

Feed Back0-1



2003-4

FeedBack 0-1Contents:

FeedBack 0-1Contents:	2
Preface, Alicia Miller	3
Introduction to FeedBack, Nayia Yiakoumaki	4
Audience – Piracy – Posse: Art Gallery Multitude, Janna Graham	5
Tactful Curation, Gair Boase	10
El Real Viaje Real, Lillian Davies	13
Art Labour and Art Work: Notes On The Status Of Labour In Art, Zuky Serper	14
A Black Box on Ground Zero. Does Enwezor’s Ground Zero Signal the End of Curatorial Authority?, Konstantinos Stafylakis	18
‘Home Galleries’ in Crisis, Kostis Velonis	22
Trackers Exhibition 2004, Charlie Danby	23
Rewiring Waiting: Housing Benefit, Static Utopia and Real Bureaucracy, Andy Weir	26
Relational Desire: the ‘Real’ Symptom. A Lacanian Treatment on Spectatorship, Sotirios Bahtsetzis	29
Account of the FeedBack Project: A Short History of FeedBack, Nayia Yiakoumaki,	32
Response to FeedBack0, Ruxandra Balaci	33
Responses to FeedBack 0	34
Afterword, Jacqueline Cooke	36
Critical and Theoretical Observations, Elpida Karaba	36
Biographies	39
FeedBack Information	41

Preface, Alicia Miller

What contributes to the way an exhibition looks? What questions are asked when deciding on its organisation and layout? What messages and meanings are embedded in the presentation of a body of work? Exhibitions appear to the general public as a *fait accompli*; authoritative, definitive and infallible. The narrativising tendency of gallery exhibitions and interpretation materials present readings of artists and artworks as singular and monolithic, rather than as a series of often idiosyncratic decisions on the part of curators, critics, and gallery educators. Rarely do exhibitions and the accompanying contextualisations, curatorial statements, didactic labels, catalogues, etc., leave room for alternative readings and disagreement. Though these occur, it is in the critical discourse that lies outside the gallery space in the reviews and commentaries of critics and scholars reflecting on the show. This dialogue, however, reaches only a relatively small cross-section of audiences.

As a gallery educator, I was interested in opening up the possibility for critique within the gallery space itself, hoping to make transparent processes that appear opaque to most visitors. Approached by Nayia Yiakoumaki, Elpida Karaba and Jacqueline Cooke, to host *FeedBack*, it seemed an excellent opportunity to explore ways in which to activate audiences, encouraging them to engage with the construction of an exhibition. Rarely considered, such choices have a radical effect on understanding; an example is the 2002 Museum of Modern Art retrospective of Gerhard Richter. This exhibition notably excluded Richter's *Atlas*, the archive of largely photographic images, recently on view at the Whitechapel, which acts as a kind of sketchbook for Richter's painting. Separating Richter's painting from *Atlas* is a radical curatorial decision that frames Richter's entire practice in a highly problematic way. How can we make these choices, particularly far subtler ones, visible to our audiences?

It seems necessary to seek ways to create a more open dialogue between audiences and the art that they view. Particularly in contemporary art, where viewers are often challenged by what they see and may feel alienated and bewildered when art doesn't conform to traditional definitions of what it should be, this dialogue can encourage viewers to invest in the creation of meaning in a body of work. Such engagement is likely to breed sympathy and understanding instead of dismissal and dislike. It will also increase the sense of cultural capital felt by audiences. But for this to occur, a visit to the gallery must be an active experience, where meanings are not simply delivered, but rather elicited, sought for and nothing is taken for granted. The edges should be messy, and the line between what has been made and what it means, ever contested territory. It should be a space for questions, where audiences ask themselves what is being said, and author their own statements about what they think it all means.

Introduction to FeedBack, Nayia Yiakoumaki

Exhibitions are open to the audiences for intake and the works of art are to the public's disposal, to view, sometimes to handle, to engage with, to criticise. What is not manifested and certainly not given away is usually the curatorial line, the strategy, the thinking behind and exhibition.

Feedback invites audiences to take a closer look and think critically about what messages and meanings exhibitions offer. It encourages what audiences have to say about the way a gallery programmes and organises exhibitions. It is an ongoing project organized by a small team of independent curators, Jacqueline Cooke, Elpida Karaba and myself in collaboration with the Education department of the Whitechapel.

It is flexible and adaptable, can take place in different venues and contexts and can be related to different events. It aims to instigate debates on small and big ideas that inform, construct, and concern the production of exhibitions and events.

The idea came from discussions the team had on the active role that audiences can have, potentially, in the making of exhibitions. Taking as a starting point that there is a one-way communication from the institution to the audiences we hoped to expand this by creating platforms for the audience to use in order to participate and infiltrate the barrier that museums and galleries set. Our aim was to allow and create an 'additional' critical space for a critique coming from the audience, thus making the whole process 'transparent'. Our interest in examining this field while apprehending the effects and potentialities of polyvalent networks of communication as a curatorial strategy started FeedBack 0 as a pilot project on March 2002.

FeedBack is active in the period during the opening and the closing of an exhibition. Its life is donated by the exhibition. It adjoins to show in question. (For an account of FeedBack see *Account of the FeedBack Project: A Short History of FeedBack* on page 32).

We hoped that a publication would append an additional platform for communication and we are pleased to be able to present FeedBack 0-1. Feedback 0-1 is the outcome of the projects Feedback 0 and Feedback 1 and it includes material, articles, short essays, visuals, and ideas which were sent to FeedBack team as a response to our open call for submissions. It concentrates on two main areas

Equation/relationship between curator, artist and audience.
Process based projects and Participatory projects.

FeedBack has instigated discussion and debates beyond our initial expectation. It has recently become the case study for the research of an organisation which examines audience development in public galleries and museums and the subject of a Fine Art postgraduate thesis. Our aim is to continue with more FeedBack sessions, taking place simultaneously in many galleries as well as activating participation from people who like to visit art galleries.

Audience – Piracy – Posse: Art Gallery Multitude, Janna Graham

For some time the question and problematic of audience has troubled me as an educator working in galleries and museums. At museum education conferences, government seminars and meetings with colleagues, conversations about this ever slippery entity abound – we talk about audience targets, measuring audience reaction, inviting in audience, what the audience likes, dislikes, how audiences move through spaces, what they read, how often, what needs to be explained, we produce more and more brochures, beckon for more and more people to come. For funders, we break down the audience – by ethno-cultural background, income level, age, level of ability.

Beyond the bureaucratic annoyance of these pursuits, there is something very uncomfortable in the feverish attempt to capture and captivate this elusive entity. In the process of reaching, relaying and making the audience more comfortable, we guard and replicate the configuration of inside and outside that is the private/public contradiction, the tense marriage between connoisseurship and altruism at core of many gallery origin stories.

This tension is often played out at its greatest intensity in the relationship between curator and educator.

In this configuration, audience is an appendix, always after the fact, evoked strategically as the back up for any argument ('the audience will love it'/ 'the audience won't understand'). In these conversations, the spectre of the museum's missionary history often hovers just below the surface of our conversations...our art is good for *them*.

Media critic Ien Eng has written extensively about the distance from which the television industry has developed countless and, in her mind, compulsive devices to know their audience. Machines, monitors, statistical models and psychological testing attempt to measure and predict behaviors that are always just out of reach from the node of transmission. Eng sites the desperate and impossible attempt to understand the audience as a late capitalist continuation of the colonial ideology of conquest. She warns against the integration of this evaluative approach in to museum audiences.

For many years now, galleries have made various attempts to compensate for their complicity in this colonial project: re-writing historical narratives, including previously excluded artists and cultural artifacts, inviting intervention and critical commentary on collections, (moderately) shifting the demographics of staff, diversifying gallery attendees.

Throughout all of these endeavours, the centrality of the institution remains intact. The attempt to pursue and attract 'others' both guards and reproduces the Modernist Western binary configuration of insiders and outsiders. In many cases, the increased professionalization of the gallery sector further institutes this paradigm. In short, nothing really changes.

Theorist Irit Rogoff describes this as a kind of 'multi-cultural managerialism that enables an easy move from xenophobia to celebration of the other...whereby a museum can expand infinitely, it can bring in everything that has been left outside and doesn't need to unravel itself'

'What is so disturbing about this additive model,' she suggests, 'is that it leaves intact the concept of plentitude at the heart of museum culture...it assumes the possibility of change without loss, without alteration, without remarking the navigation of principles by which we have traditionally made our way through cultural terrain...allowing us to [continue to] make judgments about quality of appropriateness, inclusion, vision etc.'¹

¹ Rogoff, Irit. Making Art In Public. Presentation given at Civil Arts Inquiry 01-06, 2003 published in Documents 01-06, Dublin: City Arts Centre, 2004.p.106-108

We know this. For more than a decade, the inadequacies of these diversity mechanisms have been addressed by educators, artists and curators who have produced projects that focus on performativity, the creation of social spaces and interactions, participatory models of public programming, immersive experiences, critical pedagogies, relational exhibitions. These projects attempt a kind of de-materialization of the audience in the abstract category. They often exist, however, at the margins of institutional practice, as blips and isolated incidents.

What we must also recognize within the current context of globalization and the pervasive privatization of the public sphere is that both the additive model and the de-materialization of audience fall in line with capitalism's desire to always include more within its reach. The audience is a market. As such it can be expanded and incorporated into infinitely. It can be striated, segmented and disciplined.

Within both paradigms - the very localized centrality of power in the museum and the broader context of globalization - we must ask ourselves, what is the question of our participation, who is articulating this question and why?

According to Antonio Hardt and Michael Negri, a notion of participation that is tied to the democracy as we know it - one person, one vote - a singular representation of the multiple under the sign of 'the people' ('the public or 'the audience') is unrealizable.

Rogoff's own ethnographies of the audience are told from the very subjective position of looking away from the dominant narratives and institutionally articulated questions of participation, shifting toward the very situated and partial observations of an uninvited reviewer. Rather than an instrument of the museum, she is an agent, reporting on a complex set of negotiations from the museum floor. Here, there is no audience, only people, conversations, arguments, problematics.

Without giving up the intentions and investments of publics in the plural, of art institutions working with people across class and racial divisions and without abandoning a commitment to the (not so new and seemingly insurmountable) project of shifting power within the structures of arts institutions, how might we re-activate the terminology of audience toward a kind of public participation that does not replicate the centrality of the institutional voice or empire's pervasive captivity?

The etymology of audience, of course, speaks to this complicated question: audience means spectator, but also fan, a visit with a monarch or a politician, but also, at its root, audition, *audre*, to hear.

Gallery Radiophany: Echoes and Transmissions

These multiple meanings mapped onto the gallery were points of departure for a project developed by curator Candice Hopkins and artist Cheryl L'Hirondelle at the Banff Centre's Walter Phillips Gallery in winter, 2004. Hopkins' question, 'how to get Indians into art galleries?' was of particular importance to this gallery whose extensive Aboriginal programming and situation on Stoney Land, ceded by treaty 7 in 1877, had never connected to people on the neighbouring reserve. Both 'getting in' and 'audience' for Hopkins, however, imply something quite different than the audience of the marketplace or the institutional insider. In her conception of the Aboriginal audience, she hoped to provoke 'an encounter that occurs in a space outside of the gallery's physical and conceptual confines.'

