged the local currency made from bespoke coins in wood, felt and other tactile materials, which represented units of time, wellbeing, knowledge and creativity. The stalls were unconventional too: a fablab, organ donation, commoners, a skillshare, bricklaying, an economy of promises, bring your own BBQ food, a speakers' corner – even a kiosk buying tears. As the milling crowd

moved amongst these stands, they transacted into being this non-commercial market as a socio-cultural-spatial-epistemic-economic phenomenon that was above all deeply experiential.

In 'Statement of value for London's markets' (featured in the report, *Understanding London's Markets*), the GLA identifies the 'social value' of markets as residing with their 'good growth'. This includes the environmental sustainability of their trade as well as the distribution of benefit amongst all the markets' stakeholders (GLA 2017a: 13). According to the GLA, the benefits of this value/growth in combination are most immediately dispersed across three key aspects of markets: their people, their place and their prosperity. Using these same categories, this introduction describes *TransActing* in order to locate it as art and design research that is part of the expanding body of interdisciplinary work on the social and other values that markets produce.

People

'People before profit' could well be the battle cry of those who convened *TransActing*, Critical Practice Research Cluster. Critical Practice is an international network of artists, designers, curators, educators, academics and other researchers who share a commitment to the critical practice of art, its organization and its education as public goods. The cluster recognizes that governance emerges whenever the deliberate interactions amongst people are organized. Critical Practice strives to be an open organization and to make all its decisions, processes and production accessible and public. Agendas, minutes, budgets and decision-making processes are posted online for public scrutiny at criticalpracticechelsea.org.

Critical Practice was established in London in 2005 by recent graduates and others affiliated with Chelsea College of Arts, a constituent college of University of the Arts London (UAL). At the time of writing, members of Critical Practice range in experience from college freshers to esteemed professors. In fact, one of the defining qualities of this open organization is that its diverse membership spans students, faculty and staff of UAL, as well as those without any university affiliation, from UAL or otherwise, many of whom came to art and design later in life.

The growing diversity of genders notwithstanding, art schools seem to attract more female than male students. Seventy-five per cent of UAL's student body of 18,000 recently self-identified as female (UAL 2017: 7). Despite this (or perhaps because of it), the founders of Critical Practice were all male (see 'Partial self-portrait' in this anthology). But this soon changed and for more than a decade, the gender balance has been roughly fifty-fifty (no records have been kept regarding members who identify with a gender different from that assigned to them at birth).

Most members of Critical Practice enjoy enough middle-class security to be able to volunteer. More diverse are the members nationalities: American, Austrian, Canadian, Chinese, Egyptian, English, German, Norwegian, Polish, Slovenian, Welsh and others besides (see 'Partial self-portrait of Critical Practice' in this anthology). Furthermore, the experience of the cluster is just as varied. There is a retired medical doctor who also holds a practice-based/led Ph.D.; an artist who has handy experience managing one of London's key food markets; artists whose work is steeped in collaborative practice, a curator with expertise in economics and another who has since gone on to work in political campaigning, amongst others.

Given this diversity, it should come as no surprise that the cluster has a track record for creating and curating interdisciplinary platforms that host heterogeneous practices. The one featured in this legacy publication, *TransActing*, was a vivid case in point. It showcased artists, designers, economists, civil-society groups, academics, ecologists, activists and others (see 'Stallholders' reflections' in this anthology for a more detailed account).

Long before all the participants were confirmed, plans were afoot to meaningfully host and effectively attract a diverse public. Every market's lifeblood, this throng creates and circulates value as its members interact with stallholders and each other.

Several publics composed *TransActing*'s milling crowd, such as the local residents of Millbank, the Westminster neighbourhood where *TransActing* took place. Some had observed Critical Practice and its collaborators (including the critical design practice, public works) building the infrastructure on the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground at Chelsea College of Arts in the weeks preceding market day. Other locals had learnt of *TransActing* from flyers pushed through their letter flaps. For many people who live and work in the

surrounding area of Millbank, this was the first time they had been invited on campus in the ten years that Chelsea had called this neighbourhood home, having moved there in 2005.

Other visitors to *TransActing*, especially those on their way to Tate Britain next door, moved through the market by following an age-old right of way cutting diagonally across the Parade Ground as a shortcut. The value of the paintings, sculptures and other artworks on display at Tate is well established as part of the UK's national collection. *TransActing* featured socially engaged practices that variously explored how values are produced and brokered by the marketplace. The proximity of the market to the museum helped to highlight the overlapping but also contrasting value systems of these socio-cultural structures.

Some enthusiasts of critical contemporary art came to the market for stalls run by specific artists or other cultural producers. More than one of these expert visitors expressed their appreciation for *TransActing* as a 'truly alternative' art fair. It was alternative not because it was running in parallel with a similar but more commercial event (as is often the case, for instance, with critical activity that parallels Frieze, an annual international art fair that takes place in London's Regent's Park). What made *TransActing* alternative was that it looked, smelled and tasted like a market and used art as a space for exchange but without selling it. *TransActing* was both an art market and opposite of the art market, at least as a place for acquiring paintings, sculptures and the works.

One of *TransActing*'s largest publics came from London' art schools, especially the constituent colleges of UAL, including Chelsea College of Arts where the market took place. Many of us working in higher education struggle with the way teaching and learning are increasingly pitched as commodities for sale. This does not set students up for success by negating the obvious but important fact that knowledge acquisition occurs in the body and the mind and between them. Insight and understanding are hard won through experience and critical engagement. Instead of an education fair pitching the student journey as a future-oriented and abstract proposition, *TransActing* offered rich and complex forms of experience-based learning in the here and now. Each stall was a unique opportunity to co-produce knowledge through discussion and further types of exchange between the stallholders and members of the public (see 'Stallholders' reflections' in this anthology).

Place

There is ample research on the value of markets to placemaking and much of it connects with their slippery role in regeneration and gentrification. Markets are inclusive because by definition they are free to enter and open to all to visit (GLA 2017a: 27). But as such, they can also generate exclusive value and exclusive neighbourhoods when markets push up the price of property and push out the very people – local residents and traders – who created this value. This reflects the changing relationships that markets have with the communities they serve. It also speaks to the way social and other forms of collective value are extracted and privatized.

Changing fortunes like these are not of course unique to markets. Higher education also moves in complex cycles that are riven with competing values, many of them stretching between the interests of the market and those of the state (Nowotny 2011: xxv). In learning for art and design, recent trends include collaboration and/as social practice on the one hand; and on the other, practice-based and practice-led research. These developments contest the romantic ideal that making art is first and foremost an act of individualized self-expression. In 2015, the same year as *TransActing*, the art, architecture, design collective Assemble won the Turner Prize. This was only the second time this prestigious award had been given to more than one person and the first time it had gone to an architecture and design studio. Something that sets Assemble and Critical Practice apart are their interdisciplinary moves. If Assemble moved the built environment into art and vice versa, Critical Practice moved art, architecture and design research into a blurred and shared space that was, literally, outside and in public view.

TransActing's infrastructure – its stalls – were constructed *en plein air* on the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground. Dubbed 'the gallery without walls' (Cleary 2008: n.pag.), this 3500 square meter site was reconditioned in the noughties as the premier showcase for public sculpture in central London but it remains vacant most of the time. This changed for several weeks in late June and early July of 2015; the Parade Ground was transformed from something to be crossed to arrive at college or Tate Britain into a destination in its own right.

Figure 0.1: Under construction – the stall infrastructure for *TransActing* (July 2015, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

The site began to buzz – literally – when Critical Practice set up shop, with the hum of power saws cutting up wood to make the bespoke stalls with upcycled materials using the Italian designer Enzo Mari's principle of autoprogettazione (see 'Glossary' and 'Taking Enzo to market: Open stalls' in this anthology for more information). In the days that followed, the stalls proliferated, resembling a swarm of mysterious stick insects, especially when attracting interest from helicopters hovering above. And then on market day, *TransActing* welcomed a thronging crowd of a 1000 visitors, give or take. They participated, either knowingly or unknowingly, in an exquisitely choreographed performance of informality as they moved, here and there, amongst the stalls, engaging in diverse acts of window shopping without windows. After market day, traces lingered with purpose. Stalls became benches and tables to provide much-needed public furniture, encouraging passers-by to spend time in the Parade Ground.

How did this programme of placemaking happen? The obvious but also most important answer is that it happened with a lot of help. In addition to public works, the critical design practice that led on the market's infrastructure, many stallholders collaborated with Critical

Practice on the build. Whilst the cluster is generally associated with Fine Art at Chelsea College of Arts, it often collaborates with other parts of the university. Students on the Interior and Spatial Design courses at Chelsea College of Arts also rolled up their sleeves to help with *TransActing*. Many were delighted to be building something that is subject to natural laws instead of the computational ones of virtual space. Whilst there are myriad benefits to design and fine art students working together on placemaking activities as well as other collaborative and interdisciplinary projects, an important one relates to the changing nature of work and how it is forging hybrid subjectivities that span individuals and groups. To keep pace with the job market's dynamic demands, cultural producers must engage in an ongoing programme of learning after higher education, an enterprise that increasingly unfolds through peer-to-peer exchange on projects and as part of teams (Nowotny 2011: xx–xxiii).

The sheer scale of *TransActing* demonstrates its ambition, outstripping what any one person could produce on their own. Working together can also promote experimentation when both the risk and reward are distributed amongst those involved. At the same time, cultural producers *qua* social commentators are uniquely placed to educate others about the complexity and implications of transformation when they are accustomed to experiencing this through their own work. In the case of *TransActing*, and in keeping with the critical practice of the cluster, this involved using the public market as a cultural form to activate public space. Moreover, and importantly, *TransActing* aimed to activate its publics by firing their imagination and sense of wonder and possibility. As the market convened heterogeneous practices to question existing systems of evaluation and actively produce new ones, a feeling of excited belonging began to emerge. This was not so much with reference to place as a geographical location – Chelsea College of Arts, UAL, London or the even the UK. It was closer to a sense of belonging – of finding one's place – in an unfinished and transformational project that was so much greater than the people involved, their practices, or *TransActing* as a one-day event.

Prosperity

It is striking that the GLA's report on markets explores loss to illuminate prosperity, specifically the loss of ageing traders and the barriers to recruiting new ones (GLA 2017a: 106). One of the recommendations of this research for mitigating these risks to the sustainability of local markets is to reframe – or perhaps refresh – their function by shifting it away from the market as a zone for buying and selling and towards it as a laboratory or studio for innovation:

> Markets are the original business incubators and as accessible open workspace they offer a unique, low-risk opportunity for people to test business ideas and learn new skills; they can provide the initial step into employment and open routes to different types of work. (GLA 2017a: 49)

As interfaces for learning through practice and for testing and experimenting, markets align with research, which has in recent decades been significantly broadened in Europe under the Bologna Process to include the disciplines of art and design.

This comes onto the prosperity that is made possible when art is unhooked from the impoverished sense of art for art's sake as the only purpose of art. In the case of art as research, art's expansion as an epistemic enterprise (i.e. that it produces new knowledge) is as exciting as it is controversial. Though not the place to explore this at length, it is worth observing Helga Nowotny's wise insight that 'productive contestations are also the defining characteristic of any significant innovative enterprise' (2011: xvii). In the case of Critical Practice, the central 'contestation' often relates to disseminating the sensuous experience of working with the cluster – of doing Critical Practice – with this enacted through its creative practices and embodied in its artistic publications, objects and events. The challenge being: the content of this experience can elude direct access. It is resistant to being captured and conveyed through language. There is nothing, however, especially unique about this conundrum.

Henk Borgdorff is certainly not the first to nuance this point as follows: 'The subject of the research is partly the *je ne sais quoi* of artistic research, aesthetic experience; as a matter of principle, it

refuses every explanatory gaze' (2011: 47). Yet for Critical Practice, to leave art stuck here is to reinvigorate the myth of its autonomy by excluding art from participating in and contributing to other spheres of life, including research. Ergo the sense of research that Critical Practice works through, works for and works into (Frayling 1993) seeks to overcome this exclusion by bridging various perspectives, some more rigorously thought through and others more tacit, embedded in the cluster's methods. Borgdorff's thinking is helpful here when he highlights two perspectives in particular as prime to cultural production as research (2011: 61).

The first of these is the constructivist perspective: turning imagination into reality through experiments. This is non-representational when instead of *representing* something, this perspective seeks to *present* it (Borgdorff 2011: 61). *TransActing*, for instance, was not a symbol of a market. It *was* a market. Research generated through a constructivist perspective can often be described as applied. It is also often visionary, because in Bordorff's understanding it is about 'making the world into what it could be' (2011: 61). This manifested in *TransActing* as a community of evaluation that was assembled by the market's infrastructure and given voice through the stallholders' contributions. Central here was imagining a world that gives social value – care, trust, generosity, loyalty – pride of place (see 'Stallholders' reflections' in this anthology). Critical Practice is necessarily driven by a constructivist perspective with the cluster prioritizing critical practice as a public good. Yet this alone fails to capture the rich experience of its work or why this qualifies as research.

For Borgdorff, plumbing the experiential aspects of creative practice in the service of research involves a hermeneutic perspective. This interpretive revelation is also phenomenological when art not only draws out our familiarity with the world and our distance from it but also critically discloses the world as it is, whilst proposing what the world might be (Borgdorff 2011: 60–61). Whilst Borgdorff describes this as the 'realism' of artistic research (2011: 61), Critical Practice regards it as closer to 'apprehension', with this understood as the telos of art as an epistemic enterprise. This is in keeping with the influence of Stephen Scrivener; an expert in research in art and design through practice, he charged up Research at Chelsea College of Arts in the formative years of Critical Practice. In Scrivener's influential view, which chimes with Borgdorff's, art

as research is an 'original creation undertaken in order to generate novel apprehension' (2002). This goes to the heart of *TransActing* as collaborative practice-based/led research that challenges us to differently apprehend the market as a social form.

By now it should be clear as far as Critical Practice is concerned, the act of making and brandishing a placard that says, 'All markets are bad!' is preposterous. This is not only because doing so denies the myriad ways the very fabric of contemporary life makes us complicit in reproducing market structures. It is also because this act alone can leave us, well, brandishing a placard. For those in Critical Practice, one of the obvious and immediate problems of this is captured by Carol Becker when, echoing Borgdorff and Scrivener, she asserts that if we settle for what exists and assume it is inevitable, 'there is no space for art' (2012: 68). Instead of dispensing with markets, the critical provocation is to reclaim their form to challenge their increasingly singular function. This novel apprehension was at the heart of *TransActing* as research, prompting it to explore the market's potential through alternative forms of exchange.

In keeping with the cluster's ethos and approach to project making, *TransActing* was a platform: an opportunity to both work with and showcase the critical practice of others. From this perspective, the event was conceived in the first instance for the benefit of the organizers and the participants themselves. Together, they aimed to fulfill the first of Critical Practice's articles of association: 'We will explore the field of cultural production as a site of resistance to the logic, power and values of the ideology of a competitive market – Our political economy' (2018: n.pag.).

This and the cluster's other aims and objectives state the political and philosophical values of Critical Practice. *TransActing* embodied and materialized these values in a sharable performative manner by questioning and mapping the value transacted in daily, artistic, social and economic practices. For *TransActing*, the value of art resides with its capacity to grasp complex conglomerations of value(s). This is performative, which is to say it produces additional and potentially different value(s). This emphasis on production foregrounds art as a social process in addition to being an outcome. By developing this particular kind of critical practice, *TransActing* engaged with the ways in which the economies of art practice shape and impact the wider social, cultural and financial context to the extent that they have a performative effect. At the

same time, *TransActing* drew attention to art – replete with its complex codes of appreciation – as purpose-built for examining systems of value more generally. In the season of research leading up to *TransActing*, and in the event itself, this examination spanned numerous markets, amongst them the education market, the primary and secondary markets of art, the creative industries, the knowledge economy, the economies of health, gentrification and wellbeing to name a few.

Overview of this anthology

This legacy publication is part manual, part document, part critical and contextual reflection. A combination of practical and theoretical writing, it presents hard-won insights from the perspective of practice-based/led and other researchers on reclaiming the market as a technology for shared reflection through heterogeneous exchange. The articles featured here are marked by disparate sensibilities, disciplines, desires, aspirations and concerns that chime with those of Critical Practice. The publication mirrors the processes of the cluster itself and of *TransActing*. Concepts and perspectives emerge in conversations, dialogues, analyses, portraits and reflections to be experienced, exchanged and metabolized together. No single text definitively introduces or reports on *TransActing* as a process or as an event. This unorthodox approach to a legacy publication fulfils a number of the purposes that a smooth narrative and direct critical analysis would not. Three texts in particular showcase alternative methodologies and structural approaches – 'Partial self-portrait of Critical Practice', 'Stallholders' reflections' and 'Taking Enzo to market: Open stalls'.

Introduced by Marsha Bradfield but collectively authored by the cluster, 'Partial self-portrait of Critical Practice' is a timeline. This descriptive instrument tracks a trajectory of research and production by charting the amassing activity of the cluster like pencil lines marking growth spurts on the kitchen door frame. As a method for practice-based/led research, this tool traces the events that have constituted and transformed Critical Practice as well as the uneven flow of members, decision-making and intensity of the cluster's

research activities. It offers one of many possible narratives of how value, values, valorization and evaluation became leitmotifs over the cluster's first decade of practice. The timeline starts in 2004 to anticipate the founding of Critical Practice in 2005. After describing the cluster's early activity, the chronology traces the long season of value-related research (2010–15) that led the cluster to *TransActing* as a project (2013–15). A list of the people who at one time or another have been part of Critical Practice caps off the self-portrait to acknowledge the cluster's extraordinary membership.

The next section, 'Stallholders' reflections', offers the market's participants the opportunity to voice their own positions in print to mirror the eclectic complexity of the original event. It also offers the reader the freedom of 'walking through' the pages in a way that evokes physically moving through the concourse during *TransActing*. In this way, the reader can act as editor, deciding to give more time and attention to one voice and not another, once again accepting the offer to transact. 'Stallholders' reflections' considers *TransActing* as a one-day event by re-assembling the market in textual and visual form, conjuring it up as a community of evaluation. Reflections and images provided by the stallholders evoke moments and issues that were particularly meaningful for those involved. Members of Critical Practice complement these with brief descriptions of the stalls whose holders were unable to provide their own voice. This section is introduced by Amy McDonnell's analysis of the market as a social technology.

In a similar vein, 'Taking Enzo to market: Open stalls' enacts in print an instance of the combination of eclectic methodologies that Critical Practice adopts in its day-to-day workings and project making. This practical text by Neil Cummings and Andreas Lang lays bare the collaborative procedures and critical operations that contribute to the final configuration of the event. As is well known, accounts of practice-based/led research can be flattened by theory when the materiality and specificity of processes give way to conceptual insight that can be more easily generalized. The list of practical questions that opens the text reveals consideration for care, hospitality, sustainability, ethics, inclusivity, thus reflecting the dynamics of diverse systems of evaluation enacted in practice. As is in the nature of practice-based/led research, this account leads to knowledge that has operational and critical significance for an understanding of the project. As a textual approach, it resists the

Figure 0.2: Making the market in public. From the left: Angela Hodgson-Teall, Elena Cologni, Claire Mokrauer-Madden and Metod Blejec (July 2015, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

common practice in academic, critical and analytical work to hide these processes and give centre stage to posthumous narratives of logical and coherent progress.

We can of course recognize the unresolved mess that is typically othered by research outputs in our lived experience. If anything is symptomatic of the contested post-post-capitalist sphere where 'goods' become false agents, with people being somewhat drawn into a plot of insecurities, isolation and commerce, it may be precisely the continuing call for participating in economic life. By demand, capitalism is '"a sphere of circulation" – literally, a super-market – which brings to mind Henri Lefebvre's statement, that capitalism, like an artificial intelligence, has learned to survive its crisis through the consumption and production of social space' (Andreasen and Larsen 2012: 24).

Survival through flexibility, specifically organizational and interpersonal flexibility, is something Marsha Bradfield explores as she traces value beyond econometrics as a long-standing preoccupation of Critical Practice. Taking its tenth anniversary as her departure point, Bradfield reflects on the cluster's work, including its self-organization and its projects, amongst them the four markets convened by Critical Practice to date. This opens the subsequent

section of this publication, which is composed of commissioned articles. These discussions use dialogue, narrative and analysis to contextualize the market from cultural, historical, sociological, philosophical, political and other angles. Latent in this collection of texts is the desire to produce social space via non-monetary exchange that is free of austerity and other forms of inequality.

Kuba Szreder draws on the feminist economics of J. K. Graham-Gibson to liken the market to an iceberg. The vast majority of transactions took place below the surface, behind the scenes of the project. Szreder presents *TransActing* as a community economy that seeks to resist the managerial framing of art, research and education. Nicholas Temple uses architectural theory (past and present) to trace the transforming nature of the public market: from nourishing and celebratory places for collective participation and memory to today's amnesic environments of shopping malls. Temple compares the historical intertwining of money, trade and religion to the sterility of today's virtual transactions.

The poverty of this predicament contrasts with the richness of Emily Rosamond's account of a 'big felt coin', an instance of *TransActing*'s alternative currency, as it circulates. This serves as a point of departure and return for reflecting on the effect of markets as socially engaged art practice, touching on ways this overlaps with but also diverges from the financialized market. A conversation between Andrea Phillips and Verina Gfader speaks to key dynamics within the art market and/or the markets of art. Drawing on her collaborative research project (*Aesthetic and Economic Impact of the Art Market* [2010–ongoing]), Phillips identifies artistic practices concerned with value (SUPERFLEX, Vermeir and Heiremans and others), hinting at the values of artistic knowledge.

Stevphen Shukaitis's manifesto-type notes imagine publishing as much more than an apparatus for distributing truth claims. He proposes that publishing should actively support the co-production of meaning as a dynamic and distributed social process. The penultimate text in this collection considers *TransActing* as a built environment. Amy McDonnell and Eva Sajovic explore how the structures of shelter and platform are specific to the market and support distinct types of exchange.

Finally, a glossary aggregated by Cinzia Cremona rounds off and opens up the publication as a resource. This compilation of key

terms nuances the language used throughout this publication to indicate its resonance in the discourse of Critical Practice.

This publication re-performs as a printed text the live event that was *TransActing*. The authors' shared aim is to inject in the published word at least some of the market's original depth and dynamism. Holding fast to the experimental ethos of Critical Practice, this anthology does not shy away from risk when the critical aim is expanding the fields of art and design research. The authors' distinct and overlapping forms (practical, poetic, analytical, etc.) track with the plurality of voices and processes that have nurtured the cluster as it has worked internationally to produce unique projects for more than ten years. Together, this collection of texts identifies the often messy and unpredictable outcomes that result when material and immaterial systems interact in markets and beyond.

There is no such thing as a transaction-free space. This myth compels the authors to understand their lived experience as above all transacted, riddled with a growing range and intensity of exchanges. Hence, one way of addressing the question, 'how can we live together more meaningfully?' is to pay more attention to how we transact and consider why and how this could, perhaps, be otherwise.

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1 PARTIAL SELF-PORTRAIT OF CRITICAL PRACTICE

INTRODUCED BY MARSHA BRADFIELD

Timelines are familiar but vexed. With great confidence they appear in museums, galleries, catalogues and artists' books, organizing their content in ways that seem obvious and hence irrefutable. This can make imagining alternatives difficult before we unmask the powerful ideas about progress and inevitability that timelines often convey (Lubar 2013). What or who has been left out – othered – and importantly, why? What histories have been made (im)possible by these technologies of time and space? What falls away when a timeline's central organizing principle is cause and effect? What about the failed experiments, roads not taken or feedback loops that are as vital as they are unacknowledged?

Worries like these have compelled Critical Practice Research Cluster to pursue other ways of organizing and sharing its activity. Witness the rhizomatic structure of its open-source wiki at criticalpracticechelsea.org (2019a). A single page links to several others, confounding the linear development of this organic and heterogenous online space. This helps to explain why the cluster has likened its wiki maintenance to gardening. Users of this co-authored platform are encouraged to weed out the spam, mend the dead links and sow new ideas, insights and reflections to grow this polyphonic expression of collaborative authorship.

Whilst in theory anyone with internet access can read the wiki, the website's followers tend to be niche. These readers are artists, designers, curators and other cultural producers with an interest in reflexive online platforms that straddle self-organization and community archives. Critical Practice has often discussed creating a parallel website to make its research and resources more accessible to diverse publics whilst opening up its community. In this vein, the partial self-portrait that follows experiments with a light social history of sorts. In addition to outputs (events, artworks, publications, etc.) what features here are outcomes (patterns of cooperation, decisions and turning points, knock-on effects – moments of collective accomplishment and loss).

This is Critical Practice in action, producing the body of research on evaluation that in 2015 culminated in *#Transacting: A Market of Values*. In the same way that local histories are part of history in general, the activity of Critical Practice is embedded in a larger context, spread across art, education and self-organization, especially as practice-based/led research. Against this backdrop, Critical Practice has been shaped by cultural, social, financial and other forces. These are indicated below through the spatial arrangement of text and image.

If this narrative takes its authority from Critical Practice as its collective author, it makes no claims to being definitive. The wiki features alternative stories that are also factually correct. Added to this, there may be forthcoming accounts written by different members (or critics or historians) that nuance, challenge or otherwise build on this one. Hence, readers should understand this telling as part of a much larger body of work and its emergent archives.

Cued by the call of actor-network theory to 'follow the actors' (Latour 2005), the narrative below follows Critical Practice as it negotiates a complex scene of people and materials, practices and processes. This dynamic picture chimes with Howard Becker's methodological trick for breaking the bad habit in social science of turning people into types, where they can get stuck. Their actions are taken for granted as stemming from their identity as a familiar type, for example, class or gender (Becker 1998: 66). Granted, self-organized cultural groups like Critical Practice are less at risk of being stereotyped. For those not directly involved, they can be mysterious to say the least. Even for those working collaboratively, collectively and cooperatively, there are few accounts of art-based

groups and even fewer compiled by the practitioners themselves in a spirit of practice-based/led research. (For two rare and useful examples that influenced the below, see *Show and Tell: A Chronicle of Group Material* [2010] and Neil Cummings's various chronologies, including his edit of the meeting minutes of Critical Practice in the publication, *Parade: Public Modes of Assembly and Forms of Address* [Critical Practice and Cummings 2011]).

This gap in the research points to a key rationale for this partial self-portrait as a schematic expression of autoethnography. It uses the lived experience of a concrete example to raise awareness about the economies and ecologies of collaborative cultural production. It indicates the range of activity this entails, the values that organize it and why those involved would choose to pursue this kind of practice over more standard forms. Mindful that timelines are vexed for the reasons sketched above and others, this one assembles a combination of facts, images, impressions, attitudes, encounters, desires and more to present Critical Practice in the throes of change. This is not so much a picture of progress but of change as a way of adapting to circumstance and working through desire so the cluster can persist in its critical practice. At the heart of this process is an expanded sense of art: less as a social phenomenon that is exceptional or esoteric and more as a network of social cooperation and (in)formal innovation for evolving new systems of value. For Critical Practice, creativity is valuable when it troubles, complicates and extends art in ways that seek to take advantage of its mysterious power and disruptive potential.

Critical Practice

2004: The beginnings

As Chelsea College of Arts prepares to move to its current home beside Tate Britain in Millbank (London, UK), a self-organized group of BA students works with tutor Neil Cummings to reuse industrial pallets and build a large outdoor temporary sculptural space. This draws attention to some of the structures that organize art school education, fuelling a discussion about the value of this type of learning.

Firefox and Wikipedia are beginning to show how large-scale, open and collaborative practice can produce valuable knowledge. Cummings runs a six-week elective course bringing together emergent thinking on open-source software and gift economies as alternatives to the dominant market model. BA students Ian Drysdale, Trevor Giles, Tom Neill, Wei-Ho Ng and Darrel Stadlen set up criticalpracticechelsea. The open platform presents the practices of staff and students side by side with the aspiration of flattening this traditional hierarchy.

Figure 1.1: The student founders of Critical Practice at a record company on Old Street (London, *c.*2004). From the left: Trevor Giles, Ian Drysdale, Wei-Ho Ng and Darrel Stadlen. Photo credit Tom Neill, who is behind the camera and the fifth member of the group.

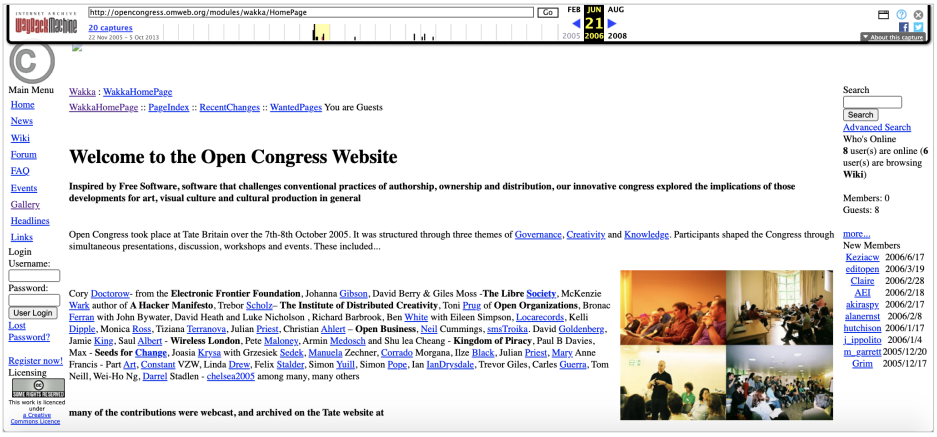
May

Neil Cummings submits a funding bid to Chelsea College for £18K to explore ideas emerging from open-source software development. The application states: 'The event [...] will not be invited experts on a podium with a passive listening audience but thoroughly collaborative and interactive. We see this research as valuable as the symposium itself' (Cummings 2004: n.pag.). Alongside growing interest in how culture – especially art – is owned, organized and disseminated, accessed and engaged with, authorship becomes a hot topic for the students working with Cummings. They adopt the shared authorial identity of Darrel_Ian_Tom_Trevor_Wei-Ho (or DITTW).

2005
January

DITTW work with Cummings and other staff members at Chelsea College, including Mary Anne Francis and Corrado Morgana, to organize *Open Congress* as an unconference about the potential application of open-source software and its modes of self-organization for cultural production. At the project's heart is a wiki and a free suite of tools for opening up the unconference to a wider community on and offline.

Figure 1.2: *Open Congress* took place at Tate Britain, 7–8 October 2005. The main organizing and archival platform was a wiki. Once available at opencongress.omweb.org, aspects are now accessible via the Wayback Machine. Screen grab courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.



April

As DITTW enter their final months of BA study, the group wonders: 'What would a peer-led degree show look and feel like? That is, one that did not attempt to mask the informal and fluid exchange of ideas between students on the course, tutors, the building and the world at large (!)' (Critical Practice 2008: 3).

June

DITTW's final artwork produced as students is a programme of events that activates Chelsea College as a network of social spaces with free internet access and activities for families, children and college staff. It is messy, frenzied, experimental and warmly received as an engaging alternative to the familiar format of graduating exhibitions.

Figure 1.3: Mary Anne Francis appears in the bottom right-hand corner, with Armin Mendosch behind her. Ilze Black is visible through the tripod and Pete Maloney is wearing a hat. *Open Congress* (Tate Britain, 7–8 October 2005). Photo courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.

July–September

The organizers of *Open Congress* research open-source democracy, 'open' law and knowledge projects, 'open' organizational models and Free/Libre and Open Source software (FLOSS), copyleft licensing and the Free Culture movement. Organizing a conference about issues arising from FLOSS without consistently and ethically embodying them would be disingenuous (Critical Practice 2008: 5). The website openorganizations.org offers guidelines for the coordination of activities: decision-making is based on 'rough consensus'; meetings are held in public spaces; agendas and minutes are published on the *Open Congress* wiki to build a collaborative record. These become the ethical foundations of Critical Practice.

October

Open Congress is realized at Tate Britain in collaboration with Chelsea College, NODE. London, MUTE and others. The congress has no audience, only participants. These include Trebor Scholz, Tiziana Terranova and McKenzie Wark, who shape the event through simultaneous panels, workshops and stalls. We can recognize the latter retrospectively as a prototype for the market technology that will prove central in Critical Practice's repertoire of forms.

The cluster's long-term sustainability depends on further funding, which in turn depends on meeting certain criteria. Chelsea College requires greater formality. The cluster takes the name 'Critical Practice' (CP) and the Guidelines for Open Organizations help shape its aims and objectives. These suggest a fluid and horizontal structure that allows 'members' to form 'working groups' for specific activities.

Figure 1.4: Ruth Catlow presenting at *Open Congress* (Tate Britain, 7–8 October 2005). Photo courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.

Figure 1.5: Marina Vishmidt appears on the right-hand side in a black dress. *Open Congress* (Tate Britain, 7–8 October 2005). Photo courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.

2006
January

Critical Practice reflects on *Open Congress* in print in *Media Mutandis: A NODE.London Reader* (2006). Edited by Marina Vishmidt, with Mary Anne Francis, Jo Walsh and Lewis Sykes, it surveys current art, technologies and politics.

Figure 1.6: Elizabeth Neilson sits in the middle with Sophie von Olfers on the right. *Open Congress* (Tate Britain, 7–8 October 2005). Photo courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.

Figure 1.7: McKenzie Wark presenting at *Open Congress* (Tate Britain, 7–8 October 2005). Photo courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.

November–December

Meanwhile, Critical Practice is invited to submit a text for a special issue of *Zehar* magazine titled 'The Open School' to be published as part of Documenta 12. Coordinated by Mary Anne Francis, the working group focuses on two issues,

> The first is the threat of the instrumentalization of the artistic field by a wholesale internalization of corporate values, methods and models. […] The second would be the return of a near hysterical 'market' as a disciplinary force within visual art education. (Critical Practice 2007a)

Critical Practice works with artist Stephan Shankland to realize an iteration of *Atelier-Trans-Pal* (*ATP*), an ephemeral structure made from 2000 wooden pallets. The event questions how we practice and value art in the context of the mass exchange of goods and information. The working group Beyond the Free Market, coordinated by Eugenia Beirer, serves hot soup made with salvaged food from London's New Covent Garden wholesale fruit and vegetable market. Critical Practice works with artist Stephanie Bourne to develop a protocol for facilitating collective exchange during a public workshop.

Ian Drysdale facilitates a series of workshops to foster Critical Practice's self-organization. These enable the cluster to better understand and implement guidelines suggested by Open Organizations. The Self-representation working group is formed and coordinated by Cinzia Cremona.

Figure 1.8: Building *Atelier Trans Pal* (*ATP*), an ephemeral structure dedicated to facilitating art/critical and off-site practices. This iteration of *ATP* took place at Chelsea College of Art and Design (today Chelsea College of Arts) in November and December 2006. It was made of 2000 wooden pallets assembled to make up a space 20m long, 4m high, 7m wide. Photo courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.

Figure 1.9: From the left: Neil Cummings, Darrel Stadlen and Ian Drysdale engage in a rocking exercise in one of the self-organization workshops facilitated by Drysdale for Critical Practice in the fall of 2006. Photo courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.

2007
March

Cluster member Manuela Zechner develops *Future Archive* with Anja Kanngieser. This project is an audiovisual and performative-pedagogical experience based on interviews and encounters for projecting oneself into the future and then reverse engineering that present. Led by Zechner, Critical Practice imagines itself 30 years in a more desirable future and recollects the changes that brought us to this reality (Kanngieser and Zechner 2019).

Figure 1.10: Critical Practice at play in the Spying Room of the Morpeth Arms. 'M Block' as it was affectionately called is the local pub of staff and students of Chelsea College. It was built in 1845 to refresh wardens of the Millbank Prison. Once the largest in Europe, the prison's footprint is today home to Tate Britain and Chelsea College. From the left: Wei-Ho Ng, Neil Cummings, unknown, Trevor Giles. Photo courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.

April

At the South London Gallery, Critical Practice works with Barbara Steveni, Neal White and Board Furniture to realize a 'between' to respond to and explore the concept of value. A 'between' is a model of dialogue and discussion used by the Artists Placement Group (APG – subsequently Organization and Imagination [O+I] and Incidental Unit [IU]) after Joseph Beuys invited APG's member John Latham to discuss artist-with-government placements at Documenta 6 in Kassel in 1977. The 2007 event includes presentations, an archival exhibition, conversations, disagreement, screenings, software, as well as the *Value Game* developed by Mary Anne Francis:

> This is not so much about making the item more valuable economically, but enhancing it in a way that is meaningful to [the player/investor] – we're interested to find out what you value and why – as the basis for a discussion later on. (Critical Practice 2007b)

Figures 1.11, 1.12, 1.13 and 1.14: *BETWEEN* (South London Gallery, 21 April 2007) coordinated by Critical Practice and O + I (the second iteration of the Artist Placement Group). Top left: Mary Anne Francis (appearing centre) facilitates *Value Game*. Neal White stands on the left in the striped shirt. Top right: Barbara Steveni (co-founder of Artist Placement Group) is seated; Cinzia Cremona stands to the right. Bottom left: Manuela Zechner on the left and Jem MacKay on the right. Bottom right: Robin Bhattacharya addresses the gathering with Corrado Morgana on the left. Also around the table (left of Morgana) is Michaela Ross, Tatiana Orloff and Eugenia Beirer. Video stills courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.

May

Coordinated by Isobel Bowditch and Andrew Chesher, newly formed Thinking Through Practice (effectively a working group of Critical Practice) screens *N for Negri: Antonio Negri in Conversation with Carles Guerra* (see Guerra 2003) followed by a conversation with Carles Guerra. The film's glossary format will prove vital to Critical Practice's repertoire of forms, as evidenced by the one featured in this publication.

July

Robin Bhattacharya, Cinzia Cremona, Neil Cummings and Mary Anne Francis edit the first issue of the Critical Practice publication, designed by Trevor Giles (Critical Practice 2007c).

Figure 1.15: The front cover of *Issue 1* of the Critical Practice Publication (2007c). Photo courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.

2008
March

Critical Practice works with European Alternatives to host *How to Make Europe Dream? A Cultural Congress* at Chelsea College. This culminates in the first of Critical Practice's markets, addressing the question: 'What is cultural about economics?'. Artists, anthropologists, economists and others activate 'stalls'.

Organizing this event makes Critical Practice increasingly aware of the divide between administrative and cognitive tasks and how they are valued. This variously affects members, contributing to the ebb and flow of participants with the surplus of energy, time and resources they can invest in Critical Practice.

Critical Practice convenes *ResourceCamp* as part of *Disclosures*, organized by Anna Colin and Maria Jankowicz of Gasworks, London. This is the first of our many 'barcamps' (which will become a favoured method with seven taking place between 2008 and 2012). 'BarCamps, are an international network of self-organized, user-generated unconferences, often related to open source methods, social protocols, and open data formats' (Critical Practice 2008: 20). Everyone presents for 20 minutes with time for questions, observations and exchange. *ResourceCamp* examines the management of money in open and cultural organizations. Cinzia Cremona shares her inspirational Personal Balance Sheet where she considers 'what is a resource?', outlining less quantifiable investments and gains. At the end of the barcamp we publish 'Draft guidelines on Open Budget Management' on the wiki (Critical Practice 2019b).

Figures 1.16 and 1.17: Stalls at *The Market of Ideas*, which was commissioned by *The Festival of Europe* (16 March 2008, Chelsea College of Arts). On the left, a barber stall. On the right, Isobel Bowditch (wearing glasses) appears seated; Neal White (in a hat) can be seen behind. Photo courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.

Figure 1.18: Cinzia Cremona's famous Personal Balance Sheet, originally presented at *ResourceCamp*, which Critical Practice realized for *Disclosures*, an event organized by Gasworks on Middlesex Street Estate, 30 March 2008.