L'Hirondelle's earlier performance on the Makwa Sahgaiehcan Indian Reserve in northern Saskatchewan revealed to her the multiple dimensions of audience with which one might engage. Running in the footsteps of Cistemaw inyiniw, a Cree man - a runner, a traveller, and messenger who delivered tobacco and gained support for ceremonies two generations earlier, L'Hirondelle, wearing a numbered racing shirt, ran across the reserve. Throughout her 25 km journey, three radio stations broadcasted the story of Cistemaw inyiniw in Cree as told by Harry Blackbird. Both the story and the act of running re-activated the moccasin telegraph, an Aboriginal person-to-person communication system for which Cistemaw inyiniw ran. Throughout these live events, artists were invited to inscribe Cree syllabics in chalk on the

reserve, create art works from their encounters on the reserve and invite people with whom they visited to enact the tradition of inviting strangers in. Based on the elders' belief that 'you never know how far someone has travelled' those who were interested in participating inscribed 'Water' in syllabics on their door and extended hospitality to L'Hirondelle along her journey.

L'Hirondelle's 'audience' was not limited by space or temporality (the story of her running still evoked on the reserve today). The project reached beyond the limits of the treaty boundaries, property lines, road designations, surface, soil rights and the before and after of the treaty process.

Treaties, L'Hirondelle states, do not have jurisdiction in the air.²

This multiplicity of encounters and audience formations prompted Hopkins to explore what L'Hirondelle's process (which lasted for years before and beyond the performance) might lend to notions of public, community, participation and audience at an art gallery.³ L'Hirondelle, myself and others were invited to work at the Morley Community School as part of Hopkins' exhibition entitled *A Question of Place*. The school is located on the Morley Reserve, a vast territory including the Bearspaw, Chiniki and Wesley Nations bordered by the Trans Canada highway #1 that runs between Banff and Calgary.

Working with students at the Morley school, an existing 'pirate' radio station on the reserve and a number of performative acts, L'Hirondelle created a series of generative, layered topographies and transmissions that ran through, plugged into and punctuated the gallery exhibition and infrastructure. As it is legal to have an unlicensed broadcasting up to 50 watts on reserve land rez radio falls between piracy and the jurisdiction of regulatory bodies such as the Canadian Radio and Television Commission. The reserve station was one of many crossover spaces in which an audience might have encountered the project.

Echoing artist Rebecca Belmore's *Ayum-ee-aawach Oomama-mowan: Speaking to Their Mothers*, a giant megaphone toured by Belmore across Canada in the early 1990s (into which Aboriginal people were invited to address the land), daily audio and video missions invited those involved to collect their responses to their territory for broadcast on another pirate radio station, to be set up at the Morley school.

While students, teachers and Banff Centre staff created this live broadcast from their classroom, L'Hirondelle used rocks to 'tag' the side of the highway that borders the reserve with messages in Cree syllabics. Aware that she and the gallery who had commissioned her could only exist somewhere between the insides of the gallery and the reserve, she extended the project's reach beyond the students at Morley school to the highway's audio and visual passers-by. In this, she reclaimed a very personal relationship to highway's edge. The road allowance that existed between the authorized zones of transportation and titled land was the only space where her Métis ancestors were able to build makeshift homes, routinely burned to the ground.

The interplay between the broadcast's activation of Glen Gould's idea that sound recording enables the archival aural equivalent of Malraux's Museum without Walls, and L'Hirondelle's very visual occupation of a traumatic border zone indicated the impossibility of replacing a historically absent audience with a present community, of discussing the before and after of the colonial project or the here and there of the Banff Centre and the Morley land.

² Interview with Cheryl L'Hirondelle, Candice Hopkins conducted by Janna Graham for *FUSE* magazine, forthcoming. Note: L'Hirondelle is specifically speaking of the air itself. The jurisdiction of airspace on treaty lands is contested terrain as the Canadian Military believes that all airspace is governed federally. See *Aboriginal Claims and the Canadian Military* by P. Whitney Lackenbauer, **University of Calgary** at <http://www.cda-cdai.ca/symposia/1998/98lackenbauer.htm>

³ Descriptions of L'Hirondelle's project and Hopkins' motivations are outlined in a paper given at the Banff Centre entitled, *How to get Indians into an Art Gallery*, 2003 available at: http://ndnnrkey.net/writing/ndns_in_art_galleries.txt

Neither an attempt at retribution nor a replacement mission, this addition of voices and processes to the gallery space necessitated an undisciplining of typical institutional roles and infrastructures – gallery piracy.

Both L'Hirondelle and Hopkins worked with students on the creation of an open structure within which the project could function generatively in the exhibition, went on daily visits to the Morley school, the radio station and the local restaurant, attended events at the reserve, negotiated with staff at the Banff Centre for the donation of equipment to Morley and attempted to open up a space in the institution for an ongoing and unpredictable relationship. As a guest educator, I lugged gear, made art, and spoke with teachers, students, Hopkins and L'Hirondelle to develop a shared understanding of what the pedagogy of this multi-jurisdictional space - between the domains of government learning, museum learning and reserve learning - might be.

'The posse produces the chromosomes of its future organization'⁴

The process valued friendship and cooperation over 'artistic quality' and continues to exceed the space and time of the gallery, its notions of audience, exhibition, public and community.

The integration of these notions into the art gallery builds from but orients itself very differently to institutional power than the more direct confrontations undertaken in important intervention projects by artists such as James Luna in the 1990s. By de-centring the bureaucratic conditioning of professional institutional roles and forms and re-framing the notion of audience, this relationship to power is something more akin to what Hardt and Negri describe as the posse. Not the posse of hip hop (though rap was the predominant speech-form in the transmissions) but posse in its Latin meaning, 'power as a verb, as activity'.⁵



Drawing with Shirley Bear (intranation residency), Luke and Anita (RACOL artists/musicians) and Walter Phillips Gallery visit.

⁴ *ibid.* p.410

⁵ From Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* p.407

Kitchen Table Topographies

While, in their use of posse Hardt and Negri refer to examples within the context of the mobile labour of sans papiers revolts and other issues of prefaced within the anti-globalization movement, mobile and layered localities might offer comparable 'chromosomes of future organization' in the art gallery.

One year earlier, at the Art Gallery of Ontario, an institution much more embroiled in the aftermaths of defunding and more vulnerable to market pressures than the experimental space of the Banff Centre, De-Ba-Jeh-Mu-Jig Theatre group from the Wikwemikong Unceded Reserve on Manitoulin Island re-built the rez house of their Artistic Director, Audrey, in the gallery. While the house-in-gallery had the appearance of an intervention, the group was far more interested in using the site as a space for forming relationships across difference. While this occupation may seem to adhere to Rogoff's additive model, by introducing the sovereignty of the Wiky reserve into the gallery and through De-Ba-Jeh-Mu-Jig's insistence that all those who entered to improvise the role of island 'visitor', the notion of the outsider audience was again, displaced. In this process, many experienced a sense of loss and uncertainty. Over corn soup and within a partially fictionalized set, a performative mode of encounter was staged within which anxiety about guilt, mis-education and the distance between cultures was negotiated. De-Ba-Jeh-Mu-Jig's emphasis on improvisation and relationality beyond all other pursuits pushed at the edges of professions and the functional usage of a gallery architecture. With an island community, a group of strangers living among 'us', the insider/outsider paradigm was obscured. While a short visit, their involvement with the gallery has expanded and continues to infiltrate future programming and approach.

It must be noted, that these counter-power topographies, infiltrations of orality, nomadism, improvisation, layered notions of space and time and cooperation are not activated *only* in relation to institutional power. They are all aspects of Aboriginal social structures that, while to varying degrees obscured by the colonial project, are integral to Aboriginal communities like Morley. They are also familiar in the practices of many contemporary First Nations artists. While their use of infrastructure may look like piracy or appropriation, these strategies are mechanisms of everyday life in multi-jurisdictional zone of the reservation. Hopkins' interest in bringing rez practice to the fore suggests that when Indians enter the art gallery, they not only shift the terms of inclusion, but offer suggestions for re-thinking dominant notions of 'public'. Rather than audience as concept, the can be seen as audience as polyphony, as, in the words of John Cage, 'languages becoming musics; musics becoming theatres; performances; metamorphoses'⁶.

The spaces of possibility for exploring the spatial overlays, improvised communities, relationship building are ever encroached upon by the pressures to reach targets of revenue, attendance and the increasingly impossible working conditions of the cultural sector that, in Canada, are results of the project of privatization. In such a milieu it seems naïve to even consider the change movements of posse, piracy or ideas of institutional metamorphosis. If there is any way to counter this homogenization of what we once called the public sphere, to create galleries for a multitude, rather than an audience or a public, the blueprint lies in these spatial, temporal, relational, even biological re-organizations provoked by difference.

Cage, John. *Empty Words*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press. 1979

Graham, Janna. *Echoes and Transmissions at the Morley School. An Interview with Candice Hopkins and Cheryl L'Hirondelle* for *FUSE Magazine*. April, 2004

Hardt, Michael and Negri, Antonio. *Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 2000.

Hopkins, Candice. *How to get Indians into an Art Gallery*, presented at the Banff Centre, 2003 as part of *Making A Noise*. at:http://ndnnrkey.net/writing/ndns_in_art_galleries.txt

Rogoff, Irit. *Making Art In Public*. Presentation given at Civil Arts Inquiry 01-06, 2003 published in *Documents 01-06*. Dublin: City Arts Centre, 2004

⁶ From Empty Words p.65

Tactful Curation, Gair Boase

So how do you like your works of art – presented fait accompli as the fruits of genius, or with the bones and labour of its construction showing, its workings laid bare, to be better understood? And what of exhibitions? Should they too display their making - the curatorial conceits involved, the choices and mechanics involved in their production, or do their best not to infringe upon the viewer's appreciation of the art? Recently the Whitechapel has brought both of these questions to attention: Gerhard Richter's *Atlas*, a work in itself, has granted tremendous insight into the workings of a man whom many people consider to be the world's greatest living artist, while Franz West's appropriation of other artists' works shows the assemblage of art itself to amount to an artistic creation. *FeedBack0*, calling for discussion on the 'equation/relationship between curator, artist and audience', brings the construction of exhibitions into focus, explicitly triangulating a relationship that traditionally was affectionately conceived as a two-way intercourse between viewer and artwork.

'Curation' is a new word, and whilst curators have been operating for centuries, the public's imagination has consigned them an essentially passive role, as preservers and displays of art rather than as active participants in the construction of art. For most exhibition-goers, curators are producers, mediators, even editors of art, but, in much the same way that a good translator's work leaves their presence scarcely felt, curators' efforts should in no way obfuscate or obliterate the art. Respect is paramount, and tact is crucial. Since the 'nineteen-sixties however, artistic exploration into the curator's realm in the form of institutional critique and installation art has exposed curation to be a far from neutral activity, and a site of much critically engaged art. Interest in curating has risen enormously – witness the rapid growth of post-graduate courses specialising in curating, and curators have become *auteurs*, super-curators, and the ultimate post-producers in an age that is deemed to be all about postproduction.⁷ Last year's Venice Biennale witnessed meta-curators such as the impressive Hans Ulrich Obrist creating exhibitions in which individual works of art were entirely subsumed into over-powering curatorial themes, leaving artists understandably wary of curatorial domination. Nowadays there are so many curators curating art about curating, or else art that has very little to do with curating except that you'd never know it from the curatorial verbiage that ensconces it, that people, especially artists, are getting sick to death of the subject. Far from being a three-way relationship, curatorial introspection has veered towards narcissism. So whilst it is good that institutions and galleries display a certain amount of transparency and self-awareness as to their powers, the need for curatorial tact, and for not using art as a medium for broadcasting curatorial issues, has never been greater.

And so to *FeedBack0-1* and the Whitechapel. Whilst this publication specifically examines the role of the curator, the exhibitions during the period it looks at featured curation at its least conspicuous. Solo shows deprive curators of many of their chances to be creative, of choosing and juxtaposing artists and of providing a theme through which an understanding of the works be filtered. Not only did the Whitechapel host no group shows over the last nine months, but several of its exhibitions revolved around massive single works, leaving the curator with very little to do by way of choosing or arranging individual works. For instance, *Atlas*, despite consisting of several thousand works, required very little choice from the curator apart from the inclusion of a dozen or so supplementary paintings; the Philip-Lorca diCorcia exhibition consisted of two complete cycles of work, *Two Hours* and *A Storybook Life*, the latter of which comprised of over seventy images previously selected and organised by the artist to form a book; and similarly the Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller collaboration of extant *Recent Works* consisted only of two works within the gallery space, leaving a keen curator with frustratingly little to author. Consistently, such large-scale works brought attention to the importance of selecting and editing individual components of art to form what Philip-Lorca diCorcia has called 'an object in and of itself rather than a sampling of ... various projects'⁸ - an object with striking similarities to an exhibition. Large-scale works also forbid the intrusion of labels and interpolated wall-text interpretations that so often stamp the curator's identity upon an exhibition, instead demanding more discrete methods of

⁷ See Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction*. New York : Lukas & Sternberg, 2000

⁸ Philip-Lorca diCorcia's 'Artist's Statement' for *A Storybook Life*, Whitechapel Magazine published for the particular exhibition.

distributing information. Even the Short History of Performance Part II can be seen as a body of single, utterly uninterrupted works, in which intervention was the preserve of artists and where Andrea Fraser's *Official Welcome* removed even the need for a curator's introduction.

All of this demonstrated commendable restraint on the part of Whitechapel's curatorial team, a restraint that is all the more refreshing when other art institutions are intent upon showcasing innovative curatorial strategies in both permanent displays and temporary exhibitions. Whitechapel's programme of excellent and mutually enhancing exhibitions has raised curatorial issues through, rather than intrusively on top of, the art, voicing artists' rather than curators' opinions. Furthermore, a FeedBack publication ensures that the audience may also have an active role in what should be a triangular debate.

Question: Who's Afraid of Definition? Answer: Curators, Julienne Lorz

It seems that even today curators are loath to define the word 'curating' despite it having been in use for over 10 years and even though courses in 'curating' are springing up all the time all over the world. There are even curators who claim not to know what 'curating' means and instead prefer 'exhibition making'. There does not seem to be the same problem with calling oneself a 'curator', however, and yet the traditional definition of this term is a far cry from the multiple roles performed by these professionals today. So: why the reluctance towards defining and using the word 'curating'? Would more clarification not benefit the general public's understanding of this profession?

This question seems particularly pertinent in the light of recent emphasis on the role of the curator. Right now, one might be forgiven if one perceives the curator to be more important than the artist, judging by their exaggerated prominence at the Venice Biennale last year, the excitement over who will be curating the next Documenta and so on. If one is generous, one might be sympathetic towards this fear of definition, since it is true that 'curating' can cover a multitude of activities, which, if one listed all of them might even defy a true definition of the word. However, it appears that at least an approximation towards a definition should be attempted, particularly when curators are challenging and redefining traditional exhibition models. Many curators today would rather describe their exhibitions as laboratories: places for experimentation or ongoing research. But it seems that this development in exhibition making has never really been communicated to the visitor. Not that these more experimental forms neglect to address the viewer, in fact it is quite often the opposite, as the viewer frequently becomes the key participant or element. Rather, it seems that these changing approaches in curating have not been made transparent or explained at any length. The majority of exhibition-goers still expect a closed entity, a show, which asks a question, then answers it authoritatively and which can therefore be evaluated as either successful or unsuccessful. Approaching an exhibition in this way disallows mistakes or open-endedness. However, could not a 'failed' experiment perhaps answer more questions or lead to unexpected developments?

Should the curator not be allowed to make calculated mistakes, much as a scientist might? It is, of course, this very notion of the scientist experimenting in his or her laboratory that curators refer to in using this terminology. In science, though, this location is usually inaccessible to outsiders. The general public only becomes aware of scientific advances after the failed experiments have been overcome.

The only arena to try out ideas for a curator, however, is the actual exhibition itself. No amount of planning and speculating on paper could accurately predict the physical, three-dimensional experience of walking through a space filled with different artworks; it is only in the actual making of the exhibition that one can get a real sense of its overall effect. While this experimental way of curating is enormously enabling and even liberating to the curator, for the viewer it can mean the exact opposite: for him or her, the exhibition can become incoherent and self-reflexive. Open-endedness for the curator thereby results in the shutting out of the visitor.

To avoid this one-sided situation one might demand a return to traditional exhibition formats, but that would merely cause stagnation in an ever evolving profession. Instead though, one might call on curators to better communicate their curatorial approaches to the exhibition visitor. Not that this should then result in lengthy and over-explanatory text panels.

Nevertheless, it would seem favourable for both sides, if an audience is made aware of the developments taking place in curating. A good way to begin this process of transparency might be to define the term 'curating'.

El Real Viaje Real, Lillian Davies

To curate P.S. 1's *El real Viaje Real/The Real Royal Trip*, October 12, 2003 – January 5, 2004, Harald Szeemann travelled to New York City, the Atlantic port where he first discovered Seth Siegelaub's artists and the movement that would inspire *When Attitudes Become Forms* at the Bern Kunsthalle in 1969.

In the late 1960s, *When Attitudes Become Forms* was important in contemporary art's permeation of the third dimension, laterally through the gallery walls, across the city, and outside the white cube. In 2003, Szeemann's *El real Viaje Real* was important in the expansion of the contemporary art into the fourth dimension of time, both historical and future.

El real Viaje Real is a return to the early sixteenth century, when, under King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, Christopher Columbus made his third voyage from Spain to the Americas. The exhibition traces Columbus's path from Western Europe to the Americas, but tries to leave behind Columbus's tragic imperialist cargo of Church and Kingdom. Instead, the exhibition seeks a balance, and encourages an equal dialogue in the encounter of twenty contemporary Spanish and Latin American artists.

Tania Bruguera, born in Havana, Cuba in 1968, now living and working in Chicago, is represented in *El real Viaje Real* by one piece, her "Autobiografia," 2003. This installation engulfs the viewer, who is blinded in a darkened room, in a thick mass of anonymous voices, simultaneously shouting, whispering, chanting slogans of the Cuban Revolution. Capturing the emotion and the energy of the rebellion, this piece announces a national identity, both recalling the history of conquest and imperialism and demanding future resolve.

Carmela García, born in Lanzarote, Spain in 1964, now living and working in Madrid, defines identity in her photographs selected for *El real Viaje Real* not in terms of nation and colony, but in terms of gender. Perhaps responding to a culturally defined "machismo," García's "Ophelia" series, 2000, and "Paraiso Perdido," 2001, are exclusively of women who are masters of their own domain and identity, quietly pictured as individuals, alone in a distant and still place.

Within *El real Viaje Real* works by Bruguera, García, and others are allowed to address the historically defined categories of cultural and gender identity within an historical context, opening a dimension of time where the heavy legacies of colonialism and cultural construction can be critiqued. Art does not simply exist within a "white cube" of present time. Art exists in an exponentially expanding realm of time, and must be considered in the context of the past and the future, as well the present. Exhibitions must account for this, as *El real Viaje Real* has, in the confrontation of closed definitions of cultural identity and time. This acceptance of history is a refusal to collapse the timeline of a marginalised group and enclose a rich history of encounter and a future of potential into a simple white box. The expansion outside of the naïve and forgetful contemporary present is the 21st century engagement, an opening for the individual within a wider realm of space and time.

Art Labour and Art Work: Notes On The Status Of Labour In Art, Zuky Serper



M in his studio, London, UK, 2003 (photo: Z. Serper)

M has been working independently in his own well-equipped south London studio, building the sculptures of a known British Sculptor for the past twenty years. Innovative technical methods of working with materials such as aluminium, copper and wood are developed by him and then used in the construction of large, intricate abstract works. The materials are pushed far away from their known appearance and characteristics. Most recently, hardwood is bent and twisted with the use of hand made jigs jammed between floor and ceiling. Once, a weld in the structure broke and the power unbound of the twisted wood snatched the man thirteen feet away! The belts of spiraling wood produced are a new shape created by delicate skill and manual labour. The vocabulary of shapes acquired is a result of M's experimental work, but the work is known under another artist's name. This condition of production creates a question concerning authorship (not unlike a modern architect's office), which is magnified by the fact that this work is not only a side-effect but the main expression of M's creative life and work as an artist. The ideas/techniques and the contracts/acknowledgements remain obscure and contentious. The gallery visitor most likely just sees the artist's name and the art work but never the labour of the work. This visitor, and the tradition of appreciation that teaches this looking at art - just recognises the finished product. But - Who does the work? Who makes work?

Three artist-technicians are working in gallery E, in central London. The gallery directors want to reshape one of the walls in the upper gallery so that the gallery space will have flatter walls without protruding elements. In this way the space will appear more like a pristine white cube. The work is planned out, tasks are assigned, and within a couple of days a timber frame is built. The results are satisfying, even beautiful. The sculpture/structure has a purpose in life: it is going to be covered in MDF sheets to become a wall, transforming the whole gallery space. But there is another aspect to it; the whole structure carries a reminiscent aesthetic of a minimalist constructivist sculpture, growing in a humble way out of the wall. It is decided to keep a record of the work and to photograph it. This was a co-operative work, no single author claimed it; as a matter of fact, it bears no signature at all, and the work is destined to disappear under the covering panels of wood. But the work was recorded, and later on, after some discussions it was decided to consider this work an art work, and documentation of the work was included in a group show at the artist-run space Pugh Pugh in Berlin (Dec. 2002).

The aim of this essay is to consider the problematic division of labour in the categories of art and labour (both work). For most people work is the activity that prevents them from doing what they really want to do. When one goes to work there is a strong feeling of sacrifice, of time lost that could have been put into one's own interests. Since work, with the exception only of sleep, is the main activity for most of the world, alienation at work can be diagnosed as a global emotional/political condition.



Revolution Machines at Brian Chadwick's Unit-30, London, UK, 2001

The social relations in the art world replicate the relations in general society, in which members of a certain class are defined by their access to wealth and to freedom, the control of their time and life. Do you need to sell your art-labour in order to exist or do you employ others to produce your artwork? Artists find work in the service of more famous fellow-artists: printers of etching, lithography and photography; web designers and video editors; foundry workers, welders, carpenters, fabricators. Another group of artists who sell their labour, not to individual artists but to institutions – galleries or museums - are the gallery technicians. Exhibition technicians build and paint the space, bring in the art works, install them and in due time take them down and put the space back. I sometimes do this work, and have met many artists through doing it. I have had some of the most interesting and meaningful conversations about art, found out about new works, new artists, and about exhibitions put together by those very same people. Social relations experienced doing such work tend to be fraternal, mostly non-hierarchical and team-based. One is able to have good conversations with artists and fellow workers, which develop into friendships. You also have access to the art work, you are able to examine a painting from a very close range, touch it, handle it. On offer here in this kind of work is the demolition of familiar hierarchical class relations within the very workings of the gallery, and the construction of horizontal structures of relations. These may remain delimited by the context and the contract, but they are somehow full of the potential for more democratic relations between worker and artist, art object and materials, art labour and art work. A lot more needs to be said about the operation of gallery organism, but we will leave the discussion about democratisation of the whole gallery for a different place.