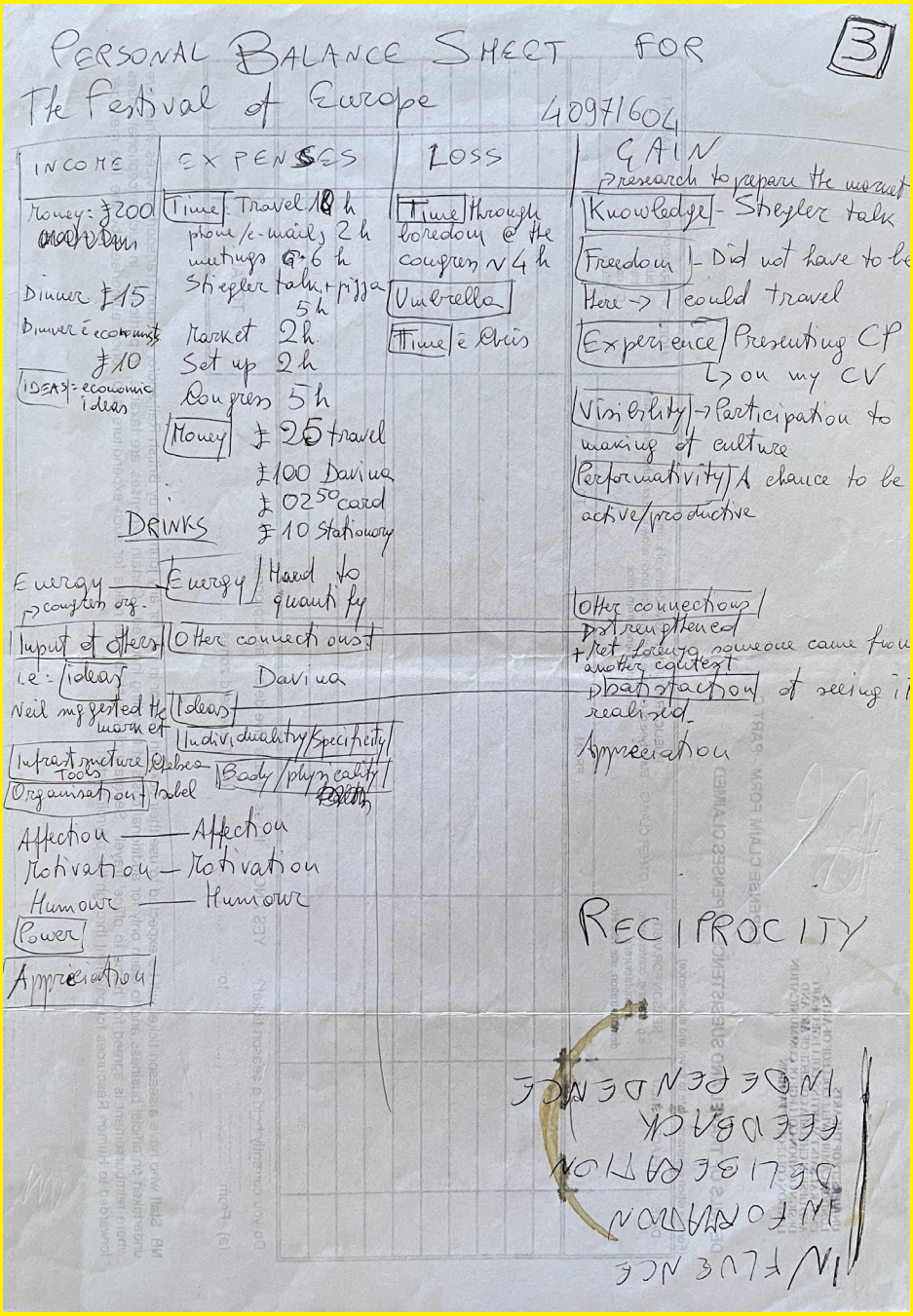
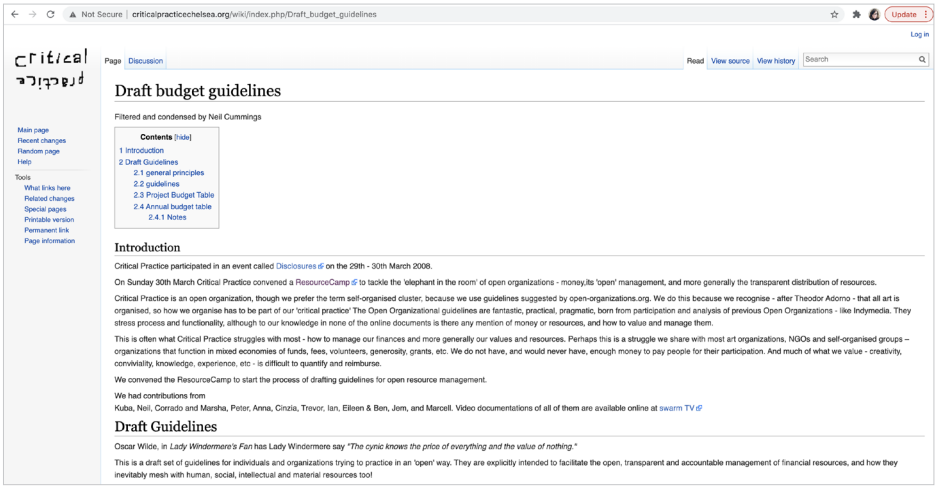


Figure 1.19: The draft budget guidelines on the Critical Practice wiki (Critical Practice 2019b). The guidelines emerged from *ResourceCamp*, which Critical Practice realized for *Disclosures*, 30 March 2008.



June

Critical Practice is invited to take part in the moving image programme *Visions in the Nunnery* at Bow Arts Trust in London and contributes to a forum that discusses relevant experiences of collaborative moving image practices.

Convening in St. James's Park for our annual picnic, the cluster reflects on its recent activities and considers some self-initiated projects for the upcoming academic year. We anonymously propose Big Ideas and vote according to the Enthusiasm Index, devised by Trevor Giles, to evaluate our degree of commitment. 'A Market of Organizations' and 'testing our budget guidelines' are both chosen as projects to progress.

Figure 1.20: 2009 annual picnic, which traditionally takes place in St. James's Park, London. From left to right: Cinzia Cremona, Mike Knowlden, Jem MacKay, Michaela Ross, Neil Cummings and Trevor Giles. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

2009

January–May

In conversation with Polish curator and CP member Kuba Szreder and Aneta Prasał-Wiśniewsk, the curator of the upcoming Polish Season in London, the emerging *Market of Organizations* shifts towards questioning how being in public is culturally constructed. We are invited to visit Poland and explore notions of public space. During our stay in Warsaw, we learn about gated communities, Polish hospitality, Jewish history, communist architecture and gain insight into some of the political, religious, financial, migratory and cultural forces at work (see Cummings and Critical Practice 2011).

Figure 1.21: Warsaw, Poland's magnificent Palace of Culture as seen from a hotel window during a research trip (2009). Photo credit Neil Cummings.

July

We convene our second barcamp in Kennington Park, formerly Kennington Common, where the Chartist meeting of 1848 demanded democratic reforms, to explore: What is 'public'? What are public goods, services, art and servants? How are we to balance private interests and public needs? What is the public domain? We come away determined to grow our inquiry into a large-scale event and call this *PARADE* as it will take place on the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground at Chelsea College in the spring or summer of 2010 (see Cummings and Critical Practice 2011).

Figure 1.22: *PubliCamp* in Kennington Park, London (5 July 2009). Photo credit Neil Cummings.

Figure 1.23: Critical Practice tours Warsaw's Praga District to reflect on the horrors of the Holocaust and discuss the area's gentrification. From the left: Marsha Bradfield, Neil Cummings, Cinzia Cremona (from behind), Michaela Ross, Katarzyna Kuzko (tour guide) and Ken Wilder (side view). Photo credit Ewelina Warner.

Autumn

Kuba Szreder secures £20k from our Polish partners to fund *PARADE* and Neil Cummings appeals to the newly formed Camberwell, Wimbledon, Chelsea Graduate School for financial and other kinds of support.

2010

January

A season of research events to prepare for *PARADE* includes open lectures by our Polish colleagues in collaboration with TrAIN, the Centre for Transnational Art, Identity and Nation (Chelsea College). We dialogue with Aleksandra Wasilkowska, the Polish architect who, with Michał Piasecki, will work with Critical Practice and Ken Wilder from Interior and Spatial Design at Chelsea College to create a bespoke structure for *PARADE*.

March

We consider various possible building materials and elect to use black plastic milk crates. We spend a week workshopping possible configurations in the Triangle Space at Chelsea College (see Cummings and Critical Practice 2011).

May

With a budget of £3k, we hire 4320 black plastic milk crates, buy 30k cable ties and, with the support of staff and students from Interior and Spatial Design, we spend a week building a striking structure that encompasses places to sit, lean on, display materials, converse and exchange.

On the first night we share a potluck of snacks, whilst Eileen Simpson and Ben White of the Open Music Archive play music from the commons. The next day we hold three barcamps and then a final *Barcamp of Barcamps* to highlight the key themes, issues and concerns explored during the day, in which roving reporters and contributors offer their reflections.

On the third day, the international stallholders occupy the structure and 'explore the distribution of public knowledge, embody peer-2-peer exchange, and build communal resources' (Cummings 2018: n.pag.). The late Chris Wainwright shares experiences about Cape Farewell; Joanna Rajkowska offers the opportunity to savour the obstacles and pleasures of the public realm from the position of helpless larvae by climbing into one of her human-sized cocoons; The People Speak host a *Talkaoke* – 'a pop up talk show where anyone can sit down and air their views around the table of chat' (2019).

Neil Cummings takes charge of deinstalling whilst others depart for Berlin to facilitate a barcamp on the theme of public presence on Tempelhof Field, on the grounds of the former airport. This takes place in *The Knot* (co-curated by Kuba Szreder), a mobile and inflatable structure traveling to Berlin, Warsaw and Bucharest, stopping for a few weeks in each city.

Figure 1.24: *PARADE* under construction. The bespoke structure was built in public from 4320 black milk crates lashed together with some 30,000 cable ties. This project about being in public was built in public on the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground, Chelsea College of Arts (May 2010). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Figure 1.25: A barcamp convened at *PARADE* on the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground, Chelsea College of Arts (22 May 2010). Photo credit Neil Cummings.

December

Critical Practice begins to assemble a *PARADE* legacy publication to capture the processes that led to the event and showcase the project. The editorial process is complicated by trying to mesh the values of Critical Practice with those of the publisher, Camberwell, Chelsea, Wimbledon Graduate School and the publication's designers. Neil Cummings assumes responsibility for realizing *Parade: Public Modes of Assembly and Forms of Address* (Cummings and Critical Practice 2011). It is toasted as an exemplary instance of showing and sharing practice-based/led research. (The book is initially disseminated for free, but it is later available second-hand on Amazon for £9.95. By December 2018, the book is no longer on sale but Neil Cummings, formerly listed as the editor, appears as the author. To value the *PARADE* publication as collaboratively produced, it appears in our bibliographies as edited by Neil Cummings and Critical Practice).

Critical Practice attends *Critical Malfunction: On the Crooked Roads of Art Production* at the Instytut Sztuki Wyspa, Gdansk, Poland. The cluster facilitates a barcamp, creating space for 'discussion about too often denied aspects of cultural production. The malfunction, collapse, crash, breakdown – all these are simply avoided in typical art scene presentations, which are rather focused on developments, achievements, improvements and self promotion' (Szreder cited in Critical Practice 2019c: n.pag.). Our preoccupation with value converges with others' at Free/Slow University's summit in Warsaw, *Creative Industries and Knowledge Factories: Analysis and Resistance* (also co-curated by Kuba Szreder). We question the value of the artwork and its significance to the lived experience of art workers. For instance, Valeria Graziano of Carrotworkers' Collective talks about 'value markers' as operating beyond either aesthetic beauty or the high prices paid at auctions.

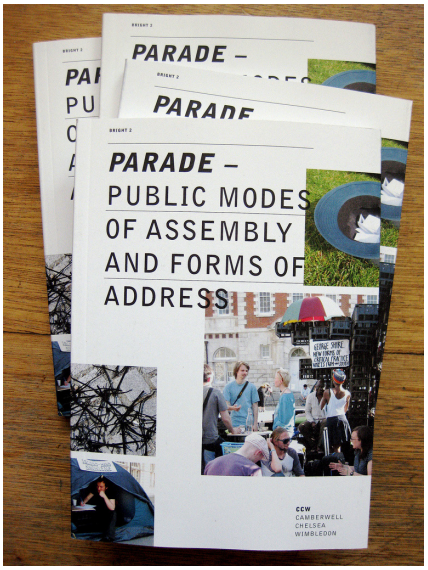


Figure 1.26: Assembled by Critical Practice and edited by Neil Cummings, the *PARADE* legacy publication was launched in 2010 and has since been recognized as an exemplar for sharing collaborative practice-based/led research. Photo credit Neil Cummings.

2011
January

Critical Practice is invited to Matadero (Madrid, Spain) for a residency. It focuses on the fledgling operations of El Ranchito within Matadero, which at the time is slated to be Spain's flagship cultural centre. El Ranchito is responsible for establishing Matadero's critical context and local culture. Critical Practice operates both in and beyond Chelsea College, and El Ranchito is seeking a similar relationship with Matadero. There is much walking and workshopping as well as a barcamp, and we feel a deep sense of solidarity with colleagues in Spain who share similar values. Inspired by this experience, some of us spend an intense day rewriting Critical Practice's own aims and objectives. Further to the residency, we are invited by El Ranchito to develop a proposal for a public project to help launch the art centre (Critical Practice 2019d).

Marsha Bradfield and Kuba Szreder meet with Polish artist Artur Żmijewski in London to discuss Critical Practice featuring in the 7th *Berlin Biennial* (*BB7*). Curated by Żmijewski with Joanna Warsza (who held a stall in *The Market of Ideas* at *PARADE* in 2010), *BB7* considers 'What is the use/effect of art?'.

Figure 1.27: Critical Practice reflects on its membership guidelines while in residence at El Ranchito, part of Matadero Madrid (9 January 2011). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Figure 1.28: Metod Blejec and Scott Schwager (pictured in the high vis vest) lead a walk in the area around Matadero Madrid. Part of Critical Practice's residency at El Ranchito (10 January 2011). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

March

Further to the invitation to develop a proposal for a public project to help launch Matadero Madrid, a working group led by Metod Blejec experiments with the format of a scavenger hunt in London using digital cameras to capture sites, gestures, objects and more. Three hugely successful 'tester hunts' for what comes to be known as *Hunterama* prompt us to differently encounter and value our everyday environment by reframing it.

April

Led by Marsha Bradfield and Kuba Szreder, the Art/Value working group develops a proposal for *Berlin Biennial 7*. We prioritize the evaluation of art as having plural and dynamic possibilities. We submit our application to facilitate a market of values with stalls by practitioners based in Berlin who would come together to trade as a temporary community of evaluation.

May

Feeling disconnected from what matters to Critical Practice as a cluster, we hold an intense workshop on self-organization, during which we review our aims and objectives. One member storms out; others leave disheartened. Still others embrace this friction as an opportunity to recalibrate our priorities. This includes holding monthly meetings on the first Tuesday at Royal Festival Hall. Working groups continue to proliferate in response to projects.

July

BB7 declines our proposal for a market of values on the grounds Berlin already has many alternatives circuits of evaluation; moreover, evaluation departs from the biennial's interest in the 'result', 'effect' or 'outcome' of art.

September

After further discussion, we submit a second proposal to *BB7. Critical Economic Practice* aims to intervene directly into the processes and practices of the biennial's evaluation and valuing, including the distribution of resources and labour. After a very warm reaction from the curators and staff, things become complicated. More and more information is requested but conversations are delayed.

October

Sharon Bennett and Charlotte Webb key into circuits of art education by facilitating a workshop in Five Years Gallery's programme, *This is Not a School. Speed Tipping* invites the constituency gathered for the session to co-create a tip a minute for one hour on the theme of being resourceful, resulting in a 60-tip compilation.

We learn that *BB7* is unable to accommodate *Critical Economic Practice*. Although we understand the institutional dynamics that lead to this outcome, we are disappointed and we evaluate the painful hypocrisy of the institutionalized art world.

November

El Ranchito decides not to realize *Hunterama* but to feature the idea as an outcome that was generated by their artist-in-residence instead of Critical Practice. A flurry of emails and a discussion if this value extraction is fair leads us to eventually agree.

December

At Karem Ibrahim's magnificent Christmas party, we discuss the insights gained into certain art worlds and anticipate next year as one that prioritizes projects that Critical Practice will initiate and drive.

2012

January

Our wiki goes down. We work through email and Google Docs whilst it is being repaired over several months. We reflect on the complex economy of time, debts and favours that propel the informal worlds of cultural production.

March

Critical Practice organizes a barcamp on value – *ValueCamp* – at the Royal College of Art. We become interested in how evaluation, and the values this generates, is relational, situated and specific in a context. Plans are hatched to develop a programme of events led by 'value brokers', people with expertise in particular value systems, especially those shaping Critical Practice's immediate reality in London.

Figure 1.29: Tweets about Karem Ibrahim's presentation at *ValueCamp*, convened by Critical Practice to enrich the cluster's understanding of value, values, evaluation and valorization (4 March 2012, the Royal College of Art). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

April

The wiki is again up and running thanks to Ben White of Open Music Archive. We recommit to our values of transparency and accountability and to returning our research to the public domain.

July

We are invited by the Hartware MedienKunstVerein (HMKV, a platform for the production, presentation, and communication of contemporary and experimental media art) to contribute to *Industrial Festival 2013* (later renamed *New Industries Festival*) in Dortmund, Germany. We propose a market of values to creatively explore and implement systems for producing, distributing and exchanging value in the shift from industrial to post-industrial work. Metod Blejec and Kuba Szreder meet with the curators who express great enthusiasm for the market, but mismatched institutional funding timelines make the project unviable.

Frustrated and disillusioned by the huge demands of securing public monies through grant-related bureaucracies, we wonder: Is investing our time and energy in these longshots good value? We investigate crowdfunding but many of us are dubious. We agree to break for August.

September

We become preoccupied with how value circulates and is 'brokered' by particular people, events, conditions and more. We embark on our new programme; *Spaces and Value: How God, Law and Landed Interests are Situated in London's EC2* encompasses three back-to-back walks. Neil Cummings and Blanca Regina produce an experimental moving image document to capture the experience of moving through this super-saturated area of London.

As we walk past the relevant sites, we reflect on the proximity of British law to business and the City with artist and lawyer Jack Tan. With Warwick Hawkins (a civil servant working on inter faith), we question how the Church of England has served the needs and interests of its members. And finally with writer and journalist Owen Hatherley we explore the Barbican Estate, comparing the post-war values embodied in its brutalist architecture and cultural offering with those currently propelling London's property market.

Figure 1.30: Flyer for *Spaces & Value*, the first walk in the season of research on value preceding *TransActing* (8 September 2012). Image courtesy of the Critical Practice Archives.

Figure 1.31: Artist and lawyer Jack Tan talks about London's Courts of Justice as we stand in front of them. From left to right: Kuba Szreder, unknown, Neil Cummings (with camera), Eileen Simpson, Karem Ibrahim, Dan McDermott, Jack Tan, Michal Murawski, Veda Popovicl and unknown (8 September 2012). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Evolving from the Art/Value working group, our experience of contributing to *Critical Malfunction* at Instytut Sztuki Wyspa (2011) and *Spaces & Value*, Critical Practice set up a working group to pursue the subject of value in earnest. We commit to collaborating with local and international partners on an inquiry into value as embedded, specific and localized. Going back to basics, the initial questions posted on the wiki for this research are as follows:

- What is 'value'?
- What distinguishes 'value' from 'worth'?
- Through what kinds of historical processes has value been produced?
- What's the relation between socially produced value and culturally produced value and is this a useful distinction? (Critical Practice 2019e)

Critical Practice organizes *P2P Exchange* in Graz, Austria, at the festival *Truth is Concrete*, a 24/7 marathon camp on artistic strategies in politics and political strategies in art as part of the *steirischer herbst* festival. Repurposing the technology of *The Market of Ideas*, Critical Practice uses a 'flea market' setup and invites contributions from 'stallholders'. The *P2P Exchange* reconfigures the festival's temporal succession into a distributed and spatial aggregate (i.e. simultaneous contributions).

October

A postdoctoral fellowship in Critical Practice is advertised, thereby evidencing the value the cluster generates for the University of the Arts London. Marsha Bradfield successfully takes this up, enabling her to be partially paid to research and write funding applications for Critical Practice. The post starts on 28 May 2013 and runs for two years.

November

HEDGE: Walking, Talking, Value, Geography and Social Organization is jointly facilitated by Critical Practice and the Scottish Sculpture Workshop in Lumsden, Scotland. This weekend-long programme of participatory events considers modes of cultivating and harvesting values with reference to sculptural, social and geographical forms. We ask: What kind of spaces and values organize rural areas? Are they any different from those in urban metropolises? What are their distinctive characteristics?

Figure 1.32: Artist and economist Hans Abbing holds a stall on why artists are poor at the *P2P Exchange* convened by Critical Practice for *Truth is Concrete*, part of *steirischer herbst* (26 September 2012, Graz, Austria). Photo credit Neil Cummings.

Figure 1.33: A local of Aberdeenshire plays harmonica at the Crown Bar, Huntly when Critical Practice visits the Scottish Sculpture Workshop for *HEDGE* (23 November 2012, Scotland). From left: Kuba Szreder, unknown, Nuno Sacramento. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

2013

January

At our New Year's party, we reflect on 2012. A flurry of successful but gruelling externally oriented events drives us to more effectively value our immediate network in Critical Practice and its self-organization. We refresh our knowledge of wiki usage, of making meeting agendas and minutes, etc. through an internal event called *CP Values vs CP Procedures: Re-engaging Open Organisational Guidelines*. Our future feels (more) transparent and accountable as a result.

February

For our second value walk *WASTE*, environmental lawyer Rosie Oliver and economic geographer Angus Cameron walk with Critical Practice around the Isle of Dogs, Greenwich and Blackheath, unpicking notions of waste (Critical Practice 2019d).

Figure 1.34: Critical Practice during a workshop to refresh the cluster's processes and protocols. Neil Cummings (left) and Sharon Bennett (right) (23 January 2013, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Figure 1.35: The *WASTE* walk led by environmental lawyer Rosie Oliver and economic geographer Angus Cameron. From left: Sharon Bennett, Rosie Oliver and Neil Cummings (16 February 2013, Isle of Dogs, Greenwich and Blackheath). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Figure 1.36: A lucky meeting with the extraordinary mudlark Lara Maiklem (featured) who was scavenging along the Greenwich foreshore. This was the destination of the *WASTE* walk, which was led by environmental lawyer Rosie Oliver and economic geographer Angus Cameron (16 February 2013, the walk spanned Isle of Dogs, Greenwich and Blackheath). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

March

We discuss our growing interest in value and how this meshes with Bradfield's post-doctoral fellowship. We grapple with how we value the assets at our disposal, especially those beyond money and the cluster's human resources: the people. Valuing the diversity and complexity of collaborative practice is an evergreen concern.

April

German artist Folke Köbberling runs the workshop *One Person's Trash is Another's Treasure*, which sees Critical Practice building with found materials around Chelsea College's Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground. We tackle the lack of infrastructure in the central square by building tables and benches for all to use. The public furniture hosts our annual picnic and many other people in the years to come.

May

Marsha Bradfield and Kuba Szreder publish their reflections on the experience of negotiating with the institutional structures of *Berlin Biennial* 7 in the *ArtLeaks Gazette*. The account is pitched as a 'resource for mapping the apparatus of art, building solidarity amongst practitioners and identifying practices that deadlock critical cultural production' (Bradfied and Szreder 2013: 85–86).

July

In a further example of Critical Practice's resourcefulness, cluster member and Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon Graduate School administrator Claire Mokrauer-Madden uses old office equipment to 'green' the Graduate School offices at Chelsea College where the cluster is based. Wire desk tidies are repurposed as containers to grow plants in *The Terrace Project*.

October

Dutch artist and economist Hans Abbing visits Critical Practice to talk about evaluation using the Socratic method.

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) undertakes the *Cultural Value Project*, which 'seeks to establish a framework that will advance the way in which we talk about the value of cultural engagement and the methods by which we evaluate that value' (AHRC n.d.: n.pag.). The British Academy holds a discussion, *The Changing Face of Value*. Concerns include:

- The digital world: Is it shaping our social and cultural values, and if so, how?,
- The apparent rise in value of notions such as 'authenticity', 'openness' and 'connectivity'
- The value of objects and new forms of material culture
- The shift of values from the enduring to the ephemeral
- The future of value itself (British Academy 2013: n.pag.)

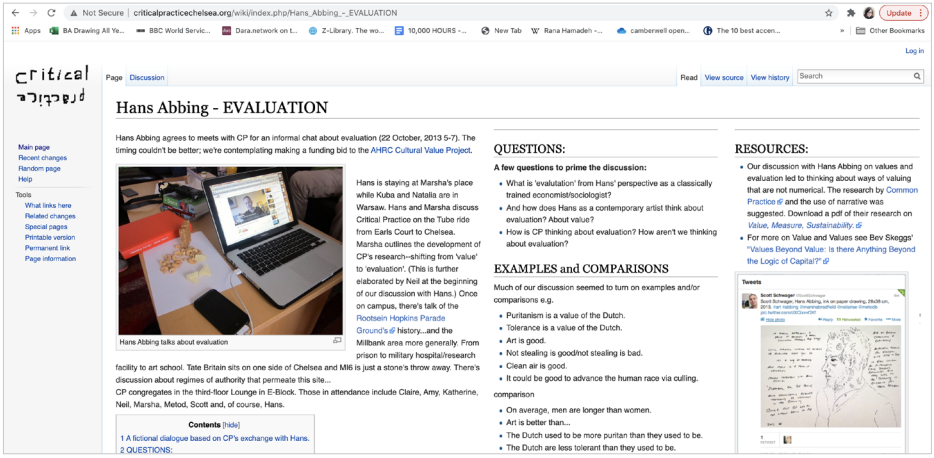
Critical Practice reflects on the nature of this growing debate on cultural value and its baseline assumption that art has intrinsic value.

We meet with Alanah Cullen of The Enterprise Collective based at Chelsea College about managing a farmer's market on the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground to fund our research.

November

We join forces again with Barbara Steveni of the Artist Placement Group, Josh Y'Barbo from Chelsea Salon and David Cross (reader at Chelsea College) to facilitate a day-long session on the value of 'not knowing'. This refusal to take anything for granted deeply influences Critical Practice.

Figure 1.37: The wiki archive of Critical Practice's session on evaluation with the artist and economist Hans Abbing (22 October 2013, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.



2014

February

Members of the Evaluation working/learning group attend a Sotheby's Contemporary Art Auction. Auctioneer Oli Barker dances back and forth, persuading buyers to bid more than £88 million over the night. Gerhard Richter's monumental *Wand (Wall)* goes for £17.4 million. Debriefing in a nearby pub, we struggle to square the circulation of immense value through the auction houses with our impoverished public sphere.

Committed to creating very different tournaments of value, we apply to the Camberwell Chelsea and Wimbledon Graduate School for £40,610 to run a large-scale, international, public market of values. We soon learn this figure rivals the programme's entire budget. We eventually receive £8500 from the Graduate School in match funding and much more in-kind support.

March

We launch the first event in our *Differently Screening* series. Inspired by our visit to Sotheby's Contemporary Art Auction we watch *The Great Contemporary Art Bubble* (2009) and marvel at the commercial art world as a circuit that excludes all but a very select few.

Some Critical Practice members collaborate with a group of utopographers (who envision, represent and critique imagined worlds), including Chelsea College's Dan Bryne-Smith. The three-day event *Utopographies: Evaluation, Consensus and Location* takes place in the Triangle Space at the college. The theme of evaluation enables Critical Practice to develop its research strand. Constructing a kind of infrastructure becomes a key part of the exhibition process. Coloured rope is

Figure 1.38: Constructing the canopy network for *Utopographies: Evaluation, Consensus and Location* (March 2014, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

threaded throughout the space, dividing it into sections and creating a habitat for the programme. One of the events includes the first version of *Utopoly* (in which players imagine a utopian alternative to the rules and form of Monopoly), which is played by different members of Critical Practice for years to come and features in Neil Farnan's Ph.D. research.

April

For the second event in the *Differently Screening* series, we host Brussels-based artists Ronny Heiremans and Katleen Vermeer at Marsha Bradfield's flat in Earl's Court. The artists screen their recent works *The Good Life* (a guided tour) and *The Residence* (a wager for the afterlife) and discuss the value systems that organize them. We hatch plans for a more extensive collaboration in the fall of 2014 but because of budget constraints these go unrealized.

We continue developing alternative plans to raise money for *The Market of Values* through holding a farmer's market on the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground. Chelsea College encourages us to develop a business plan; Karem Ibrahim, Neil Cummings and Marsha Bradfield work on various scenarios. After several meetings and heated discussions, it is revealed that Baxter Storey – the company running the canteen at Chelsea College – has a monopoly on selling any food and drink across the university's campuses.

May

For the third event in *Differently Screening*, Amy McDonnell and Catherine Long curate *Textiles, Labour, Protest and Value* at the Bread and Roses Beer Workers' Union pub. They screen a documentary about predominantly female textile workers who self-organize and take over the running of a suit factory, *The Women of Brukman* (2007). Participants begin sewing a Critical Practice *Banner of Values* as they watch.

Figure 1.39: Performance by Stephanie Dickinson and former members of medieval folk rock band Circulus at *Utopographies: Evaluation, Consensus and Location* (28 March 2014, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Neil Cummings.

Figure 1.40: Amy McDonnell and Catherine Long curate *Textiles, Labour, Protest and Value*, which includes a screening of *The Women of Brukman* and a banner-making workshop (24 May 2014, Bread and Roses Beer Workers' Union pub). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

June

Marsha Bradfield and a friend of Critical Practice, Claire Heafford, run *Futurising the Curriculum*, two cycle tours around the studios and project spaces of London, looking at models for facing the emotional, financial and practical challenges of sustaining a professional art practice. Critical Practice is invited to join and document the alternative economics involved in these realms of cultural production.

On 20 June, there is an all-day workshop with Stephen Wright to discuss his critically acclaimed publication, *Toward a Lexicon of Usership*. Here he states:

> Usership represents a radical challenge to at least three stalwart conceptual institutions in contemporary culture: spectatorship, expert culture, and ownership. Modernist artistic conventions, remised on so-called disinterested spectatorship, dismiss usership (and use value, rights of usage) as inherently instrumental – and the mainstream artworld's physical and conceptual architecture is entirely unprepared to even speak of usership, even as many contemporary artistic practices imply a regime of engagement and relationality entirely at odds with that described by spectatorship. (Wright 2013: 66–67)

Our discussions are electrified with thinking about value and use, value and misuse and economic diversity. There is growing commitment in Critical Practice to further explore heterogeneous value but also to create an event that would reflexively tap into this economic diversity by valuing values beyond the financial ones.

July

Marsha Bradfield and Kuba Szreder meet with Andreas Lang of public works to discuss collaborating on the infrastructural aspect of what would become *TransActing*. We approach public works in light of their reputation for producing architectures and infrastructures that resource their local context via the thoughtful use of histories, knowledges and materials.

Autumn

The Market of Values working group scrambles to prioritize some aspects of the project whilst others fall away. We worry about the diversity of our market stalls. We play with the idea of market-goers being allocated currency according to a starting status (either upper/middle/working class, socio-economic banding, 1% or 99%, or others such as celebrities). Participants could earn, trade, gamble, be rentiers depending on status to acquire higher-value market goods or services.

December

Amy McDonnell, Verina Gfader and Neil Cummings curate the fourth event for *Differently Screening – Sunlight: Energy Labour and Value* at Open School East.

Participants, fuelled by bread and beer, cycle. The cinema harnesses the energy of eight adults pedalling at any one time (continually and in rotation) on bikes connected to generators. This embodiment of energy and labour is reflected on screen with a series of excerpts from moving image work, such as Fischli and Weiss' *Der Lauf der Dinge* (1987) and Jacques Tati's *Jour de fête* (1949).

To celebrate Christmas and anticipate the new year, we convene to progress our Monopoly hack, *Utopoly* (started back in March at *Utopographies Evaluation, Consensus and Location*) and raise a glass in celebration of busy but successful 2014.

Figure 1.41: A film screening by pedal power. *Sunlight: Energy Labour and Value* was curated by Amy McDonnell, Verina Gfader and Neil Cummings (10 December 2014, Open School East). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Figure 1.42: Critical Practice celebrates Christmas with a DIY game of *Utopoly*. From left: Marsha Bradfield, Metod Blejec, Claire Mokrauer-Madden, Karem Ibrahim and Verina Gfader (11 December 2014, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Neil Cummings.

2015

February

We are allocated the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground at Chelsea College of Arts for 11 July 2015. Metod Blejec begins developing a publicity plan and an identity for *TransActing*. Our wiki falters again and we correspond through our email list.

In an exciting meeting, we provide one-minute pitches as to whom should be invited. We also decide to run an open call. Anyone with a practice or project that explicitly explores value, valorization or evaluation is invited to apply.

Marsha Bradfield, Neil Cummings and Kuba Szreder have spent several months developing an application to Arts Council England (ACE) for £15,000. Advised by Kelly Palmer of rentals at Chelsea College that the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground has a commercial rent of £10,000/day, we are able to confirm £108,000 in in-kind support. After Bradfield completes the draft, Szreder and Claire Mokrauer-Madden adjust the budget and the bid is submitted.

March

Critical Practice receives £15,000 from ACE. Most of the funding is allocated to paying people. Core cluster members are each given £500 to curate stallholders of their choice.

April

On 20 April, Ben White performs a software update on our wiki and Neil Cummings pays for more server space. We are back in business. Despite valuing the wiki's transparency and trying to move content trapped in emails onto our public platform, we feel overwhelmed by the sheer volume. Three months until market day.

May

Recalling our 2013 workshop, *One Person's Trash is Another's Treasure*, plans are made with public works to upcycle materials collected in and around the college.

TransActing has pivoted Marsha Bradfield's two-year post-doctoral fellowship in Critical Practice. This ends on 28 May, but the work of coordinating the project continues.

Figure 1.43: Critical Practice in the throes of planning *TransActing*. From left: Claire Mokrauer-Madden, Neil Farnan, Marsha Bradfield, Amy McDonnell, Metod Blejec (on the computer), Cinzia Cremona and Kuba Szreder (16 June 2015, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Neil Cummings.

June

In a stall prototyping workshop, public works inspire us with an exquisite evaluation of materials and systems for assembling the market infrastructure. We brainstorm protection from the elements. We review and make a selection from the open call for stallholders with an impassioned debate.

Led by Neil Farnan, the Currency working group presents ideas to Critical Practice for a local currency in the market. There will be four icons: Wellbeing, Time, Knowledge and Creativity. We wonder how to get stallholders and market-goers to adopt it. The currency will facilitate transactions and act as a souvenir of the event. We plan to give people the currency as they arrive in exchange for something, for example, their contact details. Will people treat the currency as a commodity and value it?

Neil Farnan and Neil Cummings work with Machines Room to develop a currency whose aesthetic is designed by Metod Blejec. Wellbeing is represented by felt in honour of Joseph Beuys, fluorescent acrylic for Creativity, wood for Time and a leather-like material for Knowledge.

Karem Ibrahim, who runs the Southbank Centre Food Market, agrees to approach traders, offering them a pitch in the market in exchange for the affordable fare.

We struggle to keep up with the press schedule. Marsha Bradfield clashes with Metod Blejec regarding the poster and flyer image, resulting in two designs. As more stallholders are added, our organizational resources are stretched.

We spend late June and early July reclaiming as much material from the recent *BA Degree Show* as we can for our build.

Figure 1.44: The Currency working group led by Neil Farnan creates *TranActing*'s bespoke tokens for exchange – Creativity (fluorescent acrylic), Knowledge (birch), Time (grey board) and Wellbeing (red felt). Co-authored by Metod Blejec, Neil Farnan and Neil Cummings. Photo credit Neil Farnan.

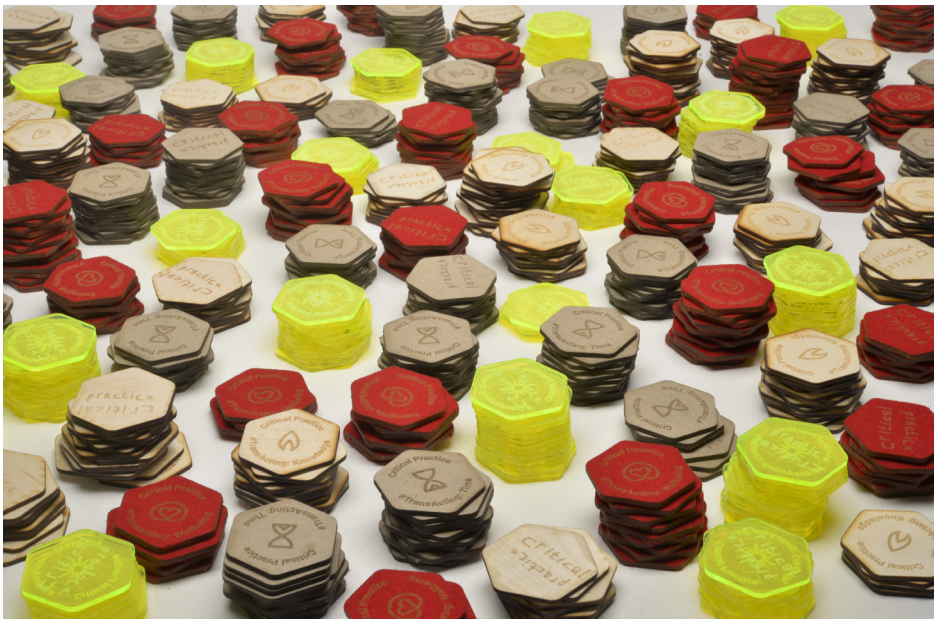


Figure 1.45: One of several stall workshops. From the left: Carlotta Novella, Karem Ibrahim, Claire Mokrauer-Madden and Andreas Lang (June 2021, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Neil Cummings.

Figure 1.46: Italian designer Enzo Mari with maquettes of his *autoprogettazione*, DIY furniture designs. Photo courtesy of Creative Commons.

Figure 1.47: A balsa wood maquette of the stalls based on the designs of Enzo Mari. Developed by public works and Critical Practice (May and June 2015). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

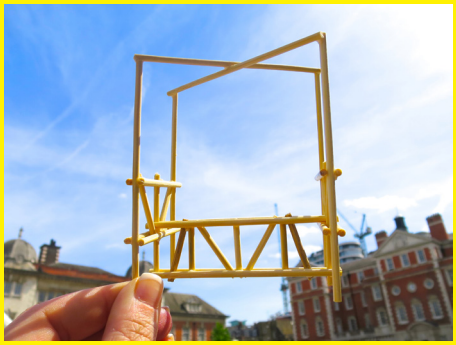


Figure 1.48: Building the stall infrastructure for *TransActing*. From left: Amy McDonnell, Silvia Krupinska, Natalia Romik and Clair Mokrauer-Madden (July 2015, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Neil Cummings.

Figure 1.49: Neil Farnan (in the hat) works with members of Artists' Union England to create their stall for *TransActing* (July 2015, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

July

In little more than a week, we make over 50 stalls from both salvaged materials and wood we order in. We use jigs so that people with different skill levels can take part in the process of building. An onsite facilitator helps newbies find their way around the construction site. Stallholders, students and others work with Critical Practice in the warm sun. Amy McDonnell keeps the builders fed and watered with rounds of coffee and Middle Eastern-inspired lunches.

Figure 1.50: The build for *TransActing* (July 2015, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Market day

The section 'Stallholders' reflections' that appears later in the publication offers a living portrait of *#TransActing: A Market of Values.*

Figure 1.51 and Figure 1.52: *TransActing* (11 July 2015, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

The day after

We are exhausted but manage to deinstall the market and clean up. Some stalls continue their life in a South London market, thanks to Karem Ibrahim, who manages to sell a few to market traders. We adapt the rest into tables and benches, distributing them in and around Chelsea College of Arts and other organizations such as Assembly in Deptford, a community programme against gentrification. The stalls' value far exceeds their significance at *TransActing*.

Figure 1.53: *TransActing* stalls enjoy an afterlife at Trade Deptford. Facilitated by public works and Assembly, this platform hosted events and discussions exploring the theme of local identity, gentrification and citizenship. Photo credit Maria Barnish.

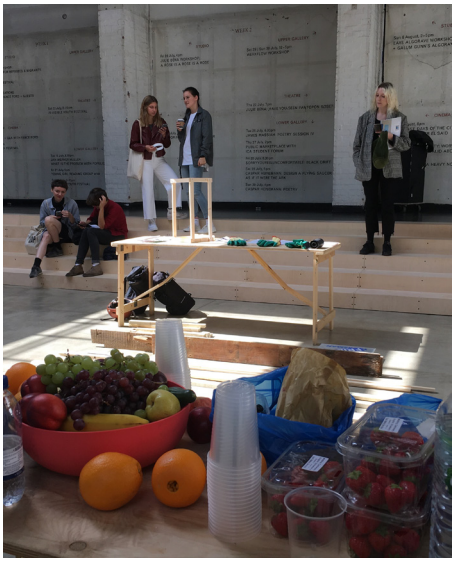
And ever after

In 2017, we are delighted to hear from curators Håkon Lillegraven and Cristina Vasilescu that *TransActing* has inspired their response to the question: 'Are non-hierarchical and collective modes of working possible within a structured organization such as the Institute of Contemporary Arts?'. The press release reads:

> The public is invited on a tour of the ICA's lesser seen architectural history, and to collectively build a structure on-site, using wood from the material framework of the ICA itself and prior artist projects. Building and investigating the materials which constitute the institution itself together, this workshop thinks through collective labour and an open discussion in a democratic and 'borderless' space within the ICA's hierarchical structure. This workshop is inspired by *TransActing: A Market of Values*, previously tested by the research-based practice hub Chelsea Critical Practice in 2015 and artist Javier Chozas' work 'The Day of the Beast'. (ICA Student Forum 2017: n.pag.)

This recognition gives us pause. The ICA had approached Critical Practice about partnering on the *Market of Evaluation* as *TransActing* was called in 2014. For whatever reason, this never materialised. And yet, the ICA has welcomed *TransActing* in retrospect as a precedent for non-commercial markets to come.

Figure 1.54: *TransActing* inspires the *ICA Public Marketplace* (part of *In Formation*) (21 July 2017, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.



An incomplete list of significant people

We want to honour our debt to all the wonderful people who have at some time or other enriched Critical Practice. This list also acknowledges that authorship is never straightforward and that even where texts and projects are ascribed to one or more names, those have been influenced and enhanced by all those who have passed by and touched us in some way.

Please forgive us if your name is not here in print but should be. This is a sign of our limitations and of the intensity of activity and connectivity of the ten plus years represented in this publication. All those to the right appear on the attendance records of our meeting minutes.

Aaron McPeake
Alexander Page
Amy McDonnell
Amy O'Neill
Andrew Chesher
Beatrice Schulz
Blanca Regina
Carlos Monleon
Catherine Long
Charlotte Webb
Cinzia Cremona
Claire Mokrauer-Madden
Corrado Morgana
Damian Taylor
Daniel Gleadall
Darrel Stadlen
David Cross
Deanne Tremlett
Denise Ackerl
Eugenia Beirer
Eva Sajovic
Ewelina Warner
Fangli Cheng
Gary Nash
Helen Brewer
Ian Drysdale
Isobel Bowditch
Jem Mackay
Joe Balfour
Karem Ibrahim
Katrine Hjelde
Ken Wilder
Kioka Williams
Kuba Szreder
Lawrence O'Sullivan
Manuela Zechner
Marsha Bradfield
Mary Anne Francis
Matthew Robinson
Metod Blejec
Michaela Ross
Mike Knowlden
Neal White
Neil Cummings
Neil Farnan
Phil O'Shaughnessy
Raquel Villar Pérez
Robert Dingle
Robin Bhattacharya
Rory Pilgrim
Sharon Bennett
Scott Schwager
Verina Gfader
Tim O'Riley
Tom Neill
Tom Trevatt
Trevor Giles
Trish Scott
Wayne Clements
Wei-Ho Ng

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critical

practice

TAKING ENZO TO MARKET OPEN STALLS

Neil Cummings (and Critical Practice)
Andreas Lang (and public works)

Critical Practice members Metod Blejec, Helen Brewer, Fangli Cheng, Neil Cummings, Karem Ibrahim, Amy McDonnell, Claire Mokrauer-Madden, Kuba Szreder and Verina Gfader met with Andreas Lang and Carlotta Novella of public works at their base in the White Building, Hackney Wick, London in May 2015. Critical Practice and public works have both been invested in researching the question: 'What is it to be in public?', through collaborative practices that engage spaces, fellow practitioners and others. public works is a critical design practice set up in 2004 that occupies the terrain in between architecture, art, performance and activism. Together with their interdisciplinary network, they rework the city's opportunities towards citizen-driven development and nurturing their rights over the city. Critical Practice knew that developing the infrastructure for the market and the act of building would be just as important as the market day itself; taking time to create the framework and structures that would facilitate activity was crucial. Therefore, it seemed like an excellent fit to work with the architectural expertise and conceptual sympathies of public works. Critical Practice brought with them the following questions to our first meeting with Andreas and Carlotta, and the following minutes outline the conversation that took place.

Some things Critical Practice has been thinking about

1. How to make a variety of market-like stalls?
2. Can we explore the potential of using sustainable and recyclable materials – bamboo, skipped things, unwanted things (unclaimed umbrellas), plastic cable ties, fabrics, etc.?
3. How to 'unify (?)' the heterogeneous and possibly 'shonky' stalls to make the market something beautiful?
4. How to think through the 'economy' of materials during the assembly process, from sourcing, constructing the event and post event? An ethics of material and labour.
5. The 'flow' of the market itself – how will people pass through, congregate and experience the market?
6. How to make the stalls/market 'scalable', able to expand and contract as stall holders commit, appear and/or change their mind?
7. How to think of the stalls/materials as resources for future use?
8. How to think about a mixed economy of materials?
9. How to organize the construction process? That is, working with volunteers and non-professional builders.
10. How to sort out the logistics?
11. How to activate the facades of Chelsea College of Arts and its glass fence with signage?
12. The Parade Ground at Chelsea College of Arts, where our event will take place, can be very noisy. Is this something we can mitigate for the *Speakers' Corner*, for example?
13. Shade/rain over... let us not tempt fate.
14. Taking stock of what we have: a lot of cord for starters!

Minutes

(taken by Carlotta Novella)

Andreas: The amount of money is very little. About a week before, we could collect materials from degree shows and use those.

Neil: It would be great to have a unit where we can prefabricate the stalls for the market. Perhaps, there is an opportunity to work with BA and MA Textile Design at Chelsea College of Arts to think about a cover for the stalls that could be used as an unifier (it would be included in the total budget). We currently have 4000 plastic cable tiles and five transparent tarpaulins. I am not sure about what sort of material will be left over from the degree show.

Andreas: In terms of economy, we should spend more time in mobilizing existing things, rather than building from scratch, as it is a one-day event. The roof might be complicated (structurally, and difficulties with the wind...). But I think we can find an elegant way for a localized solution (Mari [1974] 2002: 11 [a manual of furniture construction from very simple materials and processes]).

Neil: We can have a blueprint structure and then improvise on top of it.

Kuba and Andreas: The issue is the time – how much time can we all devote over a seven-day period for building on the site?

All: People should be available every day on site.

Carlotta: We could reuse the materials from other degree shows from University of the Arts London colleges.

Amy: Perhaps, we should consider more about transportation cost rather than material cost in order to collect materials from different spaces.

Andreas: It would be nice to have a formal arrangement so that there is a central collective moment. It should have an overall image.

Neil: If you shift the labour from the construction to the processing of old materials, this leaves less time for the actual production. The stalls have to recall a market and look like a market.

Andreas: We need to know who needs what? How many people need chairs, tables and benches?

Metod: I agree with Amy, perhaps we should consider transportation costs rather than material costs. Thirty-five per cent of people will not need chairs or tables for the stalls.

Kuba: In Critical Practice's previous event *PARADE*, we asked people to prepare signage for their 'stalls' to announce what they would talk about. It took us one hour to assemble fifteen stations like that. We could use the same textiles that we used for *PARADE* for roofing and for blankets and pillows.

Neil: There is a route from Tate Britain to Pimlico tube station that could be maximized as it cuts diagonally over the site where our market will sit.

Andreas: If you work with a wire and create tensions for elevations, we could use tarpaulin and cheap textile material with stripes or colours.

Karem: Markets have lots of problems (not enough structural stability, wind, rain, etc.), and makeshift solutions normally do not really work.

Neil: We should think if we can reuse the stalls for other events.

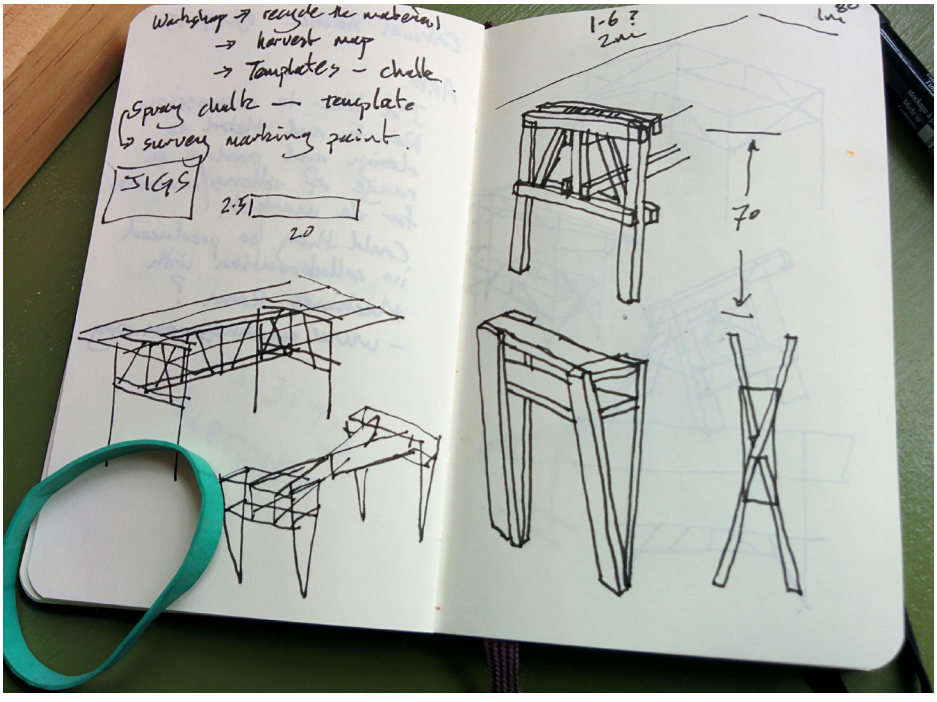
Andreas: Can we consider the stalls as public furniture that could then stay there longer creating a legacy for the market?

Neil: The square is hardly ever used. The only furniture that is provided is from a cafe that locks its tables and chairs up and very rarely puts them out for use. When Critical Practice worked with Folke Köbberling, thinking about the Chelsea College as site and resource, we made furniture that stayed on the Parade Ground for at least six months – and it was very well used.

Andreas: One way to justify the stalls staying there over the summer would be that they are actually used. We could park a container somewhere else, fill it with material and then move it to the site. If we can use spray chalk on the ground, we could create an 'Ikea-style manual' for people to assemble the stalls.

Neil: It is important to know how long it takes to make a stall and perhaps what are the different typologies. We should test some on the site.

Figure 2.1: Neil Cummings's notebook from the initial meeting, inspired by Enzo Mari's *autoprogettazione*. Photo credit Neil Cummings.



In thinking about how to construct the market stalls, the physical infrastructure for *#TransActing: A Market of Values*, we decided to try and embody our interest in resilient evaluative practices. As can be seen from the meeting minutes above, our intention was to recycle materials from the terminated degree show exhibitions at Chelsea College of Arts to produce the market's infrastructure. Every year, there is a suite of skips used to dump unwanted art-works, trashed exhibition-making materials and unloved things.

With this in mind, Andreas introduced Critical Practice to the *autoprogettazione* furniture series of Enzo Mari from 1974. The series utilized standard timber sections to produce a range of tables, chairs, beds and bookshelves, using simple tools – a saw, ruler, square, hammer and nails – and requiring only basic DIY skills. The plans, with dimensions and cutting log for the furniture, were also freely published by Mari in a premonition of a Free Libre Open

Source Software (FLOSS) ethic and a gesture towards a cultural and material commons. In the introduction to *autoprogettazione*, he wrote, 'anyone, apart from factories and traders, can use these designs to make them by themselves. The author hopes the idea will last into the future' (Mari [1974] 2002: 1). We decide to use Mari as our guide.

Andreas and public works coordinated a series of workshops where we prototyped, tested and developed typologies using the Mari table-truss as a constant, with iterations of different heights and combinations for seating, roofing support, stalls and meeting spaces. We worried about sun and rain. We worried about tarpaulins and wind loading. We worried about being too ambitious with our available time and energy, as well as the problem of overspending. We talked about the improvisatory nature of markets and the necessity of being able to reuse the stalls for other things after *TransActing*. Too often in 'art' projects, the incredible labour necessary for upcycling produces nothing but a temporary spectacle, itself destined for skip and landfill. To be true to the values we valued, we would need to ensure the stalls had a rich and varied life.

It was agreed from the outset that *TransActing* would wrest 'the market' as a bundle of technologies from its usual commitment to buy and sell for legal tender. The following captioned images give an account of the stalls' development and production.

At the second workshop led by members of public works, the working group brought Mari-inspired stall or seating proposals; there were drawings, models, some images and internet searches. We looked at and discussed them collectively to inform us of possible designs, materials or processes that could be employed for the market. We went to the Parade Ground to experiment by producing a table from Mari's designs, using salvaged materials.

Near the waste skip of Chelsea College of Arts, we found an abandoned structure and we broke it down for materials – 50 × 50 mm sawn softwood and screws. Soon, a template was measured and drawn using the dimensions suggested by Mari to make a truss and end elevations for the table frame. We learnt that the table was very simple to make, even from scrap materials and using hand tools, that it was easy to self-organize fabricating processes around it – cutting lengths, making components, assembling the frame – and that it enabled all of us to participate, whatever our DIY skills. What is more, it was stable!

Figure 2.2: Maquette of a possible stall design, using the Mari table truss. Photo credit Neil Cummings.

Figure 2.3: Prototyping stalls in a hands-on workshop. Photo credit Neil Cummings.

Figure 2.4: Production jig in use for one of the market stall sections. Photo credit Neil Cummings.

In previous workshops, we had gained experience and refined our designs to basically three types: bench, table and stall, each produced from a selection of five standard components. It became obvious that we would need a simple means of coordinating all the complex elements of the construction process. We would need to design jigs, tools to aid standardized production and organize action. The jigs would enable us to produce many stalls in a small timescale, organize volunteers with an unknown skill base, to facilitate our need to make use of recycled wood in different sections and lengths and maximize a limited resource budget.

The jigs and their makers enabled a group of people to construct the first stall; these temporary builders, via the jigs, now had the knowledge to instruct others. We began to classify our waste materials into section types, we removed screws and nails, we set about pre-cutting elements and stockpiling them. Some people who volunteered were able to commit to the whole construction period, others a lunch-hour daily, some a morning, still others a few afternoons and some just joined as they passed by because it looked fun. Some people were carpenters, others confident in their craft skills, others unconfident and some thought they knew nothing. The jigs easily accommodated all these differences and made every contribution – in terms of time, attention, skill, care or desire, no matter how small, productive.

During the production process, we discussed using the stalls *beyond TransActing* and we made provision for their afterlife. By sawing off the tarpaulin roof support and sawing down some of the longer legs, the stalls were transformed into tables. For several months, many were dotted around the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground at Chelsea College of Arts where *TransActing* took place, providing much-needed public seating and surfaces for working, lunching and socializing. Other stalls found new homes in studios and offices around the Chelsea campus, several went to an anti-gentrification project in Deptford, London, some to a community garden and others to a mobile kitchen.

Another output for sustainable practice resulting from *TransActing* was a portfolio of technical drawings. *#TransActing: Taking Enzo to Market* (Critical Practice and public works 2015) documents the stalls as prototypes to make the knowledge of their construction available to others wishing to assemble their own. The look and feel of *Taking Enzo to Market* and its ethos as

Figure 2.5: Some of the fifty stalls being assembled. Photo credit Neil Cummings.

Figure 2.6: Shorn of tarpaulin roof support, the stalls made beautiful tables in their after-market life. Photo credit Neil Cummings.

an accessible resource owe much to Mari's iconic and influential publication, *Proposta per un'autoprogettazione.* This translates from Italian as roughly 'a proposal for self-design'.

Mari's modestly produced coil-bound manual begins with the following description: 'A project for making easy-to-assemble furniture using rough boards and nails. An elementary technique to teach anyone to look at production with a critical eye' (Mari [1974] 2002: 1).

Mari goes on to express his hope these designs will enjoy a legacy fashioned through their ongoing use and invites anyone who builds them to make photos and send them to his studio at Piazzale Francesco Baracca 10, 20123 Milan, Italy. A Google search reveals that, since 1974 when *Proposta per un'autoprogettazione* was published, this address has been an ice cream parlour and bookshop.

While some things change, like tenancies, others remain the same, providing much-needed continuity, especially in tumultuous times. In this spirit, we follow Mari's example and invite those inspired to make stalls based on the typology for *TransActing* to send images and other documentation to criticalpracticeinfo@gmail.com. Below are a couple of indicative pages from *#TransActing: Taking Enzo to Market.*

Figure 2.7: Front cover of *#TransActing: Taking Enzo to Market* (2015). DIY your own market stalls with this free, 38-page booklet featuring open-source designs inspired by Enzo Mari's publication autoprogettazione (1974). Image courtesy of public works.

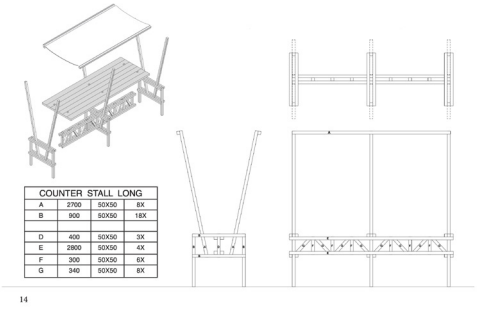


Figure 2.8: Sample page from *#TransActing: Taking Enzo to Market*. The open-source design plan for a 'counter stall long'. It was developed for *TransActing*'s stall typology, cued by Enzo Mari's *autoprogettazione*. Image courtesy of public works.

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STALLHOLDERS' REFLECTIONS

INTRODUCED BY AMY McDONNELL

Flicking through the following pages of stallholders' reflections is like walking through the clamouring space of a bazaar. All contributors have been included in the same open platform spirit of the *TransActing* market. In the physical space of *TransActing*, market stallholders were provided with the basic architecture required: a stall, a table, bench and a tarpaulin covering, which they were able to adjust and adapt to their requirements. In a similar fashion, we set a standard format for these written accounts, with a word limit and image request from each participant. Within these bounds, each stallholder has been free to make their contribution. In this way, the reader acts as an itinerant editor, as they wander through these pages, deciding which they desire to stop at to linger a little longer. In *Building and Dwelling: Ethics for the City* (2018), Richard Sennett describes the market as a 'synchronic space' with multiple activities vying for attention at the same time (240). Sennett writes that, 'people exchanging and interacting produces forms of the collage sort, making verbal edges and adjacencies, misunderstandings and shared understandings' (2018: 240). This energy, whilst at times confusing, also causes you to be alert, to use your senses, to engage by scouring, selecting and pausing to find out more.

Market technology is as ancient as it is adaptable. 'Bazaar' is a Persian word and the marketplace's structures of exchange can be dated back to early 3000 BC in Iran (Gharipour 2003). In Europe, the

history of the market stems from the agora in ancient Greece, which was an open 'place of assembly' in city-states. Any free-born male landowners who were citizens would gather in the agora for military duty or to hear statements of the ruling king or council. Later, the agora also served as a marketplace where merchants kept stalls or shops to sell their goods. From this twin function of the agora as a political and commercial space came the two Greek verbs *agorázō* ('I shop') and *agoreýō* ('I speak in public'). This dual function of circulating value found in *agorázō*, and the act of demonstrating and exchanging values in *agoreýō*, are key to the production of Critical Practice's marketplaces.

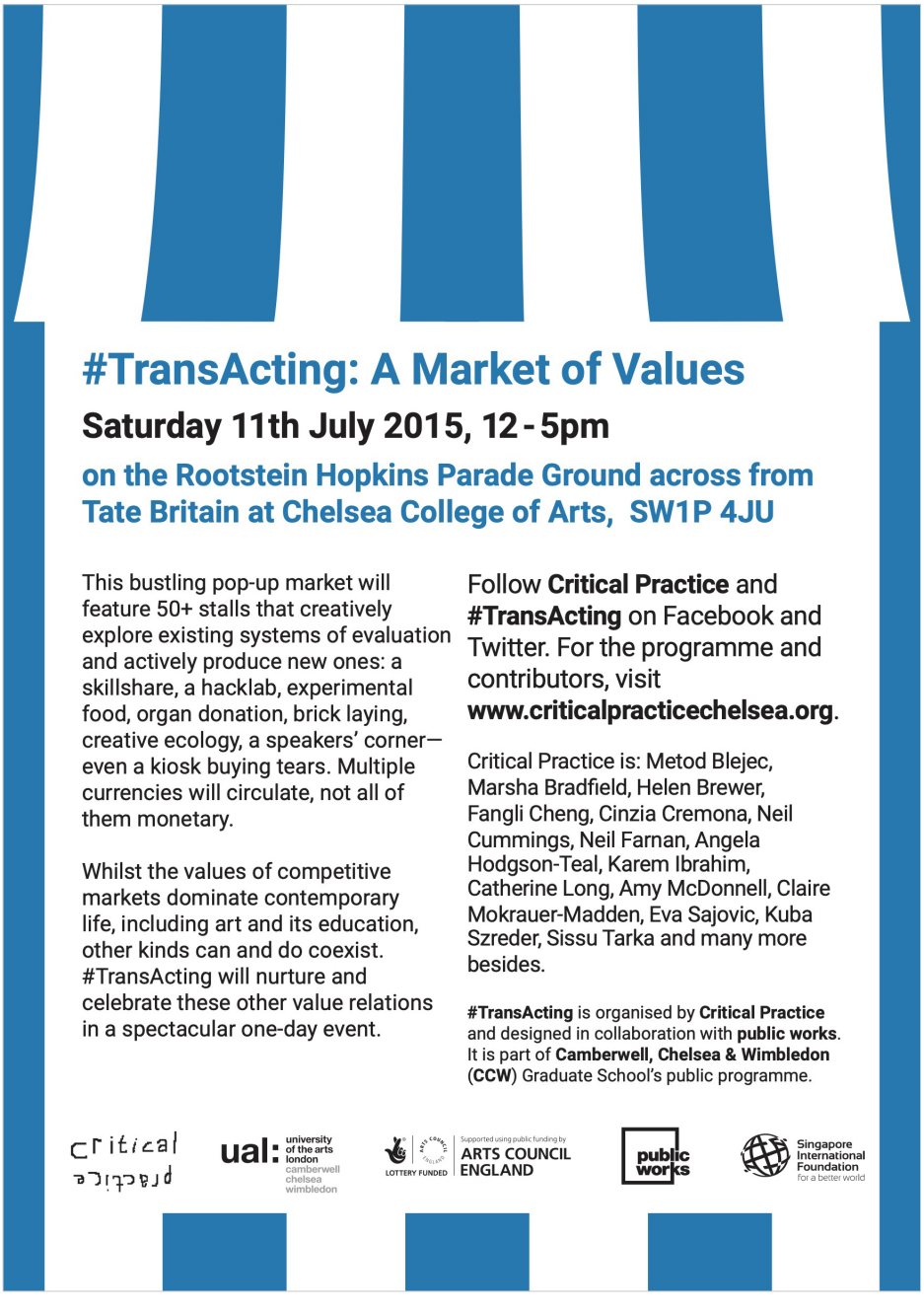
To be able to transact in public, to place the conditions of exchange in the 'open air' in a shared, 'common space' is a possibility that is under threat. There is a dwindling of these publicly owned sites, with the spread of seemingly public but actually private spaces. We can think, for instance, of Granary Square at our own Central Saint Martins (a constituent college of University of the Arts London), part of the 67 acre King's Cross redevelopment. Jack Shenker for *The Guardian* writes:

> Although they are seemingly accessible to members of the public and have the look and feel of public land, these sites – […] privately owned public spaces or 'Pops' – are not subject to ordinary local authority bylaws but rather governed by restrictions drawn up by the landowner and usually enforced by private security companies.(2017: n.pag.)

This demonstrates how crucial Critical Practice's insistence is on viewing all sites of interaction as a negotiation, a place of exchange where infrastructure, governance and therefore the ability to act, are traced and made transparent.

Critical Practice is especially interested in markets that instead of selling stuff and services, experiment with the simultaneous co-production and distribution of knowledge through one-to-one transactions. These take a panoply of forms such as conversations, surveys, gift exchanges, taste testing, bodily gestures, games and other contests of value. This value cannot be extracted without direct engagement: to discover the *Listening Stall* you must be listened to and listen in return; to connect to the Divest UAL stall you are drawn into conversation and decide whether to sign in support;

Figure 3.1: One of two flyers for *TransActing*. Image courtesy of Marsha Bradfield.



to 'know' the peripatetic *Invaluable Movement Stall*, you have to lend your weight, trust and support to another body. As Sennett describes, public spaces of buying and selling in a babble of bodies and voices are not arenas of passive consumption, but require you to have your wits about you, to have 'agora-smarts' (2018: 208). There was no passive 'audience' at *TransActing*, but a public of participants – a milling crowd animatedly transacting a medley of experience.

Diversity is essential to a vibrant market, and the stallholder reflections offered in this section gather together multifaceted snapshots from the traders who set up their wares for *TransActing*. The written accounts demonstrate a host of heterogeneous practices that can be seen in relation to the complexity and diversity of contemporary art practice, which today exceeds traditional patronage models of financial remuneration. To be frank, we can think of no better technology than the market for linking these together in the same timespace when the conventions of for-profit exchange are replaced by the logics of the attention economy. What catches your eye? How are you aware of the people, objects and atmosphere that surround you? What deserves further inquiry and what does not? Browsing is encouraged, but can we persuade you to trial and test out a little interpersonal and experiential exchange?

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Abortourism

Figre 3.2: The Abortourism Travel Agency compared the different healthcare protocols of distinct states to highlight the politics that govern the legislation, standardization and distribution of these technologies. Photo credit Abortourism.

Our stall was not directly involved in trading. Instead we reflected on the potential of the free market to bypass unjust and violating state regulations, as our slogan 'personal boundaries beyond state borders' summarized. The particular modes through which reproductive rights and reproductive technologies become curtailed reveals how relations between state and citizens are negotiated. The Abortourism Travel Agency compared the different healthcare protocols of distinct states to highlight the politics that govern the legislation, standardization and distribution of these technologies. We chose to emphasize the phenomena of medical tourism related to reproductive rights, how human dignity and autonomy come with a price tag.

On the day of the market, we left our car at home (would you trust some Eastern Europeans dealing from a car boot about reproductive matters?). We brought along our stall, spent the day offering people thyme and parsley tea (a folk remedy for late menstrual periods) and had interesting conversations about topics ranging from punitive technology to speciesism and Polish politics. Given our topic (and the backlash against it), this positive reception was a welcomed change.

Participating in the market was a unique experience. Our impression was that *TransActing* explored how value is constructed through market practices and how deeply the logic of capital penetrates our interactions, from the everyday and mundane to the

brave and bold. We liked the diversity of the goods traded, from human tears and organs, to the kind of artisan delicacies so popular in other London markets.

Artists' Union England

Emily Ballard

Figure 3.3: Artists' Union England trades on collective action for better working conditions. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Artists' Union England explores the value of artists' work and labour (monetary and other) in society, as well as the principles of solidarity and self-organization. At the time of the market, Artists' Union England was recently established as an independent and democratic body to represent visual and applied artists as well as artists with a socially engaged practice. *For too long in England, we have not had such a body to join.*

Right now, various factors encourage artists to act in their individual interests: freelancing, precarity, competition, funding and welfare cuts, the dominance of neoliberalism and the march of 'centrist' politics to the right, to name but a few. Artists' Union England believes that if we make a stand together with a common message, we can work collectively to bargain better rates of pay and raise working conditions for artists across the country.

Our activities are directed by our members' suggestions and opinions through processes, including voting, where we can aim towards decision-making by consensus. We have an elected executive who carries out the core union work on a voluntary basis. Because Artists' Union England is financially independent

of employers and funders, we can represent individual artists directly in the workplace, as well as collectively by campaigning and advocacy.

TransActing was a great opportunity to meet like-minded artists and practitioners. We discussed common issues and how we might organize around them. The values of Artists' Union England were affirmed through listening to artists' needs, suggestions and feedback. Sharing anecdotes and horror stories of low pay and exploitation in the art world can lead to more than mutual expressions of anger and contempt for the present state of things – it can galvanize us to act collectively and in solidarity to balance the power employers have over individual workers and create better working conditions for all.

Artists' Union England was represented by Emily Ballard at *TransActing*. Find out more at artistsunionengland.org.uk or e-mail info@artistsunionengland.org.uk.

Bello Gnocco

Francesco Marchese

Figure 3.4: Bello Gnocco fuels the market's milling crowd with bargain-priced Sicilian finger-food. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Food is in my blood. Before coming to London to trade on the Southbank, I had opened two restaurants in Sicily and spent my childhood in and out of my grandfather's trattoria. With my partner Obriana, we make all of our own food – including the pasta – with traditional recipes learnt from watching my grandparents' generation and their dedication to the produce that surrounded them.

TransActing needed food to fuel market-goers so that they had enough energy to continue transacting on other stalls. We made them arancini – a ball of ragu risotto covered in a crisp, deep-fried outer coating, which has its origins back in the tenth century in Southern Italy. We sold this Sicilian finger-food at bargain prices, as we did not have to pay for our pitch. In return, we sold each arancino for £2.50 rather than £3.50, as agreed with the curators of the market before trading began. This allowed us to break even by the end of the day. We talked to those who came to exchange their money for food about how the arancini are produced – the ingredients and the human labour involved.

You can normally find our stall at the Southbank Centre Market. To get in contact, find us on Twitter: @bellognoccouk.

Beyond the shopping cart

People's Bureau

Figure 3.5: People's Bureau hosts wide-ranging activities, including an embroidery workshop, bread-making session, evaluation exchange and language exchange. Photo credit Eva Sajovic.

People's Bureau is a participatory project and a space for the exchange of skills and needs based on the gift economy. The project was initiated by two artists, Eva and Rebecca, and it ran over several years from a dedicated shopping cart at the Elephant and Castle Shopping Centre. This activity worked with the social fabric of place through monthly workshop days that were often facilitated by local stakeholders.

At *TransActing*, Amy and the Rockingham Women led a session on embroidery for bunting. We gave our skills, our

concentration, our choice of colour and pattern without monetary payment. What we received was to be part of a multinational celebration of our ability to create.

We shared conversation with a debating group whilst engaging in fermentation for bread-making with Siriol. We talked about gentrification and the presence of private space in our urban environment with activists from ATD Fourth World as a way to continue working on the *People's Dictionary* (which asked people to redefine terms such as 'poverty' and 'housing' from their own experience). The People's Bureau cart also hosted a language teaching exchange with Jason and the group Young Latin Women. There was also Irish singing with Seamus, henna painting with Shahana in an exchange with a Turkish women's group from Oya, Ghent.

In parallel, we held an evaluation exchange with Jess and Sylvia of Professional Evaluation Centre, inviting people to talk about their experience of skills and value exchanges that are not paid for. This triggered critical reflection on the meaning and importance of mutual engagement in activities detached from money. Participants considered how they use such activities in their everyday life, highlighting the many ways in which the monetary economy can be bypassed through making social processes and shared interaction simple and economically functional.

The Bricklayers and the Artist: Pablo de Laborde Lascaris and Pangaea Sculptors' Centre

Lucy Tomlins

For many artists, the process of creation is the reason they began practising. Yet often, the excitement, energy and understanding wrapped up in this experience remains hidden from the public at large. *The Bricklayers and the Artist* was a sculpture–performance that explored the value of sculpting in public. The artist Pablo de Laborde Lascaris was taught this craft at *TransActing* by two bricklayers, Matt Connolly and Oláh Kálmán.

Figure 3.6: Pangaea Sculptors' Centre demonstrates bricklaying by building a tower inspired by the panopticon that once surveilled the area, when it was part of the Millbank Prison. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

The ambition was to construct a representation of a watch-tower, inspired by the panopticon that surveilled the Millbank Prison in the nineteenth century, straddling the site where Chelsea College of Arts stands today.

The Bricklayers and the Artist explored interdisciplinary and intergenerational skills and process exchange between an artist and craftspeople in the construction industry. Pablo is a talented artist who works intuitively and until the day of the market had never worked with bricks. Connolly is a master bricklayer who has honed his skills and learnt the rules of his trade over many years. Kálmán can turn his hand to anything, having originally trained as a carpenter. The collaboration between these practitioners was tested for the first time in the market, resulting in a steep learning curve and complex transactions across process, quality and contributions of time.

The Bricklayers and the Artist produced value through reflexive making and physical labour. These resided firmly in the phenomenological experience of learning through doing – becoming through practice. For the audience, the value was in the invitation to encounter, watch and question. Benches were set up on all four sides of the 'stage' to encourage passers-by to stop and watch the build.

The openness and informality of the market structure created a supportive space to experiment and to take risks in public. The premise of exploring alternative values was the perfect context to pilot our project on performing sculpture in public.

The Bricklayers and the Artist was curated and produced by Lucy Tomlins, director of Pangaea Sculptors' Centre. The project was sponsored by Wienerberger.

Bring-your-own-BBQ

Figure 3.7: Artist Francis Thorburn works the grill as part of *Bring-your-own-BBQ*. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

For *TransActing*, Francis Thorburn designed and built a pop-up BBQ and chillout lounge using only found or discarded objects. With help from students at Chelsea College of Arts, he salvaged industrial cable reels and converted them into outdoor furniture, giving an old oil drum new purpose as a monster BBQ pit, topping it with a bespoke grill.

On market day, Thorburn divided his time between playing 'host of the lounge' and 'boss of the pit'. People were invited to bring meat, fish, vegetables and other food to cook. They were also encouraged to relax in the *BYO-BAR-BQ* chillout area to enjoy their food and drink.

This stall was designed to challenge our understanding of the word 'value' in at least two ways. First, through giving discarded objects and materials renewed life, the lounge and BBQ questioned

the status of 'scrap' or 'scrapping' as confirmation of something's failure. Instead of judging its material value as set by a specific function, Thorburn wanted to focus on the dynamism of something's inherent worth. The lounge challenged how we think about value – especially generating value – by simply providing somewhere for people to relax with no expectation of return or exchange. True, participants were encouraged to share their food with those who had brought none. But the economy that crisscrossed the space, food and relaxation was largely spontaneous and its transactions were never formalized, let alone measured.

The art practice of Francis Thorburn is sometimes described as DIY because he works with materials that have outlived their perceived usefulness. Through meticulous and painstaking processes, Thorburn gives them new form, imbuing these materials with love and care regardless of their origins. The end results transcend the category of DIY with their optimistic idealism, which is both honestly hard-won and often knowingly amusing.

The Bureau of Exchanges

Anna Loveday Minshall

The Bureau of Exchanges focused on exchange as a space and process, particularly the problem of negotiating across different values and value systems. The stall played with bureaucratic formats: mission statements, terms and conditions, contracts and other expressions of legalese. These were humorous but based on simple principles of psychotherapy and conflict resolution, which aimed to promote social interaction rather than transaction as financial profit and gain.

The figure of 'the banker' has become a cliché for the less humanitarian and ecologically responsible aspects of capitalism. The Bureau experimented with subverting this role and that of the bank with the notional counter becoming an arena for reflecting on the worth of exchange. Clients were presented with six templates for transacting with me and a roll of paper unfurled between us, which became a surface where we reflected on our exchange through writing and diagrams.

What transpired on paper, in parallel to real time exchange, was not a tactical map of *TransActing*, but a diarised inner

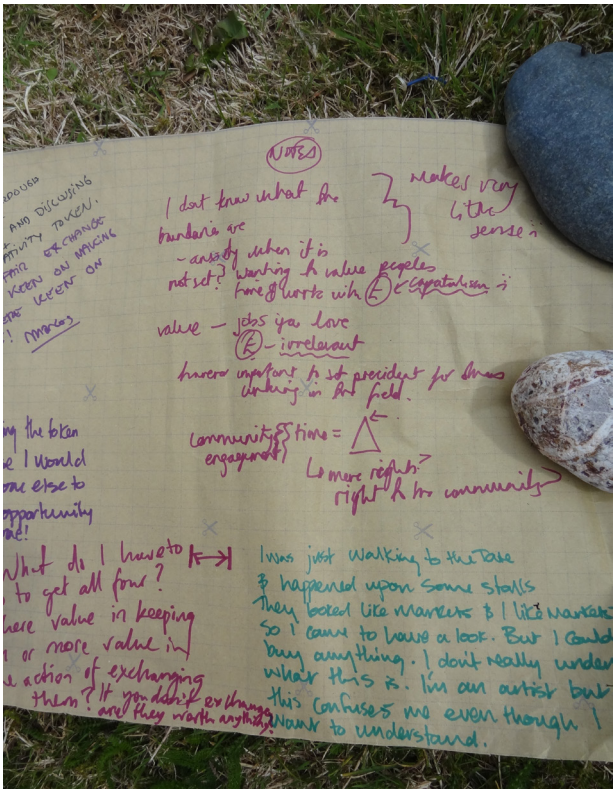

Figure 3.8: The Bureau of Exchanges plays with bureaucratic formats like mission statements, terms and conditions, contracts and other expressions of legalese to examine the pitfalls and possibilities of negotiating across different systems of value. Photo credit Anna Loveday Minshall.

monologue of thoughts that it may not have felt appropriate to voice aloud. These included reflective statements such as, 'the intention to please may sometimes override the feeling that a fair exchange was really made' and 'exchange is suffused with emotion that does not track with the abstraction of cold hard cash – feeling "short changed", for example, can be deeply embodied, experienced on an emotional or personal level'. The market's activity divided people into those not able to take and those not able to give, depending on their personal circumstances.

The most significant outcome of the day for me was a collection of conversations. They clarified that for many in the market, exchange was less about value and more about meaningful experience: the act of transacting with another and the responsibility this social engagement entails.

Calling for action for better gender balance in parliament

Figure 3.9: 50:50 raises awareness about gender imbalance in parliament, thereby highlighting the urgent need to redress this and other discrimination. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

50:50 Parliament is a cross-party, nonpartisan campaign aspiring to better gender balance in Parliament. The campaign calls for debate and seeks solutions to the historic lack of women MPs and peers. It is an inclusive campaign supported by men and women across the United Kingdom and beyond.

Of the 650 seats in the Commons, men presently occupy 459 (71 per cent) and women only 191 (29 per cent). As there are 268 more men, they outnumber women by more than 2:1. At the current rate, it could take over half a century to achieve equality. 50:50 wants this to be a priority today and works to educate and encourage women to become involved in politics. More than 100 years after women won the right to vote, 50:50 Parliament is calling for action so that women can lead, govern and legislate side by side, in roughly equal numbers, with men.

At *TransActing*, Frances Scott, director of 50:50 Parliament, engaged in public discussion at *Speakers' Corner* and exchanged opinions, knowledge and strategies with many men and women at the 50:50 Parliament stall. Putting into practice the suffragettes' call – 'deeds not words' – Scott encouraged around 50 people to sign the petition and join 50:50 Parliament, reaching 12,000 signatures!

Helen Pankhurst, great-granddaughter of Emmeline Pankhurst, supports 50:50 as does Philippa Bilton, an ancestor of

the famous suffragette Emily Wilding Davison who died when hit by King George V's racehorse as she stepped onto the course at the Epsom Derby. Bilton signed the 50:50 Parliament petition stating that, 'a suffragette did not die on Derby Day for women to be still fighting for equal representation 100 years on'.

Along with thousands of other men and women, help make history happen. Find out more at www.5050parliament.co.uk

CCW Tracers

Figure 3.10: Artist John Hartley (with a pencil behind his ear) and illustrator Tobias Benedetto (in the hat) work with other CCW Tracers to trace the flows and networks of Camberwell, Chelsea, Wimbledon Colleges of Arts. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

We call ourselves 'tracers' because we use our skills and sensibilities as artists, designers, filmmakers and other cultural producers to 'trace' the flows and networks that organize our lived experience as students and staff affiliated with Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon (CCW), three constituent colleges of University of the Arts London.

We were galvanized in the autumn of 2014 by growing concern with the domination of a competitive market and its impact on educational institutions. Convinced this monoculture is unsustainable, we explored the concept of 'communities of evaluation' in which other value is produced, maintained and reformulated. Our tracing began with taking the university as a potential example. We read and visualized aspects of its annual and other reports to better grasp the complexity of Europe's largest monotechnic of art and design: student/staff compositions, financial entanglements, aspirations and energy flows. Our tracing of this data enabled us to

collectively assess the resilience of the networks in which we find ourselves enmeshed.

Following the flows of the competitive market threaded through the university led this body of practice-based researchers to mine, untie and reweave traces of the Anthropocene by starting at home, from our institution, before spanning outwards. One rich conversation that took place at *TransActing* involved thinking through a Panasonic video camera that was being used to capture footage of the event. We researched and reflected on the company's sustainability, not from the perspective of potential investors, but as users of a Panasonic kit. We considered the people who make the tools of our trade as cultural producers, the kinds of workers' rights they (do not) enjoy. We discussed the materials and resources used to make, distribute and ultimately recycle the camera to better grasp its real cost. We used the market to more robustly evaluate the means of our production as creative practitioners and consider the future sustainability of our work.

The CCW Tracers included Tobias Benedetto, Marsha Bradfield, Molly Butt, Neil Cummings, David Cross, Karel Doing, Neil Farnan, Cici Kang, John Hartley, Anna Loveday Minshall and Deniz Paran.

Collecting keywords

Renée Ridgway

Figure 3.11: Artist Renée Ridgway uses keywords and analogue searching to raise awareness of how we value this everyday activity, both online and off. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Everybody searches. It is a daily practice, a habit even, where vocabularies are assigned to connect things, ideas, actions or to better understand our interests. Searches range from investigating local histories, querying online recipes, digging in library archives for a specific book, or searching Netflix. At *TransActing* we gathered keywords, negotiating our individual thoughts, activities and perceptions through an offline, analogue transaction of worthiness.

I engaged the market's publics to enquire into how people search, which words (usually nouns) describe their field of interest, their research, what they find important or more generally, what is on their mind at that particular moment. I then asked visitors to pick a colour from a selection of markers and to write down their keyword on one side of an index card. On the flipside, I asked them to assign value to their word in any way they so desired. The valuation ranged from a few words of contextualization to paragraphs and short poetics. Only one of the 43 people who participated used a number to evaluate their word. The 'quantification process' proved to be more qualitative than expected.

The keywords and phrases I collected form a 'folksonomy' that reflects #*TransActing: A Market of Values* and include:

experience, saudade, refit, rubicon, life cycle assessment, finally, obfuscate, nature, sound, embellish, coprophile, pulchritude, kindness, soprano, friendship, atom boy – atom girl, catalyst, freedom, decolonization, ebullient, composure, respect, yale, idiosyncracies, art of traveling, I forgot, extrapolate, equality, together, empathy, compassionate, help, ambitious, cleansing, generosity, love, divest, information, destruction, represent, authenticity, conflict.

Creative and resilient communities in London: Placemaking in the city – What is it?[1]

Ezio Manzini

Figure 3.12: Design academic Ezio Manzini brings to bear his thinking on social innovation with reference to London as a city in flux and reflects on regeneration as an expression of heterogeneous design. Photo credit Neil Cummings.

The stall bought, sold and exchanged information on *creative communities* – groups of people who, against the dominant tendencies towards urban gentrification and desertification, are capable of regenerating the social fabric and reproducing public spaces.

As I am totally alien to London's context, I started the day having nothing to sell or exchange except some general ideas on design and social innovation (concepts that I had already proposed in the book *Design when Everybody Designs* [2015]) and some thoughts about related intuitions (coming from my experience on UAL's *Cultures of Resilience* project). My hope was to sell/exchange these ideas and intuitions for some good examples of creative and resilient communities in London. And then, to re-sell/re-exchange these examples, increasing their number during the day.

Endnote

1. London, as all large cities, is quite a fragile system and, considering the most visible trends, its fragility, in both physical and social terms, is increasing. Nevertheless, this negative scenario is not the only one. Observing London in a more attentive way, we can recognize very diverse and contradictory signals. Amongst them, a growing number of formal and informal initiatives aiming at regenerating communities and places, and doing so, at creating more resilient urban systems. Looking at these promising signals, a totally different image appears: the one of a city where several community-based initiatives, driven by a new form of creativity, permit us to build a new scenario. It is a scenario that tells us the story of a city where creativity spreads amongst its citizens and becomes the engine of a bottom-up movement towards resilience and sustainability. This takes diverse forms, from localized actions at the margins to highly connected and 'smart' ones, some hidden or unrecognized, others highly visible. In building and enhancing this scenario, art and design can play an important role. Communities' diffusive creativity can in fact be interwoven with that of artists and professional designers, exploring its contents, amplifying the message, making it clearer and more effective, creating what can be called the Resilient & Creative London Scenario (visit www.culturesofresilience.org to learn more about University of the Arts London's *Cultures of Resilience* project [2013–15]).

CuratedThis!

Figure 3.13: The not-quite-formulated manifesto of CuratedThis! Photo credit Elliott Burns.

As curators-in-training, members of CuratedThis! were facing the imminent prospect of unemployment, job searches and maybe another low-paid or even unpaid internship. Preparing to leave our educational cocoon, CuratedThis! devised a trade stall designed as part declaration of intent and part research platform to gauge our employability and the worldly relevance of our discipline.