There is a sensual dimension when entering a gallery: the art workers have finished altering the physical space: they have changed internal divisions and room sizes, the height of

ceilings, colours, lighting. They are the cause of the transformation as well as those who first experience it. The wall work mentioned above was a moment of self-consciousness in this cycle of exhibition building. The snap shots which document it show the structure; a sculpture positioned in space - a working wall of a commercial gallery. The piece transforms the invisible labour of gallery technicians into self-conscious work. Vanishing as it approaches completion, It becomes a concealed art work that has a secret existence; structurally indistinguishable from the gallery wall.



Revolution Machines at Hakibbutz Gallery, Tel-Aviv, Israel, 2002

Revolution Machines in Pugh Pugh Gallery, Berlin, Germany, 2003.



Wall, Gallery E, London 2002 By G. Walker, R. Hughs, Z. Serper (photo: Z. Serper) Documentation of wall, Pugh Pugh Gallery, Germany, 2003

This minimalist, temporary, art work *wall* resembles an established high art practice and a day to day building process. This example plays with the distinctions between the status of an object as an art work or the result of normalised paid work. But there is more to it than intellectual speculation: by emphasising the importance of gallery technicians for the production of smooth exhibition space on which to see the art, and by acknowledging the location of these technicians, artists themselves, and other cultural workers, inside the process of the physical and conceptual production of the institution of art, the Idea is to open up and question the hierarchy of the gallery organism and to link gallery workers with other cultural workers. This example questions the systems of legitimation which hold inequality in place. There is an attempt here to start thinking the operation of art exhibition, distribution and discussion systems along different principles, democratic in process, yet maintaining high levels of commitment, scholarship and expertise, that could lead to real changes in the way that art institutions are working.

Revolution Machines have taken place at Whitechapel Art Gallery, during Ella Gibb's *Programme* 2001, Brian Chadwick's Unit-30 2001; Fordham gallery 2002; Trafalgar Square-Mayday 2002; Hakibbutz Gallery, Tel-Aviv 2002; Pugh Pugh Gallery, Berlin 2003.



Revolution Machines at FORDHAM gallery, London, UK, 2002

Revolution Machines developed seminars for Ella Gibb's *Spare Time Job Centre*, Chisenhale, under the title: *Free Time, Work and Boredom* (with Brian Chadwick), February 2003; the MA Curating course, Goldsmiths: *Revolution Machines - Inquiry into the Relations of Art and Political and Social Activism*, March 2003; MA Visual Arts, Goldsmiths October 2002-March 2003 and the 2nd European Social Forum, Paris, November 2003: *Art and Political Activism* (with: Movement of the Imagination).

A Black Box on Ground Zero. Does Enwezor's Ground Zero Signal the End of Curatorial Authority?, Konstantinos Stafylakis

Documenta 11 was definitely a challenge to the existent status of curatorial discourses and to the way they intend to tangle with artistic and political praxis. The essay *The Black Box* by director Okwui Enwezor broaches a manifesto and addresses a call for a new bond between divergent theoretical disciplines and artistic production. Its highly political content is shaped by an impulse to overcome a heritage of 'avant-gardism' and to forward the hegemony of a new 'political subjectivity.' An undertone of 'necessity', 'inevitability' and 'radical engagement' pursues the final overcoming of the dichotomising logic of artist/curator and, nevertheless, portrays the inadequacy of such dichotomies in front of the late global changes in art and politics.

The anti avant-garde impulse in Enwezor's essay becomes rather dogmatic and generalising when he underlines the lack of radicality in historical avant-gardes due to their restrictive 'westernism.' Enwezor's ambitious strategy is to perform a 'Copernical Turn' by replacing traditional primitivism and orientalism with the marginal discourses *themselves*. *The Black Box* proposes a postcolonial world against the world of the War on Terror, and attempts to make the name for the possible role of a resisting political Islam. But the exacting character of such an enterprise is further perplexed by Enwezor's appropriation of terminology from the exuberant political ontology designated by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in *Empire*. The theoretical scenery becomes even more far-fetched when Frantz Fanon becomes a central source of influence (undermining the complexity of contemporary post-colonialist discourses). Enwezor argues with Fanon for the necessary 'ground-clearing' operation of decolonisation (an act of 'absolute violence') and metaphorises Ground Zero as the new *topos* of disintegration. Ground Zero signals the end of curatorial authority and becomes the symbol of its disintegration; but can we conceive of such an initiative beyond the level of metaphors? The puzzling conceptualisations that Enwezor appropriates from Hardt and Negri's doctrine formulate a curatorial tone derived from the tricky field of meta-politics.

Documenta 11 provides the central idea of the *platform* as a decentred form of discursive operations. The platform is defined as 'an open encyclopaedia for the analysis of late modernity; a network of relationships; an open form for organising knowledge; a non hierarchical model of representation; a compendium of voices, cultural, artistic, and knowledge circuits'⁹. With the publication of the last volumes of the Documenta 11 five platforms, a circle of debates on outstanding thematics seems to acquire a form of completion albeit spatio-temporally displaced.

Some critical voices have already noted the superfluous curatorial intentions that pervade the project. According to Stewart Martin's recent critique:

"[...] if Documenta 11 is intended as a relatively coordinated and consistent project, as the curators make clear that it is, then this curatorial intention provides a point of departure for the attempt to apprehend it. This may be liable to objections about the general overvaluation of curators that has become so prevalent recently – according to which artists and artworks are reduced to the materials of the curator/super-artist – but the assessment of an exhibition as novel in organizational structure and in the selection of artists as Documenta 11, would be naïve if it did not examine the curator's intentions, albeit critically."¹⁰

The successful operation of Enwezor's initiative opens up a thematic prism, one that is impossible to sustain within the organisational limits of the five realised platforms, and pledges of a global cultural-political turn - a kind of novel consciousness corresponding to Hardt's and Negri's notion of the 'multitude'. The 'multitude' outmodes the dipole artist-curator

⁹ Okwui Enwezor, "The Black Box", in *Documenta 11_Platform 5: Exhibition*, Catalogue, Germany, Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2002, p.49

¹⁰ Stewart Martin, A new world art? Documenting Documenta 11, *Radical Philosophy*, No 122, November/December 2003, p.8

since it reflects the birth of a new ontology, a new global culture, a *Creole* culture supposed to multiply all discursive operations rather than stabilise particular sets of differences.

There is a certain intrinsic and subtle implication regarding the approach between politics and culture. The debate on platform 3 (Crèolité and Creolization) provides the 'cultural' substitute of the 'multitude'. The notions of 'creoleness' and 'creolization' are implicitly providing a *pre-ontological* understanding of the novel universal subjectivity that Documenta 11 pursues. The continuous 'mixing' of global cultures realizes a map of 'exchange' between cultural agents. The process of 'creolization', introduced by Edouard Glissant in opposition to the rather static conception of 'creoleness', is nonetheless the substratum of every definition of the 'multitude'. Hardt and Negri define the 'multitude' as "a singularity that establishes a new place in the non-place of Empire, a singularity that is a reality produced by cooperation, represented by the linguistic community, and developed by the movements of hybridisation."¹¹

The final equation between ontological constitution and pragmatics excludes any irreconcilability between critical curating and artistic praxis since culture enters a phase which Hardt and Negri will even call 'theourgic'.¹² Although Hardt and Negri underline the non-hierarchical nature of the 'multitude', re-inventing a Nietzschean 'sovereignty', some of their crucial idealist references produce an effect of uncanny to the reader. The *Empire* is obviously the product of an exuberant syncretism. There is a subsequent tension between the Deleuzian emphasis on practices like nomadism, defection, desertion, insurrection etc. and the fundamental references to the most ghostly text of Continental philosophy, the so-called *Oldest System Programme of German Idealism*.

According to Andrew Bowie, this fundamental text of early idealism, conceived by Hegel, Hoelderlin or Schelling in 1796, "wants to re-unify the world that has been split up by Kant's critique of traditional metaphysics, at the same time as reinforcing Kant's insistence on our capacity for self-determination."¹³ This manifesto defines absolute moral freedom privileging the interceding subject rather than the latter's adaptation to the world. The authors of the *System Programme* demand a 'new physics' that would include self-determination in the conception of our inner nature, and emphasise the Kantian idea of 'Beauty' as unification between practical reason and understanding. Two of the most significant quotes from the *System Programme* in *Empire* are introducing the demand for a 'materialist mythology of reason' and a 'materialist religion of the senses.' In opposition to the *System Programme*, Hardt and Negri do not appoint the 'mythology of reason' in the 'service of the Ideas' (as in the *System Programme*) but rather in the service of the 'multitude': "A material mythology of reason thus begins to be formed, and it is constructed in the languages, technologies, and all the means that constitute the world of life."¹⁴ The mythology of reason is according to Hardt and Negri a 'symbolic and imaginary' articulation of universal cooperation – of universal consciousness fighting against transcendental mediations (representations). The *Ideas* mentioned in the *System Programme* are manifestly though the Kantian transcendental 'Ideas'. Perhaps it's useful to remember that in Kant's 'transcendental dialectic' the 'Ideas' acquire a regulative character supporting the very structure of Reason due to their 'ideality' which becomes a form of measure or standard against its defects and incompleteness. At a final stage, 'morality appears to be their ultimate horizon.

In the essay Hardt and Negri contribute to the Documenta 11 platform 1, the 'mythology of reason in service of the Ideas' is replaced by 'Giants!': "Today we need new giants and new monsters that bring together nature and history, labour and politics, art and invention to demonstrate the new power that the birth of "general intellect", the hegemony of immaterial labour, the new passions of the abstract activity of the multitude provide to humanity."¹⁵ But

¹¹ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000 p. 395

¹² Ibid. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, p.396

¹³ Andrew Bowie, *Aesthetics and subjectivity, from Kant to Nietzsche*, New York, Manchester University Press, 1990, p.55

¹⁴ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000, p.396

¹⁵ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, "Globalization and Democracy", in *Democracy Unrealized, Documenta 11_Platform 1: Exhibition*, Catalogue, Germany, Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2002.

should we conceive of the 'platform' as a 'topos' of birth for new giants, or monsters? Rereading some of the contributions to Platform 5 catalogue publication, which includes the curatorial assessments, we pause before the figure of the 'trickster' proposed by Jean Fisher as a modality of artistic subjectivity; a kind of liminal-carnavalesque figure that appears in almost every cultural history; the 'trickster' is the "incorrigible liar, cheat, thief, gambler, eroticist, shape-shifter, humorist, master of divination, 'bricoleur', and 'agent provocateur' with an insatiable appetite."¹⁶ Enwezor's curatorial manifesto sets him off as the 'trickster' of the *Empire*; but how?

Enwezor's assessment does not forward any clarification of the enthusiastic-syncretic assertions of the *Empire*, instead, it offers a rather brusque justification for bypassing every residue of the transcendental spectre of 'westernism' focusing on the 'Copernical' effects of September 11: 'the full emergence of the margin to the centre.'¹⁷ Rather than heteronymous, the transition to a decentred global reality remains immanent - faithful to Hardt's and Negri's own political philosophy of immanence. The rising of the multitude's universal culture in Enwezor's predicament corresponds to the elimination of any heterogeneous 'political negativity' in the framework of Hardt's and Negri's Nietzschean/Deleuzian ethics of affirmation. Ernesto Laclau has pointed out that in Hardt's and Negri's doctrine, the rejection of any inherent negativity in political subjects disqualifies all possibilities for antagonistic politics within the theoretical framework of the *Empire*. According to Hardt and Negri, the inherent power of the multitude has to be a disruptive power, "lodged in all state of domination as its ultimate content, a content destined to destroy all barriers. "Multitudes have to be a content whose continent is Empire."¹⁸

Enwezor completes the operation by dismissing any reminiscence of 'aesthetic negativity' (the core feature of Adorno's *high* modernism). *The Black Box* signals a potential homogeneity where the "full realization of the multitude's immanence would be the elimination of all transcendence."¹⁹ The 'end' of 'avant-gardism' is equally the end of 'westernism' and colonialism; hence, the end of authorial curating which assigns its power to platform-events - ciphers of the multitude. Some commentators have noticed that this initiative reproduces to a certain extent the revolutionary project of traditional avant-gardes since it means to 'expose as the product of bourgeois institutions [...] and engage in the emancipatory dissolution of art into a life free from capitalist social relations.'²⁰ But the claims of Documenta 11 replace every possible antagonistic politics of a 'democracy unrealized' with the positivity of the 'multitude'.

Enwezor's understanding of history, following that of Hardt and Negri, is founded upon an inadequate and truncated account of immanence. As Laclau has pointed out, Hardt's and Negri's analysis of social struggles locates the birth of immanence back to Duns Scotus and his insistence on the singular essence of every entity. This transition is according to Hardt and Negri the main feature of the secularization process up to Spinoza where the 'horizon of immanence and the horizon of the democratic political order coincide completely.'²¹ Laclau draws attention though to the unresolved theological issues already at stake before Duns Scotus in Scotus Erigena's *De Divisione Naturae*. The original theological and political question, occupying Saint Augustine among other thinkers, 'was how to make compatible the

¹⁶ Jean Fisher, "Toward a Metaphysics of Shit", in *Documenta 11_Platform 5: Exhibition*, Catalogue, Germany, Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2002, p.67

¹⁷ Okwui Enwezor, "The Black Box", in *Documenta 11_Platform 5: Exhibition*, Catalogue, Germany, Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2002, p.47

¹⁸ This phrase from Jacques Rancière's, *Peuple ou multitude: question d'Eric Alliez à Jacques Rancière*, *Multitudes* 9, May-June 2002, p.97 is quoted in Ernesto Laclau's "Can Immanence Explain Social Struggles?" In *Empire's New Clothes*, ed. by Paul A. Passavant and Jodi Dean, New York, Routledge, 2003, p.21-22

¹⁹ Ernesto Laclau, "Can Immanence Explain Social Struggles?" In *Empire's New Clothes*, ed. by Paul A. Passavant and Jodi Dean, New York, Routledge, 2003, p.24

²⁰ Stewart Martin's observation refers to Peter Burger's understanding of early avant-gardes such as Dada, surrealism and constructivism. "A new world art? Documenting Documenta 11", *Radical Philosophy*, No 122, November/December 2003, p.9

²¹ Jacques Rancière, quoted in Ernesto Laclau, 2003, p.22

worldly existence of evil with divine omnipotence.²² The 'immanentism' of Erigena who asserted that evil does not really exist but it is rather a necessary stage towards God's divine perfection was back then a response to the very old question of theodicy. In Documenta 11 the events of September 11 are exploited towards the construction of a type of 'secular' theodicy in the kernel of which we find Hardt's and Negri's immanent development of the 'multitude': the story of the multitude will provide the historical context in which the rationality of all suffering will become visible in the end. Every initiative is internal to the universal development of productive forces. Ground Zero has to occupy a space, a territory within Hardt's and Negri's monistic *Empire* and a place within the history of social struggles. Meanwhile, Hardt and Negri seem to contradict themselves when they visualize an Empire without external limits but with a virtual centre:

If these points were to constitute something like a new cycle of struggles, it would be a cycle defined not by the communicative extension of the struggles but rather by their singular emergence, by the intensity that characterizes them one by one. In short, this new phase is defined by the fact that these struggles do not link horizontally, but each one leaps vertically, directly to the virtual centre of Empire.²³

Enwezor grasps the opportunity to re-territorialise the virtual centre of the Empire construing a much more sterile secular theodicy; a kind of cosmody: 'The emptiness at the centre [of Ground Zero] is not a ground but a founding moment for articulating the demands of the 'multitude' that have emerged in the wake of Empire', and additionally, "there is a view today that Ground Zero represents the clear ground from which the margin has moved to the centre in order to reconceptualise the key ideological differences of the present global transition."²⁴ But isn't this route a way through which curating reclaims its authorial status (a God's eye view of historical meaning) and offers inadequate consolation for *particular* suffering. Is Ground Zero a 'clear ground' or is it the constellation of multiple historical processes, some of which involve more than two opposing agents? Is there an anti-theodicy argument that could perhaps formulate an adequate understanding of September 11 as the outcome of a historical dialectic that would not simply reproduce a dualist struggle between two immanent entities, the empire and the multitude? And wouldn't this involve a different account of domination, disenchantment, myth, or the interweaving between all these? Whatever the answer may be, the conceptualisation of September 11 in terms of eventuality and historical determinism undermines the initiative to invent a novel bond between art and politics, and reverts to the old Sartrean ethics of 'engagement'. The curator coerces artistic engagement and demands faith to the 'event', to the shining 'truth' of the present – to the truth of an event that supposedly represents nothing negative or incommensurable but simply the 'means' and 'cause' of the multitude. Perhaps the positivisation of Ground Zero that Enwezor performs in *The Black Box* is the 'truth-content' of the 'multitude': "the elimination of any kind of asymmetry between actual political subjects and the community as a whole."²⁵

There is a way in which the whole Documenta 11 project is trapped within the proto-idealist aspirations of the *System Programme*: nevertheless, as Rancière and Laclau remind us, 'the kernel of metapolitics [Hardt's and Negri's project] is to lead back the precarious artifices of the political scene to the truth of an immanent power which organizes beings in a community and identifies the true community with the grasped and sensible operation of this truth.'²⁶ Perhaps the decentering of curatorial authorship that Enwezor forwards with the central idea of the platform could be understood as one of the most radical leaps towards the dematerialization of aesthetics we've ever witnessed. On the other hand though, the celebration of Ground Zero as a symbol of redemption could signal the multitude's regressive enchantment by a newborn global 'cult of sacrifice.' Is terrorist aestheticism, the 'grandiose' spectacle of September 11 which thinkers like Slavoj Žižek have carefully deconstructed a kind of perverse proto-idealism in search for a new sublime?

²² Ernesto Laclau, 2003, pp. 22-23

²³ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, 2000.

²⁴ Okwui Enwezor, "The Black Box", In *Documenta 11 _ Platform 5: Exhibition, Catalogue*, Germany, Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2002, p.47-48

²⁵ Ernesto Laclau, 2003, p.25

²⁶ Jacques Rancière, quoted in Ernesto Laclau, 2003, pp.21-22

'Home Galleries' in Crisis, Kostis Velonis

Today we are witnessing an 'activation' beyond the framework of the institution. A number of artists are discussing possibilities of exhibiting beyond the intellectual and professional conventions of institutionalised forms of art (museums, galleries, institutions of contemporary art). Many artists have now created their own spaces in the form of 'home galleries', project rooms, or even, in clubs and lounges connected to exhibition spaces, with more popular and familiar spaces, in order to gain acceptance by a non-specialist audience. Although common rooms in apartments create new conditions for the way that works are arranged, it is not easy to understand if such places have the ambition to display these works *beyond* institutional conventions, especially considering the fashionable audience of such spaces.

We would expect 'apartment aesthetics' to enforce a sense of familiarity in the viewer. Indeed there is a psychological advantage to be gained if you exhibit your work in these 'alternative' spaces. You can imagine that, even if your work will not finally be part of a famous collection, that at least there are some radical possibilities for your work to challenge the conventions of institutional practices. However, if we try to examine the different and unconventional methods of non-institutional cultural spaces, it is clear that the 'third way' of hi-art has been absorbed by these same institutions. The non-institutional art house displays a kind of *allegro modo moderato* in the face of the *allegro vivace* of contemporary institutions.

In our post-capitalist context, with the interdependence between the cultural industry and the aesthetics of investment, there are formal analogies between fetishist commodities and the artworks, which influence the whole tectonic aspect of the exhibition space. Marketing strategies follow conventional standards of presentation. There are similarities between the display of consumer goods in commercial shops and the clinical arrangement of artworks in institutional and non-institutional spaces.

It is time to attempt to focus on the similarities rather than the differences between the concept of 'the house' and the cultural institution (a sort of 'public house') in order to understand the consequences of the home gallery's pseudo-radical negotiation with the conditions of the museum exhibition space. It is clear that the concept and practice of 'the museum' continues to develop from its role in the 19th century. Institutions offer the most stable definitions of 'fine art practice' and criticism of the museum's role begins from the moment that we understand that artworks were not necessarily created in order to be exhibited in this particular context, which has determined an identity far removed from their original intentions.

So, in what conditions is it possible for art to re-examine its established properties *beyond* the domineering machine of domestic architecture, either in its official orientation (art institute, museum, commercial gallery) or in the form of artist-run space? How is it possible to deny its character as a sophisticated object and finally to function against the endlessly reproducible images of consumer culture? Is the domestic space of the 'home gallery' an appropriate place to sustain an alternative praxis in the face of entertainment and hi-culture superstructures, or does it offer only an illusion of escape? Is there any escape, in real terms, from the architectural space and its various typologies governed by the domineering strategic logic of the curator.

Or, perhaps we must reorganise existing institutional space in order to liberate its meaning from conventional codes of display which enforce a certain control over meaning of artworks. According to which set of conditions must we expect such independence of the artwork? Is the 'home gallery' the appropriate place for this relation?

So, the next question is: What kind of relations, within the forms of sculpture, installation, photography and expanded practices, can negotiate the certainties of the supreme status of architecture, and being 'out of its field'?

Trackers Exhibition 2004, Charlie Danby

'Trackers' is an experimental project that brings the work of twenty one artists to the Pitzhanger Manor Gallery (PM Gallery & House). The Pitzhanger Manor is a large Georgian House that came to note as the property of the acclaimed architect of the Bank of England, Sir John Soane. It provides the forum through which these twenty one artists will challenge and be challenged; and one through which the resulting exhibition is not a solution but an outcome. The artists working in video, sculpture, installation, performance and painting, are working together to forge an experimental approach to curation.

The Pitzhanger Manor is a dual site building, split between its Georgian House and the contemplative purity of its modernist 'white cube' gallery space. The interconnection of these strongly oppositional spaces has provided the pivotal backbone to the structure and methodology that has characterised the development of this exhibition. The twenty one artists will be exhibiting across the two spaces, with twelve artists showing in the House and nine working in the gallery.

The origins of 'Trackers' lay in an exhibition entitled 'Hang the Curator' (2002) Hammersmith. The exhibition adopted a system of chance in order to oppose the structure of curation by establishing an arbitrary position in relation to it. The rolling of dice, the simplest and most representative measure of chance, was used to locate randomly the paintings of the twenty two participating artists on six walls marked out with six grids. In leaving the balance and aesthetic reading of the exhibition to chance, a surprisingly formalist and tightly cohesive outcome was the result of this implied negation of curatorial practice. The cause and effect of chance produced a solution that created its own arbitrary aesthetic.