Trading a not-quite-formulated manifesto, presented in a bespoke hand-stapled publication format and limited edition CuratedThis! stickers, we encouraged everyone to find the curator in them. Obviously, we did not realize that this could in fact undermine our job prospects.

Aware that winter was approaching, literally and metaphorically (we graduated in December), we agreed upon a strategy of trading our wares for as much *TransActing* currency as possible. Like a squirrel collecting acorns, we would ride out the cold weather with our hoard. This worked up to the point when we were told to spend it to help stimulate the market economy.

CuratedThis! were Adriana Arreola Barroso, Elliott Burns, Špela Pipan, Jake Charles Rees, Louise Laage Toft and Yusi Xiong. The CuratedThis! (2015) publication was created with contributions from Osman Ahmed, Alison Green, Alice Humphreys and Andrew Marsh.

Currency

Neil Farnan

Figure 3.14: The Critical Practice currency for trading – Wellbeing (red felt), Time (grey card), Knowledge (birch plywood) and Creativity (fluorescent acrylic). Photo credit Neil Cummings.

Of course *TransActing* would have existed without the Critical Practice currency, but this currency *did* become embedded into the market experience of both visitors and stallholders: a device to highlight the very nature of the market itself. It was designed to facilitate understanding of what the market was all about: the

celebration of diverse value relations that have no cash equivalent and the unrecognized values that contribute to society. As a unit of account, it was a device that allowed reflection and focused attention on the moment when values are transacted, in other words, making intangible value transactions tangible.

At the early stages of planning, we envisioned a bustling market with multiple value transactions. By looking back at our past research, such as a hack of Monopoly, we were able to select values which coexist with, but that are excluded from, a cash economy. These were creativity, knowledge, time and wellbeing. The creation of a circulating tender was an opportunity not just to create a local currency but to change the notion of money and what it represents by demonstrating an ecosystem of value exchange.

To work, a new system of barter needed to be accepted, valued and capable of trade. In a one day event with many transient visitors and some stallholders having their own ideas of exchange, this could have proven difficult. But in the end, it worked out better than expected. Each entrant to the market was given a currency (usually Time in return for their time – a universal basic income) and was briefed that the stallholders may ask for it or something else to trade. Previous to this, we also told each stallholder about trading the currency and they were given a float to start the process. To a large extent, everyone engaged with the currency, which proved to be a catalyst for transaction and participation, as well as being a great conversation starter both for traders and visitors. The currency even became collectable and desirable. It could be said that most people came away from the market richer than when they arrived.

Divest UAL

Georgia Brown, David Cross and Amy McDonnell

Divest UAL believes that financial value and social values must be considered together and called on University of the Arts London to divest its direct and indirect investments from the fossil fuel industry. It has been calculated that 80 per cent of fossil fuels must stay in the ground if we are to limit global warming to 2 degrees

Figure 3.15: Climate activist Georgia Brown admires the Divest UAL banner. Photo credit Neil Cummings.

(McGlade and Ekins 2015). Indeed, the realization has grown that 2 degrees of warming, far from being a safe limit, is a threshold beyond which the world loses control. Moreover, it is not enough to address climate change just in our personal routines; it is crucial to act collectively in the organizations we function within. This is not a moment to shy away. Written on behalf of People & Planet, Platform and 350.org, Ric Lander's report, *Knowledge & Power* says:

> UK Universities have a combined investment wealth of £62.2 billion. Conservative estimates suggest £1.9 billion of this sum is invested in the fossil fuel industry but our research suggests that a figure of £5.2 billion is more accurate: an investment in fossil fuels of £2083 for every student in the UK. (2013: 5)

Divestment, or the removal of investment from fossil fuels, is rapidly changing the way that the fossil fuel industry is perceived by reducing its 'social licence to operate', a term first used in 1997 by Jim Cooney, former vice president of Placer Dome mining company (Lacey et al. 2012: 1).

The UAL Divestment stall at *TransActing* stimulated many constructive and engaged conversations and launched a petition, which at the time of writing, has almost 500 signatures from staff, students and alumni of UAL and other higher education Institutions, representatives of Friends of the Earth and members of the public. These people have shown their support for UAL to connect its values with its operations, not only to help avert climate crisis by

divesting from fossil fuels but to help build a more just and sustainable society by investing in renewable energy.

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Economy of Promises

Early Lab

Figure 3.16: Members of Early Lab offer drinks to the market's thirsty crowd in exchange for promises for better mental health, such as 'I promise to ask someone how they really, really are'. Photo credit Early Lab.

Free drinks that come with strings attached.

On a hot sunny day, the Early Lab team knew what would go down well with people: delicious, naturally flavoured, ice-cold water. In posses of two, we approached parched market-goers with our freshly made refreshments and invited them to quench their thirst in return for making a promise. Before agreeing to the transaction, people could check how onerous the promises were by reading them off the ribbon attached to every cup. Here are two examples typical of the many promises made on the day: 'I promise to ask someone how they really, really are', 'I promise to be honest about how I really am when someone asks'.

This economy of promises was enacted to combat the stigma that is so detrimental to people's perceptions of mental health. Based at University of the Arts London, the Early Lab team believes that a culture of openness, peer support and community collaboration are the values through which mental health concerns can be addressed. We chose not to have a physical market stall because this initiative demanded that we were mobile. This reflects our research into what a mental health service should be. An effective service anticipates needs and should go where its users are, rather than wait passively to be approached – it should be everywhere and be integrated with other services.

As designers, we can often feel overwhelmed by large societal problems like mental health, which we seem to have no control over. However, nurturing small moments that explore new attitudes and behaviour is exciting. The intention of this small, modest intervention was to sow the first seeds and get people talking about emotional wellbeing.

Our experience of the *TransActing* market was that it yielded receptive participants, including stallholders and, to its credit, was extremely fertile ground for a currency based on empathy.

Education, community and self-organized groups

Open School East

Figure 3.17: A child chips away at the ice block that Afshin Dehkordi used to explore diminishing value. Part of the stall for Open School East. Photo credit Neil Cummings.

At the time of writing, Open School East was a self-organized group of fourteen 'associate' artists. We paid no fees but were provided shared studio space in the Rose Lipman building (Haggerston, London) and other resources to produce socially engaged art. It is the kaleidoscope of vested interests that make Open School East dynamic and is the source of its strength.

Open School East's values are determined to some extent by the crop of associates; each year a new cohort redefines and recalibrates the programme's working practices and aspirations. As part of the experiment in fee-free, non-accredited, post-graduate level arts education, the associates are less bound by the stranglehold of market-led education and the commodification of the student.

Open School East's stall in *TransActing* displayed a collection of ephemera and publications that reflected the experiment's role within this landscape of art education. Much of this content resulted from ongoing support and solidarity with United Voices of the World (also featuring in the market's *Speakers' Corner*), a union that campaigns to improve the working conditions of migrant workers within art institutions.

In the market, Open School East associate Afshin Dehkordi explored the notion of value, worth and its appreciation – or depreciation – over time. Dehkordi wheeled around a market barrow carrying a 100 kg block of ice, regularly pausing to shave this melting cargo as he distributed it to refresh stallholders and the public. This practice invoked the *Yakhi* ('ice') men of Iran. They would trundle around their commodity at the height of summer, chiselling precisely to the needs of each householder. But the value of their ware – their very income – would diminish before them as the minutes passed and the thermometer rose. This practice continued until eventually modernization delivered home refrigeration and readymade ice cubes. In the context of Open School East, Dehkordi's performance asked: 'Is unconventional arts education melting away to be monopolised by the readymade convenience of packaged higher education?'

Emotional Baggage Handling Service

Figure 3.18: Colour coordinating the Emotional Baggage stall with red felt Wellbeing coins of the Critical Practice currency. Photo credit Belle Tidswell and Barley Massey.

'It is hard to really listen to people and it is even harder to be heard without conditions being attached', observes Belle Tidswell. Together with Barley Massey, she runs the Emotional Baggage Handling Service. Marked by discretion and respect, this service offers users unconditional expression. It offers people

an opportunity to express themselves, to take some time out, to offload. Tidswell again: 'Often, just having the chance to analyze or communicate an emotion, problem or feeling is a positive step towards finding a solution'. Participants are invited to write these anonymously on sticky notes, which the service keeps in trust for six months and then burns. This 'left luggage' facility reminds us that emotions are finite, even fleeting. Negative thoughts can pass more quickly when we acknowledge them, enabling us to leave them behind. For better or for worse, it is unlikely that half a year from now we will feel the same as we do today.

'Each interaction was unique,' reflects Tidswell, with the service and the participant sharing a moment in time. This transaction could be taken either seriously or tongue in cheek. Either way, it encourages those involved to experience a sense of emotional ownership, understanding and expression. Tidswell and Massey feel there is a place in art and design for this kind of emotive audience participation and interaction. It helps us appreciate how psychology shapes our experience as human beings whilst placing interpersonal exchange at the heart of social life.

Finance(ing) System for Art Dealing

Doris Koch of Büro komPleX, Berlin

Figure 3.19: Architectural researcher Helen Brewer draws out her newly acquired investment, a mobile prop-agator, at Doris Koch's stall exploring the *Finance(ing) System*. Photo credit Doris Koch.

At the *Finance(ing) System for Art Dealing* stall, several types of values were closely connected: artistic, societal and financial. The system took up, reflected and transformed aspects of the global financial system to create an artistic practice that focused on dealing in these very systems as a way to understand and highlight how they function. I presented one particular element of the *Finance(ing) System* at the stall: *Koch-Shares*, which took the form of stocks and currency, participatory notes and money. How the value of the circulating *Koch-Shares* performed depended on the dealings of those who held them – without (trans)acting, the value of the *Koch-Shares* decreased.

One possible way to start (art) dealing was to withdraw your *Koch-Shares*. Current owners of the shares (from before the market) gave me the task of asking visitors to the stall if they wanted to draw out their newly acquired investments and fifteen people took the chance to do so. The *Koch-Shares* were re-evaluated on 11 July 2015 at *TransActing* to show that these fifteen transactions slowed down the increase in their value by 0.27 per cent. This raised the Kunsthandeln-Performance-Index (KUPEX according to the FTSE 100) from 12,274 to 13,325 points. But what does this mean? Are these just numbers?

These transactions also directly impacted on what was 'on the table' after the market at the end of the financial year, since the share's value dictated the menu at the annual Share-Takers Meeting. Depending on the share's success, there is a differing level of abundance each year – the amount of courses produced and ingredients used are all directly related to the value of *Koch-Shares*. But is an increase in quantity also an increase in value? What about the quality of the ingredients? At *TransActing*, passionate talk about the current state of our financial system took place whilst trying to better understand how it functions together.

Finding Money London and Paris Diary

Antonio Contador and Carla Cruz

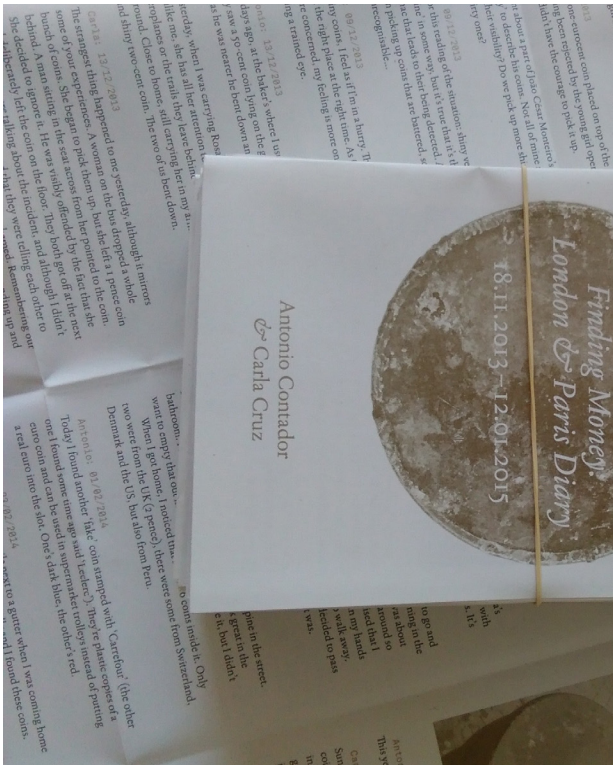

Figure 3.20: *Finding Money London and Paris Diary*, a pamphlet created and shared by artists Antonio Contador and Carla Cruz. Photo credit Carla Cruz and provided courtesy of the artists Antonio Contador and Carla Cruz.

This stall focused on an everyday occurrence: finding money on the street. Collecting money was an excuse to discuss broader socio-political issues related to value, honesty and privatization, but it was also an opportunity to delve into methods of artistic research. I initiated the project *Finding Money* in 2009, and it transformed into a collaboration in September 2011, when both Antonio and I started collecting found money simultaneously in Paris and London.
The year-long cycles of performative search were recorded through an ongoing diary. This narrative documentation has been the main source of material for performative events such as walks, talks, astrological consultations, broadcasts and magic sessions.

During *TransActing*, I exchanged copies of the publication *Finding Money London and Paris Diary* (2015) for any of the currencies circulating on the site and – because it became evident that some people wanted to keep the currency coin given to them as a souvenir – I also gave away some of my currency to visitors so they could keep on exchanging it within the market. So, interestingly enough, it seems that as soon as a currency is created, collectors will emerge. However, the most significant episode, which relates perfectly with our project, happened towards the end of the event when I found two Wellbeing coins on the ground. Light and soft in matter, these were the perfect coins to lose for they could easily be blown away by the wind and made no sound when they fell. However, they were very bright in colour, thus easy to spot on the floor. Needless to say, I was thrilled that such an incident occurred even though the market, with its experimental currency, only lasted for five hours.

Finding Money was first presented in Marseille in 2013 and developed further during a six-month residency at Gasworks/Open School East two years later (January–June 2015), supported by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

Fortune cookies

John Teddy Chan

Figure 3.21: One of John Teddy Chan's limited edition fortune cookies. Image courtesy of the artist.

I produced 300 limited edition and custom-made fortune cookies and disseminated them at the market. I aimed to generate conversations about the value of readymades, in this case a ubiquitous snack that is often offered as a freebee after a Chinese restaurant meal or with takeaway orders. The artwork was transacted through my sale of the cookies as well as discussing their significance with market attendees.

FREE EDUCATION

School of the Damned

Figure 3.22: Bikes are emblems of freedom and thrift, making them the ride of choice for many artists. School of the Damned congregate near their banner, which reads, 'FREE EDUCATION'. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Based across the United Kingdom and coordinated online between meetups, School of the Damned is an alternative unaccredited postgraduate programme run by its students and supported by a growing circle of visiting lecturers and tutors. It was constituted as a reaction to institutionalized financial exclusivity within art education and provides artists with the opportunity to study in a space that allows for critical discourse and a sustained reassessment of students' art practices. The school is constantly redefined by the motives of its students and aims to establish a new network of artists, academics and institutions, who not only advocate free education but also demand a universal acknowledgment of education as a fundamental right. A crowd favourite at *TransActing*, School of the Damned hoisted a massive banner over its stall that read: 'FREE EDUCATION'.

From ‘Letter to a Teacher’ to ‘Letter to a System’

The Common

Figure 3.23: One of the market’s most popular stalls, *From ‘Letter to a Teacher’ to ‘Letter to a System’* facilitated by The Common with help from art educator Josh Y’Barbo. Photo credit Kerri Jefferis.

Our projects are often based on exchanging ideas through conversation. The group, whose membership is in constant flux, has instigated a range of platforms for these exchanges – often using the creation or imaginary of the collective to produce questions (and answers) together.

For *TransActing*, we built a survival shelter fashioned from abandoned degree show detritus, aka the ‘potpourri of broken dreams’. It was a place to protect people from the impending apocalypse (and the sun, as it was a rather hot day and no one fancied getting sunburnt), complete with harsh lived-reality, academic zombies and fallen asteroids.

We used the shelter as a gathering point to forge and identify a trail into an uncertain future – a trail to litter with breadcrumbs as a path for those seeking alternatives. This project assembled the roaming public including Damnees (students of School of the Damned) and Associates (of Open School East). Their discussions held at *TransActing* built on the ongoing project, *Letter to a System*, which takes its inspiration from an earlier version, *Letter to a Teacher*, composed by students at the School of Barbiana, Italy in 1967. The current letter exists as a collection of anecdotes,

thoughtful reflections, advice and warnings. There was a long-term plan to edit the letters into a single document, one that collates the voices of criticism and celebration offered up by a self-nominated group of BA Fine Art graduates.

The letter was both a response to the inefficiencies of the National Student Survey (NSS) and a conscious effort to feed back through a format that resists quantification and, in doing so, diversifies and unites the conversation. That same academic year, the letter was due to be published and circulated across the United Kingdom, landing on the doorstep of every arts university. As well as featuring traces from *TransActing*, it included an invitation to future graduates to create and share their own.

The Common is now dispersed but e-mail contact@kerrijefferis.com, who acts as a conduit of this collective authorship.

The Giant Doll's House project

Catja de Haas

Figure 3.24: Artist Catja de Haas uses shoebox dwellings to explore the values of home. Photo credit Catja de Haas.

Participants in the *Giant Doll's House* were asked to make a miniature room in an empty shoebox. The boxes were then linked with ramps, ropes and ladders to create a series of spaces. This collaborative project was, and still is, a work in progress that reflects the way in which communities can grow. It also highlights the importance of having a place for home and work as integral to everyday life.

For *TransActing*, the boxes' trade value was prioritized. They were assembled and linked at the beginning of the market and people could buy one by giving £1 to the London-based housing charity Shelter. New owners personalized the interiors by making furniture, wallpapering or decorating them in some other way. The houses could then be resold. A sticky note with the seller's mobile number was hung in their shoebox so that potential buyers could text to negotiate a price. The doll's house market was not regulated, and participants were welcome to buy as many boxes as they wished.

We predicted that there might be a shortage, with some people owning several boxes and others none, and we wondered whether this trade in doll's houses would mirror the real housing market. It turned out that most people were willing to sell their houses on after they bought them, with many adding furniture or wallpaper before doing so. No one really cared about the sale price or wanted more than one box. The only participants who did not want to sell their houses were children who became completely absorbed in the project and insisted on taking their 'new house' home. Whilst this experiment did not mirror the real housing market, important ideas about home and housing were exchanged.

GoodGym

Ian Drysdale

Figure 3.25: GoodGym in action as they literally run over to help with last-minute construction. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

GoodGym can be described as a community of runners who cross-train, getting fit whilst creating social change through hands-on

activity. It works like this: groups exercise together, punctuating their runs with one-off tasks ranging from social visits with the elderly to – in the case of *TransActing* – lending a hand to build market stalls.

Further to this, as a former member of Critical Practice and chief technical officer of GoodGym, I came to the market to share the company's mission. This springs from frustration with conventional gyms, especially their tendency to squander their members' energy, dissipating it on reps and exercises, when there are abundant opportunities to practically apply this in the world and make a difference. In 2008, after many years of imagining and testing alternatives, this vision found form and was submitted to Social Innovation Camp (a project that brings together ideas, people and digital tools to create web-based social start-ups). What followed was a period of rapid development at the Camp, garnering the project first prize. Proof of concept resulted from GoodGym finding legs in Tower Hamlets and in 2009, this coalesced into a Company Limited by Guarantee. Since then GoodGym has worked with the London Legacy Development Company (established to further the local impact of the 2012 Olympics) and NESTA (the social innovation enterprise).

What GoodGym helps us to appreciate is that transactions take multifarious forms, including familiar but also underutilized ones. When we operate our bodies, businesses, etc. with diversified intention and purpose – and we coordinate our efforts, thereby increasing the scale and intensity of our engagement – our activity has heretofore unthinkable potential. Of course, leveraging this logic drives capitalism. But this does not mean it has a monopoly on transactions. GoodGym demonstrates a model of social enterprise that is quite literally more fit for purpose when it comes to enriching wellbeing and interpersonal connection amongst both individuals and communities.

HALLUCINATRON 5000™ micro-hallucinatory theatre

Joey Ryken

Figure 3.26: Artist Joey Ryken demonstrates the *HALLUCINATRON 5000™* micro-hallucinatory theatre. Photo credit Joey Ryken.

For *TransActing* I placed the *HALLUCINATRON 5000™ (H5K™)* in the market – a portable theatre-cum-hallucination-chamber worn by individual users. Transaction was complicated through multiple layers moving from the novel chicanery of fairground spectacle, to the superstitious seduction of spiritualist scams, to the entangling of audience-as-art-object put up for auction and finally to test the results against an actual philanthropic cause.

The *H5K™* was slow to gain interest from the market audience, but eventually picked up momentum, attracting a broad range of participants – adults, children, amused, bemused, confused and

some anxiously suspicious. I explained to curious attendees that the *H5K™* was a hallucination machine that accumulated their psychic and orgonometric energies, transferring them to my Spectral Plasma Net, worn over my head and body to enable me to 'read' their energies. Interpreting these energies intuitively, I translated them into hand-drawn psychic portraits. I explained that the portraits would contain a small percentage of their inner energies and so would be highly valued as invocatory objects amongst daemon summoners and spell casters worldwide. By participating in the experience, users of *H5K™* were forfeiting these energies to go up for auction on eBay, which they would be invited to bid on to reclaim (which I recommended). I explained that the proceeds from these auctions were to be donated to the Wixarikari people of Jalisco, Mexico, who have maintained a hallucinatory cultural cosmology for millennia, resisting outside conquest for the last 500 years.

Interactions varied a great deal with the majority of participants either mainly interested in the sensorial experience of the *H5K™* or else superstitiously nervous about what could be done with their 'portraits'. Ultimately, it was very successful for my intentions – to perform value as a process of magical intent, at once a spectacle, a scam, a projection and a promise.

In the red: Catalysing value since 77 AD

Angus Cameron

Figure 3.27: Geographer Angus Cameron discussing the value of mercury. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

What is the most valuable substance in human history?

There are many possibilities, but one substance stands out: partly because we have been using it for so long – thousands of years – and partly because it has contributed to so many systems of value. That substance is *mercury*...

Mercury is nasty stuff. Now largely banned through the 2014 Minamata Convention, its toxicity has been known for centuries. Writing in 77 AD, Pliny the Elder warns eloquently that it should be avoided. But even he cannot avoid its usefulness. In Pliny's day, and much more since, mercury was an important chemical catalyst. Liquid at room temperature, mercury dissolves all metals (except iron). Without mercury's ability to leach gold and silver from the ores of the New World, Europe's empires would not have been able to fund the industrial revolution or to embark on the beginnings of modern finance. Since then it has been essential to global chemical, electronics, medical and military industries. Capitalism as we know it was catalysed by mercury.

No one said value had to be nice.

Even before all that, mercury ore – cinnabar – gave us the pigment vermillion. A symbol of power in ancient Rome, this bright and stable red was essential for the painters of the Renaissance. Long before then, it was a sacred pigment in many east Asian cultures. The first Chinese emperor was famously buried in a tomb in which a model of his empire's rivers ran with liquid mercury…

We transacted stories of paintings, maps, lighthouses, disease, wars, empires, banks and power. We barely mentioned Mercury the deity; though as god of money, theft, marketplaces and boundaries – all things transactional – he haunted proceedings anyway.

And my experience of *TransActing* is that people love a story.

And will pay for it.

In passing

Alice Tatge

I sought to explore the concept of success versus failure: how do we codify these two oppositional positions, where do we place ourselves on this scale of values and how can we change our perception of ourselves by shifting/subverting this value system?

Figure 3.28: Live artist Alice Tagte creates a picnic-style interface to explore the qualities of success and failure. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Success has always been linked with a certain economic and social status. By opening up an exchange on the subject of success and failure, I wanted to remind each passer-by of the value of immaterial success: intuition and second sense, procrastination and restlessness, chaos and the unknown.

In each one-to-one encounter, I asked a series of questions in and around the subject of success and failure, and the value system it creates. I combined conversation-based engagement with other sensorial stimuli to cause a 'glitch' in the process of rational deliberation, in order to access the participant's more surreal and oneiric thought associations and memory cabinets connected to their own personal history. These sensorial stimuli included a visualization exercise, a kit of 'olfactory potions' and storytelling – the experience was a cross between a dialectic debate, a psychoanalytical session, a shamanic ritual and a mind massage.

Only the participant who 'takes a leap of faith' can fully access the work's content by allowing their own 'internal choreography' to take place in the intimacy of their own mind. The participant is both the subject and object of the work, both choreographer and performer of their own story. Ultimately, my intention is that of creating a temporary environment or transitory site, where the visitor can experience a dialectic process between physicality and thought, a space to reflect on their place in the world, hopefully through the lens of another value system, if only for an instant.

Invaluable movement: A workshop exploring the value of moving together

Dafne Louzioti

Figure 3.29: Dafne Louzioti's dynamic stall uses contact improvisation and Capoeira Angola to experiment with paired movement. Photo credit Metod Blejec.

Value? What value? If identity and self-worth are constructed in terms of productivity and capital value, what happens to actions with indeterminate outcomes? How can rethinking the body's hierarchy of balance and movement affect how we view the hierarchies of value? What use can the awareness of how to move with another person have?

This walking stall used the principles of contact improvisation and Capoeira Angola in exercises to unpack the subtlety of cooperation, competition and individual action in a pair. The level of physical work was light and ranged from leaning onto one another, to trying to turn and lean on the other's back, whilst engaging in discussion throughout. These pairings with the public led to sharing weight, letting go a little of one's sense of balance and relying on another person to remain moving without falling to the ground. The purpose of the interaction was to consider how the organization of our bodies is related to the organization of our values – capital or otherwise.

The exchange was that of weight in the interest of generating a shared moment of inter-dependence and honest communication

– if the intention was not authentic, the balance did not work. What remained was the experience and the transient moment of re-organized corporeality. Within this *Market of Values*, one was led to question not just how we ascribe value to things, but to what do we ascribe this value? What does the potential for challenging existent value hierarchies have to offer? For me, proposing such action within the context of the vibrant and diverse *TransActing* market, which questioned the traditional format of goods exchange, led to this: unless the very structures we are embedded in are taken apart, no alternative values can truly emerge.

Jacob's Ladder

Jayne Duveen and Michael Duveen

Figure 3.30: Biodynamic beef from Jacob's Ladder. The burger was served with a piece of Wellbeing currency. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Everyone has heard of organic, but our biodynamic farming goes further – we aim to mimic the biodiversity of nature so, for example, rather than just farming either cattle or crops, the two are brought together to create a more harmonious symbiotic relationship. The more diverse a farm, the more rich all aspects will be.

It takes two years for a traditional beef breed to reach maturity and a further nine months for a cow to produce her first calf. It takes up to two years for the calf to grow and 'finish' before it is ready to be butchered. The carcass is then hung for a minimum of three weeks to allow the meat to mature and become tender. The skill of the butcher lies in their knowledge of the animal's anatomy and in producing a wide range of 'cuts' that utilize the whole carcass.

As meat eaters, we should appreciate what it is we are consuming and be aware of our food's provenance.

Each adult animal needs about three acres of land to support its requirements throughout the year. They graze on herbs and grasses that are suited to their highly organized digestive system and they range in herds to seek out new pastures fringed with thick hedgerows and woodland.

Because of the nature of our soil types, heavy animals must be kept off the land over winter. They are housed in large airy barns where they are bedded on coarse grass or straw and fed on hay made on the farm in June and July, when the grass growth is abundant. In the spring, when the cows are again turned out onto the pastures, the manure is removed from the barns and composted to be returned in the autumn to the fields from which the hay is taken in a large cycle of resources.

All of our meat can be fully traced back to either Jacob's Ladder Farm or one of a handful of farms that supply us. We do our own traditional butchery and prepare our own burgers. As we sold our burgers to market-goers for cash we also exchanged information about being responsible towards animals and all of the benefits of holistic, biodynamic farming methods.

Find out more at jacobsladderfarms.co.uk or contact us via Twitter: @jacobsladderfms.

Liquid Memory

Natalia Romik

Figure 3.31: The mirrored sign for the *Liquid Memory* stall, where vodka helped us remember. Photo credit Neil Cummings.

> ‘Is that vodka?’ asked Margarita weakly.
> The cat gave a little jump on his chair in resentment.
> ‘For pity’s sake, my Queen,’ he wheezed, ‘would I really permit myself to pour vodka for a lady? This is pure alcohol!’(Bulgakov 1996)

Memory is a subject of evaluation: secretive and revealed, private and collective, real and non-real, constituted in the most intimate moments and articulated through exchange.

In the context of the market, I transacted in memories, with each exchange propelled by alcoholic drinks. Surprisingly, the liquidized memories found a lot of patrons. We probed these recollections together, tasting and testing them. For example, we ventured on a virtual trip to the Brompton Cemetery, where previously a bottle of herbal liquor had been tumbled near mossy gravestones, on pavements overgrown by grass. The taste of herbal vodka, infused with the aura of this tranquil space and accompanied by my stories of a trip, catapulted patrons into their own memoryscape, enabling them to recollect their own intimate reminiscences and revisit forgotten gaps.

Other bottles contained phantoms of economic transformation, the rustic idleness of remote Kashubia, spectres of abandoned Jewish buildings, like the Pre-Burial House in Gliwice. Holding a glass of hand-made honey vodka we discussed spheksophobia and hive architecture. The stall, a wooden structure interwoven with glittery and reflective fabrics, brought back tastes and memories long forgotten, transplanting spatial sensations to the vivid market of liquid transformations.

Listening Stall

Mark McDonnell

A ‘market of values’ with the money removed; the transactions remain, here labelled Knowledge, Time, Creativity and Wellbeing in an attempt to capture something of the complexity that passes between us, marking our essential interrelatedness. Keeping the market but taking away the money was a brilliant stroke. Nothing that happens between people is ever purely economic; there are

always persons involved. People are surely embedded in networks of relationships branching and spreading through the present and the past. Maybe the selves, which, for convenience, we imagine as individual entities, are but nodes within a matrix of relationships. Maybe our every relational movement is turned and influenced according to the tautness or looseness of the myriad ties that hold us in our social space.

Relationship, I came to understand, is what the *Listening Stall* was about. I tried to offer what were billed as 'listening skills' but were actually elements of a listening attitude composed of welcome, acceptance, respect and warmth. People came and gave me something of themselves, to the extent that they wanted to or felt safe to. Ordinary stories sometimes went to another, unexpected, level of sharing. So it was a transaction, or better, a relationship, which we created together every time someone sat down with me. I ended the day tired but happy; every encounter had been a wonderful privilege.

Lo Scarto (Touch)

Elena Cologni

Figure 3.32: *Lo Scarto* (*Touch*), 2015, result of participants interaction, clay, *c.*6 x 12 cm. Photo credit Elena Cologni.

In *Lo Scarto* (*Touch*) participants connected in pairs through soft clay. This eventually becomes distorted in the process of manipulation whilst defining the space between the pairs into unique objects. Such a socially negotiated practice allows embodied memories (carried in gestures and habits) to be exchanged as a form of knowledge of one another conveyed through touch. This form of

engagement, of prelinguistic dialogue, is a reciprocal dynamic of question and response. A 'question' already implies an openness towards the other's background and differences (cultural, gender). In particular, in the encounter the question informs the empty space between hands, which has been inhabited. The distance between two people, a materialized topography, a 'place memory' acts as point of contact, exchange and separation.

Participants feel and listen in order to respond as a way of sharing one's own experience to inform the other's. This is also how communicative memory works, through the integration of different traditions, an aspect of which will be lost or discarded along the way – *Lo Scarto* is an offcut, scrap or residue of culture. The exchange happens in the present of the encounter, when embodied memories surface through pulling, pushing, pressing, joining, connecting, adjoining, abutting, tapping, patting, nudging, prodding, poking, feeling, stroking, rubbing, brushing, grazing, fondling, caressing, petting, tickling, fiddling with, fingering, thumbing, handling, affecting, concerning, involving, moving, stirring, arousing, making/leaving an impression on... Thus, the residual space between hands is shaped, through touch, embedding who we are in response to each other.

Management Architecture Research

S. E. Barnet

MAR, or Management Architecture Research, is a pursuit to make evident practical relationships between monetary profits and the practice of educational inquiry. Co-existing between a surplus of available information within the public domain and often unacknowledged internal agendas, actual management structures can be obscure and difficult to appreciate. The MAR agenda looks at how power and control are allocated and how they circulates through administrative arrangements as well as underlying formal and informal associations and networks.

For *TransActing*, information in the form of posters was distributed through a roving delivery system. In exchange for these posters, people were asked to respond to a short survey including

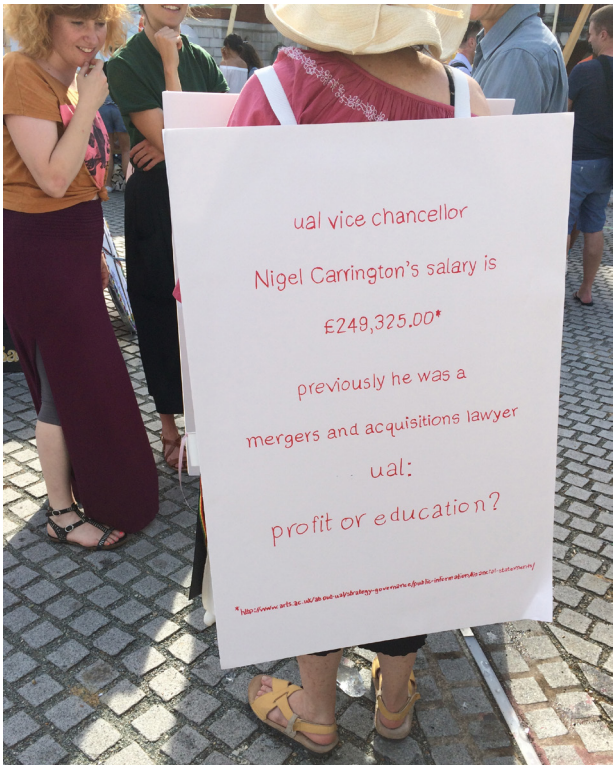

Figure 3.33: Evaluating priorities – artist S. E. Barnet wears a sandwich board advertising the salary and background of University of the Arts' vice-chancellor. Image courtesy of the artist.

contact details. Through this informational transaction, MAR endeavoured to unpack policy and encourage debate surrounding current management configurations and activity. Fundamentally, this is about where value lies within the organization and management of the educational institution.

This was the event debut for MAR and it offered considerable interaction with a fairly broad range of the public. The responses manifested significant discussion surrounding a variety of issues ranging from ethical inquiry to suggested approaches and underlying causes. These extremely valuable conversations included a few areas in particular. One concerned a more transparent style of management – management that encourages a flow of knowledge both up and down the hierarchy of the system. This allows practical intelligence of the efficacy of policy to then accurately reflect further policy. Second, there is a look at underlying structures within ideological frameworks. This concerns the allocation of value within the organization as manifest through the scale of profit and the particulars of re-investment within the institution to ensure the best possible education. Currently, there is concern about the accumulation

of debt under the agenda of various large capital investment projects and again their worth towards the delivery of education. These results allow for a refinement of the potential focus and aims for MAR.

Master of the Universe (2015)

David Cross

Figure 3.34: Artist, academic and activist David Cross wearing his graduation robes from the Royal College of Art and dressed as the zombie, *Master of the Universe*. Photo credit Neil Cummings.

At my annual appraisal, I had been told that although I was working hard, nothing I was doing was having any effect – I was just a lone researcher, and unless I showed that I really cared, my institutional relationships would wither and die... So for *TransActing*, I hired my graduation robes for Master of Arts at the Royal College of Art and paid a makeup artist to give my head and hands the appearance of putrefaction, in homage to the occupy movement's use of the zombie as the figure of contemporary capitalism.

I made a spectacle of myself as the living dead: a professionalized academic, warning of ecological catastrophe, and the

destruction of value through the pursuit of money, yet implicated in the commodification of my own cognitive and affective labour. I 'acted out' as a lone researcher, a spectator rather than a participant in the positive exchanges going on around me. Recalling the tradition of the robed mystic in the marketplace, dispensing predictions, knowledge or wisdom in return for payment, I stumbled around, muttering distractedly. But I barely spoke, and asked for nothing.

Master of the Universe refers both to the financiers who caused the global financial crisis and to the masters of the university, struggling to negotiate the resulting paradoxes and conflicts.

Medical Research Council London Neurodegenerative Diseases Brain Bank

Judith Lyons

Figure 3.35: Judith Lyons highlights the value of brain donation to the Medical Research Council London Neurodegenerative Diseases Brain Bank. Photo courtesy of the stallholder.

Human brain tissue is an essential resource for neuroscience researchers in their battle to design new strategies and develop future treatments for neurodegenerative diseases. By participating in the market, we hoped to facilitate encounters that would raise awareness of the importance and value of human brain donation. Brain-themed activities for both adults and children offered a way

to open up meaningful dialogue and promote public engagement. Visitors to the stall seemed genuinely interested in learning more about the work of the brain bank and the act of brain donation. Many wished to discuss their own experiences in dealing with friends and family affected by neurodegenerative disease; time and personal testimony were generously shared, whilst the brain bank staff were able to answer questions and provide knowledge and information.

At the craft table, children sculpted brains from Play-Doh, made neurons from pipe cleaners and produced colourful brain images. Many of the artworks were subsequently 'donated' to a gallery on the stall, where they could be viewed and enjoyed by others. Whilst a willingness to donate their creative output seemed less well developed in those visitors under five, the pleasure that they took in these simple forms of artistic self-expression was hugely rewarding to observe.

Many visitors completed a form requesting further information about brain donation, a sign that the stall had succeeded in one of its primary aims: to raise awareness about the value of sharing an organ that although once vital for its donor can, after their demise, go on to benefit others.

Mending for Others

Becky Earley and Bridget Harvey

Figure 3.36: Artist Bridget Harvey doing a hands-on mending demo. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

The act of mending our clothes needs a total reinvention. We have neither time nor often the inclination nor need to patch up

our garments, as we would have done in an era of pre-abundance. Artists, designers, creatives, as well as the general user can all add something unique to the act of mending – distancing it from its position of outdated domestic duty and shame of patched clothing and instead making it an act of resilience to co-create something that bonds, person to person, and perhaps person to garment.

The stall was based on previous work; *Elastic Learning Tools* and *Mending for Others* were both part of the institution-wide project *Cultures of Resilience* (University of the Arts London, 2013–15) and MISTRA Future Fashion (research into systematic change in the Swedish fashion industry, 2015–19). This iteration of *Mending for Others* explored object ownership and emotions as well as mending as a 'service' for others. It was about mending for other people that you know, mending as 'giftivism' and mending as social bond.

Participants brought a garment with some form of damage – holes, missing buttons, stains. The damage should have been something that can be mended by hand and something they did not feel confident at attempting themselves. Damaged shirts were provided for those who came empty handed, as was other mending equipment. Children were able to join in by making fabric patches using fabric pens and stencils.

Mint(ed)

Colin Priest

Figure 3.37: Exploring the complex value of mint. Photo credit Colin Priest.

Mint is perhaps one of the most undervalued herbs around. Beyond the fiscal wordplay, the mint plant has remarkable currency as a medicine to aid indigestion, freshen breath and alleviate nausea, to a 'negativity' detergent when mixed with boiling water in Victorian homes, and was even used as a tax payment in biblical times.

For the market, a lucky dip of fresh mint was freely available to awaken these overlooked narratives. Over the day, alongside public watering, trading evolved – from mint chewing gum, to a guest lecture, help offered for a conference and a few promises to hashtag an image at *TransActing*.

Mobile Prop-agator

Helen Brewer

Figure 3.38: Architectural researcher Helen Brewer activates her *Mobile Prop-agator*. Photo credit Helen Brewer.

I remember slowly pushing the prop-agator through the early summer crowds, navigating the corridors in between market stalls. This mobile device was a stall that performed on site – overtly political, defensive and autonomous. Like the Russian constructivists, it disseminated 'revolutionary' information through agitation. Housing a typewriter and reams of paper, the structure mobilized itself in *TransActing*, collecting conversations, events and stories. Both producing the content and distributing the content itself. The structure was small scale, lightweight and temporary. The information collected was wheat pasted onto the device's sides, sheets of paper layered on top of one another, whilst stallholders and the public conversed with the writer inside or took up the position themselves. Inside the structure, you had a window into *TransActing* – a literal frame of reference that allowed for the values of the market to enter and interpret themselves. At the end of the day, a manuscript was formed of the collected information. It consisted of poetry, snippets of conversation overheard, a child's first time typing on a typewriter, stories from the past, present and future... and the collective public's stream of consciousness.

The Money Weaver

Tal Drori and Giovanni Innella

Figure 3.39: Money weaving – before and after. Large photo courtesy of Neil Cummings; inset courtesy of Tal Driori and Giovanni Innella.

At *The Money Weaver* stall, market-goers were able to give two banknotes of £5 and get them shredded and then woven into one. We explored the relationship amongst three elements: the material

value of things we buy, the value of the labour required to turn materials into products and the cultural context in which products are traded.

The dynamics and mechanisms of the cultural industry are at times hard to decipher. Under a varnish of cultural values, products hide the agenda of several stakeholders. As a consequence, just like any other industry, the cultural industry embodies processes and principles of capitalism and consumerism. *The Money Weaver* aims to visualize the economy generated by the cultural industry, its values and principles. In doing so, it explores the overlap between the 'cultural' and the 'commercial'.

Music by the Metre

Graham Dunning

Figure 3.40: Artist Graham Dunning distributes lengths of audio tape in homage to the work of Giuseppe Pinot Gallizio, part of Situationist International. Photo courtesy of the artist.

At the stall, I gave away single metres of tape (off-the-peg) and also made a unique cassette edition (while-you-wait). Almost none of the stall's customers would actually be able to play the one metre of tape as few people still have the equipment to play cassettes. In this way, the tape mostly serves as a token, a souvenir.

The basis for the *Music by the Metre* project was as an audio homage to *Industrial Painting* by one of the founding members of Situationist International, Giuseppe Pinot Gallizio. The artist used an automated painting machine, along with other techniques, to fill long rolls of canvas with abstract art. These were then cut up into lengths and sold by the metre. In his manifesto, *Discourse on Industrial Painting and a Unitary Applicable Art* (1959), Gallizio writes: 'Perhaps the machine is the only instrument qualified to create art that is inflationary and industrial and therefore based on the Anti-Patent' (n.pag.). He planned to make unique artworks on an industrial scale, to make them entirely available and to usurp the economy, by flooding the market and causing inflation.