Mathew Collings wrote of the show "They wanted to go against the usual solutions to arbitrariness and just be frankly arbitrary...I found that I quickly got used to the oddity...On the other hand I thought the oddity was good..."²⁷

The Pitzhanger Manor has provided a unique context from which to expand the work of 'Hang the Curator'. In looking at the role and function of arbitrary curation within the presentation of artworks in public and gallery spaces, it was necessary to extend the conceptual and structural model of the grid that had been employed in 'Hang the Curator'.

'Trackers' extends the structure and facility of the grid to a three dimensional proposition, adapting it from its two dimensional use in 'Hang the Curator'. The idea was to create a vector co-ordinate system, within the parameters of the gallery space, from which it would be possible to generate and plot the series of points that would be the centre (origin) points for each of the nine gallery artists showing work within the space. These points would have an x, y and z co-ordinate structure that would locate them somewhere within the volumetric space of the gallery as determined by the parameters of the vector grid. The most challenging aspect of the model was the 'y' co-ordinate, placing each of the artists at specific heights across the gallery area.

In contradiction, the Georgian House is a formally curated space with the twelve artists (including two artists' groups) operating across the three floors of the building. In this part of the building, due to the inherent visual richness of the rooms, a closeness to Sir John Soane's ideology was sought that would confront and potentially conflict with the rooms, rather than allow the works to operate succinctly within its spaces. The works in the House have a technological bias which attain a relevance to the progressive and experimental ideology of Soane. The works across these rooms harbour a psychological edge of unease that plays to the paranoia that came to represent Soane's own compulsive nature. The curation although more formal in the House, has adopted an aspect of the system-based curation of the gallery;

²⁷ *100 Reviews (3)* London, Alberta Press, 2002.

it has pitched artists together in clusters within the rooms, or suites of rooms, that are reflective of the random clusters of the works resulting from the throwing of dice in the gallery.

Two of the artists exhibiting in the House have been chosen to work as 'roaming' artists. They have not been restricted to the rooms as the other artists have, and although exploring a cohesive strand of concept within their work, have been asked to work across the space. Their work exists both between and around the other works in the House, informing and delineating the spaces that exist between the architecture, the objects of the building, and works located within them.

In both the Gallery and the House the artists have been left with the freedom to regenerate their work as they see fit. This has allowed for a general sense of flux in relation to the development of work and in relation to the outcome of the exhibition. The curatorial remit imposed in both spaces has dictated this along with the fact that although the artists have been selected on account of specific pieces of work or working practice, they have all chosen to produce new works for the exhibition.

An important aspect of the exhibition, in relation to the role and function of curation, has been that it has encouraged the artists involved to operate through a system of negotiation. The implication of other works, due to the nature of the spaces and the schematic of the curation, is something that each of the artists has had to consider. The exhibition is the outcome of the process of its development, just as each artist's work is the outcome of their individual working practice. The exhibition therefore reflects and represents a transparent curatorial ethic.

The opposing spaces of the Gallery and House have provided an ideal situation not just to extend the ideas of 'Hang the Curator' but also to contradict and oppose them, and thereby emphasise their purpose not as absolutes or solutions but as potentials. The random system of the dice in the gallery has ensured that all the works, however disparate in nature, are mediated through a system. The works are no longer bonded solely through the conceptual, visual and material crossovers and contradictions that exist between them. The dice system provides an additional layer through which the works can be read as a group. The works within the gallery vector system, like the forged dialogue between the oppositional spaces of the House and Gallery, are independent and at the same time interdependent of each other. The random system of chance adopted in the gallery eradicates the hierarchies that would normally predetermine the location of each artist's work and the aesthetic decisions associated with this. Each artist has therefore had to consider the placement and predicament of their work in a way that that they would not normally expect to do.

From an early stage in the project it was important to establish the vector grid and co-ordinate system from which all the gallery artists' points would be measured. In collaboration with the architectural technicians working on the project construction of the vector grid, has over a period of time, been reduced to its most minimal and effective form.

A series of three separate screen walls have been designed that clearly delineate to the viewer the three planes of the axis; the x, the y and the z, which make up the vector structure. Each axis has been made visible through a set of horizontal and vertical slits which have been built into the screen walls. Each screen wall is in two sections, the gap between the two creating the slit, and consequentially the line of vision along which each axis line runs. A ramp behind one of the screen walls wraps around one corner of the gallery allowing the viewer not only to walk outside of the active area of the vector grid, but also to look back into it through the horizontal slit that delineates the Y axis plane. This section is 'L' shaped allowing a section view across both directions of the gallery.

The structural presence of the vector axis presents visually the concept of the vector, establishing the basis for a system of navigation around the space, and highlighting the arbitrariness of the location of the works within it. The screen walls present the viewer with specific viewing platforms which reflect the fundamental function and aspiration of the artwork. An artwork presents itself as a system of communication and as such it functions to

direct and dictate reading and meaning through its ability to manipulate the gaze of the viewer and pre-judge concept. The screen walls seek to function in the same way; orientating the viewer around the space, dictating their reading of it, and consequentially establishing an apparatus through which the works located within it can also be read.

The works of the nine gallery artists within the vector highlight the arbitrariness, instability and fragility of the imposed system. Should the dice have fallen differently the works themselves would be located differently, and not just singularly but collectively. The works represent the single outcome of a rolling of dice, and in their stasis they propose the endless permutations that would lead any of them to be located anywhere within the grid. Movement and interchange within a static system is a foundational concept within the curation of the exhibition. The House presents an altogether different conception of navigation. The House is constructed from a series of rooms and interconnecting spaces set over three stories. The restrictions placed on hanging works in the House led to the consideration of the internal space of the rooms. The rooms have become in effect origin points, active spaces within the House that have been conceived as equivalent to the units of space established by the works in the gallery.

The visual representation of the vector grid in the gallery, through the construction of the screen walls, was not necessary in the House. The rooms already had a specific scheme of orientation based around the architectural facets of the building, the decisions associated to the creation of the active spaces (rooms) having already taken place through the original architectural design of the building. The imposed curatorial device used in the gallery reproduces these architectural decisions, albeit that these occur through a false, random system adopted in order to create an arbitrary outcome. It is perhaps fitting that this occurs in the modernist extension of the Georgian House built to replicate the architectural proportions and sections of the Eating Room, a ground floor section of the original building.

Sir John Soane intended the Pitzhanger Manor to be a place where the architects, philosophers, writers and artists of his day would meet to debate and exchange their theoretical and practical ideas. 'Trackers' is sympathetic to these ideas, and as a shifting and constantly developing project has drawn on the experience and resource of a wide range of people.

The exhibition is itself a work in progress; it is an outcome at a point in time. It proposes nothing finite. Its intention is to allow the viewer to unravel the layers of both the works and of the building. 'Trackers' proposes an investigation into the function of curation; it seeks to demystify it as a fixed and singular entity, presenting the potential of shifting readings within a visually rich and diverse exhibition space.

'Trackers' – an exhibition curated by Charles Danby and Alejandro Ospina in collaboration with the PM Gallery & House 29/04/04 – 04/07/04



*Images, from left:
The Eating Room, PM Gallery & House,
Rolling the dice,
Meeting at the Dragon Bar, London, 29/09/03*

Images courtesy of the curators and the PM Gallery & House, 2004

List of artists

Alexander Graham
Francis Ives
Rob Smith
Charles Danby
Alejandro Ospina
Maria Von Kohler
Nathaniel Rackowe

Goshka Macuga
Georgina Batty
Adrian Ward
Stuart Brisley
Geoff Cox
Alex Hutchins
Errol Perkins

Lyle Perkins
Bruce McLean
Amy Cunningham
Neil Hamon
Gideon Rubin
Ben Judd
Gary Woodley

Rewiring Waiting: Housing Benefit, Static Utopia and Real Bureaucracy, Andy Weir

RING Center. Start in close-up. Lush greenery and birdsong. Pan slowly to the right across the Grecian villa dappled in sunlight, the rippling muscles of its painted heroes. To the garden. Table and chairs laid out under a parasol. Here is a place I would sit and wait to die, my hand trailing lazily against soft grass.

Go in closer.

No, pull back first. The only movement is around the edges. Escalator traffic. Shoppers slowly moving between levels. Security cameras. Armed guards. Its borders are heavily policed.

The pastoral idyll stands framed in the centre of Berlin's *Ring Center* shopping mall. Its birdsong is piped on a 75 second loop through six levels of consumer outlets. Its greenery plastic and its villa painted cardboard. In one sense, *Ring Garden* fulfils the function of Baudrillard's Disneyland; an emphatically artificial environment to make the surrounding 'shopping city' seem more real. Separate to and contained within *Ring Center*, it is mood-effect architecture posing as public square.

Built from primary colours and sharp flat edges, the visual language of *Ring Gardenis* streamlined and hyper-simplified so powerfully that a six-inch cardboard cartoon fence is more successful than electrified barbed wire in discouraging trespassing. Moreover, the space is uncannily static. A dead centre. It is the only sub-zone within the *Ring Zone* where nothing is for sale. There is no transaction.

In contrast, surrounding the garden, in *Ring's boulevard periphique* or M25, consumer traffic is in constant flow. While shoppers buy jewellery on credit, money moves faster than the eye can sense, pre-emptive payment anticipating nothing but its own continuation. Why not buy a coffee while waiting for friends to have their nails done? Or download a new mobile phone screensaver to eliminate those moments of boredom moving between shops on public transport. What are you waiting for?

A still centre surrounded by the endlessly accelerating flow of globalised commercial traffic, mutually interdependent, one enclosing the other. In *Ring*, infinite slowness and infinite speed exist simultaneously.

And there are no windows to the outside. Its opaque architecture strategically sited on Berlin's *Ring S-Bahn Line*, which sketches a border between inner and outer city, *Ring Center* is the citadel protecting from beyond. Workers, proud guardians of *Ring*, are paid minimum wage to pick up shit, clean toilets and filter suburban shoppers from displaced homeless people in search of shelter. There can be nothing left over. And the zones (inside/outside. *Ring Center/ Ring Garden*) must be kept separate. If the boundaries where to collapse then what? Frozen consumers? And a sullied garden.

Housing Benefit. What role then could art practices play in renegotiating this border, in producing micro-utopian strategies, communities and economies with their own speeds and rhythms which can engage with, and function immanently to, the breakneck speeds of globalised economy rather than remaining separate and contained, reduced to speed zero. How can they disrupt the whole into which they don't quite fit, make things move/vibrate? What happens when nomadic or relational practices run up against the slowing-effects of institutional bureaucracy? And what is produced / yet to come?

Childrens Toys as Fragile Strategies for Bare Survival: 'It's the sort of dinghy you would buy in Woolworth's for a couple of small kiddies in a paddling pool, no more than about six feet long.' Said the Dover Lifeboat coxswain after picking up three hypothermic men who had been attempting to paddle their fragile vessel through the night across the channel. Crammed into the tiny inflatable, they had departed from somewhere near Calais and navigated one of the

busiest shipping lanes in the world to reach the UK. Upon arrival the men were taken to hospital and then detained at the Port of Dover immigration centre. Immigration officials said two of the men were believed to be from Romania and the other from Chechnya. None of them could speak English.

Bare survival. Pushing between national boundaries and identities, the dinghy must keep moving. To slow down any more would mean certain death. Three artists from London working under the collective name 'Bez Nazvru' took this story as a starting point for their *Housing Benefit* project in Prague this summer. Installed at the National Gallery as an annex to and parasite on the 1st Prague Biennale, a mobile modular structure built from children's 'wendy' houses became a bureaucratic machine for producing collective subjectivities. Participants in the project were called through a 'waiting room' (Barbie House) and 'interview room' (Spiderman House) in order to complete a Housing Benefit application form. The form itself focused on the final section of the real UK housing benefit application; the dangerous supplement "anything else to add: (it may help your application)". Examination of the UK housing benefit form itself reveals plenty in excess of a set of questions to evaluate your living needs and situation. 'Do you live in the front, middle or back of the house?' you are asked. Questions are repeated, slightly different in form. Lists and regulations become gargantuan in their repeated insistence. And there is an empty space, a moment to step out of the bureaucratic economy and take your own potentiality as starting point. It is this space, in the Bez Nazvru appropriation, which is magnified and speeded up to become a receptacle for potential hopes, fears and desires around basic survival needs of shelter. The installation existed, like any benefits office waiting room, somewhere between a confused and self-organised process of administrative procedure and a hyperbolic performance of arbitrary authority.

Waiting. Detained at Dover, cramped and suffocated, concealed in a goods truck, the body in transit offers a respite to art practices trafficking in collapsed geographies of post-nation-state mobility. There are borders everywhere, which must be produced, maintained and regulated at all cost in order for power to function effectively. *Housing Benefit* plays out, on one hand, a parody of bio-institutional control over rhythms and boundaries of the body. Forced into participation, visitors to the museum cram into the tiny spaces while off-stage, a mechanised and uncanny voiceover, detached from any subjective position, regulates and controls their flow, "will number sixteen please move to the interview room". On the other hand, it simultaneously operates a rewiring of the speeds of waiting itself. In a temporary suspension of the 'free' consumption of objects in the museum, a community of waiting is (per)formed in the holding pod. It is in this space that something is produced, packaged and exported to another economy. Relying on a performative disavowal of surrounding power structures, a speed of play emerges. Waiting does not have to be read as expectation, as anticipation towards an object, coiled before the revolution, but can also be seen as breathing, bare survival, before inclusion in some pre-assigned identity, an opening up of other possibilities of connection between singularities. Notions of 'the event' must include the possibility that nothing will happen, or will have happened. Waiting, while enforced and maintained by institutional authority, also, through its enactment, opens up the body to new rhythms outside of its regulatory logic. It is evident in Bez Nazvru's video documentation of the project that these communities gradually slip from being directed by the artists themselves to being produced and directed by real bureaucratic forces as the artists too get caught up in waiting games. Rhythms of play and regulation, commerce and utopia, inside and outside collide, as the real bureaucratic system is forced to unwittingly participate in its own performative construction and legitimation.

When the installation was transported to a public space (a park outside the National Gallery in Prague), despite breaking no laws, its presence sparked an excessively harsh reaction. "You have five minutes. Move on," the weight of the law performed with sweeping gestures. The piece here is recoded by institutional bureaucracy as an identifiable and containable alternative economy, "You cannot sell things here... You cannot camp here", and the park is marked as dead centre, architecture of interdiction. But the fact that nothing was for sale, and no-one was camping offered the real challenge to power; A conflict of control over waiting, regulation and production of speeds and rhythms. The final part of the documentation shows the completed *Housing Benefit* forms entering the real benefits economy in Bethnal Green,

East London, where the project's research on 'blueprints for a utopian architecture' first started. An interview with the agency manager is edited in jump cuts, compressing and re-expanding waiting into abrupt electrical connections. Feeding the machine into a bigger machine, the video ends in institutional blockage, "we are still waiting"; A gesture of despair or pointer towards something else? We are left to consider this question when invited to the *Wendy Kino* premiere of the video, curated as a performative screening room inside a shanty wendy house structure, waiting for our numbers to be called then squashed into a space too small and heavy with the sweat of others.

Recent mega-exhibitions such as last year's 50th Venice Biennale, where visitors trudged from space to space fighting heat exhaustion, sweat and continuous deficit of attention, have brought the role of bodily duration sharply back into curatorial focus. It is not a case of bemoaning 'MTV culture' (whatever that may mean), while continuing to make work that demands more and more attention, but of actively developing new curatorial strategies to engage with these speeds, blockages, montages, and rhythms. Waiting rewired, hinted at by works like *Housing Benefit*, can be seen not just as dead time/space between experiences, events and consumption of objects, but as a positive performative act, the time lag or delay of translation where different connections between singularities can be formed. A transnational community of people is (in) waiting, in detention centres, benefits offices, enmeshed in bureaucratic identity machines around the world, not in demand for global citizenship but suspended from dominant rhythms altogether. As 'utopian' space, whether in the fabric of the city or in the plethora of art practice engagements, is increasingly commodified; static and contained, or abjected and off-limits, it is in this suspension of time where a doubleness lies (moving/ not moving), which can open up new tempos to disrupt the rhythms of smooth biopolitical control. Contemporary gestures of utopia must operate, not displaced in time, but from within the very temporal structures which disavow their logic.

Relational Desire: the 'Real' Symptom. A Lacanian Treatment on Spectatorship, Sotirios Bahtsetzis

*Hell-Golden Age. Keywords for Hell:
Boredom, Gambling, Pauperism.
A canon of this dialectic: Fashion.
The Golden Age as catastrophe.¹*

Hal Foster's celebrated dictum of the 'return of the real' – of art practice and theory that seeks to be grounded in actual bodies and social sites - has dominated the debate on contemporary curatorial practice since its first public articulation.² Post-avant-garde opposes Hegelian historicism (the notion of the linear and developing succession of 'historical epochs' towards a historical end of time) not by undoing the progressive 'culture of originality' (alias modernity) through critical opposition (in the way that the institutional critique of the Neo-Avant-garde has accomplished it), but through embracing and incorporating 'real' structures in art itself. Based on a retroactive model of art and theory, which both re-emerge again and again in an uncanny perception of historicity, the post-modern problem of artistic production as ironic pastiche or incongruous palimpsest turns out to be only an interplay with historical value between Neo- and Post-Avant-garde but not an instrument of contemporary art practice. Old-fashioned critique of the art context becomes obsolete, bearing a kind of sentimental "post-post mannerism", because new artworks, which operate for example as 'real' service provisions or ethnographic research laboratories of identity and reinvention of social and local personas, came to replace it. (Outside the 'white cube' one should have to face the wide colourless space and inhabit it!) Meanwhile, curatorial practices, which concentrate on the dogma of 'relational aesthetics', have to reassure the audience, that they are not be treated as enthusiastic or offended however always patient apprentices, but apparently as engaged 'real' participators.

Foster's formulation of repetition of ideas and practices, which take place through a complex relation of anticipation and reconstruction, both related to the model of the uncanny recognition, do though suggest a notion of historiography as a Derridian 'hauntology' "they are always there, spectres, even if they do not exist, even if they are no longer, even if they are not yet."³ Derrida's scepticism in *Spectres* deconstructed not only the concept of 'the end of history' as an ideological confidence trick of neo-conservative marketing, but also the belief in reality itself as a kind of appropriated historical amnesia, that drifts into post-modern nostalgias, which express themselves as ideological anagrams or apocalyptic 'end-isms'. Post-modern repetition should not be conceived as being superseded by the logic of nostalgia, concerned with the fascination of the ethereal image of the past, but in terms of Benjamin's ahistorical stasis, whereas History is always an appropriated 'Now'. Benjamin's dialectical images, which are conceived as the only valid reading of history, reverse the connection between past and present. Instead of viewing the present as a continuation or even a paraphrase of what came before it, dialectical images explore the deteriorated conditions in which we now find the past, focusing on their current state as a source of meaning.

There is a parallel between Benjamin's understanding of history as an entity between materialisation and its reciprocal rewriting, Derridian historiography conceived as 'hauntology' and the notion of Lacanian analysis, which as signifying frame produces truth retroactively. Analysis is thus conceived as symbolisation, a symbolic integration of meaningless imaginary traces, whereby their meaning is not discovered, retrieved from a hidden past, but constructed. Those traces suggest the Lacanian formulation of the symptom, in which the repressed content paradoxically is returning from the future and not from the past. The

¹ Walter Benjamin 1935 expose of "*The Arcades Project*", note no. 7.

² Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real*, Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1996.

³ Jacques Derrida, *Spectres of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf, New York and London: Routledge, 1994, p.176.

symptom is then “the traumatic point, which is always missed but none the less always returns, although we try – through a set of different strategies – to neutralize it, to integrate it into the symbolic order”⁴ If the symptom is the continuous affirmation of this return, it conceals the Lacanian ‘Real’, “the unhistorical traumatic kernel which returns as the Same through all historical epochs”⁵ That paradox entity, which doesn’t really exist, although it can produce a series of effects in the symbolic reality of subjects, has an existence exactly because it is unmentionable, because it resists symbolisation.

However the radical ontological formulation of the symptom as ‘real’ (expressed in the Lacanian neologism of ‘sinthome’) suggests literally, that the symptom is the only substance of the individual, the only positive support of its being, that gives consistency to the subject. In the ultimate recognition of the ‘real’ of the symptom as the only ontological support of our being, in accepting its ‘pathological particularity’ and ultimately in enjoying our symptom, we acknowledge however the significance of the discursive existence of the ‘Real’ per se. The symptom exists only because it can never be included in the circuit of the discourse, because it is a material leftover, which suggests the materialization of the terrifying, impossible jouissance.

Reading Foster’s ‘return of the real’ in Lacanian terms and accepting it as symptomatic for new emerging relational strategies, which opposes historicism in a non-nostalgic, or apocalyptic, version of the post-modern, implies to reconsider the artistic perception of reality, in terms of an objective phenomenon, and analyse the contemporary ‘updating’ of curatorial and artistic practice in context of the Lacanian traumatic jouissance.⁶ The curatorial practice as laboratory (Hans Ulrich Olbrist) and artistic production as something between service provision and an example of social activism, without any spectacular, theoretical supporting framework (Rikrit Tiravanija) introduces new types of cultural transaction, which have a refreshing scent of aphrodisiac optimism. The new concept of art as relational aesthetics (“art that takes as its theoretical horizon the realm of human interactions and its social context, rather than the assertion of an independent and private, symbolic space”⁷) readdresses the modernist concept of social reality as a given, introducing however strategies of intervention in Deleuzian minor perspective. Artists make artworks in form of temporal connections and meetings creating circumstances for convivial encounters in user-friendly areas, which contain a certain degree of randomness, avoiding in this way the teleological and pedagogical zeal of ‘social sculpturing’. Moreover they propose artworks as objects producing sociability in forms of collaborations and contracts (Maria Eichhorn) or as more or less parody oriented ‘businesses’ adopting the professional relation to clientele as social interaction. They shift, redefine, eliminate and subvert the borders between artworks and their surrounding context, extending the possible places of a work ad infinitum. Certainly one should assume, that there is a difference between artistic interventions and installations of the 1980s and 1990s, which mainly propose spatial narratives, scenarios to be mentally enacted, and engage therefore the audience by implementing the expansion of the space of art as fantasy. Relational artworks operate in already existing, real conditions and frameworks, they readdress the concept of participation as task to be performed not in representational but in psychological and social space. Those dynamic ‘formations’ of inter-subjectivity, which deliberately ignore the question of original ‘formal effectiveness’ are in the interpretation of Nicolas Bourriaud the quintessence of artistic practice today. In a peculiar Deleuzian folding, relational aesthetics readdress the fundamental modernist utopia of merging art and life.

The modernist utopian longing for a total transformation of reality through merging art and life, establishes the eternal jouissance of the modern philosopher and his counterpart of the pictor doctus. Theodor Adorno’s response to the quest of utopian vision during a 1964 discussion with Ernst Bloch, entitled “Something’s Missing” was, “that the fulfilment of utopia consists

⁴ Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, London: Verso, 1989, p. 70.