My project is ostensibly the same concept copied in audio: mass produced abstract music recorded to spools of tape and sold by the metre. However, I used this activity as a route into a discussion about value – contemporary avant-garde music, Creative Commons culture and the notion of the art object or artefact. Gallizio discusses in his manifesto a '*potlatch* system of gifts that can only be paid for by other poetic experiences'. Potlatch is a Native American term relating to a gift-giving ceremony, in which items are 'wastefully' given away or sometimes destroyed. All of the stock on the stall was given away as opposed to being sold. The value visitors brought to the stall was their curiosity, anecdotes, time and social engagement.

Reference

Gallizio, Giuseppe Pinot (1959), *Discourse on Industrial Painting and a Unitary Applicable Art*, https://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/industrial.html. Accessed 30 July 2021.

Organ donation and splenic palpation

James Van Der Walt and Angela Hodgson-Teall

James is a specialist nurse at St Thomas' Hospital and Angela is an artist (and a medical doctor in a past life). We enticed participants to 'double blind draw', have their spleens palpated and finally give

Figure 3.41: Artist and former medical doctor Angela Hodgson-Teall palpates a spleen. Photo courtesy of the artist.

over their organs. As an interim measure, participants created mini-lungs, livers, hearts, brains, bones, skin – not to mention eyes and ears – in ceramic clay as a pledge towards the donation of the real thing as a posthumous event. Even guts were created as a prelude to giving the actual innards to others in need. Ten brave individuals signed up on the day. Many more were already organ donors. Angela offered the palpation, which James described as a 'massage' and is used in medicine to discover whether the spleen (which sits opposite the liver and under the stomach, primarily acting as a large blood filter) is enlarged. This practice was undertaken on the participant who lay down, with eyes closed, moving slowly along a scroll of white paper with a stream of graphite. Double elliptical doodles emanating from a pencil in each hand, whilst the spleen was massaged.

This act of giving, without expecting financial reward at times of crisis is still encouraged. Neil Cummings from Critical Practice arrived to sign up for organ donation. He offered a transaction, swapping Knowledge counters in the local currency for Time. He was refused. He tried a two-for-one barter but was refused again. Eventually we managed an equal exchange of Knowledge for Time – another market-goer echoed Tennyson's cry, exclaiming: 'Capitalism, "red in tooth and claw"' (referencing Tennyson [1850] n.d.: canto 56). In his famous poem *In Memorium A.H.H.* [1850] n.d. the following lines also appear: 'Tis better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all' (canto 27). It is this sense of fellow feeling that allows one to gift a heart to others so that they might enjoy a sense of wellbeing, in the knowledge that these others will have a longer time to live.

Reference

Tennyson, Alfred [1850] n.d., 'In Memorium A.H.H', The Literature Network, http://www.online-literature.com/tennyson/718/. Accessed 30 July 2019.

Open Circle Feedback (Ceramic Version)

Dan Scott and Trish Scott

Figure 3.42: Artists Trish and Dan Scott facilitate an open-feedback session as a space for market-goers to reflect on and make sense of their experience at *TransActing*. The small clay items on the blue bag/plinth were produced in the process. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Open Circle Feedback (Ceramic Version) was a space for feedback, critique and evaluation of the market. We invited visitors to table

items for discussion triggered by their experiences of *TransActing*. Over the afternoon, a blackboard filled with questions and statements for debate. Some people hosted discussions themselves, others proposed topics that we discussed on their behalf.

Debate moved from the ethics of 'widening participation' and institutional art targets, to the extent to which art can effect change and the types of agency individual artists have in the current political and financial climate. We discussed whether a market structure was the right one for exploring alternative values and what the impact of the event would be. One of the topics tabled was a proposal for 're-crapification', which developed into a thought experiment about reversing the effects of gentrification.

Our conversations were mediated by purposeless making: participants joining the circle each took a lump of clay to mould and shape as they chose, in tune with the discussion. The clay objects that accumulated in the centre of the circle took on a documentary function. One woman looked down at her hands and said in surprise, 'I thought I was going to make a pot but instead I've made a… a squished… plate-like thing'. She then commented on how our discussion had influenced the making, despite the ambiguity of what she had formed.

Open Circle Feedback was underpinned by a reciprocal exchange of knowledge based on people giving time and sharing ideas. It was also a listening space and wellbeing was discussed in this context, one visitor remarking that the conversation and making had improved her state of mind. We gave currency to visitors who contributed a question or who spent time listening. Our offer was often greeted with surprise, as the transaction of speaking and listening seemed enough.

OpenValues

Metod Blejec and Taja Topolovec

What are your core values, work ethics, beliefs and the passions that you base your professional practice on? What kind of values do you want to share with other people through collaboration? With OpenValues we are developing a platform for a worldwide community of individuals, groups and organizations built on shared values. We are aiming to connect like-minded individuals and existing

Figure 4.43: OpenValues – using visual icons to connect people with shared values on a global scale. Photo credit Metod Blejec.

initiatives through the power of visual icons – and to do so on a global scale.

#TransActing: A Market of Values offered a stage where we tested and discussed several of our core ideas with market-goers. The findings that emerged from these discussions gave us a clear indication that people want and need to connect with like-minded people, to build bridges between creative communities. The problems they face are firstly, where to find others on an international scale and secondly, how to quickly communicate what they care about within their community? It is here that OpenValues steps in.

OpenValues is in its beginning stage, developing a solid foundation on which we will build and connect with others through our common values. Our idea is simple – to share what we care about to form new connections and collaborations.

For more information, please visit our website: openvalues.org.

Permaculture/Permablitz

Kayode Olafimihan

Permaculture: creating sustainable human habitats by following nature's patterns.

The most sophisticated and important trade hubs in the world are invisible to the human eye. They are based on reciprocity – each contributes and all benefit. They happen in the ground – in the rhizosphere (the root zone of plants) where the nutrient cycles begin. These trading posts, in billions of transactions every day, exchange water, sugars, nitrogen, phosphorus and other essential nutrients forming a soil-food-web of life. Although competition is present,

Figure 4.44: Permaculturalist Kayode Olafimihan activates the *Permablitz London* stall. Photograph courtesy of the stallholder.

this web depends on dialogue and communication that cycles information and food through the ground. Its foundation is made of millions of species of bacteria and fungi that provide natural fertilizer(s) for the plants who in return feed them sugars and proteins from their roots. Healthy rhizospheres containing bacteria, fungi, protozoa, nematodes, arthropods, spiders, earthworms and beetles are the most diverse and abundant ecosystems in the world. There are more living creatures in a teaspoon of such soil than people on the planet.

Permablitz London: Edible Garden Makeovers is a social experiment that seeks to emulate the kind of give and take exemplified by the soil-food-web. Using permaculture ethics and principles and a wide range of design tools, we bring people together to create edible, wildlife-friendly spaces through free permablitz days open to all. Permablitzes spread by stimulating networks of reciprocity and mutual support: once you have helped at a few, you can have one of your own. Our makeovers aim to co-garden with the soil-food-web, wildlife and plants to maintain health and build fertility, typically creating plant alliances that mimic natural ecosystems.

Photographing Girls

Julia Riddiough

Photographing Girls is a project that uses archive imagery from pro-am photography manuals that utilize the male gaze and viewpoint to photograph women in order to sell products or just to look and consume women. As we are told – sex sells! But exactly what kind of sex sells? These images sell more than just the product

Figure 4.45: *Photographing Girls* uses archival images of women to sell sex. Photo courtesy of Marsha Bradfield.

– they sell us concepts of sex and the positioning of sex using the women in these photographs. The 'female' is being projected as a fantasy rather than showing a realistic portrayal of women.

The proxy of looking is the authority to represent someone else in the act of looking. We are being sold a story that has been premised on pipe dreams and illusions. The media uses stereotypes to sell us things that we do not really need and these stereotypes create a false sense of ourselves, of the ways in which we are able, allowed or made to see, ultimately defining who we are and how we should live.

Participating in *TransActing* gave me the opportunity to connect and get feedback around the *Photographing Girls* project from a range of individuals with different values and perspectives. People generously shared insights, experiences, confidences and viewpoints as we traded Creativity and Knowledge. Although my last visitor, after much discussion and debate said quite emphatically 'I am not buying into that!'

Platform

Rosanna Thompson

Platform is an organization driven by the need for social and ecological justice that combines arts, activism, education and research. The values that our stall explored included creativity, knowledge and passion for social change. Many people were intrigued to find out about the various ways in which Platform uses artistic methods to create and sustain political campaigns – the connection between art and politics is often a strange one to grasp at first.

Figure 3.46: Rosanna Thompson shares information about ecological justice at Platform's stall, featuring the organization's materials related to art, activism, education and research. Photo courtesy of Marsha Bradfield.

Platform began in the 1980s to connect art with political movements and as an organization they have developed this cohesion through creative campaigns, courses, research and events.

At the market, many people exchanged their Time coin in order to learn about Platform and were given a Creativity coin in exchange. As an alumna of Platform's Shake! course for young people, I spent time chatting with potential participants for the next one, telling them about the creative workshops that form a space to imagine what justice looks like. We discussed how it gives young people an opportunity to find their voice, make their own media, as well as being introduced to many concepts and approaches to think about issues such as race, power, media and art.

When people came to visit Platform's stall, wellbeing was exchanged through conversations, which reflected on our mutual or differing concerns, working through them and facing tough questions about the future of 'the art world' and its sponsorship by the oil industry, an issue that Platform tirelessly engages with. The Platform stall was also a chance for both stallholder and market-goers to exchange knowledge about organizations, actions and groups active in London, creating an informal network. I personally felt that many connections and friendships were fostered and nourished through being at *TransActing*.

Portable darkroom

BBKP

Figure 3.47: BBKP making public and accessible photographic processes. Photo credit BBKP - Savvas Papasavva, Nathan Birchenough, Nicholas Brown and Craig Kao.

BBKP's self-made portable darkroom provided a material environment to record ephemeral moments on paper. Members of the public were able to choose to have their portraits taken from a range of unlikely cameras, revealing the tools and methods needed to create chemical-based photographs. These included pinhole cameras fashioned from shoe polish and biscuit tins, a dog food toy, monkey nut shells and even a lens-based camera made from a sunglasses case.

Those already familiar with the processes went on a nostalgic journey comparing their earliest memories of photography to those created on the day, whilst younger members experienced for the first time the magic of image creation somewhat lost with modern cameras. Posing in front of a display of example photographs, other cameras and the darkroom itself, individuals perched and families huddled optimistically in the direction of the photographers. The success of the images varied, based on the camera and the trial and error of re-familiarizing ourselves with these unusual objects. Heads were chopped off and faces were blurred, but people enjoyed these processes. We photographed all images taken on the day held in the hands of those they belong to, using our own digital phone cameras. Whilst some sitters were excited enough by their portraits to donate real money to us, most of this went towards a copy of *The Big Issue* bought from a seller present at the market.

The market felt very community oriented and a lot more liberating compared to the standard high street art and craft fair. Being situated next to Tate Britain also brought an interested audience across and we got to work with a large group from Latin American Women's Rights Service who were active on the People's Bureau stall. They brought their members to our stand, who were very excited to see images develop and have portraits taken.

BBKP is Savvas Papasavva, Nathan Birchenough, Nicholas Brown and Craig Kao.

Process as work

Mohammad Namazi

Figure 3.48: Mohammad Namazi, *Five Minute Conversations*, 2015, participatory sound installation. Photo credit Metod Blejec.

Engaging with values that exist within social relations formed the basis of a series of micro events titled *Five Minute Conversations*. My inquiry was to pursue a set of dialogical interactions and their potential contribution to the liberation of the production of an artwork.

The work functioned as a platform to examine how a combination of informal dialogues and sound experimentations could lead to alternative representations.

Constraining the time of the conversations to five minutes, the stall lent a non-critical ear to the participants' views on art and the role of artists in the twenty-first century. Through transcription and software, a text-to-speech application read out the resulting scripts, whilst the participant performed with a Monotron (a simple

synthesizer). Thus, the stall expanded into a sonic space, echoing values important to each participant.

The project strove to reduce the role of the artist as *maker,* opening space for the artist as *collaborator* or *system-orienteer*. By directly engaging with participants, I attempted to investigate how *work* can emerge out of a collective activity, both within the event and within its post-production online. In the process, HTML programming translated the sonic information into data and codes, interfering with the documentation – introducing other layers of inter-relation.

Through the iteration of data (dialogue→text→digital speech→performance), the physical *artwork-event* united with the plasticity of electronic and digital media, suggesting the notion of *process*. Once online, this transition iterated the work indefinitely within the network and manifested the event into new entities – where multiple encounters are possible, and discrete events are accessible simultaneously.

To make art *live* and to construct it as a *live event* are to highlight its actual experience in real time and to represent the transitory aspect of life in the artwork.

This aspect of a *live event* can democratize the notion of encounter, transforming audiences into participants, shifting the emphasis towards a momentary experience – which can present art as something earthly and not sublime

Reading aloud: Eden of the dispossessed

Ruth Maclennan

Market-goer 1: Can I have this one?

Ruth Maclennan: The books are not for sale. You can borrow one to read aloud if you like.

Market-goer 2: Are you the book woman? Can I interest you in these books? They are in Japanese.

Market-goer 3: I will read one page for you. [a page later, turning it] Oh! I can't stop there... I will read another page and then I have to go.

Figure 3.49: A market-goer reading aloud as part of Ruth Maclennan's stall. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Market-goer 4: I am afraid I have not read very much. I keep meeting people instead.

Market-goer 5: What is this about?

Ruth Maclennan: You can take a book, and read it aloud, anywhere you like. You are both audience and performer.

Market-goer 5: And what are the books?

Ruth Maclennan: Have a look. The idea is to animate the square with the voices in these books, voices that might have been heard here before and have now left, such as Mayhew's costermongers or scavengers or prostitutes. Alternatively, there are voices that should be heard or those that could be imagined here – Mrs Dalloway is walking down a street nearby musing on her dinner party this evening and Septimus Smith cowers as he hears that plane overhead. Characters from *The Girls of Slender Means* live not so far away up by Kensington Gardens. Stewart Home? Well these contemporary voices layer over their equivalent situations from the past.

Market-goer 6: It felt submerged, not distinct from its surroundings. That is quite an interesting effect, actually, one reason I liked reading aloud was that it was showing off, in a non-obvious way.

Books

Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor* (1858)

Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the English Working Class* (1845)

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* (1925)

Hilary Mantel, *Beyond Black* (2005)
Ali Smith, *How to Be Both* (2014)
Stewart Home, *Down and Out in Shoreditch and London* (2004)
Muriel Spark, *The Girls of Slender Means* (1963)
Tom McCarthy, *Satin Island* (2015), or *C* (2010)

Records Store Pilot

thickear

Figure 3.50: Exchanging sound recordings for personal data at thickear's *Records Store Pilot*. Photo credit Kevin Logan.

Records Store Pilot was conceived as a test for a forthcoming residency project by the art collective thickear (Geoff Howse, Jack James, Kevin Logan and Tadeo Sendon). Additional trials subsequently took place during *Free Market Day* (17–19 July 2015) at Furtherfield and in partnership with the Museum of Contemporary Commodities. Although initially designed as a test run, *Records Store Pilot* was self-contained. The particulars of its method and delivery, such as bespoke data form design and music composition, were produced specifically for *TransActing*.

During this performative installation, members of the public could acquire a thickear sound recording artefact in exchange for personal data. In this examination of the ethics and economies of transaction, the artists acted as brokers. They then authenticated the 'art object' with a dated signature. The object/artefact was in turn validated through the time invested in this engagement, a commerce based on conversation. Hard data was collected such as name, gender, date of birth and income. These quantitative questions invited participants to consider: do I want to give this information away? Is this an equitable trade? This was then measured against soft data queries: do you look forward to tomorrow? Do you regret the past? Do you live in the moment? These qualitative and emotionally charged questions situated the public in a space of consultation. They functioned as a provocation to ad-lib, to open up to intuition or speculation, conditions that are generally considered to be at odds with how we understand data gathering. thickear recognizes the importance of these tests conditions. We would like to thank Critical Practice and all who took part for the opportunity to appraise this work in the 'real-world' scenario that was the market. The stimulating and supportive environment provided by this event has been invaluable in the research and development of the *Records Store* project.

Rejuce

The Rejuce stall offered market-goers beautifully balanced cold pressed juices made from 100 per cent ugly fruit and wonky veg. Made from surplus that might not be good enough to sell but too good to throw away – the primary objective of Rejuice is to save large amount of local, seasonal, fruits and vegetables from going to landfill.

Figure 3.51: Rejuce – providing market-goers with so much more than a drink. Photo Creative Commons.

Ribas and Herbst

Cristina Ribas

Figure 3.52: Artists Marc Herbst and Cristina Ribas steal other people's stuff. Photo credit Cristina Ribas and Marc Herbst.

We confronted people, asking them to give us their valuables; expensive and personal items... sometimes they would. It was exciting to harass people for iPhones, money and jewellery.

When people asked why we were demanding these items, we would respond, 'its none of your business'. And if we were able to wrestle an object from someone, we never stayed around for a conversation, we would just leave straight away, reinforcing our greediness. We would not share anything – not even a thank you. What would we do with these things?

It was an extraordinary summer day for London: 35°C under the sun. As the day wore on we won a block of ice from a guy passing by, and used it as a place to display our booty – jewellery, flowers, nose ring, real hair, coins, bills, shoes, socks, table cloths, old photographs from relatives and dirt. All that is solid melts into air; the jewels and coins, heated by the sun, burned deeper into the ice. As the day wore on, we let the kids smash the ice to bits.

We left and threw the day's treasure into the Thames, except for the cash, which we kept; and for the plastic, not to pollute the river (would that make any difference?). This was an exploration into capitalist exchange value by investigating assault, ownership, giving and the commons.

The Rivers Project

Silvia Krupinska and Richard Bater

Figure 3.53: Artist Silvia Krupinska follows the ebb and flow of water value in *The Rivers Project*. Photo courtesy of the artist.

The Rivers Project at *TransActing* was a collaboration between artist Silvia Krupinska and social scientist and geographer Richard Bater in which we explored the value of water, rivers and nature. A flowing roots sculpture climbed through the structure of the painted-white stall, often creating an initial point of contact with people as they negotiated past the twisting branches whilst walking through the market. Passers-by stopped to comment on the sculpture's shape or what they thought it might represent. Our stall was decorated with live plants and colourful crayons as well as themed books on river ecology and physical geography, including water dynamics and hydrology, for people to pause and flick through.

The day was hot. We served water to refresh body and mind. Children could draw all over the white wooden structure, whilst we asked everybody two simple questions: What does water mean to you? What does nature mean to you? As we exchanged water for conversations, our questions brought up that we all love spending time in nature by the water and we would hate to lose these precious places. Other issues included themes of tap water, water mileage, ownership of water and water branding. We also had inspiring conversations about hydro-politics and sculpting processes. One participant wrote this message to us:

> Thank you
> Keep on talking
> And making us think
> About what we do
> About water
> And what we take for granted.

The conversations and reflections sparked by the sculpture at *TransActing* rehearse the idea that the values, promises and representations that ebb and flow through our watery existence ought not be reduced to the zero-sum grammar of raw exchange and means of money. To decommodify everyday objects, encounters and discourses mean also to re-enchant. By proposing and enacting ways of being with water, art becomes our staging post. Through our exchanges, we aimed to place water, something taken so for granted in our everyday lives, into the foreground.

Sharing community value

Millbank Creative Works

Figure 3.54: Local community activist Wilfried Rimensberger explores community value on behalf of Millbank Creative Works. Photo credit Doris Koch.

Millbank Creative Works (MCW) is a local not-for-profit network that bridges critical fine art practice, enthusiast and hobbyist cultures and culturepreneurs working in the creative industries. The director of MCW, Wilfried Rimensberger, is a local institution. Having lived in the hood for more than two decades, he has worked extensively to value this part of London on its own terms. This begins with celebrating Millbank's hidden talents and as a built environment, including the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground, which hosted *TransActing*. This is a right of way between Tate and Pimlico Tube Station. Rimensberger spends significant time in this area as he cross-pollinates projects amongst local residents, social enterprises and the institutions of Tate Britain and Chelsea College of Arts. In this spirit, MWC's stall provided an innovative service, one that directly tapped possibilities of community evaluation. People were invited to leave their contact information in exchange for shares of community value. This enabled anyone to become a symbolic shareholder in the not-for-profit, MCW. Added to which, the share certificates literally recycled the value generated by Chelsea College of Arts. Wilfried repurposed a catalogue of postcards, each of them featuring work by a recent graduate along with their contact information. Shareholders were issued postcards of this catalogue, a distribution that connected them not only to MCW and Chelsea College of Arts but also to Millbank as home to both.

Figure 3.55: Design educator Shibboleth Shechter and widening participation students test the creation of the infrastructure for *Speakers' Corner*. Photo credit Shibboleth Shechter.

Speakers' Corner: Design and build

Shibboleth Shechter

The process for designing *Speakers' Corner* for *TransActing* evolved through a series of 'live projects' completed between 2009 and 2012. These I facilitated in collaboration with MA Narrative Environments students and staff at Central Saint Martins and the Speakers' Corner Trust (a charity that promotes freedom of speech by setting up committees made up from the public to stimulate areas of debate). We developed a methodology for the co-design of several local *Speakers' Corner*s and realized a prototype to be used as a mobile version, which has subsequently been developed for a North London community park and for local schools.

The *Speakers' Corner* for *TransActing* was designed and constructed by widening participation students attending the Interior and Spatial Design 2015 Summer School, which I led with Carolina Caicedo and Xavi Llarch Font. The programme's aim is to encourage and support young people from working-class backgrounds who have no family history of higher education to apply and successfully progress to courses offered by the University of the Arts London. The Interior and Spatial Design Summer School is a four-day 'taster' in 1:1 making and collaborative projects, both of which are integral to the BA (Hons) Interior and Spatial Design course at Chelsea College of Arts.

During the four-day design and build of the *Speakers' Corner* for *TransActing*, those involved considered the significance of these public platforms. They also surveyed the site of the market to understand the space and how their intervention might affect the Parade Ground and its users. Scale models were constructed to explore the *Corner*'s physical characteristics and the eventual version that we used was decided upon by a democratic vote. This design was modular in its approach so that the seating and standing elements could be combined into a variety of group sizes to enable different forms of communication – one to one, one to many, many to many. The *Speakers' Corner* for *TransActing* was collaboratively constructed from grey ultra-board (i.e. heavy-duty cardboard) and joined with green and white hazard tape.

Speakers' Corner: Content

Kuba Szreder

Figure 3.56: Curator and academic Kuba Szreder (appearing in the hat) facilitates *Speakers' Corner* on market day, while Shiri Shalmy draws attention to the struggles of Sotheby's cleaners, including their demand for the London living wage. Photo courtesy of the Critical Practice archives.

As part of our heaving market, Critical Practice decided to facilitate *Speakers' Corner* to enact our belief in the free and unconstrained exchange of ideas. It was not the first action of this sort, as the format of the *Speakers' Corner* first surfaced in Critical Practice when we trialled an open discursive platform back in 2008 in the form of a *PubliCamp* as part of our research into 'being in public'. *PubliCamp* was based on the concept of the BarCamp, a

type of conference (or 'unconference' as Critical Practice likes to say) that is open, where the content is decided by the participants. The *Corner* of 2015 hosted a series of both facilitated and spontaneous discussions by members of the public and invited guests. It was open for everyone to stand up, to voice their concerns, visions and values.

The *Corner* was located on the edge of the market, close enough to be part of it, but sufficiently distant to create a discursive space of its own. It was rather unassuming, just as speakers' corners tend to be – a small wooden stage and a dozen or so seats, designed and built in cooperation with Shibboleth Shechter and her students. The flow of discourse was dynamic, conversations were sharp and tightly scheduled. A moderator from Critical Practice would hit a gong to draw attention from the milling crowds. A speaker would simply stand up or sit around, present their topic briefly using a megaphone and start a discussion. People would assemble, listen, ask questions and participate in lively exchanges on an array of topics for the maximum allotted time of fifteen minutes.

The thematic roster was impressive. During a couple of hours, *Speakers' Corner* reverberated with discussions about bling bling communism, artistic taxi driving, unionization of artistic labour, ways of dealing with activists' burnout, gender equality and restorative politics, philosophies of justification, artistic cooperatives, struggles against austerity, the role of art in the context of Palestinian struggles for liberation and the controversies surrounding a – then – looming Brexit referendum. In this way, a corner became a momentary point of focus for passing crowds, who engaged in collective disputes, thus constituting a harmonic counterpoint for the distributed structure of the market, which prioritized more intimate exchanges between 'vendors' and their visitors.

Speculative values: Reading science fiction

Dan Byrne-Smith

Focusing on utopia, science fiction, cultural memory, spaces of publication and the necessary death of contemporary art, my research engages in 'utopography'. This term was coined by H.G. Wells *c.*1906

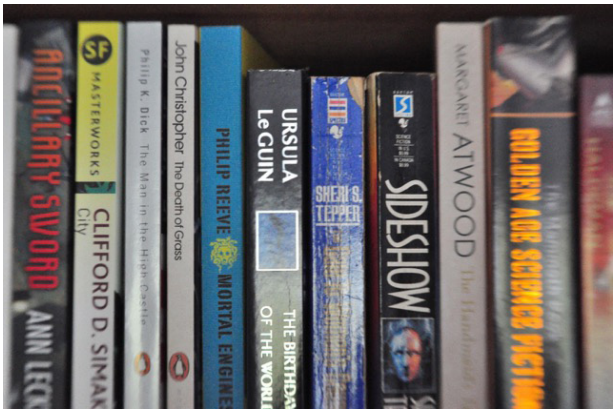

Figure 3.57: Some of the titles featured in academic Dan Bryne-Smith's stall focused on the values of disparate futures. Photo credit Dan Bryne-Smith.

to capture his conviction that sociology should hinge on the projection and criticism of ideal societies. To experiment with utopography as collaborative cultural production, in 2014, I worked with Critical Practice to realize *Utopographies: Evaluation, Consensus and Location* (see 'Partial self-portrait of Critical Practice' in this publication, under March 2014). This two-day international unconference in the Triangle Space (Chelsea College of Arts) tested processes of creative displacement. Utopographic hacks, meals, screenings, seminars, simulations, Skype sessions, performances and workshops took place under a false ceiling made from thousands of threaded and knotted cords. This bespoke environment aimed to make manifest the extensive and interdependent network that utopography seeks to explore, expand and variously inhabit.

In a similar spirit, my stall in *TransActing* hosted a public reading of science fiction stories at hourly intervals throughout the duration of the market. These included *The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas* (1973) by Ursula K. Le Guin, *There Will Come Soft Rains* (1950) by Ray Bradbury, short story 'When It Changed' (1972) by Joanna Russ and *Branded* (2012) by Lauren Beukes. These stories were chosen for their sense of cognitive estrangement and their potential to engage with social, philosophical, emotional and creative elements through the narrative worlds crafted by the selected authors. This reading aloud of science fiction also generated value through interpersonal transaction, as the text-to-voice was offered with the potential for reciprocity through discussion. Central here was the interplay between estrangement and engagement, prompting listeners to question and address their own values in relation to their social, ethical and creative practices.

Stupid Club

Sadie Hennessy

Figure 3.58: Artist Sadie Hennessy explores the precipice of age 27 as the year when so many rising stars fall to their death. Photo credit Sadie Hennessy.

On hearing of her son Kurt Cobain's death, his mum said, 'he's gone and joined that stupid club', referring to pop stars who die at the mythical age of 27.

This inspired me to produce a range of prints to celebrate these tortured pop idols, and others who fall out of the category but who embody the spirit of the *Stupid Club*. The prints are single colour, hand-pulled, limited edition screen prints (approximately the size of an LP). They are coloured in a way to be reminiscent of cyan blue funerary mementos. The size of the edition is governed by the age that the star was when they died. So, for example, there are 21 prints of Sid Vicious, who died at that age. My work intends to unsettle its audience and to elicit a jolt of recognition in them. I am not afraid of using humour to create a reaction, but it definitely comes from the darkest end of the comic spectrum. The *Stupid Club* stall dealt with transactions in culture of death and value, of loss and gain, and ultimately of the commodification of pain.

Surreal toy making workshop

Machines Room

Figure 3.59: Artist Jennie Fagerstrom leads participants in making a circuit glove puppet. Part of the Machines Room's stall. Photo credit Neil Cummings.

Resident maker artist Jennie Fagerstrom led a workshop for Machines Room, inviting market-goers to create their own soft circuit glove puppets. Conductive thread and LEDs allowed participants to develop their own wearable technology, bringing their characters to life and transforming a traditional toy into an interactive contemporary item.

Tarot readings £5

Rosalie Schweiker

The card you have chosen is called: *Early Rise*. It is a difficult card to have because it stands for a busy time, when you have to get up early, maybe even when it is still dark. You might feel resentful towards the people who can have a lie in, you might feel that they are not pulling their weight. Be aware that these feelings might sabotage you, be aware that they are not constructive. It might be better to talk to your partner, colleagues or friends about your workload and ask them to share it, rather than indulge in an angry inner monologue. The card tells you that you will have a lot of work

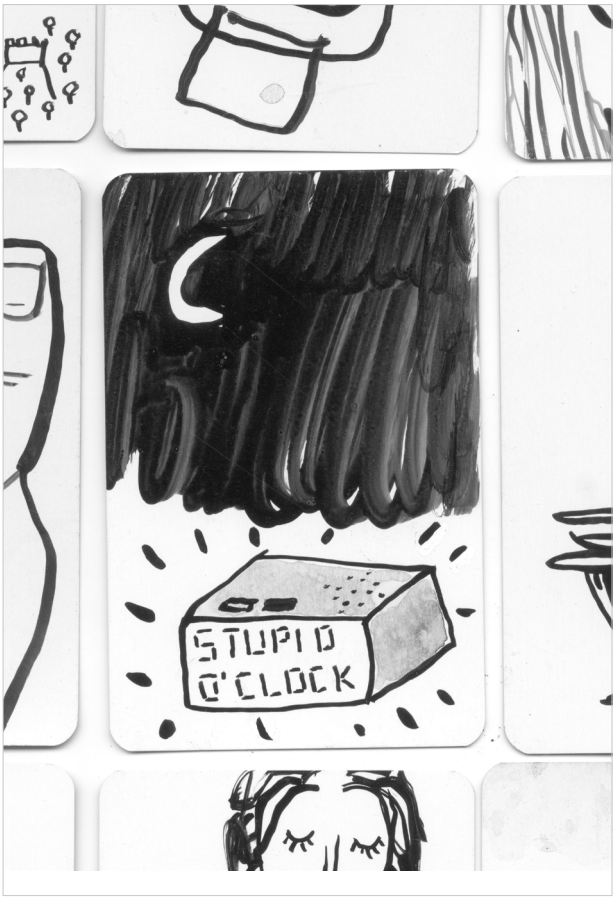

Figure 3.60: *Early Rise*, one of artist Rosalie Schweiker's remarkable tarot cards. Photo credit Rosalie Schweiker.

to do over the coming weeks; there are big tasks ahead of you, for example, setting up a huge market, building lots of stalls, inventing a new currency and sending millions of e-mails, organizing and hosting and facilitating. But the card also tells you that this work will be satisfying and worthwhile. You are creating a new alternative universe, in which ultimately nobody will ever have to get up early again, capitalism will be abolished and all we will do is lie in our soft warm beds until our bodies ache. Think of this new world whilst you are toiling away. It will help you to struggle on.

Tear Dealer

Alicja Rogalska and Łukasz Surowiec

Figure 3.61: Artists Alicja Rogalska and Łukasz Surowiec's *Tear Dealer* project captures the complexity of affective labour. Photo courtesy of Alicja Rogalska and Łukasz Surowiec; photo credit Zbigniew Tomasz Kotkiewicz.

The *Tear Dealer* stall attracted 43 tear producers in just a few hours. Most participants managed to produce up to ten tears (around 0.5 ml) valued between £1 and £3. Only a few reached the 1 ml target and approximately 12 ml of tears were produced in total.

Tear Dealer first appeared in 2014 as a temporary shop commissioned by Rewiry – the studio of socially engaged art in Lublin, Poland – on a high street lined with pawnshops and loan sharks, in an area of high unemployment and related socio-economic exclusion in the city. Over a period of four days, more than 200 people participated in the project selling their tears (produced in situ) to the artists for cash. 150 ml of tears were collected in total.

Tear Dealer relates to issues of affective labour and the commercialization of emotions – essential elements of the modern labour market. It also creates a space for the collective experience of sadness as work. The collected tears are not for sale as a fetishistic art object, thereby contradicting the logic of the art market whilst distributing arts funding to those who need cash.

Venn diagrams and open datasets

Claire Mokrauer-Madden

Figure 3.62: Claire Mokrauer-Madden's stall uses Venn diagrams to explore personal tastes and values. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Filling in Venn diagrams is an activity that we used to do in maths class at school. As well as offering the opportunity for us kids to describe ourselves within specific datasets, this was also a chance for us to learn more about each other. For *TransActing*, I recreated the style of questions I had been asked back in grade school. These queries posed during the market were explorations of personal taste and values, apart from one secret question punning on a cultural reference – that transaction was really only complete if you got the joke!

I did not trade in the local currency of *TransActing* or other types of money so as not to influence my survey participants. Nevertheless, there were certainly exchanges of creativity, knowledge, time and wellbeing beyond the currency's units. Rather than confining responses to the choices offered, some people added their own circles, which then became fields for subsequent respondents to populate. Most seemed to give considered answers to the questions. I particularly remember a boy who ticked to say that he had repaired a relationship. His mother seemed a little surprised and asked him what he meant. The boy told her about two friends of his who were having an argument that he stepped in to

help settle. She seemed incredibly impressed that he had this sample of repair in his arsenal of personal experience.

The *TransActing* participants engaged with the questions, allowing themselves to be grouped and categorized. However, they also did not confine themselves to the large circular diagrams and data sets that I offered them, demonstrating that we are all clearly so much more than the labels we are given and in return give ourselves – we will always draw outside of the lines.

Very Vertex

Figure 3.63: Very Vertex rents space on the Rootstein Parade Ground to sell toys at a profit. Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

Critical Practice first discussed renting stalls in a meeting in 2008 when we were preparing for *The Market of Ideas* at *PARADE* (2010). Our plan was to generate revenue from stallholders who could afford to pay: 'We want to try and use privately accumulated funding to enhance the "public good"' (Critical Practice 2019: n.pag.). We approached Google, Nokia and others without success.

We revisited renting stalls as a resource stream in the late spring of 2015 by posting an advert on the online commercial rental platform, We Are Popup. The idea: we would charge vendors £200 (£180 after We Are Popup took their commission), and they would sell their wares at whatever prices they chose and keep 100 per cent of the profits.

Interested parties were reviewed by Critical Practice to determine their suitability for the market. We settled on Very Vertex because the company sells children's toys. We knew from past experience the market would attract families but had made little

provision for this demographic. The bubble gun seemed a popular item and created surprising forms of interactions.

Reference

Critical Practice (2019), 'Funding page', The Critical Practice Wiki, http://www.criticalpracticechelsea.org/wiki/index.php/Funding. Accessed 30 July 2019.

Wearable Art

Akiko Ban

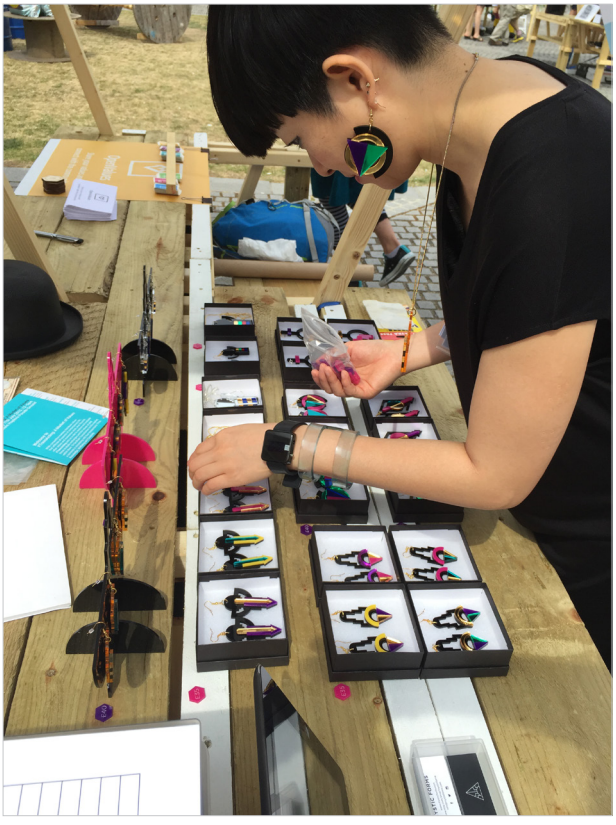

Figure 3.64: Artist Akiko Ban explores the possibilities of jewellery as 'wearable art' at a stall by the same name. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Wearable Art is accessible; when placed on the body, art becomes personal and less intimidating. My collection of Perspex jewellery is a case in point. These handmade forms come in various shapes, sizes and colours, which are cheap to make and therefore inexpensive for customers to buy.

As *Wearable Art* is an emerging project, *TransActing* felt like a testing ground, an opportunity to receive feedback on this new line of Perspex jewellery as well as a chance to explore my thinking on the value of art and how it is experienced. I am skeptical about the corporatization of art, especially the appreciation of artworks as financial assets, and I participated in the market to advance my understanding of how art is produced, distributed and consumed. This emphasis on economic value ignores perhaps the more personal value that a project like *Wearable Art* may be able to provide.

The market's stall system where I displayed my jewellery proved a good way to learn about how others view its value. I had some fascinating conversations with market-goers as feedback on my new line of jewellery, helping me to evaluate if it is perceived as wearable art or if it is indeed something closer to a fashion product.

I was also interested in this transaction as a performance of exchange. The diverse crowd challenged me to talk about my practice from multiple perspectives. All kinds of people visited my stall, not only art enthusiasts but also tourists sightseeing in Millbank, people living and working in the local neighbourhoods and even other stallholders. Engaging with this wide range of people challenged me to think more carefully about the audience for my artwork and how it might generate different value dependent on the person and the context.

Weave exchange

Shane Waltener

The stall at *TransActing* displayed a collection of stitched and woven objects produced using locally sourced plant materials and yarn during *Land of Plenty,* a recent project with the Arts Artelier Oya community group based in Ghent. These objects were offered to visitors at the market provided that an exchange was made in the form of another object, an instruction or a thought or story inspired by the woven collection at the stall. The stall questioned the value of objects and making: the provenance of materials, finding sustainable ways of making work, the necessity for social interaction and exchange to determine the value and meaning of things.

A number of transactions involved exchanging suggestions and drawings for some of the objects, but no new woven works

Figure 3.65: Artist Shane Waltener displays a collection of webbed objects to raise questions about the value of objects and making, the provenance of material and so much more. Photo credit Shawn Waltener.

were made at the stall. Instructions included using some of the work as a plant cachepot, using Oya-inspired crochet work as an alternative decorative glaze motif on ceramic, as stencils for printmaking and as templates for jewellery and other fashion accessories. It was also suggested that one of the larger and more colourful pieces could be used to make a wide-brimmed hat.

I was initially surprised that so few people engaged with making at the stall. Reflecting on this, I think the market format, with multiple stalls offering a whole range of opportunities for transacting, probably dictated a certain pace at which the transactions were made and prevented visitors from investing time in making. This set-up facilitated the exchange of objects for instructions and ideas, which is great – an idea for making something after all, as opposed to showing a finished object, is full of promise and unexplored potential.

Weighing Matter

Ruobing Wang

Weight is a measurement of how much the force of gravity acts on a given amount of mass, a measurement often used to describe and designate value – from granules of gold to figs on a fruit and veg stand. What would be the weight of a mass like a *TransActing* market stall?

Although I originally planned to invite market-goers to weigh their personal belongings and goods purchased on the day,

Figure 3.66: Artist Ruobing Wang investigates the value of weight. Photo credit Ruobing Wang.

the intuitive responses that most visitors had to *Weighing Matter*, was to weigh and balance *themselves* on the stall. The audiences' intuitive behaviour enabled the human body to enter into a system of economic exchange, as in return they were given 'currency' made by Critical Practice for their participation. With the interplay of market-goers' bodies, *Weighing Matter* employed the measurement of the force of gravity as a self-made product.

In a system of alternative economies, what is the value of a stall as a physical object as well as a research object within this net of relations? *Weighing Matter* was conceptualized around this inquiry through weighing the given market stall literally with an old-fashioned weighing scale. Using an antique and inaccurate implement, rather than a more advanced digital scale, shows how absurd the quantified value of this weight is.

Weighing Matter has kindly been supported by the International Foundation Singapore.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY CRITICAL PRACTICE

MARSHA BRADFIELD

It may surprise you to learn, as it did me, of the tradition in the United Kingdom, the United States and beyond of celebrating ten years of marriage with gifts made of tin. Was this, I wondered, because tin sounds like ten? Why else choose a base metal to mark such an important occasion, especially for those who value the institution of marriage. Yet it seems several qualities of tin effectively symbolize enduring matrimony. According to the jeweller H. Samuel, tin is 'resistant to corrosion, whilst still being pliable'; reaching a ten-year wedding anniversary depends on the 'flexibility' of those involved (2018: n.pag.).

For sure, these are qualities of Critical Practice Research Cluster, which celebrated ten years of being together in 2015. For more than a decade, this motley crew of artists, designers, curators, educators and other practice-based/led researchers have been challenging each other and their associates to broaden and connect their engagement through the critical practice of art, the field of culture and its organization (Critical Practice 2019a: n.pag.). These are familiar commitments for other art-led formations that operate in the overlap between culture and politics. When, for instance, the New York-based collaboration Group Material (1979–96) describes its work as '[exploding] the assumptions that dictate what art is, who art is for and what an art exhibition can be' (Ault 2010: 49), it might well be referencing the values that galvanized Critical Practice to self-organize as a London-based research cluster in 2005.

Something else these collaborations share is that both have explicitly refused to pursue the values of the art market. If following this is tantamount to rejecting the commodification of art, it hardly goes far enough for Critical Practice. Depending on your relationship with capitalism, the art market symbolizes a high point or a low one in neoliberalism's broader drive to marketize every aspect of life. Like it or not, what Karl Polanyi termed 'market society' has come to pass. As anthropologist David Graeber explains, 'the triumph of the World Market—in which the most gigantic, totalizing, and all-encompassing universal system of evaluation known to human history came to be imposed on almost everything' (2001: 89). Faced with this economic authoritarianism, what should we do?

This is a loaded question in the worlds of contemporary art, many of which have been shaped by conceptualism and its failed project of dematerializing the art object. In 1969, the American critic Lucy Lippard was hopeful that those making this art would 'be forcibly freed from the tyranny of a commodity status and market orientation' ([1973] 1997: xxi). This was thanks to conceptual art often being slight in its material presence but thick with ideas, many of which mitigated against a sensuous experience in favour of art as information. But three short years later, even these expressions were increasingly bought and sold. 'Yet with a longer view,' Lippard writes in *Six Years*, 'it is also clear that the conceptual artists set up a model that remains *flexible* enough to be useful today' ([1973] 1997: xxi, emphasis added). Suffice to say that flexibility is a quality that gives more than metal and matrimony their enduring strength. In Lippard's view, the flexibility that sustains conceptual art stems from 'the most exciting "art" [...] still being buried in the social energies not yet recognized as art' ([1973] 1997: xxii). It was similar thinking that compelled Critical Practice to critically appropriate the market as a form, embracing it as a readymade, with this culminating in *#TransActing: A Market of Values* (henceforth *TransActing*) in 2015. If historically many critical artists have struggled to escape the market's grip, the cluster instead seized it to better grasp the values that propel the economy, with these manifesting across the market as a forum for exchange.

The following are some eclectic reflections that consider a core set of values in Critical Practice, especially those connecting the cluster's social reproduction (its day-to-day self-organization, self-governance, etc.) to its outwardly facing cultural production

Figure 4.1: The meeting is the medium. Critical Practice in action: Cinzia Cremona, Fangli Cheng, Kuba Szreder, Verina Gfader, Angela Hodgson-Teall, Metod Blejec, Neil Farnan, Claire Mokrauer-Madden, Marsha Bradfield, Amy McDonnell, Eva Sajovic, Helen Brewer and Neil Cummings (behind the camera). Photo credit Neil Cummings.

(specifically the four markets that Critical Practice has convened to date). Openness is a value that receives special attention as both intrinsic and extrinsic to the cluster. Implicit in what follows is the vital role of openness in constellating the theory, practice and evaluation that support the cluster's sustainability through a continuous process of change. I consider this with reference to 'the market' as one of the cluster's preoccupations. Critical Practice attempts to prise open the market to make its contradictions explicit. This suggests the need for and potential of the market to change through an injection of creativity, collaboration, enthusiasm, care and openness, with the latter outstripping the 'open market' as it is usually understood.

I offer these reflections as a long-standing member of Critical Practice. Since joining in 2006, I have been involved in its everyday maintenance and have collaborated on numerous projects on a wide range of artistic, economic, social, technological, political and other issues. This sustained engagement has made my relations with Critical Practice a deeply meaningful aspect of my life

and work. If, though, this is akin to a figurative marriage, it is without the matrimonial knot. The cluster is instead a network, one that is flexible but also fragile, especially when pulled together through interpersonal relationships. Networking as a verb highlights the affective, practical and other types of recursive labour that go into ordering all these heterogeneous human and non-human actors (Latour 2005). This brings us to the cluster's social reproduction as a point of departure and return for all of its activity.

Open house

That 'economy' comes from the Greek words *oikos* (meaning household) and *nemein* (meaning manage) points to why we can think about the cluster's self-organization in terms of its housekeeping. This and other social reproduction has unfolded through a decision-making process based on rough consensus. This distribution of authority tracks with the aspiration to self-organize as a flat hierarchy. Whilst the agonism of this ongoing process has been captured in the cluster's meeting minutes and expressions of organizational ethnography (Critical Practice 2007, 2008, 2019a; Cummings and Critical Practice 2011), a great deal of business occurs 'off the page' (Bradfield 2013: 9). Chatting at the pub, conversations whilst in transit and other socializing have created the cluster's shared history through moments of informal and candid reflection. This exchange has also nurtured a sense of intimacy where complex relationships come to the fore. Even now, with Critical Practice increasingly distributed as a global network, the critical practice of the cluster virtually connects its members in Chicago, Ljubljana, London, Sydney, Warsaw and beyond.

I think it fair to say that no one anticipated Critical Practice would reach its tenth anniversary. Compare the cluster's decade-plus of activity to other personal and professional ventures: whilst 60 per cent of start-ups in the United Kingdom wind down within three years (May 2019), the unlucky number is twelve for marriages that end in divorce (Norris 2018). Perhaps the durability of Critical Practice relates to its slow process of membership. In my case, it took several years to get to grips with the cluster's approach to practice and feel as though I belonged. This is ironic given that it was multidimensional openness that first attracted

me. Membership is open to anyone willing to abide by the aims and objectives that are aligned with those of the open organizational movement (P2P Foundation 2017). There is no formal induction process or tests to take, no membership card, no fees to pay – hence the running joke that being so open has made Critical Practice remarkably difficult to join.

It seems fair to say that Critical Practice is more effectively open in its organizational transparency. The cluster's meeting minutes, project plans and budgets have all been published in the public domain on a dedicated wiki (Critical Practice 2019a). On the one hand, this has put the cluster on display, opening it up to scrutiny in a dual spirit of peer-to-peer and public accountability. This part of Critical Practice has been informed by reaching back and down into the UK's earthy history, rooting around for precedents to support the cluster's particular culture of openness. These include the Charter of the Forest (1225), which codifies and organizes what the United Kingdom once held in common. It offered guidance on how commoners could use the commons for their personal subsistence whilst sustaining this bounty as a community resource (Standing 2019: 61). Perhaps more than anything else the commons has inspired the ethos of Critical Practice – its self-organization, self-governance, as well as the content, form and open access to its projects, processes and other outputs that its membership would cocreate.

The cluster's commitment to commoning for more equitable and sustainable futures tracks with growing international interest in what Guy Standing describes as a drive to 'take back the commons, revive their principles of sharing, solidarity and universality, and ensure that commoners – "we, the people" – are properly compensated for any loss' (2019: 59). For its sins, Critical Practice has always focused more on abundance than on scarcity. Especially in its formative years, the cluster's enthusiasm for the digital commons was unbridled. Witness its massive and sustained wiki work (Critical Practice 2019a). More broadly, techno-utopianism would prove indispensable to catalysing but not collectivizing the production of information, images, music and other resources. But in the first decade of the new millennium, before the ascendance of Big Data, using Creative Commons licensing to provide open access to the cluster's administrative, evaluative and other traces seemed to

Critical Practice to be politically progressive, in fact, a radically progressive thing to do.

On the other hand, the cluster's production draws on the peer-to-peer pragmatism of open-source programming. This hand of Critical Practice has been waving to others who share its faith in the effectiveness and resilience of networks for distributing risk and reward. Again, openness – not only to new ideas but also as cultural and methodological diversity – played an important role in building Critical Practice as itself an open network. Granted the cluster was founded by students of Chelsea College of Arts, University of the Arts London (UAL) and their tutor Neil Cummings and was hence made possible by this institutional privilege. Yet from the very beginning, art education and its institutions were things that Critical Practice aspired to open up.

Taking this as its license to operate, Critical Practice encouraged those without any formal affiliation with Chelsea College of Arts to join the cluster and benefit from its extracurricular programmes. The cluster also convened members at different stages of their personal and professional development on equal footing. To my knowledge, it has been the only research group at UAL that has ever brought together students, faculty and staff as well as those with no institutional affiliation. The qualities of this openness chime with large-scale, open-source cultural initiatives that have crossed national, disciplinary and other boundaries by operating online. In keeping with the ethos of Wikipedia as the 'free encyclopaedia that anyone can edit', the Critical Practice wiki is an aggregate of live documents. Content can be changed by anyone with a readily available password and basic knowledge of how to edit MediaWiki, the open-source software that powers the cluster's organizational hub and online archive – Wikipedia's too.

Describing the critical practice of Critical Practice in this way risks papering over its fault lines. In the world of anniversary celebrations, tin may be revered for its pliability; but beyond its symbolism for enduring marital relations, and even within this union, there are limits to how far a person can flex. It is hard to say how much the cluster's dependence on free labour has excluded those struggling to make ends meet. This and not Critical Practice has been their priority. For sure, members have come and gone depending on what their time, energy and other resources would allow.

This goes to the heart of a contradiction that has tested the cluster. As largely self-funded, Critical Practice has survived on free labour. Yet it has also chafed against the narrative of self-actualization through the hyperflexible cultural practice that has been held up as an ideal to which all workers should aspire (Carrotworkers' Collective and Precarious Workers Brigade [2012] 2015). For as long as I can remember, Cummings, one of the founding members of Critical Practice, has cautioned against making plans that rely too heavily on the cluster's human resources. Mindful that enthusiasm, camaraderie, interest and goodwill can and should only go so far, he has instead extolled the economic, interpersonal and other fragilities that compel a culture of care.

Through careful trial and error, the cluster has coordinated its social reproduction with the cultural production of its events, exhibitions, publications and further outputs designed to engage others beyond its membership. In the process, Critical Practice has cohered a set of complicated values, amongst them openness as in transparency, inclusivity and emergence. These have been tested and retested through a shared repertoire of forms, including the marketplace, which I will discuss soon enough. But most of all, the cluster's sustainability has been about tracing and retracing a network of human beings who are interested in using art and design in the service of social practice to figure out ways for living on purpose in a complex, tumultuous and increasingly inequitable world.

Context: Value, research and neoliberalism

So much happened between 2005 and 2015, the time spanning the cluster's first decade of activity. By 2010, Critical Practice and those in its UK network were feeling the effects of the 2008 bank bailout. The cluster was experiencing first-hand the deep cuts and dwindling funding for research, which paralleled hikes in student fees to £9000 in 2011. Political and sociological theorist William Davies describes the self-actualization of neoliberalism as 'the elevation of market-based principles and techniques of evaluation to the level of state-endorsed norms' (2017a: xiv). This entails a double movement: the market has been extended through privatizing the

formerly public sphere whilst non-market institutions (e.g. universities and the NHS) have been actively reformed by the neoliberal state to make them more *businesslike*. At the same time, legislation and other strategies have been introduced to crush collective resistance to econometrics. These strategies include the precariatization of work through the rise of zero-hour contracts, which effectively atomize instead of unionize workers (Davies 2017a: xiv).

Dizzy from this double movement, many of us working in the fields of architecture, art, craft and design, as well as higher education, especially in the arts, humanities and social sciences, have grown increasingly anxious about the ways in which culture is being evaluated to rationalize its financial expenditure. In the United Kingdom, this is driving the likes of the Research Excellence Framework (REF), the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), the Arts and Humanities Research Council's *The Cultural Value Project* (Crossick and Kaszynska 2015) and Arts Council England's evidence review, *The Value of Arts and Culture to People and Society* (2014). From within the econometrics-obsessed nexus of neoliberalism, the need for alternative economies has become palpable. What seems required are critical and creative forms of practice based/led research that honour the specificity of their intrinsic values whilst also demonstrating their broader extrinsic significance and, crucially, do so in ways that align both types of value and insist on their interdependence.

Between 2005 and 2015, Chelsea College of Arts was a hotbed of value-based research. The now defunct Contemporary Marxism Collective, of which I was also a member, was a testing ground for some of the insights that came to comprise Dave Beech's important book, *Art and Value: Art's Economic Exceptionalism in Classical, Neoclassical and Marxist Economics* (2015). In retrospect, Critical Practice's commitment to hands-on practice (i.e. 'understanding through doing') provides ample evidence of its engagement with Marxist ideas without direct reference to Marx. Above I outline some of the ways that lived experience – replete with its conditions and contradictions – has been a salient preoccupation in the cluster's work, including its self-organization. Similarly, immanent critique has been central in Critical Practice without being theorized as a Marxist method. For those less familiar, it will be useful to know that immanent critique critically

engages with the systems and rules at play in a given context, with this approach stemming back to those of Hegel and Marx.

Consider *TransActing*'s stall infrastructure as a case in point. The cluster used the market to critique the wasteful practices of degree shows, most immediately that of Chelsea College of Arts where Critical Practice was based and *TransActing* took place. This immanent critique did not languish at the level of theoretical discourse but was pressed into practice, with this giving voice to growing social concerns with environmental and other forms of sustainability, including those of large institutions like universities. At the same time – and crucially – *TransActing* piloted a practical response to tackling this systemic problem at a local level as detritus from the 2015 degree show was upcycled to create the stalls for *TransActing* (see 'Taking Enzo to market: Open stalls' in this anthology for further discussion).

All this is to say that if the ken of Contemporary Marxist Collective was rigorous discourse that consolidated and extended Marxist theory, for Critical Practice the priority was on facilitating inclusive, experimental and often non-discursive forms that embodied Marxist values without necessarily labeling them. Being good Marxists and being recognized as such has never been a motivating factor in Critical Practice. This stems in part from the knowledge, hard-won through experience, that rigorous theory, Marxist or otherwise, tends to give way to the pragmatic demands of realizing collaborative events like *TransActing*. These demands include discursive competence but they also entail a knack for working with other and often disparate materials – be they recycled planks of wood or the emotional intelligence required to build an inclusive and meaningful community of practice. The alternative modi operandi of Contemporary Marxism Collective and Critical Practice help to explain why more crossover between the groups was not forthcoming.

In addition to commoning and the open-source production as two of the cluster's preoccupations mentioned above, Critical Practice adopted and adapted several other practical theories that complement those of Marx, in part because they proved more amenable to the cluster's practice based/led research. These are Marcel Mauss's sociological research on gift economies ([1954] 2002), actor-network theory (especially that of Bruno Latour) (2005) and, more recently, Stephen Wright's philosophically inspired

thinking on use, set down in his popular publication *Towards a Lexicon of Usership* (2013). Added to these is the feminist thinking of the geographer-economists, J. K. Gibson-Graham, which would become a hinge for much of the cluster's mature work on value, especially its preoccupation with values that are not usually valued: 'trust, care, sharing, reciprocity, cooperation, coercion, bondage, thrift, guilt, love, equity, self-exploitation, solidarity, distributive justice, stewardship, spiritual connection, and environmental and social justice' (2014: S151). It became increasingly important to Critical Practice that its economy of kindness and care should highlight the often invisible, feminized and essential-but-badly-paid work that motors social reproduction writ large (see '*TransActing* as an iceberg' in this anthology).

All of these approaches repurpose Marxist values for a post-structuralist context. While Mauss examines the kinship system as an alternative site to the factory for producing value (Graeber 2001: 152), Wright positions user-generated culture as operative beyond a labour-based regime that turns on commodification. Latour attempts instead to offer an observational approach that analyses associations in the process of shifting. For actor-network theory (ANT), value arises from a network of human and non-human actors produced in the process of associating – relating, exchanging, interacting, etc. thus transforming historical materialism into a tool to examine the emergence of groups and social aggregates. Using this theoretical range to engage with value, values, valorization and evaluation – in a word, axiology – chimed with the methodological heterogeneity that Critical Practice holds dear. In this way, the cluster's cultural production aimed to practically and experimentally challenge the widely perceived hegemony of Marxist theories of value as the most effective critique of capitalism.

I have sketched this contextual terrain in some detail en route to positing the value of practice based/led research like Critical Practice for diversifying and perhaps even invigorating the knowledge enterprise of higher education. This involves moving beyond the conceptual inquiry that marks research in the humanities and social sciences when it asks: What should we think? (Turabian 2007: 8). Davies, for instance, posits that we should think of neoliberalism as 'the disenchantment of politics by economics', with this resulting from the relentless spread of economic calculation

beyond the market (2017a: xiv). As the title of his important book makes clear, he is principally concerned with *The Limits of Neoliberalism*. Here rigorous critique maps this threshold, replete with its contradictions. And yet, as Davies also observes, simply *explaining* why the pre-2007 paradigm persists will do little to address the growing inequality it engenders (2017a). Nor will critique alone topple the authority of evaluation based on the price system, the limits of which Graeber captures in compelling terms: 'No one will ever be able to produce a mathematical formula for how much it is fitting to betray one's political principles in the name of religion, or to neglect one's family in the pursuit of art' (2013: 224). Granted, we make conversions like these all the time, but this has taken on oppressive significance with the growing formalization of the audit culture writ large as a mandate to extract economic value at all costs.

So what should we do? For Davies this involves reducing the scope of economics (2017a: 196) while enhancing the reach of 'collective entrepreneurship', especially if this, 'which – like individual entrepreneurs – saw economic normativity as fluid and changeable, could produce new forms of political economy, with alternative valuation systems' (2017a: 203). Enter Critical Practice and its season of value-based research. But before discussing this in relation to the cluster's four markets to date, I want to conclude these initial reflections with two interim thoughts.

The first relates to my sense that so much value in Critical Practice stems from how the cluster has aligned its outwardly facing cultural production and its self-sustaining social reproduction to gain greater insight into the creative practice of economy as the vital field that it is. Because art takes its authority from beyond the market's reductive metrics, art is open to diverse interpretations and hence irreducible significance. The political consequences of this evaluative openness are many, including art's sensuous potential to join forces with other kinds of knowledge in the service of a meta-evaluation that might throw the status quo value of valuation into productive doubt. This, in effect, was the remit of Critical Practice's value-based research. It fostered an alternative economy, one that challenged the poverty of econometrics by using heterogeneous evaluation to generate richer and more abundant meaning – understanding too.

The second point I want to make relates to celebrating the first ten years of Critical Practice being together. At stake in this tin anniversary are deeply anthropological values. I like to imagine that Graeber is describing the cluster when he calls for a tradition that sees 'human beings as projects of mutual creation, value as the way such projects become meaningful to the actors, and the worlds we inhabit as emerging from those projects rather than the other way around' (2013: 238). We can also recognize in Graeber's thinking the avant-garde drive to merge art and life. What does it mean to live with creative purpose – as an individual practitioner and as part of a community like Critical Practice? How can we use culture to create experimental economies and reclaim the market as a forum for dynamic but emergent and also equitable exchange? These are questions the cluster has been keen to address.

Not all markets are created equal

We can trace the cluster's interest in markets back to its founding document. The earliest version of Aim 1 on record states: 'We will explore the field of cultural production as a site of resistance to the logic, power and values of the ideology of a competitive market' (Critical Practice 2019b: n.pag.). Since then, this aim has been rewritten several times, most notably in 2013 when it became Aim 3: '[We will] model alternatives to an exploitative market where wealth is accumulated for its own sake' (Critical Practice 2019b: n.pag.). This change reflects the realization – arising from practice – that the cluster's application of the market model (discussed below) does not so much eliminate competition but instead reconfigures it. In this, a shift occurs from an economy based on money to one that trades in attention.

Nevertheless, Aim 3 was reverted back to Aim 1 several months later in 2013 and returned to its original phrasing. If memory serves, this was because the subsequent version failed to capture the rampant financial inequality arising from neoliberal competition that is implied by the first and enduring version. This is not something that Critical Practice has theorized at length, but Davies's critique does important work in this regard. He argues

Figure 4.2: Stalls at *The Market of Ideas*, which was commissioned by the *London Festival of Europe* (16 March 2008, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Neil Cummings.

that by generating, representing, testing, celebrating and enforcing competition, neoliberalism affirms its claim to being a free society, unfettered by authoritarian control (Davies 2017a: 41). What, however, this too often elides are the many and varied inequalities that drive economic and other forms of rivalry. Recall the example mentioned in passing above, that 40 per cent of start-ups in the United Kingdom survive their first three years, which, simply put, depends on 60 per cent going bust (May 2019 : n.pag.). Add to this the performativity of markets that is captured in the adage 'success begets success'. As competitors scale, they often gain the advantage by acquiring or obliterating their rivals. More and more (money, power – value) is concentrated in the hands of an elite. In what world can this be considered fair and just?

This returns us to the question: What should we do? Crucially both Davies and Critical Practice agree that the problem is not the market per se. It is instead how this matrix of exchange has been expanded and instrumentalized in the service of powerful economic actors, including the neoliberal state (Davies 2017a). This is something Davies taps into when writing about the supporters of nationalist movements as 'the left behind':

> The economy *is* cultural: class and identity constitute each other. This is why the perspective known as 'cultural economy' (or 'cultural political economy') is now more valuable than ever, if it can illuminate the ways in which markets, property rights, work and consumption produce distinctive identities and affects, not as side-effects or as false consciousness, but as integral components of how they operate. (2017b:n.pag., original emphasis)

It is striking the cluster's interest in markets was catalysed by a similar focus when prompted by the question: 'What's cultural about economics?'. In response, Critical Practice organized its first market in 2008 as a one-day event marking the culmination of *The London Festival of Europe*, a much longer programme that took up the question, which in the shadow of Brexit holds added poignancy: 'How to Make Europe Dream?'. Drawing on the critical potential of art when it works as social practice to both represent and test new forms, Critical Practice set about imagining an alternative to the common market that was then enjoyed by the UK as part of the EU.

This market as a continent-sized apparatus for buying, selling and otherwise circulating goods and services without tariffs was reflected upon by Critical Practice in a much more intimate market of ideas, one exploring the economization of culture and the culturalization of the economy. The call for Critical Practice to mobilize its social practice as practice-based/led research stemmed not from a desire to liberate art from the clutches of capital and shore up a romantic vision of art's exceptional status as an autonomous sphere. Instead, the cluster's aim was to better understand the tensions between culture and economics by cinching them tighter, thereby making them more acute – more perceivable – through the market matrix composed of emergent and wide-ranging forms of exchange.

This market as a spatiotemporal frame assembled thirteen stalls and convened a milling crowd to interact with each practice being shared, cross-pollinating information and understanding amongst them. For instance, Graeber hosted conversations about some 24, mostly non-commercial, social transactions to explore forms of exchange, telescoping into instances such as 'group

communism and sharing' and 'balanced egalitarian exchange', so practical ways to avoid or alleviate debt relations, especially those that are long term (Critical Practice 2019c). Other stalls featured a chef, a curator, a radical barber, several economists, various artists, a permaculturist, a philosopher, a screen printer, a thief, a videographer and many others besides. Together the stallholders exchanged knowledge with a milling crowd on issues as diverse as well-being economics, waste management and the visualization of market society.

What for Critical Practice this first market confirmed was the potential of a form akin to a tradeshow. It was unpretentious but could also support deeply experiential encounters for those taking part. This informal and decentralized programme created a 'many-to-many' exchange as an alternative to the 'one-to many' dissemination used in the likes of academic conferences and news broadcasts to convey authority via focused messaging.

The cluster realized a second iteration of the market in 2010 at *PARADE*; it was more ambitious. Some 30 stalls were held by international stallholders to explore publicness (being in public, public space, public infrastructure, public funding, public goods, etc.). Market day took place in a bespoke structure also built in public

Figure 4.3: Stalls at the *Market of Ideas* for *PARADE*. The bespoke structure was built in public from 4320 black milk crates lashed together with some 30,000 cable ties (May 2010, The Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

from some 4320 black milk crates. These were rented for the occasion and lashed together in the hot sun on the grounds of Chelsea College of Arts (see Cummings and Critical Practice 2011).

Two years later, Critical Practice was commissioned by the avant-garde festival *steirischer herbst* to facilitate a market as part of *Truth is Concrete* (2012) in Graz, Austria. The cluster intervened in the 24/7 cultural marathon by creating a makeshift peer-to-peer exchange. This solicited a range of responses to the festival's theme, another chiasmus: the interplay of artistic strategies in politics and political strategies in art. Critical Practice's market in *Truth is Concrete* can be described as a 'soft shoulder' of the marathon, a place where contributors could pause, mingle and catch their breath. In this way, the market constellated an expanded network of solidarities with a global reach. It helped to fortify the shared commitment amongst wide-ranging marathon participants to cultural production as a practical means of contesting the ethical, environmental, social, creative and other bankruptcies that neoliberalism is trying to declare.

By 2013, evaluation had emerged as the cluster's primary concern. Critical Practice facilitated a series of field trips, including a visit to Sotheby's Contemporary Art Auction. That night, the sale totalled an eye-watering £87,971,500. How does this accumulation relate to waste and friction? To explore this question, environmental lawyer Rosie Oliver talked rubbish as we ambled across

Figure 4.4: Stalls in the *P2P Exchange* commissioned for *Truth is Concrete*, part of *steirischer herbst* (26 September 2012, Graz, Austria). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

the Isle of Dogs and learned to beachcomb from a mudlark scouring the banks of the Thames for tidal treasure. Economic geographer Angus Cameron reflected on the movement of capital across borders as we walked around Greenwich, crossing the meridian several times.

My relationship with Critical Practice shifted in 2013 when I took up a post-doctoral fellowship based in the cluster, a role that enabled me to focus on progressing our research on value. For more and more of us in higher education, this trajectory depends on writing grant applications. A turning point came in March of 2015 when Critical Practice received £15,000 from Arts Council England. This gave the cluster a total of £32,000 (much of it coming from Chelsea College of Arts) plus £48,000 of in-kind support to realize a large-scale event, one that would mark the culmination of our current body of research and celebrate our first decade of activity.

TransActing took place on the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground, beside Tate Britain, in July 2015. It was a spectacular pop-up market with a difference. Instead of consuming more stuff and things, this arena encouraged the milling crowd to swap skills and services, to exchange in order to repair broken goods or gain knowledge and other resources. Some of the 65+ practices that featured were a fab lab, a people's bureau, a skillshare, a pinhole photography booth, a listening stand, a bricklaying demonstration, a speaker's corner, a permaculture tent, refreshments-for-promises, organ donation – even a kiosk buying tears.

TransActing was hosted in bespoke stalls developed with the critical design practice, public works, and assembled with help from the market's stallholders and others who enjoy the practical pleasure of a build. In a typology inspired by home furniture designed by Enzo Mari ([1974] 2008), the market's stalls were interspersed with other spaces of assembly. The exchange of a local currency in units of Time, Creativity, Knowledge and Wellbeing contested money as the universal measure and medium of value.

Whilst the values of commercial markets dominate contemporary life, including art and its education, other values can and do coexist. Some, like care and generosity, even flourish. Nurturing and celebrating these values in a spectacular one-day event was one of *TransActing*'s prime concerns (Critical Practice 2019a). Another was to mobilize interdisciplinary practice-based/led research across architecture, art and design to wrest exchange from the

clutches of neoliberalism. *TransActing* did this by highlighting something that is easily forgotten, especially during periods of economic downturn, which can feel like the new normal for those in the 99 per cent. Financial transactions composing the world market are only a fraction of the sum total that produces our lives – in fact, the former only comprise the small number of those in banking services. What about the wealth of interpersonal relations through which commercial, cultural, institutional, material, organizational, social and other forms of production take place?

TransActing aimed to reclaim the market as a technology for coordinating activity to value people and the planet over profit. To understand the broader significance and potential application of this as practice-based/led research, we imagined what such a market would entail. Here, values would circulate not as equivalents but as agonistic complements as they are transacted through decentralized decision-making that trades impersonal abstraction for face-to-face exchange. The result was *TransActing*. Forgoing art for art's sake, the stalls in the market unleashed the logics of architecture, art, design and other disciplines to engage issues that to many matter most: health and wellbeing, experiment and play, history and horticulture, the natural and built environment, alternative and free education, meaningful social relations, civil liberties and human rights to name just a few. *TransActing* modelled a world that we might actually want to live in and invest our time and energy in creating and sustaining. The project demonstrated how cultural production as interdisciplinary practice-based/led research is vital to modelling alternative ways of doing and being.

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Figure 5.1: Diverse Economies Iceberg by Community Economies Collective adapted by James Langdon, as part of the *Trade Show*, which was curated by Kathrin Böhm and Gavin Wade, (Eastside Projects, Birmingham, 2013).

The first trade of *Trade Show* was with the economic geographer Katherine Gibson whose essay published for the show was written in exchange for James Langdon's redesign of The Economy as an Iceberg. The diagram is licensed under Creative Commons. Image courtesy of Kathrin Böhm.

TRANSACTING AS AN ICEBERG

KUBA SZREDER

In this text, I am going to scrutinize the diverse economies of *#TransActing: A Market of Values*, a one-day event that was organized in central London in summer 2015 by Critical Practice, a research cluster affiliated with the Chelsea College of Arts. I will propose to view this event as a momentary manifestation of the latent value generated as a result of a long, collective process that led to its inception and execution. To analyse this situation, I will apply the feminist economic theory of J. K. Gibson-Graham and use this perspective to reassess cultural policies, shifting focus from quantitative outcomes to underlying processes of artistic production.

In this sense, I would like to start my argument with a visual metaphor. Let us imagine *TransActing* as an iceberg with a visible, yet relatively small peak and a large mass hidden below the surface. If the event is like a peak of the iceberg, the collective process is like its bulk. It consists of a much larger but hidden mass of distributed labour, as Critical Practice spent hundreds of hours generating concepts and honing practices that were activated at and through market day. We exchanged, discussed, researched, walked and studied together, long before the festivities unfolded. Without this hidden labour, the event would not have happened, but only a fraction of this is manifested in the event itself, experienced by the audiences, evaluated by academic and artistic institutions.

This choice of iceberg metaphor is informed by the theory of J. K. Gibson-Graham, a pair of feminist geographer-economists who use the properties of an iceberg to analyse the composition of labour in capitalist societies (Gibson-Graham 2006: 70). In what follows, I draw on this analysis to consider the development and execution of *TransActing*, exploring, in particular, the diverse economies that were convened by Critical Practice in its preparatory research for the market between 2010 and 2015.

At stake in Gibson-Graham's use of the iceberg metaphor is illustrating that wage labour constitutes only a fraction of the vast realm of activities, without which the capitalist economy could not function, but the importance of which capitalism obfuscates in order to exploit. Gibson-Graham's interest in this metaphor, which also fascinates a multitude of economists and artists, stems from this potential to deconstruct economic concepts that present capitalism as the only possible way of defining relations of production, exchange and appropriation. Gibson-Graham, for instance, claim that their weak theory of economy 'marshals the many ways that social wealth is produced, transacted, and distributed other than those traditionally associated with capitalism' (2006: 70).

With this in mind, I want to consider *TransActing* not only as an example of economic diversity, with reference to the various types of financial and non-financial exchange through which the market came into being. I also want to consider the event and its associated research as an intervention into the apparatuses governing academic and artistic production. As Gibson-Graham and other proponents of alternative economies emphasize, their weak theory of economy is not just an intellectual exercise. Its main agenda, to which my analysis also subscribes, is to acknowledge and strengthen what Gibson-Graham call 'community economies' with these referring to equalitarian, sustainable, communal and inclusive ways of organizing economic systems (2006: 79). In order to analyse the practical and theoretical nuances of Critical Practice's position in the context of community economies and broader research cultures, I am contrasting two ways of perceiving the economic reality of *TransActing*. One draws from this weak theory of economy; the other is embedded in resistance towards what I call here the managerial framing of art and research.

The research process leading to *TransActing* was conceptualized as a practical alternative to the negative impact of

managerialism on artistic and academic cultures. By 'managerialism' I mean a field-specific expression of a more general, neoliberal assault on social welfare and previously autonomous realms of art and academic research, following with the scholarship on neoliberal cultural policies (Belfiore 2004; Gielen 2013, 2015; McGuigan 2005; Power 1997; Raunig 2013). In keeping with my prior research on project-related apparatuses (Szreder 2013, 2015a, 2015b), I want to foreground managerialism as a diffuse yet coherent apparatus, operating through policies and administrative procedures. I analyse managerialism from the wormhole perspective of a practitioner confronted with such heterogeneous elements as applications, grants, internal accounting procedures, systems of institutional management and modes of evaluation. Precisely, in this context, I find the weak theory of feminist economics so relevant. It unpacks the diverse economies underpinning academic or artistic endeavour, unmasking the arbitrariness of managerial mechanisms, which do not officially account for some forms of academic or artistic labour with the express purpose of exploiting them. Notably, I am discussing community economies in a specific context of artistic research and from the perspective of a long-term member of Critical Practice, with privileged access behind the scenes. For this reason, instead of discussing weak theory in general, I will discuss the iceberg theory of artistic research (in short: iceberg theory), considered as the application of weak theory in the realm of artistic research. In this chapter, I will briefly outline its main premises by discussing different aspects of *TransActing*.

Temporal structures and externalities

Following Gibson-Graham, a weak theory more effectively accounts for the longevity of artistic processes than a managerial approach does. The iceberg theory demonstrates that formalized time schedules are tuned in such a way that they discriminate against some forms of labour by limiting the timeframe that accounts for project-related labour. Whilst official project timelines might cover several months or years, their schedules very rarely account for long and unstructured processes which precede a formulation of any

project and continue after it has been made. Crucially, the procedures that limit the timespan of projects typically account for costs and benefits from the position of an investor (institution, grant provider, etc.), rather than a producer (artist, curator or other non-investor stakeholders). The distributed labour of dozens of people, who work before and after the scheduled time of a project, can be underpaid or unpaid thanks to short-term accountancy.

Responding to this tendency, Critical Practice highlights the durational character of its process, especially with reference to outcomes for public encounter and experience. Consider, for instance, the Critical Practice wiki (www.criticalpracticechelsea.org) as an alternative accountancy system. Here, administrative documents (meeting agendas and minutes, budgets, project blurbs, etc.) register various stages in artistic and intellectual processes. At first glance, the wiki, whose content is publicly accessible, may look chaotic, as it differs from a typical website, which conveys neatly organized information. But from the perspective of iceberg theory, the wiki is not only a promotional interface, but also a cognitive tool, one that supports collective resistance to the short-termism inherent to managerial apparatuses.

Evaluating hidden labour

The iceberg theory of artistic research differs significantly from managerial accountancy because it deconstructs evaluative frameworks that discriminate against distributed forms of labour. Managerial accountancy implicates a specific notion of efficiency, one that makes disappear from the economic equation the costs of sustaining and reproducing labour, including that contributed by artistic or academic communities, such as Critical Practice. This deftly denies the reality that without communal involvement, the vast majority of artistic research cannot succeed. As in the case of *TransActing*, collective labour is important for preparing projects, running and concluding them. However, systems of institutional management recognize only a fraction of work conducted in the framework of a project. Other activities are deemed voluntary; they are relegated to in-kind contributions and hence have only limited value. This exploitative auditing is founded on the norms of contractual agreements. Artistic institutions and universities only

pay for the time of contracted employment. However, more holistic approaches like those favoured for *TransActing* clearly demonstrate that these distinctions do not pass the test of reality. Extracurricular labour is necessary for the successful execution of most artistic projects and plays a key role in the maintenance of research culture more generally. In the case of *TransActing*, every remunerated hour was matched with at least ten hours of unpaid and unaccounted research and other project-related activity by members of Critical Practice. This time was spent not only on planning and preparing the project but also on activities conducted during *TransActing*. For example, Critical Practice spent hundreds of hours recycling the timber and constructing the market's architectural infrastructure. This labour was not covered by the project's budget, which recorded it as in-kind contribution. This is just one example of a much wider tendency. Clearly, executing complex projects like *TransActing* depends on significant time and effort, the vast majority of which is unpaid or underpaid, due to the operations of managerial accountancy.

Another, much more general mechanism for undervaluing labour is the cruel economy of authorship. Here, only a fraction of activities associated with artistic creation or academic research are positively evaluated by granting reputations (which could be analysed after Pierre Bourdieu as symbolic capital [Bourdieu 1996]). Authors earn reputation when they exhibit an artwork they have created or deliver an academic paper they have written. Through this recognition, artists and academics constitute their professional trajectories. However, reputations are not attributed when people discuss, study, exchange ideas, formulate collective concepts, even though all of these activities are socially necessary for formulating intellectual or artistic propositions. Additionally, there are many people who conduct various tasks (such as administration, organization, maintenance) that are not generally considered to be authored. Despite being indispensable to realizing outcomes, they go unrecognized and undervalued. By contrast, the iceberg theory re-evaluates the importance of these activities and as a result, it may prompt collective renegotiation of the terms under which various types of labour are distributed and remunerated. For example, Critical Practice tries to support non-authorial contributions by budgeting for vital work, such as hospitality. This ensures that these contributions are at least partially paid, even if they still fail to garner

symbolic recognition and go underappreciated as constitutive of the artistic reputations to which this gives rise. Another outcome of the iceberg theory is tactical multi-authoring, tested extensively both by Critical Practice and other research clusters, such as Free/Slow University of Warsaw. This tactic is advocated, amongst many others, by Marsha Bradfield, a member of Critical Practice. This publication, for example, applies the principles of multi-authorship in practice. It is edited collectively and hosts a multitude of voices from Critical Practice, stallholders, and the wider research community. All of them were given a platform to build their own perspectives on an event, thus constructing their own authorial profiles. As a matter of fact, multi-authoring does not negate the basic principles of authorship, just as a weak theory of economy does not overcome economy as such. Instead, multi-authoring twists rules of authorship in order to create more open authorial systems, which distribute reputational gains more equally.

Performing transactions

Whilst discussing economic structures underpinning artistic research, it is not only important to ask how people work, but also what is being transacted and how through this labour. The iceberg economy of artistic research underscores the multiplicity of forms of knowledge generated and transacted during the research process. In this context, the iceberg theory is no longer perceived solely as an alternative to managerial apparatuses. It is rather a more general way of conceptualizing the value of artistic research.

When applied to artistic research, weak theory facilitates a better understanding of an experimental streak in Critical Practice's collaboration. Before analysing this more deeply, let me illustrate how the research process leading to *TransActing* unfolded by recalling a couple of examples. A research phase encompassed not only more academic readings, but also collective drifts through the financial districts of London (see 'Partial self-portrait' in this publication, September 2012), which resulted in a tacit, bodily understanding of relationships between capital flows and spatial politics. In the case of building the market infrastructure for *TransActing*, the research team not only discussed collective values but also engaged in a collaborative process of recycling and construction,

resulting in embodied, hands-on understanding of how to build a market stall from recycled wood. *TransActing* as an event featured, amongst many other artistic interventions, *Tear Dealer* by Alicja Rogalska who provoked her 'clients' to meditate on the value associated with human tears by purchasing them for a nominal sum. None of these activities resulted in academically formalized outcomes; they have instead generated a wealth of tacit, embodied and embedded knowledge.

The curation of *TransActing* was conceptualized in order to facilitate a wider understanding of artistic research. It struggled against tendencies to quantify and regulate art and research, both of which are intrinsic to the neoliberal revamping of academia. Academic criteria of evaluation are tuned in order to demean more informal cultures, which are foundational for any research to unfold, yet undervalued by official systems of academic credits, research excellence, impact studies. In order to analyse and counter this tendency, Stefano Harney and Fred Molten discuss the undercommons of a university, a sphere of informal exchange and collective study, that precedes formalized research (2013).

In order to analyse how systems of academic evaluation debase undercommons, it is important to underscore the relational and contextual character of artistic research. Quoting Neil Cummings, a member of Critical Practice, 'markets mark the things that circulate within them' (2014: 37). In other words, an object of transaction is not unhinged from the systems of exchange and evaluation through which it is circulated. In this sense, academic systems inevitably change the nature of knowledge distributed through them. They positively valorize only a particular form of knowledge, which can be wrapped up in academically viable formats, like a conference paper or a journal article, and evaluated by such metrics as the number of quotations or an impact factor. These systems of evaluation have to be highly formalistic and discriminatory, devaluing all non-formalized ways of producing, feeling and owning knowledge. In contrast, curatorial experiments such as *TransActing* positively valorize more embedded and less formalized knowledge, characteristic to artistic research, by proposing an alternative way of producing and performing knowledge. Instead of discriminating against the wealth of generated knowledge, they constitute platforms for artistic performances and group processes, which facilitate more intuitive ways of expanding on a given

problem. To explore questions of value, *TransActing* engaged a plethora of values, not through theoretical analysis at arm's length, but instead by practically enacting various forms of collective exchange. Participants in this process acquired a more dynamic understanding of value, which might have overridden their previous notions about what a value is, for whom and by whom it is constituted, how it is sustained and how it resonates with other alternate systems of evaluation.

Interdependence

Iceberg theory acknowledges and facilitates the emergence of organizational systems based on mutual interdependence. Paraphrasing the words of Chicago-based collective Temporary Services, independence (from a managerial stranglehold on artistic research) proceeds from interdependence (Hickey 2012; Temporary Services 2012). Community economies, also in art and research, are instituted on relations generated through unquantifiable exchanges: gifts, favours, ideas, mutual support. It is precisely in this way that the undercommons that I have previously referenced emerge.

Critical Practice operates as an interdependent cluster. By distributing labour, responsibilities and risks, it executes projects that could not have been realized by a network of unrelated individuals. It is hard to imagine what would motivate a loosely tied network of independent researchers to spend five years on largely underfunded research processes. Collective research is enabled by sharing the risks inherent to such processes, like the risk of rejected applications, of research going awry, of people dropping out and of imminent precarity. Obviously, clusters like Critical Practice are not able to shelter their members from the structural pressures of neoliberalism. However, they are able to provide interdependent support structures. As Franco Berardi (2009) notes, these can reframe systemic tendencies to privatize responsibility for structural shortcomings.

In this way, interdependent clusters reinforce forms of sociality based on mutual care, the importance of which is emphasized by such feminist thinkers as Isabel Llorey (2015). She underscores the philosophical ramifications of this as this care rewires systemic tendencies for possessive individualism. This may not eradicate

conflicts related to the realization of individual interests inside interdependent clusters, but at least such structures have the potential to facilitate the collective negotiation of conflicting interests in a more egalitarian way.

Conclusion: Interdependent curating

As a conclusion, let me write a couple of final notes on interdependent curating, a curatorial process that engages collectives rather than individuals. Interdependent curating rewires authorial processes, for better and worse. Had *TransActing* been directed by an individual, independent curator, it would have taken a radically different form. But as an interdependently curated project, it was not an expression of any individual's will or authorial style, but rather a manifestation of collaborative desire. The iceberg theory excels at mapping the values generated by interdependent curators, overcoming the restrictions imposed by the managerial apparatuses. It is also well suited to undermine the individualistic, authorial obsession, to which a vast chunk of artistic production is indebted. The visual metaphor of the iceberg manifests the bulk of distributed, creative labour that is otherwise purposefully obfuscated by managerial apparatuses and authorial conventions. Interdependent projects are openly steered by mutual obligations and embedded considerations of tacit values, shared histories and ongoing discussions. The resulting curatorial structure resembles a distributed mesh, composed from diverse, even conflicting systems of value. After all, icebergs are particularly unwieldy forms, stirred by underwater flows of collective energy.

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REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING IN CONSUMERISM

NICHOLAS TEMPLE

The experience of the consumerist environment in contemporary society is so pervasive and intrusive in our daily lives (through mass advertising, internet shopping and the corporatization of civic spaces) that it is difficult to appreciate its peculiarly and uniquely modern characteristics. What distinguishes these from earlier forms of commercial activity and transaction, whether in the ancient or early modern worlds, is the manner in which consumerism today creates conditions of amnesia – situations of individual and collective forgetfulness – which are reinforced by the insularity and placelessness of its built form. In this chapter, I attempt to demonstrate how this phenomenon is manifested spatially through the development of the modern shopping mall and commercial street. The creation of large retail zones in cities and out-of-town mega-complexes for mass consumerism invokes a certain pathological behaviour among the general public. This is revealed in the innate 'passivity' of modern consumerism – its tendency to be experienced as a form of 'therapy' in urban and suburban life – in contrast to the participatory involvement of consumers/shoppers in the civic and religious spaces of pre-modern marketplaces.

The 'memoricide' of the mall

I begin this investigation with an observation by Beatriz Sarlo:

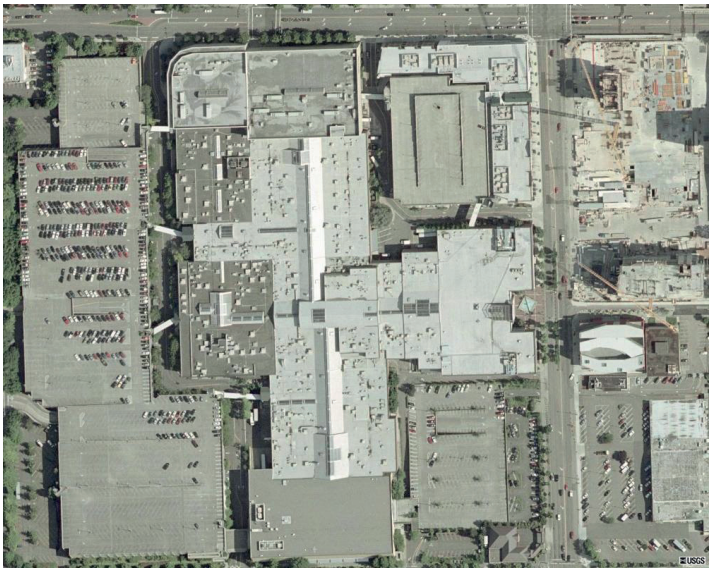
> Once history has been evacuated as 'detail', the mall suffers an amnesia without which the smooth advancement of its business would be impossible. If the traces of history were too evident and went beyond their decorative function, the mall would experience a conflict of functions and meanings: the mall's semiotic machinery has to be that provided by its project alone. (2001: 14)

Quoted in Jean Franco's keynote paper 'The politics of memory' at the conference *Sites of Recovery* (Beirut, October 1999), Sarlo's comparison between historical traces and the shopping mall underlines Franco's assertion that the modern mall is a 'monument to amnesia' leading ultimately to 'memoricide' (1999: 145). By evacuating history – or any registering of past undertakings – the mall produces a spatial-temporal vacuum in which the activity of consumerism is managed as a dominating force and insular experience without the otherwise 'distracting' influences of personal recollections or associations of place.

Examined in the context of the re-democratization of countries in Latin America, Franco and Sarlo highlight how attempts to erase the memory of the atrocities perpetrated by previous political juntas involved amongst other initiatives the construction of shopping malls on sites formerly used for incarceration, torture and even mass execution. Sarlo's reference to the mall's 'semiotic machinery' is symptomatic of what Franco calls the 'undermining of [the] relation of identity, place and memory which cannot be separated from the concept of modernity' (1999: 144).

This phenomenon of collective forgetfulness, through the largely passive act of consumerism, could be described as an insidious condition of modernity in general, and late capitalism in particular. As Fredric Jameson asserts, the insularity of the contemporary shopping mall gives rise to 'the consumption of sheer commodification as a process' thereby erasing any opportunity

Figure 6.1: Bellevue Square Mall, Washington, Aerial View. Wikimedia Commons (USGS copyright).



for reflection and therefore spatial-temporal continuity (1991: x). Indeed, the claims of Sarlo and Franco reveal a more general (and equality unsettling) condition of modern consumerism observed by Andrzej Piotrowski: '[I]f disasters are considered as social or cultural phenomena, architecture's ability to support recovery directly relates to the common understanding of the symbolic functioning of buildings, and this ability is increasingly diminished by the contemporary practices of capitalism' (1999: 311).

Not surprisingly, Piotrowski takes amongst his examples for investigation the Mall of America in Minneapolis to demonstrate how this diminishing capacity of architecture to aid recovery through symbolic meaning and collective memory (and thereby redeem the past) results in what he calls 'Sites of Amnesia' (1999: 314). He contends that this out-of-town mall 'selectively replaces the city', in the scale and conceit of its enterprise as a reconstruction (in part) of a pseudo-vernacular style street of shops all under a single glazed roof. As is typical of other malls, there is a conspicuous absence of any material history in the 'lifeworld' of the complex; retail businesses simply come and go without leaving a trace. I use the term lifeworld in the way applied by Marvin Trachtenberg (2010) in *Building-in-Time: From Giotto to Alberti and Modern Oblivion* to describe the duration of a building's existence, from its construction to its use/inhabitation. The Mall of America provides a perfect

example of how a particular commercial environment of shopping can actually render 'irrelevant questions concerning architecture's role in culture and society' (Piotrowski 1999: 315).

Transformations of the high street

This phenomenon, however, is not just peculiar to the contemporary shopping mall but is also increasingly evidenced in the commercial high street, exacerbated by the combined impact of the internet on shopping practices and the continuing effects of corporatization and the protracted economic recession. Historically, shops have served a social as well as a commercial function, by providing settings where consumers can gather and converse in the process of selecting and purchasing goods. Familiarity with the commercial life of a particular place, through its once distinctive and 'memorable' shopping environment, has historically formed the backbone of many city centres. As places where members of the public return to repeatedly over many years (sometimes through generations of customers), and develop lasting relationships with shopkeepers, the high street shop has long provided a vital social function in towns and cities. Believing (or hoping), however, that such a tradition still pervades, contemporary retail environments are based on the misguided assumption that shops and the services they provide continue to serve as one of the stable 'registers' of urban/community life, against the backdrop of rapid technological and commercial transformation. Evidence of commercial stability and continuity can of course still be found in some parts of the world, such as in the old family businesses of Italy. However, there is increasing evidence, particularly in highly competitive commercial environments such as in the United Kingdom, that the life expectancy of local shops has dramatically shortened, leading to an endless cycle of commercial failures, closures and new ventures (Coca-Stefaniak et al. 2005: 357–71). At the same time, even when independent retailers survive in this fiercely competitive and precarious market, the pressures on businesses to regularly reinvent themselves by changing/updating their interior layouts, their merchandise and even those they employ to sell goods, creates situations of disorientation and even alienation amongst local shoppers. These changes reinforce

the perception of the commercial high street as a place exclusively reserved for consuming goods (without any larger social function), in much the same way as their more contemporary out-of-town shopping malls.

The gradual demise of consumerist space as shared space in the history of cities, from the innately participatory settings of Medieval and Early Modern cities (where memorable experiences of communing citizens drew upon the symbolic relationships of buildings and their urban contexts) to unfettered and unmediated consumption devoid of recollective meanings, provides the historic raw material for Walter Benjamin's examination of modern consumerism in his unfinished *Passagenwerk/Arcades Project* ([1982] 2002). Benjamin believed that 'only a redeemed mankind [*sic*] receives the fullness of its past' which he argues underlies the experience of the nineteenth-century arcade (Wohlfarth 1986: 6). It is on the basis of this belief that it is generally agreed, amongst commentators, that *Passagenwerk/Arcades Project* is a Messianic work whereby the experience of shopping in the nineteenth century was replete with mystical overtones, in a radically immanent and aesthetic sense (Wohlfarth 1986: 7). This understanding, moreover, is informed by two key theoretical perspectives of Benjamin: first, his forensic examination of historical materialism (as an alternative to historicism); and second, his intense interest in the experiential qualities of colour (Caygill 1998: 109) that forms a key element in the kaleidoscopic experience of modern commercial space. Both are closely interconnected in Benjamin's philosophy of modernity and relate to his concept of 'profane illumination', a peculiarly modernist aesthetic turn.

Whilst in many ways a modern precursor to the contemporary shopping mall, the arcades that formed the subject matter of Benjamin's *Passagenwerk/Arcades Project* essentially territorialized and enclosed particular streets within existing urban contexts, thereby contrasting with the placeless out-of-town shopping malls of today with their artificially constructed footprints. Hence, as sheltered passageways within existing urban fabric, arcades in many ways underscored the prevailing trajectories and navigable routes of public movement in cities, albeit selectively and with enhanced (and more intense) consumerist involvement. The contemporary (postmodern) shopping mall, by contrast, is designed specifically to disorientate and insulate the consumer, in relation to the outside world, as a necessary precondition to constructing 'alternative' virtual worlds that can be

Figure 6.2: The Galerie Argentine, Paris, along the Avenue Victor-Hugo. Wikimedia Commons (Olybrius).

experienced on their own (primarily) visual or graphic terms and therefore without mediation (in respect of physical and historical contexts).

Significantly, Benjamin believed 'that the devastation visited on the mystical tradition by recent history has also released forces within that tradition that make it possible to *register* the world-historical cataclysms of modern history' (Wohlfarth 1986: 12). It would be interesting to speculate how Benjamin would have reacted, in this context, to the contemporary shopping mall as a site of amnesia, in the way presented by Franco and Piotrowski, and whether resonances – or reminders – of the flaws of modernity can ultimately be redeemed in the way Benjamin argued in the context of the arcade.

Symbolic and participatory dimensions of monetization

In contrast to the synchronic environment of the contemporary shopping mall, the Benjaminian model of the nineteenth-century arcade provides a link (albeit tenuous) to a deeper diachronic tradition of commercial/mercantile life, where the marketplace actually

gave sustenance to participatory (civic/religious) involvement rather than systematically nullifying or erasing it. In the ancient world, for example, the invention of money, and the activities of trade and religious practice were deeply intertwined. As Richard Seaford observes: 'Sacrifice is an early agent of monetization. At least as early as the classical period some Greek sanctuaries functioned as banks or as places (during festivals) for tax-free trading' (2004: 213). This activity, of what was exceptional tax-free trading in places of worship in the ancient world where there was mutual benefit to both the worshipper (customer) and the trader/banker, finds interesting parallels in the medieval practice of religious indulgences during Christian pilgrimages to Rome (the Eternal City). As a means of reducing levels of temporal punishment (penance) for sins committed, indulgences were vitally important during the Middle Ages to attract pilgrims to the holy sites. During the Renaissance, indulgences even took the form of financial donations to the papal purse, serving as one method of raising much-needed capital to pay for the construction of the new St Peter's Basilica (Cassone and Marchese 1999: 429–42). There existed therefore an implicit *redemptive* relationship between money and religion, a relationship that finds demonstrable expression in the role of number in each.

To give an indication of just how closely intertwined money, trade, civic space and religion were during the early modern period, I refer to a sermon delivered by an eminent humanist and Augustinian friar, Giles of Viterbo, in Siena in 1511. Delivered in response to a salt war with Ferrara, the sermon, which took place in the basilica of St Augustine, was aimed at a crowd of disgruntled Sienese investors. Sent directly by the pope (Julius II), Giles' principal aim was to persuade the Sienese to remain loyal to the papacy in the face of falling profits and financial hardship against a rival principality. As someone who was 'obsessed with the contemplation of number in its pure form', Giles attempted through persuasive talk to reveal an inseparable link between the mystery of numerology, that embodied a cosmological order (in the Christian-Platonic tradition), and commercial arithmetic (Rowland 1995: 699). To assist him in this task he referred in his sermon to Scripture in which God declares: 'You have arranged everything in terms of measure and number and weight' – *Omnia mensura et numero et pondere disposuisti* (The Bible, Wisdom 11:21 cited in Rowland 1995: 701). Underlying this scriptural reference is the principle of an analogous

relationship between forms of quantitative value (weight and measure), as applied in the marketplace, and the symbolism of number. As Karsten Harries argues, in the context of urban life in fifteenth century Italy:

> Having proclaimed, citing Scripture, that wisdom cries out in the streets, the layman calls the orator's attention to the activities that take place in the marketplace: money being counted, oil being measured, and produce being weighed. In each case a unit measure is applied to what is to be measured. And can we not observe something of the sort wherever there is understanding? The activities observed on the marketplace invite the thought that just insofar as he is the being who measures, the human being transcends the beast. Animal rationale comes to be understood first of all as animal mensurans. (2006: 119)

Delivered at a time when commercialization was beginning to become more sophisticated and visible in urban life, Renaissance cities like Siena were still very much immersed in an onto-theological world-view, where symbolic meanings pervaded everything including financial transactions. Giles' interpretation of arithmetic, in his 1511 sermon, would have

> struck his Sienese audience somewhere between their carefully cultivated Christian piety, with its attendant number lore, and their skill at reducing the vagaries of nature and of human society to their quantitative effects on the supply and demand of the marketplace. (Rowland 1995: 703)

The new religion

The intersection between the commercial and religious interests of the city, in the early modern world provides, I believe, a useful counterpoint when we consider the dominance of the former in our contemporary globalized society, so much so that the market is even being called the 'new religion'. Richard Foltz asserts that:

> [T]he dominant faith system of our times is rarely recognized as such, although it contains the complete ecclesiastical apparatus: a priesthood – the economists – whose formulaic mumbo-jumbo nobody really understands but almost everyone trusts to be effective, a missionary organisation in the form of the advertising industry, preaching the gospel of salvation through consumption, and a church – the shopping mall – where the rituals of the faith are carried out. The ethics of this faith system are summed up by the belief that the highest value is to shop. (2007: 136)

Whilst such arguments may seem persuasive to the contemporary reader, they completely misunderstand the historical relationships between commercial and religious life and the way in which the former can never be a substitute to the latter:

> The sacred was then directly involved in the development of the European city. It was no mere pawn in the profit and power game, but a fundamental part of civic identity. Religion in practice was a union of utility and salvation: The pilgrim coming for the indulgence while selling his wares at the market did not lay aside his bargaining techniques when approaching the altar. The city became a center of trade in salvation as it did for material commodities. The gods who responded were city gods. (Trexler 1980: 7)

Quite how this transformation took place, from a predominantly civic/religious life (as Trexler observes above) to a commercially and technologically dominant one highlighted in the modern world, is partly revealed in Dalibor Vesely's principle of 'divided representation' in the foundations of modernity (2004: 246–49). Vesely draws on the examples of different European cities to explain how this relationship gave rise to tensions between instrumental and communicative roles of architecture:

> [T]he knowledge of architectural and urban history […] illustrates the tension and very often conflict between the civic and commercial interests.

> The case of the Medici in Florence at the time of the Renaissance, the preference for civic values in Nuremberg in the time of Dürer in contrast to the commercial interests of the Fugger bank empire in Augsburg at the same time […] shows that our current dilemma has a long history. (2015: 8)

Until the late eighteenth century, the commercial life of cities was always – in the end – subordinate to 'civic values and interests'. Indeed, up to this point the market 'operated within a plethora of other institutions [such as religious and civic bodies] that restrained it' (Cox 1999: 20).

A good indicator of the transition to modern precepts of commercialization and monetization can be found in the changing modes of transaction and their meanings. In the early modern world, the purchase and trade of goods by the general public and mercantile classes took place using an instrument call an '*abbaco*'; a calculation board originally consisting of pebble counters for arithmetic reckoning. This method of manual calculation was easily translated into written records of financial transactions (the basis of modern double-entry bookkeeping invented by the fifteenth-century mathematician Luca Bartolomes Pacioli). But as I have already indicated, numbers were rarely understood in purely abstract (or utilitarian) terms, but were loaded with cosmological meanings and associations. This is underlined by the responsibilities assumed by those instructors of arithmetic described, 'as a kind of stairway to divine matters [...] ambitious teachers of "abacus," or computation, glorified their professional activity by praising their discipline's ability to elevate human action to a realm of higher principles' (Rowland 1995: 702).

The activities, therefore, of markets during this time formed an integral part of the civic and religious activities of the city, in which even financial transaction served as a constant reminder of higher (divine) things. This was especially apparent during the most venerated religious festivals or pilgrimages, such as the Feast of St. Giovanni Battista in Florence and the Holy Jubilee in Rome, when the purchase of goods (from religious souvenirs to everyday commodities) was accompanied by public sermons and ceremonial processions along streets and squares.

Figure 6.3: Piazza della Signoria, Florence, which formed one of the main venues for the Feast of St Giovanni Battista. Photo credit Nicholas Temple.

Markets were often located at strategically important locations along the processional routes, to 'capture' the flow of pilgrims/spectators, as we see for example in the famous market in the Piazza di Ponte (*Platea Pontis*) in Rome, at the bridgehead to the Ponte Sant'Angelo which led to St Peter's Basilica (Temple 2011: 52–53). Through this coexistence between commercial and religious activities, the spaces of cities were experienced as multi-layered and multi-faceted in their symbolic meanings, requiring varying dimensions of involvement and participation depending upon the role (and station) of the citizen in society.

What we can learn from these historical examples of the ancient world and the Renaissance is that trade and consumerism served as essential 'props', in the everyday and mundane life of the marketplace, for religious observance and civic identity. Through arithmetic calculation, in the financial transactions of buying and selling, continuity between the everyday activities of purchasing goods and civic/religious occasions were transmitted symbolically and numerologically. In this context, commercialization was in every sense a 'baseline' of the lived city, for recalling previous festive/ceremonial occasions and for anticipating the ones to follow. Hence, far from being sites of amnesia, as we see in the experiences of the contemporary shopping mall, the historic market was a place for collective participation and recollection.

In our increasingly paperless and virtual forms of communication any semblance of the ritual formality of transaction through number and gesture, that once dominated the marketplace, has all but disappeared. Consequently, monetary exchange through personal contact between customer and seller has become little more than a mechanical/prosaic operation, facilitated through the sanitized facilities of computer screens and handheld (contactless) card readers. What persists is the repeated and monotonous instruction of virtual transaction, redeemed only by momentary human gestures (such as a brief smile) and a courteous 'thanks'. Consequently, at the level of one-to-one contact in the operations of purchasing goods, contemporary consumerism is intrinsically amnesiac; there is simply no time or space for occasion or recollection as existed in the historic marketplace. One of the consequences of this 'evacuation' of place and memory is that the objects of consumerism (the purchased good) become fetishized as both the source of – and substitute to – this perennial condition of forgetting. What gratification the fetishized object generates is inevitably short-lived and is replaced by a sense of *ennui* (listlessness and dissatisfaction).

Conclusion

In our perennial search in the contemporary city for situations of memorable (collective) experience, expressed for example in modern 'festivals', public concerts or live street performances, the pervasive and numbing effects of mass consumerism serve an amnesiac function that erases what has gone before in the collective memories of civic and commercial spaces. In this chapter, I have sought to demonstrate why this modern development, with its vast and complex technological apparatus, is so dominant in the everyday life of cities today, and why understanding its deeper historical developments is instructive to architects, planners and urban designers seeking alternative forms of spatial and symbolic relationships.

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TECHNIQUES OF ABERRANT EXTRACTION
TRANSACTING SURPLUS ACTS IN AN AGE OF SPECULATION

EMILY ROSAMOND

Upon entering *#TransActing: A Market of Values*, I was given a large, felt coin. It was bright red, floppy, hexagonal and of a slightly uninviting texture; a strange interruption into a lifetime of accumulated feelings for coinage. With the bemused smile of someone who had just been invited to join in a shared fiction (like a Monopoly game), I shrugged and slipped the coin into my purse. Tucking this red measure away, like all those who arrived before me, I took my coin on a trip through the market stalls. Like the wandering tip of a narrative structure (Lynch 2008; Bridges 1771), it wove in and out of many booths: a tear dealer, a portable darkroom, an open school, an artists' union, a keyword collector, a money weaver, a speaker's corner. Sometimes changing hands, often staying put, the coin hung on the sidelines of these scenes, like a strange, misplaced punctuation mark, a silent witness to a field of felt activities and interactions. It hung in the background whilst, in one booth, I donned a helmet-like device, The *Hallucinatron 5000™*, which played me video clips as it harvested my psychic energies, to be sold on eBay, for the

benefit, so I was told, of a faraway, autonomous, separatist tribe. It waited whilst I sculpted an intestine, in another booth, whilst discussing organ donation. The coin listened as I sat in on a discussion about alternative art schools; as I visited the *Music by the Metre* booth, receiving a length of a cassette tape containing who knows what information, what latent soundscape, as I moved between conversations with friends.

Values, like conversations, crisscrossed and blanketed the scene, building up and self-destructing in odd piles, at odd angles, with odd effects. At one end of the market, participants sat in a circle in the shade, discussing the ins and outs of alternative, unaccredited education, performing their allegiance to shared and overlapping communities. At the other end of the site – and the opposite end of the spectrum – in the *Tear Dealer* booth, visitors struggled to cry into test tubes in the bright sun. The booth's operators, Alicja Rogalska and Łukasz Suroweic, were purchasing the tears by the pound, by volume; they had onions at the ready to help hopeful earners extract their sorry surplus. Not far away, at Ribas and Herbst's booth, visitors were coerced and cajoled into leaving something of their own behind: a treasure, an aid or a crutch that, surely (so the operators smilingly said), they could do without. The resultant display was a chaotic accumulation of extracted personal effects, given with more or less hesitation, whose material properties cancelled out each other's usefulness, thus marking an end to their social lives as personal accompanists. Books, a shoe, lipsticks, CDs, toys and hairpins clung to heavy blocks of ice, which melted all over the tablecloth, ruining everything. An irreverent, almost disgusting surplus (or a mini-potlatch, systematically dug out of bags and purses with batted eyelashes), Ribas and Herbst's stall was frequently rearranged by an attendant swarm of delighted children.

What is a surplus? What can act as a vehicle for extracted value? *The Market of Values* – a temporary agora, a fleeting material diagram – envisioned an economy of ever-shifting registers of value, ever-shifting provisional definitions of surplus. Changing places, and hands, the materials and actions in the market traded in techniques of aberrant extraction. Tears, ideas, time, belongings – all were lifted from bodies and their possessive orbits, like a surplus. Surplus, as a concept, promiscuously inhabited many kinds of object (both concrete and immaterial). In turn, surplus came to be, itself, defined as a kind of promiscuity, as anything which can

readily be taken, lured, lifted, coaxed or plucked from bodies' possessive or affective, alienated orbits. Cajoling, tricking and wheedling joined approaching, giving, inviting and offering as methods in a temporary textbook of techniques for shared extraction. (Both the booth operators, who introduced the terms of exchange, and the visitors, who brought their expectations and their willingness to suspend disbelief, practiced these techniques.) And in all of this, the big, red, felt coins faded, as the day progressed, into the background – remaining, for the most part, silent. In the end, they did not really change hands too much but, rather, punctuated the scene like lo-fi radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags: taking in and tracking narrative pathways through the much more nuanced, complex exchanges of surplus things and dialogues and affects. From coinage to tracking device, the Critical Practice currency slips registers. In doing so, it articulates a breaking point between two conflicting images of exchange, two conceptions of the relations between money and information: those of the liberal-era marketplace and those of the online surveillance economy.

In its classic, liberal iteration, the concept of the market has no patience for manipulating price. The true price of a given good could not, under any circumstances (so, at least, the theory went), be tampered with for it bore information. The precise meeting point between supply and demand, represented by price, was indicative of, and exactly calibrated to, the market as a whole system; to fix, or change, the price of a given good would be to cloud the waters, losing the crystalline capacity to see the whole economy through the microcosm of price. Now, in an age in which the image of the economy as a stable, fixed structure has (to say the least) considerably waned, giving way to an image of crisis-as-the-norm, chaotic-economic weather patterns; in an age of flash crashes, RFID tags and online surveillance, the concept of information has divorced the concept of price. Information flows at oblique angles to pricing; the control of information is a technique of power that, ironically, might well be aided by entirely 'free' exchange. Further, this economy becomes, shall we say, thoroughly saturated with ghosts, autonomous affects, moods or animal spirits, as the economist John Maynard Keynes would have called them, or newly foregrounded forms of imitativeness as an affective technology of capitalism – a capitalist meteorology – as human geographer Nigel Thrift (2009) might have said. A thick, restless, moody weather now permeates

the concept of the market. How, then, does the rift between these two registers of the big felt coin – the liberal market, constructed in the image of its own transparency and the surveillance economy made from bursts, swarms and shifts of erratic mood and valuation in information flows – galvanize the actions of Critical Practice's marketplace?

Let us say, for a moment, that the physical wares-and-salesmen marketplace, bartering in things, is an image thoroughly ensconced in the liberal era. In and of itself, it is rather quaint – or, at the very least, quite partial – as an image, or even a microcosm, of contemporary financialized value. This problem – this disconnect between concrete market metaphors and swarming financial markets – comes up in political discussions quite often. Particularly right-leaning politicians, taking cues from Thatcher's popular 'housewife economics' tropes, routinely use common-sense images of buying and selling at shops as a shorthand for contemporary finance, justifying austerity with quaint images of balanced shop or household budgets. Former Greek Minister of Finance, Yanis Varoufakis, for his part, seems to spend a great deal of time debunking such myths, reminding the public that the world of speculative finance is in no way comparable to a shop or household. In the financialized, neoliberal era, derivatives and stocks change hands at high frequencies – with no hands, so to speak – in fits of automated, speculative valuation, coursing through fibre-optic cables, of imaginary profits, based on whipped-up, calculated futures that – though they never come – are traded in the present. In such financial maelstroms, valuation becomes, so it seems, almost autonomous; neither the exchange of commodities, nor the abstract labour that these commodities (like tiny banks) purportedly store, can anymore serve as an image of the basis of those fits and storms of (now quite speculative) value. Value, in its financialized form, departs from the commodity, from abstract labour, much like, in tandem or in its wake, information has come unhinged from price. More and more, value seems to float in thin air. Value operates more on the basis of its own, recursive performativity – its feedback loops of self-absorbed, self-generating booms and busts – than on any tangible product or profit. What, then, can the activated image of the marketplace, so meticulously planned by Critical Practice, offer to this financialized context by way of lived understanding? In what language does it speak to this milieu?

Perhaps it is best to envision the physical marketplace, in this context, as a metonym in, and for, the financialized world. From microcosm to metonym: the exchange of values, in the stalls-and-sellers marketplace in the financial era, has its ear tilted towards something else, towards the seemingly secondary, dispersed, distributed contexts of derivative markets, whose moods still – yes, still – course through the physical, goods-and-wares marketplace, though this time at an oblique angle. The tangible, physical marketplace cannot *stand in for* the financialized market; but it can stand *beside* it, listening for its highly distributed whispers. Further, the exchange of, shall we say, moods – so much subtler than big, felt coins – models the oblique angles at which the speculative spheres of investment dance rapidly, spin circles around the clunky, cumbersome exchanges of currency, doubly inscribing the bearer of the mood, and her activities, in both the physical, commodity-tied world of trading and in the speculative worlds of investment futures. The speculative worlds of investment live in financial markets, yes, but also, beyond this, in any chaotic, recursive loops and flows of feeling; not just, not only, the high-speed markets' circulated feelings that no one actually feels, but also the lived, personal feelings for exchange and value that course through contemporary lives, always-already tinged by financial markets, lived, owned, inhabited practices of valuation like reputation, glory, trust, truth or power (Feher 2009; Hearn 2010). These were amongst the terms in sociologist Gabriel Tarde's (2007) expanded vocabulary of economic value (2007; Latour 2010; Latour and Lépinay 2009). Economics, Tarde argued, already, in 1902, needed to take into account the full spectrum of values coursing through newspapers and social lives – and not just those that are directly, obviously monetized.

The ramifications of this doubling of registers through which the felt values of exchange take on significance has broad and wide-reaching implications for the analysis of so-called 'socially-engaged' art. This is something that – in my view, at least – Critical Practice's event most usefully, and innovatively, highlights. Take one example: the shifting registers *TransActing* makes visible for the role of that classic trope of relational art: the open dialogue. In this physical marketplace that is also a metonym – but certainly not a microcosm – for financialization, how does open dialogue function? What does it signify, what does it signal, in both the concrete

register of monetary exchange and as metonym for the chaotic free-flows of feeling in financialized contexts?

Earlier, I juxtaposed two moments in the market stalls: the open-school discussion and the *Tear Dealer*. I called them opposite ends of the spectrum of transactions that *TransActing* contained. But I want to develop this thought a bit further. For on what spectrum, exactly, are these two practices opposed? Clearly, the contrast would seem to be in their implied understanding of social space, as either inclusive – oceanic – or antagonistic, ridden with power struggles and micro-exploitations. Whilst the open-school discussion hinges on inclusivity and seeks to value each participant – caring, even, for their unique contributions – the *Tear Dealer* takes no such interest in its charges. It plays on tropes of predatory, parasitic expropriation, extracting, inviting – even demanding – emotional investment, seeming to pit participants' desire to make a few pounds against the tears of their immaterial toils.

Such a concept of a spectrum for social practice is, by now, quite familiar art historical territory. It was art historian and critic Claire Bishop (2004, 2006) who broadly critiqued relational aesthetics' simplistic claims to inclusivity, arguing, instead, in favour of works that more difficulty, more truthfully spoke to an antagonistic conception of social space. Bishop, quite rightly, attacks the conflation of ethical and aesthetic values in much writing on socially engaged art practices (for instance, in Grant Kester's tendency to judge socially engaged works by how inclusive or egalitarian they are, thereby overlooking the possibility that antagonistic, non-egalitarian social practices, too, might be worthy of attention). Yet Bishop also falls into a trap, by simply valorizing antagonistic effects as 'truer' to social interaction. What Bishop's criticism fails to register is precisely the *double-coding* of valuation in a financialized context; the values that accrue around physical, market-based transactions, on the one hand, and speculative acts of valuation, on the other hand – both of these coursing through the same contexts, but at oblique angles and, in their duplicity, rendering the difference between supposedly 'inclusive' and 'antagonistic' social practices rather moot. In other words, the differences between 'inclusivity' and 'exclusion', or between 'ethical' and 'antagonistic' social practice – as they appear on the surface of a social setting – might not be quite so significant as they, at first, appear. They

have been overtaken in significance by the difference between the shared stakes of participants in a particular exchange, on the one hand, and the distributed structures of investment (be they in the form of derivative financial investment, or other distributed affective investments, such as the investment in images of an artwork by the 'art world') that override and overcode the significance of these exchanges (Feher 2009).

The open-school discussion speaks to the production of educational values outside of their most formalized, institutionalized, bureaucratized iterations in universities. Yet in a financialized context, its unconscious, shall we say – its financialized rhyming couplet – is the *social impact bond* (SIB). SIBs are contracts between investors and the public sector, outlining a commitment to pay for improvements in social outcomes that lead to public savings. For instance, the organization Social Finance, Ltd. has created social impact bonds to finance outcomes from prisoner rehabilitation in Peterborough to schemes helping rough-sleepers in London (Dowling and Harvie 2014: 877). SIBs (according to some views, at least) epitomize the financialization of 'social impact'. As Emma Dowling and David Harvie point out, the emergence of SIBs, in the wake of Tory visions for a British 'Big Society' (which, though it may have flopped as an ideology, still perfectly encapsulates, in their view, the emerging, hegemonic logic of social investment), speaks to a casualization and outsourcing of social investment. Citizens, on the one hand, are encouraged to use their personal investments, feelings and empathies to pick up the slack, fill the gaping holes in social programming left by austerity measures. Much unlike the Thatcher-era spirit of relentless competition, the image of the Big Society, mobilized by David Cameron in 2009, champions caring and social activism. Yet if, in this phase of conservatism, on the one hand social investment was left to private citizens, on the other hand, it was left to the bond market – to private investors who, armed with their own forms of (perhaps less emotional) investment, sought to couple better social impact metrics with better returns.

The open-school discussion, in this context, inevitably speaks to the financialized logics of social investment. And yet it is not so simple as saying (as, perhaps, sociologists Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello [2005] might have it) that artistic critique, and the forms of social investment mobilized by alternative art schools and other models of critical practice, are 'recuperated' by capitalism – that

'everything', in the end, becomes incorporated, integrated into a system that ensures that some investors profit most from everyone's community investments. Rather, it is a persistently double logic: given the differential angles at which transactional values intersect with structures of investment, there is nothing that remains fundamentally 'captured', by capital, in social investment, *even as the financialized logics of social investment continue to operate*. Neoliberal-era artworks that trade in tropes of transaction must speak to both transactional and speculative logic, differentially, at the same time, and in multiple registers. It is possible neither to unify, nor to separate, an account of these two dimensions of their financialized, yet also non-financial activities (Malik and Phillips 2012).

The playful volatility of Critical Practice's event speaks to the proliferation of these speculative registers, unsure in their own valuations. *The Market of Values*, and the many practices it contained, looked, always, somewhat beyond themselves, into the distance – into a speculative stratosphere they intuitively felt but did not entirely, directly know. Sometimes, the market outright acknowledged this context, as in the Divest UAL stall and its call for University of the Arts London to fully divest from fossil fuels. At other times, it charted an imagined path through that extended web of networks, as in artist Joey Ryken's *Hallucinatron 5000™*, which weirdly siphons psychic values, strange surplus feelings to be vaulted onto an imagined eBay path. This is just one instance, in the market, of a piece that speaks to spectres of the surveillance economy, positioning that economy as a kind of surplus context, above and beyond the 'real', 'live' presence of the performance/transaction space – which, in any case, is in some sense just a way to get to the abstractions in price-meteorologies. The market, drawn in space, in the imagined pathways of red felt trackers/coins, is a narrative structure that speaks to the dual logics of transaction and investment – not to mention the need for art practices and art writing to hold these two logics in tension.

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A CONVERSATION ON VALUE WITH ANDREA PHILLIPS

VERINA GFADER AND ANDREA PHILLIPS

Verina Gfader (VG): For the organizers Critical Practice, the intention was always to create *#TransActing: A Market of Values* as an alternative to the so-called or so-understood art market, to dismantle presumed questions of value and evaluation and economies – the frameworks where these become apparent – and try to set up the possibility for different models of exchange and transaction, including gift culture. This includes a debate of how Marxist thinking of use and exchange value infiltrates – in a new shape or disguise – and permeates current modes of circulation/distribution/consumption. Ultimately, it aims to create a platform where these questions are put into question through inhabiting such space and re-activating potentials within it. Values we have been drafting were about time, knowledge, wellbeing and creativity.

Interestingly within *TransActing*, lots of people, invited participants, suggested a different currency moving beyond the monetary – but towards what? What then happened on the day of the actual market was that there were several currencies running in parallel, simultaneously. A strange or estranged exchange system based on variability, non-autonomy and flexibility was established that also

created different levels of engagement with not only the things at stake (products) but with our habitual patterns, actions and so on.

Andrea Phillips (AP): Could you describe some of these currencies that were in circulation?

VG: There was cash (pounds sterling) and other models of value measurement of what is to be valued (such as time). There was, for example, The Bureau of Exchanges proposing a conversion table that deals across the tangible, abstract and emotive currents in the market. *Mint(ed)* pointed out that mint is one of the most undervalued herbs, but the robust plant has remarkable currency, it was even used as tax payment in biblical Egypt. There were banknotes being shredded and then woven into another banknote. Formal experimentations included a stencilled out 'money' using felt, wood, plastic as its main materials.

AP: That is interesting. David Boyle wrote a fantastic book about the history of alternative currencies for the New Economic Foundation (1999). He and I did a talk together at the Whitechapel Gallery as part of an exhibition *The Spirit of Utopia* in 2013. The exhibition included works by SUPERFLEX, e-flux and Pedro Reyes. We were asked to engage with the e-flux *Time Bank* project. David and I were looking at ways in which alternative currencies related to the art market. The history of alternative economies, alternative currencies, is very long and very experimental and there are many in operation at the moment. But most of them are what I would call non-ideologically formulated. They are formulated through necessity. So if you look at currencies like Bitcoin, it is not ideological in the sense that it is set up as an antagonistic alternative. But it runs as a parallel exchange system, one that is integrated into the stock market. Other exchange systems focus on histories of the gift economy, which I am sure you have explored. To what extent is the gift a utopian alternative to current currencies and current paradigms of value? Is it not absolutely locked into a very similar system of evaluation which is about reciprocal demand (Phillips 2015)?

VG: There is a different guilt involved, a different kind of guilt or layer.

AP: There is a film about the art market, which is made by an artistic duo called (Katleen) Vermeir and (Ronny) Heiremans. *Masquerade* (2015) takes its title from the subtitle of a book by Herman Melville, *The Confidence-Man*, that was first published in 1857. It is an episodic film set in an auction house. The film weaves together a series of symbolic and actual, factual narratives on the art market. The artists have developed something called the *Arthouse Index*, which is effectively an algorithmic mechanism through which they measure their own value based on a number of different stock market factors (the value of their house, their value on the ArtFacts index, the Standards and Poor's, etc.). They have created their own index, which shifts of course, as indexes shift. They mimic the various art valuation indexes that are now available for advising and generating investment in the art market. The algorithm runs the order of which episodes in the film are screened. Katleen and Ronny invited me to play a reporter in the film, whose role is to examine the way the art market operates (so they placed my own critical inquiry into the heart of the film, at once fictionalizing it and making my role as an academic fully participatory within the structures of value production – very clever!).

VG: To me what sounds most fascinating is the algorithm at the core of it. Can you develop the code for a mechanism for measuring your own value – a completely technologically produced 'market-self'? Trust in a certain technological condition?

AP: Yes. What the artists and I share is an understanding that all these valuation systems are built on fiction and myth (Phillips and Malik 2012).

VG: But precisely because of this fictitious nature they are then on the front or top of everything, no? What is needed is complete fiction based on a kind of exaggeration – based on a lack.

AP: Absolutely. But the art market is slightly different because the imaginary lacks, as you call them, are a need. And they are specific to a very small bunch of people. The art market is a strange subsidiary of market values in general. One of the things I have learned through doing research into the art market with Suhail Malik, Andrew Wheatley and Sarah Thelwall in the ongoing project, *The*

Aesthetic and Economic Impact of the Art Market, which we started in 2010, is that the modes through which art is accrued and distributed are both similar to normative functions of value within any market and asynchronous to these. Of course the art market learns and replicates certain valuation systems within the world so that its stock affairs, regressions and accumulations function in a similar way. But as the capitalist market functions at the moment, it is also slightly different from the art market. My interest is in these anomalies as they reveal the modes through which artistic and broader forms of inequality are produced. What most artists would suggest is that these differences in valuation are special, because they allow art to function in a more utopian mode within the world. But I think these differences show that the art market and therefore artists that make work that circulates in the art market, are wrapped up in something that is more divisive, and more potentially aggressive, than 'normal' capital. So I would argue differently, that the art market is the front – the avant-garde – of financialization in the sense that it allows us to value on a seemingly idiosyncratic level of things that circulate in a very small world. This reflects and produces deep inequality – deeper inequality than for instance the housing market and the housing market already provides deep inequality. So I think that the art market is specific in that it produces inegalitarian structures that generations of artists have fed. And somehow we are hooked – just as most of the world at the moment is hooked, is libidinally and financially addicted to a form of capitalism – so the art market is libidinally and financially hooked on a specific mode of circulation. We often classify the art market as a form of alternative currency without understanding that in fact alternative economies do not alter but add to terms and forms of value production.

VG: They are surplus in that sense.

AP: Yes in a way. In terms of art it is also surplus value. Nothing is needed in the art market. There is nothing that is produced that is necessary.

VG: I am wondering though, you consider the art market as this small world or universe, as this small bubble – well it is not a bubble; in fact, it has a long history. Could you expand on this in relation to the question of the 'global'? In terms of how the 'global' can

be reconsidered, re-analysed, and potentially realized through this small world of the art market? What do you mean by small here?

AP: The art market is global already. The network is an assemblage of small sites of production but exists as a veneer on top of, but also alongside, the spread of capitalism throughout the world. This market is a significant example of public–private entrepreneurial partnership. I will give you a very local example for London. The role of many curators at Tate is not simply to curate exhibitions and manage the institution, but also to develop connections in other parts of the world. So certain curators at Tate are experts in both the art of and the potential and actual collectors and collections in, for example, the Sub-Sahara or Middle East or other particular regions, territories. Their job is to go out and produce affective markets. They need to find new artists in these places in order to keep the value system buoyant and bring a new product that excites their directors (and also audiences), and also to develop expanded territorialities of collecting – and donating. So Tate understands in a highly sophisticated way that in order to keep its finances in place, it needs to develop collectors at a local level but also globally who then, for example, join their collectors circle. But they understand that they need to do it through a structure that looks like care and value exchange, that looks like the giving of the gift of knowledge and receiving the gift of knowledge in other places. This is how you set up an exhibition, this is how a biennale runs. Tate is very happy for its curators to curate biennales in other parts of the world, for instance. Again, there is this kind of reciprocity of care and gifting, which is of course all related to financialization of the main body or agent – an empire of art (Phillips et al. 2015).

VG: There is something else I would like to hear more about from within that discussion, namely the question of knowledge and value. From your experience working on this larger research project, *The Aesthetic and Economic Impact of the Art Market*, how has the relation between knowledge and value developed in ways that have become completely impossible to grasp in this market development? What does market development do to the question of art knowledge, as it were, so a renewed strange, staged sophisticated interdependence between...

AP: What do you mean by 'art knowledge'? You are not referring specifically to the knowledge of the market, are you?

VG: No, I am referring to knowledge (value) produced through artistic work, art research, artistic research if you like, the intellectualization of the art object.

AP: OK, so first of all I would say that that is not new that knowledge surrounding the art object has always been a currency. And second, I guess what is relatively new, certainly in the West, has been the relationship between educational institutions and art, which has been something that has been produced only over the twentieth century. Art knowledge for instance is much older. We can look at the way Plato wrote about art to see concerns and restricted pleasures in art. But in the twentieth century, the link between educational forms of knowledge production and artistic forms of knowledge production has been brought together. The difficulty has been in the ways through which knowledge has started to be measured. And, of course, you and I have recently been through the Research Excellence Framework (REF) structure, whereby this has become a very pointed argument, where artists have objected to their work being measured for the REF exercise within educational circumstances in the United Kingdom specifically. Of course, similar structures and demands are at play in other countries as well, although these structures are not quite as advanced in terms of measure as the one in the United Kingdom. Many artists etc. object to something they consider an incursion but their value is already based on cultural currency and part of this valuation includes knowledge – a very large part (I would say particularly since conceptualism). What art people, people who are involved in art education – artists, curators, art historians and so on – struggle with is the language and the formulation of that knowledge in terms of a currency that can be understood and therefore be able to be measured financially. But art knowledge has always already been a currency. There is a great deal of denial in the art world of knowledge valuation – and the REF exercise is a case in point. I see art knowledge as being a currency that is very similar to a kind of corporate knowledge production. I do not see it as an alternative even as the *content* of the knowledge is critical of the system it produces.

VG: The question is then about translation.

AP: Absolutely. I think that the problem of measuring is that it is seen as an oppression. It is a hegemonic imposition upon forms of knowledge production that do not meet certain measurement criteria. I understand that completely. That is not only true of visual art, it is true of the arts in general and it is equally true of certain forms of sociology and certain forms of ethnography, for instance, that also have this problem: we share and are not exclusive – it is a broader community than just art. It is also a mistake for the art community to refuse principles of measurement. And it relates to some of your broader questions that you had sent me in preparation for this dialogue. I think that actually people need to recognize in a kind of accelerationist mode that one needs to engage with those systems in order to produce a new system of valuation.

What I have been working with recently is the concept of the production of alternatives through devaluation. When Suhail Malik, Andrew Wheatley, Sarah Thelwall and I set up the *The Aesthetic and Economic Impact of the Art Market* project in 2010, what we were trying to do – and effectively it is very simple – was to make transparent the ways in which money flows within the art market. This is something I think is still of importance. We have done a bit of it, but it has been very difficult. We wanted to examine the financial relationship between the artwork, the dealer, the collector, the private institution, the public institution, the auction house and the artist; so to look at that circuit in order to analyse the production of value. If you can mine that data, you can analyse its impact on the artist, their career and their lives. One of the things that we propose is to look at what we call the 'financial biography of an artwork'. So to look at an artwork that was produced twenty years ago and trace its history of valuation and devaluation through these various modes. What that entails is getting people to reveal the financial price.

VG: I am curious precisely about the variability of spaces and forms of presentation, for example, a collective. What status does it have in the overall system? Where and how does it play a role or according to what measurements exactly does it fluctuate? If this art market of value that we built and initiated at Chelsea College of Arts created an exchange of some 60 stalls, what is going on here? How

does this market position itself within the dynamic you described? In what way does it feature in your analysis?

AP: How many alternative art markets are there now running? There are plenty. But even though they are set up to produce a different mechanism, they serve as or become a metaphor that feeds into the general valuation of art as a viable, experimental, exciting, interesting, creative (one of the words which should be banned from the English language) space for self-production. And, of course, that is an enormous attraction. One of the problems – and this is not something that is recent – is the way in which alternative value systems are incorporated into the normative on a regular basis. Which is not to say that they should not be practiced and are not incredibly important in terms of the circulation of ideas. And of course they are also important in terms of experimenting with thinking about art's relationship to the broader circulation of material and immaterial cultures in the world.

One of the problems with the art market is that it reproduces the idea of art as a singularity. Even with alternative fairs and alternative instigations, we are still hooked into this individualization. It is very clear to me that unless we reverse valuation systems, we are going to continue to produce the same formula of marketized, financialized valuation – however disguised it is within the regimes of the symbolic, the aesthetic, the affective. So I started trying to think about the idea of devaluation within the feminist context of *WE (Not I): On Creativity and Value*, a series of collaborative working meetings, presentations, and events that was organized by Melissa Gordon and Marina Vishmidt across various venues in London from 27 April to 2 May 2015. I proposed the idea of devaluation influenced by three things: first of all a simple reversal, a kind of thought experiment. How can we devalue art objects? What happens, what are the ripple effects, the ramifications if one thinks about being devalued rather than super-valued? I went to Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou's book, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* from 2013. They try to think about the dialectic of dispossession; on the one hand, the type of dispossession that occurs if your house is reclaimed by a bank and you are left with nothing if you are financially dispossessed. But also, the idea of a kind of radical subjective dispossession of autonomy – a dispossessing of the self in the face of another. Butler and Athanasiou bring together

these two forms of dispossession to try and propose an alternative politics. I tried to transpose dispossession to devaluation and think it through art. There is one side of devaluation which could neatly destroy an artist's career, in the normative sense of the artist's career; it would close down galleries, etc. And another that would unravel the systematic autonomization of artistic production.

VG: Circulation, production.

AP: Yes. So as an alternative site of devaluation, following the Athanasiou and Butler model, it supposes or could produce the devaluation of the artist's subjective autonomy so that actually, the artist would become a different type of worker within a field of workers and not a singularized one. This thinking is also influenced by the concept of de-growth within ecological thought. Finally, I am trying to bring to this the concept of de-meritocratization. Meritocracy is a term used by Michael Young ([1958] 1965), Baron Young of Dartington, who was a Labour politician in the 1950s. He died in the early 2000s. He wrote a book called, *The Rise of Meritocracy*, which was published in 1958. It was a dystopian fiction that predicted that a system of merit would dominate British politics by 2033, in which knowledge and elite skills would be a barter tool that would replace the money form, producing a revision of the class system, but new and more pernicious forms of inequality would ensue. Art education and the art market are all built-in systems of meritocratization.

My interest is in working with structural transformation, so working within art institutions and within art education institutions and shifting things. I really value institutions.

VG: I think there is no outside. I do not think... it is an illusion, or rather a myth, fulfilling or promising a mythical function or a fantasy.

AP: I think these are the conflicts that we need to put our energy behind and our critical hearts within, rather than antagonistic policies. And this comes back to the individualization and the content of much artwork. Whilst I really appreciate and I learn from going into an installation that tells me what is wrong with the world, you know – and I do learn from these things – or one telling me about the conditions in Syria, I think that now is the time to start transforming that content into structural change. So rather than producing as a

pedagogue, I am interested in encouraging people to make critical practice and to think about critical structure, critical value and critical formation structure.

VG: Or becoming invisible.

AP: Yes. As the Bernadette Corporation said a long time ago: get rid of yourself (2003).

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MINOR COMPOSITIONS NOTES TOWARDS A PUBLISHING RESONANCE

STEVPHEN SHUKAITIS

1. ‘One publishes to find comrades!’ (Breton in Branwyn 1997: 52). This declaration by André Breton is as fitting a place as any to begin discussing what a politicized publishing means, or could mean, today. This is not a facile declaration, but really something that is worth reflecting on to consider changes in the current and shifting relationship between publishing, politics and cultural labour more generally. For what Breton says here is *not* that one publishes to propagate and spread an already conceived absolute; this is not a publishing of revelation or of bringing consciousness to an already imagined fixed audience. Rather Breton is describing something that might be called a publishing of resonance. That is, not a publishing practice that is necessarily intent on trying to convince anyone of anything, but rather is working towards creating conditions for the co-production of meaning. Thus, publishing is not something that occurs at the end of a process of thought, a bringing forth of artistic and

intellectual labour, but rather establishes a social process where this may further develop and unfold.

2. In this sense, the organization of the productive process of publishing could itself be thought to be as important as what is produced. How is that? It follows logically from the idea that one publishes in order to animate new forms of social relationships, which are made possible through the extension and development of publishing, through the social relationships formed by it. Publishing calls forth into itself, and through itself, certain skills of social cooperation that are valuable and worthy, even if what is produced as an end product is possibly not an exalted outcome. Perhaps that is not so important at all. In short, publishing is the initiation of a process where embodied processes of knowing and understanding are produced and reproduced, rather than the creation of objects where complete understanding is fixed, static and contained. The production of the community of shared meaning and collaboration, the production of a public, contains within it a wealth that is often greater than a single text. The production of the text can only be valuable because of the social relationships it is embedded with and produces meaning through.
3. It is for this reason that historically there has been a close relationship between forms of social movements and changes in media production. One could likely come up with a great number of further examples to think about the relationship between shifts in print and politics, conducting a comparative analysis of them and what differences these shifts have meant for those involved in them. And that would be useful, potentially leading to developing a more refined grammar of political subjectivization in relationship with the changing nature of print-politics. And this could be followed by the explosion of enthusiasm that came with the various waves and changes in the rise of net technology, which managed to return after repeated bursting of various tech bubbles, to rise again with each new and successive form of technological interaction, from blogging to social media. But as significant as these lessons would be, to discuss a publishing of resonance would mean to return to these previous moments to learn from them to then address the dynamics of the present. What are the current conditions of print-politics as affected by changing regimes of labour, culture and media?

4. One might be tempted to think about the current dynamics of print-publishing starting from David Batterham's clever throw-away line that most booksellers are quite odd, which he suggests is not surprising, 'since we have all managed to escape or avoid more regular forms of work' (2011: 7). The problem with that observation is that whilst once it may have been possible to escape from 'more regular forms of work' through certain forms of literary and publishing pursuits, today it much more seems that it is work which has escaped from us, in the sense that there are a dwindling number of decent paying jobs left within publishing and media industries more generally. A friend working for a fairly large independent press described to me how he was nearing 40 years old, was working in something close to what he would imagine as his dream job, but still needed to share a house with three other people and subsist on an income more fitting of a student existence than someone who has worked in a professional job for over ten years. One might be tempted to describe this, much as Jaron Lanier does, as part of the generalized gutting of middle-class jobs, particularly in forms of cultural work and media production, brought about by the effects of network technologies and labour (2013).
5. What this means is that the constant recourse to, or invocation of, the notion of openness might indeed be a precondition of the publishing of resonance, but it is not its only characteristic. Rather we end up with questions of how, what and for whom is this openness constituted? Or perhaps more fundamentally, what is *the open* – is publishing open? What kinds of social relationships does it support? What kinds does it work to prevent? How can it serve to further the sociality in publishing argued for by someone like Breton? One interesting way to think through these kinds of questions, even if a bit strange, would be to return to Agamben's (2004) commentary on Jakob Johann von Uexküll's research about ticks. Uexküll describes the tick as completely open to the world. But in saying that, its openness is constituted in a rather limited fashion: namely sensing the movement of warm-blooded mammals below it so that it can drop itself on to them, suck out its necessary nourishment and then die. In this version, *the open* is not an unlimited capacity for becoming and transformation, but rather the organism's capacity to interact with its particular world. Thus, it is not true to

say the tick is not open to the world; it is as open as can be and it sustains itself through that relationship to the world.

6. A publishing of resonance must start from these questions: what is the openness to the world produced through the social relationships of publishing we currently find ourselves in? This is not a question that can be answered by looking at the politics of media production just by themselves, or at the labour involved in the production of media, no matter how directly political or not they might appear to be. Rather it is a question of media ecologies, where print politics are embedded within larger ecologies of media production, circulation, distribution, and consumption – and at a time when the difference between these previously distinct actions have increasingly tended to blur into one another. It is not only a question of the best way to organize autonomous print and media production, although that is an important ask, but also the best ways to organize the publics and undercommons that are articulated through autonomous media production and which feedback through and support continuing development and lifeworlds of autonomous media production. Like Breton would still say today, one publishes in order to find comrades, but not merely to find comrades as the consumers of information or media, but rather as co-conspirators and accomplices.

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PLATFORMS AND SHELTERS
A REFLECTION ON *#TRANSACTING: A MARKET OF VALUES*

AMY McDONNELL
EVA SAJOVIC

This chapter is a conversation between two members of Critical Practice Research Cluster as they assess both the build of *#TransActing: A Market of Values* and market day. Amy McDonnell and Eva Sajovic use this dialogue as a way of reflecting and getting to grips with the cluster's terminology and modes of working developed over more than a decade of their existence, with both practitioners having joined Critical Practice in the later stages of the five-year period of research leading up to *TransActing* (McDonnell in 2013 and Sajovic in 2015). In keeping with Critical Practice's drive for transparency by feeding a wiki page with all of the productive messiness of organizational meeting notes, updated project descriptions, funding forms and 'to do' lists, this exchange between the two 'CPers' incorporates multiple formats: email, transcribed conversation and subsequent additions, which appear as textual annotations. This means that a conversational inquiry is maintained

along with researched accompaniments that respond to ideas that surface during the exchange. Rather than present a unified, conclusive, singular edit, this article shows how ideas have developed between McDonnell and Sajovic over time, hopefully providing more space for readers to intervene, disrupt and make new connections as they engage with the text.

From: Amy McDonnell 13 January

Hello Eva,

With Verina Gfader at Borough Market when having coffee, we started to think around what makes a market a market. What is 'marketness'? Qualities we came up with included shared space, want, need, exchange, trust, ritual, noise. We considered the physical requirement of some sort of platform like a town square or flat ground and a stall or table from which to sell wares, as well as a kind of shelter, perhaps a tarpaulin, to shield goods and provide protection from the sun or rain.

The concepts of 'platform' and 'shelter' function in differing, seemingly oppositional, ways that necessarily intervene with one another. The openness of the platform and the covering, perhaps nurturing space of the shelter.

The idea of the platform reminds me of the project *Public Sculpture on the Outskirts of Monterrey* (2003–06) by the Mexican collective Tercerunquinto. Apparently humble for public sculpture, rather than creating a monumental form, the group made a 50 square metre concrete platform on the sprawling edges of the city. Before long, plastic chairs were placed on the platform and it became a makeshift barber's. Over time, the chairs were removed and it then became a place to drink and dance. The platform continually changed usage until one day someone decided to take spontaneous ownership and use the concrete as the foundations of a house, bringing Tercerunquinto's project to an end.

You run The People's Bureau [I will expand on here so readers of the article will understand], which is an artist-led process dedicated to the exchange of skills and needs, run from a shopping cart based in Elephant and Castle shopping centre, an area in South London undergoing one of the largest regeneration projects in Europe. The project operates as an informal consultation place and a catalyst between different parties including the developer, the local council, local people and organizations, London College of Communication and other public institutions. I see this project as acting both as platform and shelter. How do you see these qualities playing out differently from their use in *TransActing*?

Best wishes,

Amy

From: Eva Sajovic January 16

Hi Amy,

In terms of 'platform', there are parallels: if you look at *TransActing* mainly as a community of evaluation, both communities were created out of an interest in democratic exchange, collective production and act as a site of negotiation. The People's Bureau's aim is to make visible the cultural capital existing in the regeneration area as a counter to the threat of homogenization at the hands of developers. *TransActing* also critically examined hospitality, democratic ways of working and the complexity of holding multiple types of interaction by different parties in one space.

There are differences in these approaches as well. The People's Bureau is a long-term, embedded process using interaction as a tool to make apparent diverse narratives and is based on a gift economy. *TransActing* was a one-day event, which interrogated the concept of value by producing multiple systems of exchange, including the gift economy, but only as one type of transaction amongst many.

Eva

Figure 10.1: Tercerunquinto, *Escultura pública en la periferia urbana de Monterrey* (2003–06). Public sculpture. Courtesy of the artists and Proyectos Monclova. Photo credit Tercerunquinto.

At the South London Gallery No. 67 cafe, 8 March 2016.

Amy McDonnell (AM): Is it best to start from the image I shared in our emails – the work by Tercerunquinto?

Eva Sajovic (ES): Yes. Was the house built? Or...

AM: Yes, now there is a house that exists on the site.

ES: Incredible. So public became private?

AM: Yes exactly. But I had not thought about it in that way. The interchange between public and private is useful for viewing platforms as sites of engagement and potential, along with the shelter, which creates a more closed or intimate space, perhaps limiting or concealing. In other words, the two seemingly opposing, yet apparent sides of a market's structure.

ES: I was looking again at Nicholas Bourriaud's *Postproduction* (2000), where he talks about artists from the nineties who engage in 'market as form', such as Jason Rhoades. On the one hand, *TransActing* could be seen as a continuation of this model aesthetically, yet there are important differences including context (it took place outside of the white cube) and its platform structure (rather than an installation for proposed social activity that an audience/participant may or may not carry out. Critical Practice's market worked with practitioners who were required to take up their own space in the market structure in order to activate it). However, I like Bourriaud's emphasis on the creation of new interactions and that actually, within this marketplace, the most important transactions are the negotiation between people – that it is a space of heterogeneous relationships.

Annotation: Critical Practice often describes their curatorial activity as creating platforms for others to plug into. *TransActing* clearly demonstrates this, as Critical Practice provided the basic market requirements of seating, stalls and shelter for individuals to enter and set up their own independent activity within one, shared space. 'Platform' models became important to Critical Practice from its earliest investigations into free and open-source software culture. The 'platform' provides the 'infrastructure', the 'base upon which other applications, processes or technologies are developed' (Techopedia n.d.: n.pag.). The concept of the market is imbedded in this software culture as the term 'bazaar' was used to describe the development of the operating system Linux, one of the most prominent open-source software collaborations amongst engineers. Rather than being carefully crafted amongst a few programmers working in close-quarters, Linux was developed over the Internet in public view. Eric Raymond, one of the programmers who initiated this process, writes, 'the Linux community seemed to resemble a great babbling bazaar of differing agendas and approaches [...] The fact that this bazaar seemed to work, and work well, came as a distinct shock' (2001: 3).

Annotation: In *Postproduction* Bourriaud argues that the passage of art from the 80s has changed from a 'shop window' to a 'flea market' aesthetic; in other words, from, Jeff Koons to Rirkrit Tiravanija (2000: 28). The curator writes that this bazaar or souk aesthetic relates to temporary, nomadic gatherings, representing a collective form that, 'does not depend on the command of a single author [that it] embodies and makes material flows and relationships that have tended towards disembodiment with the appearance of online shopping' (Bourriaud 2000: 28–29).

We would make two assertions in relation to Bourriaud's description of a 'market aesthetic'. Firstly, the French curator's understanding of collective forms as the reverse of an individual artist's practice has its limits, as when has art ever depended on a 'single author'? A babbling noise of influences and assistance is of course behind any one person's 'production'. We would also dispute the way Bourriaud sets up an opposition where the 'bazaar' reacts against online activity, since software culture is an essential part of contemporary collective forms of production that are not as simple as one being 'socially engaged' and the other 'socially disengaged', as we know hybrid activity takes us in a constant to and fro with on and offline spaces, which interact with one another. However, Bourriaud's text is useful for seeing the platform as a potential for multiple iterations: 'Every work is issued from a script that the artist projects onto culture, considered the framework of a narrative that in turn projects new possible scripts, endlessly' (2000: 18).

ES: Perhaps this can be linked back to the Tercerunquinto sculpture and the interaction between the public and private, the platform and shelter. I was reading Jane Rendell – she writes a lot about sculpture in public space and the assumption that this space is 'democratic', which in a way can neutralize the tensions found there, or it can hide the multiple negotiations that manifest in market forms such as *TransActing*.

AM: Yes, it is important to make apparent the transactional negotiations that produce space. There is always a condition to relationships and to one's presence in any space. Sites of interaction, such as the market, the platform, are actually negotiated through these conditions of presence even before any exchange behaviour takes place. In other words, a platform is never neutral, even before participants have entered this structure there are certain requirements that have to be fulfilled, these act to include or exclude.

ES: Thinking back to *TransActing*, what was very valuable for me – and I wish that I had had more time – was the period of constructing the market stalls together and how this enacted relationships between us through the physical act of sawing, hammering and problem-solving together with a shared goal and sense of urgency. Sociologist Richard Sennett (2012) talks about the 'craft of cooperation' citing the workshop as a key example of a collaborative, working model where repetition of action both develops skill and makes ritual. It felt as if the exhibition was a disruption to this process of honing certain practices together (preparing food, cutting wood etc.), that this sheltered act of embedding ways of working, routine and interaction between a small group of individuals was abruptly stopped.

AM: Yes. With the building, there was a real sense of 'lived exchange' as the activity set a daily rhythm for those involved centred around a shared task, whereas I felt distracted in the market. Suddenly there was a clamouring, multiplicity of interactions carried out for just one day. Although it was valuable in a different way, as an opportunity to give a 'public face', to 'exhibit' sets of behaviours and test them more broadly, incorporating new voices. This did not have the same nurturing quality as the more sheltered building activity. Perhaps this is part and parcel of the platform as a structure? With increased openness, a supportive, nested environment is harder to produce.

Annotation: Rendell considers the mutable quality between concepts of 'public' and 'private' with regards to 'place': 'For those who support the public realm, "privatization" is associated with replacement of public spaces by a series of private places with exclusive rules governing entry and use. But if we take instead a liberal rights-based perspective, then privacy is understood to provide positive qualities, such as the right to be alone, to confidentiality and the safeguarding of individuality [...] The terms "public" and "private" do not exist then as mutually exclusive categories; rather, their relationship is dependent and open to change' (2006: 6).

Annotation: Philosopher Karl Popper in *The Open Society and It's Enemies* (1945) describes an 'open' society—which he opposes to 'closed' totalitarian or communist societies—as free from any sort of set hierarchy. Popper argues that the open society is self-determining: 'Personal relationships of a new kind can arise where they can be freely entered into, instead of being determined by accidents of birth [...] one of the most important aspects of the open society [is] competition for status amongst its members [...] our modern open societies function largely by way of abstract relations such as exchange and cooperation' (1945: 173–74). We can equate this 'open' with the platform, whose unprescribed space creates the 'noise' of the market environment where value, or the negotiation of relations, is in a process of constantly being made through transactions.

Annotation: Critical Practice has explored the concept that outside of traditional, structured imaginings of community (such as institutions) new ways of associating can be formed around groups or 'communities of evaluation', whose conditional tie is the endeavour to focus on a shared issue at hand and to produce or re-perform the perimeters of value in doing so. During the development of *TransActing*, Critical Practice held a conversation with artist-economist Hans Abbing to discuss the concept of 'evaluation'; how 'value' is, and could be perceived, constructed and measured (see October 2013 in 'Partial self-portrait of Critical Practice'). Could 'communities of evaluation' cohere to make value judgements that are, 'always situated and specific'? Abbing provocatively suggests that exclusivity within these communities is not necessarily a negative quality, that we should not automatically be seeking an 'open' or the most inclusive platform possible. Abbing asks Critical Practice: 'Do we really care what other people think? Why not commune with other believers? You look shocked!' Critical Practice responds: 'It is just rather [...] insular, no? Narrow? Self-affirming?' 'Why is this so upsetting?' he retorted (Critical Practice 2013: n.pag.).

ES: Yes, this continual sense of movement. I keep thinking of the quote by Rendell, which discusses the messiness between public and private, how opposing concepts can flip between them.

AM: Perhaps this brings us to a final point, the idea that, strangely, platform and shelter can be adhered to both in public and private, in neo-liberalism and socialism, which makes it so important to trace how ideas are used to fuel specific dialogues. The platform can be seen as a space of open abstract relations (i.e. not pre-determined), a space of opportunity, where new values are formed through exchange and competition, where 'communities of evaluation' can grow. The shelter restricts and covers, making it a space of protection, where experimentation can occur in a safe yet exclusive way, taking us from the space of public to concepts of privatization, all in a constant shift between the open and the closed.

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GLOSSARY

INTRODUCED BY CINZIA CREMONA

Over the years, words have circulated within Critical Practice gathering connotations and layers of meaning. This glossary attempts to weave interconnected references into a shared vocabulary that also represents a snapshot of Critical Practice's culture and values. Doing so aims to make some moments of our history more accessible. Of course, the letters of the alphabet are not enough to contain more than ten years of communal making, analysing, disagreeing, learning and sharing, but they are a useful reference that depicts a selection of our most valued matters of concern, especially those related to the complex project and event that was *#TransActing: A Market of Values*.

This glossary is also an attempt to make space for contradictions, paradoxes and moments that perhaps have not found an explicit voice in other sections of this publication. In the interstices between meeting and making, we have been aware of the complex workings of power, the importance of invisible things, small gestures and how interpersonal relationships, trust and intimacy shape social relations. We have come to realize that we are enhanced and transformed by taking part, and we understand the vitality that springs from being present to take care of the task at hand.

Like Critical Practice itself and this publication, the glossary would not have been possible without the thoughtful contributions of Metod Blejec, Marsha Bradfield, Neil Cummings, Neil Farnan, Amy McDonnell, Eva Sajovic, Verina Gfader and all the nomadic participants who have invested in this research cluster and its projects. Thank you.

A

autoprogettazione

A book and approach to furniture by Italian designer Enzo Mari based on the principle that making something instead of buying it creates an opportunity to learn in a unique way. The plans for the original furniture with dimensions and a cutting log were freely published by Mari in 1974 in a premonition of a Free Libre Open Source Software (FLOSS) ethic. Therefore, *autoprogettazione* can be seen as a clear gesture towards a cultural and material commons. Andreas Lang of public works introduced Critical Practice to Mari's original designs for the material structure of *TransActing* during workshops and discussions. In collaboration, drawings and maquettes were used to develop variations on the basic stall design for the market, which were collectively built with stallholders and with the contribution of the GoodGym (see Ian Drysdale's reflection on the GoodGym stall in 'Stallholders' reflections' in this publication) (see also **Stall**).

B

Barter

In *TransActing*, organs, tears, sounds, words and promises were traded for lemonade, time, care, knowledge and only occasionally legal tender. As there are no direct quantitative and qualitative equivalences between these systems, bartering activates the open potential for materializing implicit values and modes of exchange. The challenges of bartering within such mixed economies may elicit generous responses if all involved abandon disbelief and explore the alternatives on offer (see also **Love**). Bartering encourages the re-evaluation of goods and beliefs; it reframes the market as a context for collective knowledge production, reciprocity, social experiments and affective exchanges (see also **Quid pro quo**).

C

Currency

The material representation of intangible values that facilitate exchanges. The value of each unit and the trustworthiness of the system as a whole are attested by a form of authority accepted by consensus – a community or an elected government. Within a closed system, limited forms of currency sometimes circulate as a strategy to contain transactions within a geographical area,

an organization or a specific context (e.g. the Disney dollar, company scripts and the currency designed by Metod Blejec, Neil Cummings and Neil Farnan for *TransActing*). It is important to always trace the currencies. If you do this and give an account of your tracing of the currencies, to some people it will look like a network, to others an economy (see also **'Techniques of aberrant extraction: Transacting surplus acts in an age of speculation'** in this anthology).

Communities of Evaluation
Communities of Evaluation cluster around shared issues of concern in an act that evaluates by selecting where attention, care, energy and time are focused. In doing so, they negotiate and produce values; not just judgements but also a shared vocabulary and a set of joining criteria. Acts of evaluation result in affinities, conflicts and possibilities. Evaluation occurs within a group and also nurtures a culture that extends beyond the immediate bounds of a particular community. Critical Practice has been practicing as an open and fluid community of evaluation, building resilience through connecting, sharing and producing resources with others.

D

Desire
Not need, not want, not lack – personal and collective desire. In the Lacanian sense, desire is unconscious. Being what a subject really wants, desire may contradict explicit ethics and political beliefs. For example, the desire to belong, to feel safe or to control one's life may lead to accumulating possessions to the detriment of social and political structures that in the long run would benefit all. The contradictions between desire and ethics inform how interlocutors relate to each other, how difference and otherness are played, enjoyed, addressed and experienced. The dialogues, exchanges of information and acts of generosity fostered by *TransActing* opened a space to rethink the systems within which desire is steered towards isolation and private possession (see also **Usership**).

E

Economies
Economies connect needs and desires to limited resources via transactions. The concept of one economy taken as a single

umbrella system dominated by financial concerns either denies the existence of, or dwarfs other possible processes that inform and interfere with the circulation of legal tender. Interlocked human economies can function on the basis of different flows of transactions that produce varied values (see also **Market**).

F

Free

Meaning at no monetary cost or in freedom, yet it often implies a different kind of transaction. For example, *TransActing* demonstrated that recovering materials, such as wood and nails, did not monetarily cost anything but did in fact cost energy and time. Following on from this equation, the concept of 'free' is actually impossible in the context of interpersonal and social relations as a complex negotiation of emotional desires, needs and wills come into play (see also **Barter**). *Free from the constriction of proprietary approaches to knowledge and technology* is a horizon to which Critical Practice continues to aim. In this way, awareness of the ideologies and systems that govern transactions, even when they appear free, is an indispensable tool.

G

Governance

The practices and policies by which any group abides as it attempts to balance the power of decision-making, workloads, opinion sharing and opportunity to act. It is constituted by the explicit and implicit rules through which hierarchies and sources of power are negotiated and/or understood.

Critical Practice uses the principles of open organizations as a group protocol. Working procedures include decision-making by rough consensus, transparency of working processes and knowledge production, and the creation of working groups to focus on tasks at hand. These approaches are not always effective but produce a continuous wellspring of political and institutional awareness. Sources of power that control resources often favour the oblique in order to maintain systems and positions unquestioned, therefore distorting transparency. But this action can be counterpointed by forms of governance that produce robust discussions, efforts at awareness and opportunities for generosity.

H

Hospitality

The will and actions of welcoming and sharing. It involves acceptance of others, generosity, care and attention. It is based on creating a welcoming environment in which all can feel comfortable and free to act. In *TransActing*, the stalls could be adapted to the requirements of stallholders, making explicit Critical Practice's openness to the needs of each 'trader'. Successful hospitality begets hospitality, and a convivial atmosphere along with the sharing of food confirms that the wellbeing of all has been considered. During *TransActing*, children were catered for and Critical Practice member Angela Hodgson-Teall set up a pet's corner, where visiting dogs could drink and cool down in the shade. The freegan *Bring-your-own-BBQ*, which generously cooked food that participants and the public had brought with them to share, can be seen as an epitome of reciprocal hospitality.

I

Indebtedness

Describes the condition of owing to another. An option is for value to be 'paid forward' – rather than repay the original creditor, the debtor passes on value to someone else who is currently in need. *TransActing* recognized that debt, and therefore the condition of indebtedness is not a personal failure or blight, but a political situation. Indebtedness can also mean to have a strong sense of gratitude that is not necessarily related to obligation or money.

J

Jig

A jig is a custom-made tool used to coordinate the location of components and the actions of people. Critical Practice made jigs to enable the production of the market stalls for *TransActing* (see also **Stall**), allowing builders of varying skills and experience to work together, avoiding waste and making the structures consistently stable. A jig is also an effective metaphor for *TransActing* as a guide for patterns of behaviour, as the long-established ways of working within Critical Practice enabled the market's multiple interactions to occur.

K

Know-how

A pragmatic approach to knowledge constructed through doing and making, discussing and 'learning on the job'. An understanding of how to do things, it implies that the 'science' of the application is understood through a net/patchwork of emergent knowledge, produced intuitively, explicitly or implicitly by the people undertaking the action. Critical Practice employed mixed practices to encourage the development of the existing know-how of forming groups, making platforms and working together to construct *TransActing*, which in turn led to the furthering of collective skills such as communication in groups, drilling, kindness, bread-making, empathy and negotiation amongst others.

L

Listening

The actions and attitude required to ensure that others are heard and taken into account, even if this does not necessarily mean changing a group's activity to benefit individual desires. Critical Practice's method of researching through doing also implies another way of listening – to notice and dedicate attention to the needs, habits and preferences of other people: learning their ways of sawing, noticing if they are tired, the space they require to hammer a nail, how they like their coffee or the pressure needed to hold down wood, counterbalancing the force from the other's drilling (see also **Hospitality**).

M

Market

A market connects people's needs and desires through mediums of exchange, or transactions. Markets are a bundle of simple technologies interlocked to form an ecology – a system of entities bound together in interdependency within a specific environment integrated into a network of related interests. Similarly, an ancient bazaar or a contemporary distributive market enable the interaction of people, 'goods', knowledge, values, resources, energy and waste to be networked into a resilient, often self-organized and decentralized system.

N

Network

For many years, actor-network theory has been key to Critical Practice's research and practice, particularly as recounted by Bruno Latour. In this approach, a network only occurs when it is being enacted. Human and non-human actors relay, form and renew associations in the form of a group, organization, institution, community or issue to exist (and persist). As Critical Practice gathered stallholders around the concept of *TransActing*, the Market took shape and material form. Similarly, assembling a roaming public on market day gave rise to shifting networks of transactions, relations, conversations and values (see also **Currency**, **Economies**). This publication continues the relay of associations by gathering together, once again, Critical Practice members and stallholders with new participants and users. We hope that as an actor within this network, this text will spark the desire to convene new non-competitive markets.

O

Offer

The act of putting forward or suggesting a transaction, either univocally or expecting an offer in return. From the perspective of greed and accumulation, scarcity produces demand and increases the relative value of a product, locking it into a specific system of affordability. Within a logic of generosity, however, to offer can suggest the potential for a negotiation that produces opportunities for more sophisticated forms of economy.

P

Public

Despite being a contested term, the public has been an important qualifier for *TransActing* and Critical Practice in general. Having engaged in research that both challenges and contributes to the dubious 'publicness' of many spaces, structures and organizations described as such, exploring the Critical Practice wiki demonstrates the cluster's shifting understanding of the term:

- The public – a community or the people as a whole.
- Publicness – a quality of things shared; the activity of sharing resources with others.

- Public good – of concerning or nurturing beneficence. The principle of doing 'good' in the widest sense for a community or assembly.
- Public space – maintained for or used by a people or community.
- Public company – capitalized shares that can be traded on an open market.
- Public realm – participated in or attended by a group or community.
- Public office/service – connected with or acting on behalf of an assembly or community.
- Public knowledge – open to the knowledge or judgement of all.
- Public interest – the advantage or benefit of a group of people.
- Public utilities – the infrastructure necessary to facilitate a public.

Q

Quid pro quo

From the Latin for 'something for something', it stands for the double-edged sword of reciprocity. Whilst in English-speaking countries, quid pro quo indicates an exchange of items of comparable value, in Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and French, it signals a misunderstanding: 'to take one thing for another'. This is a risk inherent in transactions that challenge established systems of monetary equivalence and it voices Critical Practice's awareness of the conflicts implicit in all interpersonal and social relations.

R

Resources

Although some material resources are consumed in the process of fulfilling their potential functions, *TransActing* materialized the possibility that some can be enhanced, multiplied, recycled, repurposed and leave a legacy of further resources. This is not only the case with materials (see **Stall**), but legacy is also produced by acquiring skills ready to be put to other uses. As a transaction is first an interpersonal and social relation and only on this basis can further exchanges exist, the new connections created by *TransActing* act as a reservoir of potential resources to be tapped into in the future.

S

Stall

A temporary structure to transact 'goods' in a street market, fair or convention. In *TransActing*, stalls embodied Critical Practice's interest in resilient practices. Cluster members, students, stallholders and others recycled materials from the terminated degree shows at Chelsea College of Arts and, with public works (the London-based art and architecture practice working within and towards public space), developed variations of a furniture series by Enzo Mari (see also ***autoprogettazione***). The series utilized standard timber sections to produce a range of furniture (see also **Jig**). The use of repurposed material affected the aesthetics of the stalls and our learning processes, promoting problem-solving and revealing how skills can be developed and adapted to circumstances. We negotiated varying levels of experience and skills, personalities, timings, knowledge, values and ideas. In this way, it can be seen how the principles and dynamics of Critical Practice and of *TransActing* materialized in the processes that led to the production of the stalls.

T

Transacting

First and foremost a relational praxis, or in other words, a set of activities that make relationships present. People are brought together by needs, desire and opportunities to exchange, often for quite different reasons, on the basic conditions that they have some 'goods' or services to transact and social conventions to enable the transaction. Sometimes these conventions are in fact also up for negotiation. Values of all kinds can be made present, substituted and transacted, although it is important that interested parties can apprehend the substitution. All transacting entails the risk of exploitation as pre-existing power relations are often performed or renegotiated in the exchange.

U

Usership

An alternative to ownership, it speaks of access to, and the circulation of, exchange in order to replenish resources. Also, a system of leasing that creates dependence on resources owned by others. At a time when most of the world is owned by a tiny percentage of people, those who own determine terms for those who use.

Misusing can be a tactic of resistance with the view of reconfiguring the terms and conditions of a social contract (see also **'Happy Anniversary Critical Practice'** in this volume).

V

Value(s)

In the singular and as an abstract term, a vector, a force and a medium – nothing moves outside of its sphere of influence. Value circulates through systems of production, distribution, capture and accumulation. To value is to invest or speculate and to invest in values often not yet known: future, fugitive, contingent values, new ecologies of value. Maintaining a plurality of values beyond those that are monetary, material or power-based counterpoints the dangers of reification – the mechanism recognized by Marx in which interpersonal and social relations are valued for the commercial transactions they foster and sustain.

W

Waste

A time and context specific value judgement. Matter from which people can no longer imagine extracting a benefit. The production and distribution of resources consumes and corrodes life if these are recast as waste. From *Beyond the Free Market* (a project in which Critical Practice researched the consequences of capitalist economic policies for food production and consumption), via Mike Knowlden's *Waste Proposal Unit* (which charted and proposed new uses for food waste during *The Market of Ideas* at *The London Festival of Europe* [2009]) to repurposing materials for the stalls and working with Tom Fletcher and friends of Rejuce (making juices with discarded fruit), Critical Practice has a long history of reverting this process to reframe waste as a resource (see **Resources**).

X

Love

X as the shorthand for a kiss. Love as the foundation of care, hospitality, respect, freedom, offering and of key values. Love and love again. Keep loving, do not stop. Do not expect love in return, do not calculate. Do not economize love, do not compete. Love is a currency without an economy, so do not worry if you love too much, or not enough. Love what you can.

Y

Yield

As a verb: giving in, giving way, bending to make space for incoming otherness (see also **Hospitality**).
As a noun: gain, return, reward.
These two aspects come together in transactions involving non-equivalent systems of value.

Z

Zero Carbon

A key consideration for sustainability, resilience, public interest and the protection of ecosystems. Within *TransActing*, zero carbon was a value made tangible by the stall of Divest UAL, a student-staff activist group calling for University of the Arts London to divest from the fossil fuel industry. In an ongoing campaign after *TransActing*, Divest UAL's actions led to the university's commitment to divest. At the time of writing, University of the Arts London is still banking with the Royal Bank of Scotland, which has been a major lender to oil and gas companies, but which recently cut 95% of its finance to extreme fossil fuels. (In a bid to escape its own toxic reputation, the Royal Bank of Scotland changed its name to NatWest in July 2020.) In a zero carbon drive, David Cross (longtime collaborator with Critical Practice, *TransActing* participant, Divest UAL founder and Reader at Chelsea College of Arts) calls on the institution to do more. Divesting is not enough; staff and students should be involved in decisions about re-investing to align actions with values and promote zero carbon living.

Figure G.1: A market stall from *TransActing* enjoys an afterlife as Neil Cummings's desk in the profs and readers' room (third floor E Block, Chelsea College of Arts). Photo credit Marsha Bradfield.

CHAPTER CONTRIBUTORS

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Marsha Bradfield rides the hyphen as an archivist-artist-curator-director-educator-researcher-writer. Marsha's post-doctoral fellowship at Chelsea College of Arts (2013–15) focused on economies and ecologies of collaborative cultural production. This research propelled *#TransActing: A Market of Values*, the project discussed in this publication.

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Cinzia Cremona is an artist and researcher focused on performative mediated relationality. She experiments with the materiality of the screen and remote intimacy in relational, networked and video performance practices. She is visiting fellow at Macquarie University in Sydney and research fellow at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design (University of Dundee, Scotland).

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Neil Cummings has evolved a multidisciplinary practice that relates to the specific contexts in which art is produced, distributed and encounters its audiences, working directly with museums, galleries, archives and art schools. Examples of his work include the exhibition *Enthusiasm* at the Whitechapel Gallery, the film *Museum Futures: Distributed* (2008) and the publication *The Value of Things*.

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Nicholas Temple is an architect and senior professor in architectural history at the Cass School of Art, Architecture and Design, London Metropolitan University, where he directs the Centre for Urban and Built Ecologies (CUBE). He was previously professor of architecture/director of the Centre for Urban Design, Architecture and Sustainability (CUDAS), University of Huddersfield.

TRANSACTING AS ART, DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE

A NON-COMMERCIAL MARKET

An interdisciplinary anthology exploring alternatives to the principles of commercial markets that dominate contemporary life.

This book applies an experimental ethos to collaborative cultural production. Expanding the fields of art, design and architectural research, contributors provide critical reflections on collaborative practice-based/led research. The volume builds on a pop-up market hosted by the London-based arts cluster Critical Practice that sought to creatively explore existing structures of evaluation and actively produce new ones. Assembled by lead editor Marsha Bradfield, with help from other members of Critical Practice, the chapters contextualize the event within a long history of marketplaces, offer reflections from the stallholders and celebrate its value system, particularly its critique of econometrics.

Marsha Bradfield rides the hyphen as an archivist-artist-curator-educator-researcher-writer. She has been affiliated with Chelsea College of Arts at University of the Arts London since 2006. **Cinzia Cremona** is a Sydney-based artist, researcher, writer and curator who works with video, performance and digital technologies from networked practices to expanded reality. **Amy McDonnell** is a London-based curator in socially engaged art practice and an environmental campaigner. **Eva Sajovic** is an artist and a senior lecturer at University of the Arts London.

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