⁵ Slavoj Žižek, *Enjoy Your Symptom, Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and out*, New York; London: Routledge, 1992, p. 81.

⁶ Lacanian jouissance suggests an access to knowledge, which is paid with the loss of enjoyment: jouissance = enjoyment-in-sense.

⁷ Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, Dijon: Les presses du reel, 2002 (original 1998) p. 14.

largely only in a repetition of the continually same 'today'.⁸ In Lacanian terms this apparently pessimistic philosophical insight is an optimistic acceptance of the ontological status of the human condition in its modern formulation. Even the title of the discussion "something's missing" paraphrases the eternal philosophical question of "why is there something instead of nothing?" suggesting that this "missing something" is in a way the materialisation of the Lacanian symptom. The 'return of the real', interpreted as a Lacanian 'real' symptom, is then an evocation of reality, a return back to the objective world, as an existing phenomenon, in order to ensure the existence of the 'Real' itself. Embracing given social essentials, incorporating existing economic structures into the artwork, while readdressing psychological needs, not through grand narratives but in a small scale format, does not suggest that reality is accepted and transformed, but implies an enjoyment of an impossible utopia, a 'return of the real.' Lacan's paradoxical gesture of reducing lack through its affirmation of itself can be thus reformulated in the context of relational aesthetics as a realistic materialization of the utopian Golden Age. "If the Real is the impossible, it is precisely this impossibility which is to be grasped through its effects."⁹

Real creative 'madness', addressed both to artists and 'real' participators, assures a minimum of consistency to the human being-in-the-world. No nihilistic resentment is necessary if the day begins again and again as continuation of a long and repressed desire; if we are able to acknowledge an empty universe without meaning or metaphysical guarantee (Nietzsche's concept of eternal return) and still affirm such a picture.

⁸ "Something's Missing: A Discussion between Ernst Bloch and Theodor W. Adorno on the Contradictions of Utopian Longing", in: Ernst Bloch, *The Utopian Function of Art and Literature: Selected Essays*, trans. Jack Zipes and Frank Mecklenburg, Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1996, p.2.

⁹ Zizek (1989) *ibid.* p. 163

Account of the FeedBack Project: A Short History of FeedBack, Nayia Yiakoumaki,

FeedBack 0, the pilot project, took place at the Whitechapel during Cristina Iglesias exhibition, 21 March - 18 May 2003, and was aiming to generate discussions on issues of concern and to infiltrate ideas, pre-conceptions and misconceptions on the current exhibition and the arts, into the gallery. FeedBack 1 took place during the Short History of Performance - Part II.

Feedback 0 was set up as follows:

The organizers of the project proposed an agenda of curatorial topics concerning issues that, explicitly or implicitly related to the exhibition and then we would invite people to respond to the proposed debates. This invitation was addressed to a varied group, constituted of gallery visitors, and many others with professional or non professional interest in art. Thinking on how to achieve greatest dissemination of the debates we felt that appropriate formats for FeedBack were emails, a website and flyers. The economy and flexibility that they offered were appropriate to the project. Through the Whitechapel's website we fortnightly publicised this communication with the audience, the responses we had and we envisaged this virtual space as another parallel space for communication. Part of the work that we had to do as curators was to gather and organize the material we received in relevant thematics.

For the *Cristina Iglesias* exhibition we proposed two debates. The one debate was relevant to the *process* of exhibition making and the dynamic links that traverse the relationship between the *artist*, the *curator*, the *audience* and the stages of the *real*, the *imaginary* and the *symbolic*, whilst the other debate was relevant to the consideration of the *space* where exhibitions take place, as a reflective space of the polarisation between the institutional and the non-institutional. In this case the disused shop where *Behuliphruen*, one of Iglesias' works, was installed.

FeedBack 0 concluded with a presentation and open discussion which took place the last weekend of the exhibition where visitors and members of the audience were present.

Feedback 1 was set up as follows:

It took place during the Short History of Performance - Part II which investigated the lecture format used as artists' method to question ideas of authority and truth.

Flyers were displayed in various places in the gallery and also given to visitors as they collected their tickets for entry. Responses were received by returning the flyer to the Information Desk by hand or post.

FeedBack 1 invited the visitors to comment on one or more of the following debates, taking as impetus the Short History of Performance Part II:

*What is the relationship of the artist and authority?
How do you see the role of the artist as conveyer of truth?
What do you think about the re-staging of performances?*

In the meantime an open call for contributions for the publication FeedBack 0-1 was sent by email and was publicised on the internet. The responses we had from FeedBack 0 and FeedBack 1 and the contributions to the open call for texts were the main material for this publication.

Currently we are thinking and researching the possibility of FeedBack taking place simultaneously in a number of public galleries thus becoming a networking body for art audiences in the UK and abroad creating the opportunity for simultaneous response and feedback on exhibitions and curatorial concerns internationally.

Response to FeedBack0, Ruxandra Balaci

Space

Conceptually they influence one the other as emphasizing institutionalization and des-institutionalization of art; the fuzzy borders, the in between; speaking again on cutting edges of nowadays art.

Both a shop and an art gallery can re-create conceptually the space through artistic intervention. Artistic intervention unifies different categories of spaces. The installed "abstract garden" in a shop is re-proposing the shop as illusory gallery, proving once more the nomadism of art's status and art interventions/art concepts, also.

Expanded sculpture/installation/concept scenography (conceptualizing scenography or scenographising the concept) pervade galleries and shops, homes and streets, transforming ordinary spaces, shifting from perception to illusion. From illusion to immersion. A vision of space. Seemingly palpable passages manipulating perception and thoughts, recreating mysteriously spaces. Involving sensations of body, minds and souls.

In Christina Iglesias' work talking shadows are silencing the spatial fragments building up a spatial-tactile/ loudly unsounded experience. A pervading everywhere in nowhere, invested with the sound of silence. A silent non-space in the space. Experimenting with light and mass, the artist turns luminescence into dark, proposing a scintagram of space. And the important is thing is to be in that space built up by the artist finally, no matter in what place. More than an ambiantal proposal it is important that the relation between inner/indoor space and outer/landscape symbol submitted to the pervading conceptualisation of space. Conceptualized but also still highly aestheticised, experimenting on inducing feelings. Finally reducing Space to an abstract intuition.

Process

Artists/curators/audience (some of it at least) = thinkers, who know that everything can be turned into art. After Beuys' experimental art and institutionalized culture = inextricably linked. Producing dissolution of terms and categories and emphasizing process.

Curator=hybrid between the artist and the audience. Being for the artist a part of the audience and for the audience a part of the artistic process. He doesn't translate (as the critic use to do the art work and the artists' thoughts for the audience) but "performs" a part of creation both for the artist and the audience. Curating seems to be a part of creating. Curator = "morphing" the artist and "morphing" the audience (to a certain degree). A key (fluid) item in the becoming of art.

In the artistic process, the symbolic, the imaginary and the real are seemingly interchangeable. Imaginary is interceding for the real to reach the symbolic. Or the symbolic is a key to access, from the real, the imaginary (which could be, according to Plato, another level, superior, of the real). Art suffuses the 3 levels: real /imaginary/symbolic. To be in this interwoven "thing" is to be in the art process. Nowadays art process could be all about hybrids, interwoven links (network), flux of information about the 3 levels.

Responses to Feedback 0

“The purpose of the artist who creates visual art is to convey to the audience something personal - a picture of reality as it is or in a symbolic form. For doing so, above any technical ability, it is the artist’s imagination upon which will depend the originality and beauty of the work and which will engage the attention of the audience, produce the intended, desirable emotional impact and impart the message the artist wants to externalise and transfer. With art at present increasingly penetrating the environment and the way we live, one sees the two dimensional painting mixing with the three dimensional sculpture, the fourth dimension of time being added with movement and performance, and that complimented by sound, touch, and, eventually, by smell and taste. Art increasingly engages each one of the senses, absorbing the viewer within its space, and converting him eventually into part of the exhibit in a way that work of art and audience interacting with each other become one integral, architectural piece.

For this reason the way of presenting visual art is perhaps as important as creating it and for this the part played by the curator is essential. Although when presenting the artistic work there are universal principles to be obeyed resulting from years of collective experience, the outcome will finally depend upon the curator’s intimate interaction with the work, his personal understanding of the message it intends to convey, upon the audience to which it will be addressed and, above all, upon the curator’s imagination which will enhance the interest and beauty of the piece. All this, however, is a strictly personal matter and can have as many expressions as there are individuals on earth.

Christina Iglesias’ exhibition at the Whitechapel exemplifies the above especially as it extends into the nearby shop where with Behuliphruen one can compare the effects created by specific ‘spaces’. It is in the small shop that I felt engulfed by whatever was Iglesias’ initial intention-personal memories and emotions, society, politics, history, philosophy or metaphysics and captive within the restricted environment of her work, I was forced to plunge into my own journey of thoughts.

And

Following the meeting on Saturday I would like to let you have some further ideas that came to my mind: The ‘feedback project’ could be enhanced, I think, if, together with all other questions, one could ask what was the effect of the exhibition-either as a whole or particular aspects of it, upon the viewers. Perhaps the following are areas to be explored:

a: Was the ‘spirit’ of the artist easily understood? That would create an additional interest on the way the layperson perceives art as expressed by the artist-particularly important in the case of conceptual art.

b: Unconnected with understanding the work or not, were there any feelings provoked by the exhibits-pleasure, joy, love, hatred, sadness, calm, restlessness, anger, in short, was there any form of emotional reaction?

c: Was there any intellectual impact upon the viewer, i.e. did the audience leave having gained something new-artistic, cultural, social, political, philosophical, metaphysical or else?

Presenting such questions in a systematic way one could gain invaluable information on ‘semantics’, emotions and the ‘educational’ aspects of an exhibition. An analysis of them followed by a ‘feedback on the feedback’ could benefit both the viewer and the curator since new ways of seeing and thinking could emerge in order that the exhibitions, in addition to whatever else they are meant to be, could, as well, act as a mission for the future!

I did enjoy our talk on Saturday and many thanks to you all for organising it.”

Kyvelie Papas, by e-mail

"What I really liked about this artist's work was its tactile nature and its sensuality - the smell of the raffia recalling 1970s furnishings, the screens that both created interior spaces to explore and shut the audience out. The audience is left to (in some cases literally) try and read the texts - once again the raffia was very effective here as you strained your head upwards to try and make out words. Is there a sense or isn't there? I suppose the relationship here is not so much that between the 'symbolic' meanings evoked and the physical real(ity) of the work but between the intense personal nature of the memory (for the audience) spaces evoke and the dialogue between that and the (necessarily?) more universal project of Art."

Dr. Fiona Hardyside, by e-mail 25/3/2003

"..I came and saw the show and recoiled from walking under the huge block of concrete but eventually was brave enough to stand in the middle waiting to be crushed... it has been real, imaginary and symbolic..."

Bill Allen, by e-mail 25/3/2003

"The familiar materials Christina Iglesias is using in her work make it easier for the audience to enter her imaginary world, created through symbolic references and real three dimensional spaces. Once entered into that world the viewer can narrate stories but also project his/her own memories and feelings onto it."

Emi Avora , by e-mail 3/05/03

Afterword, Jacqueline Cooke

Initially we received more requests for our observations as curators rather than Feedback. Most of these were from art institutions, offering us opportunities to promote ourselves as curators, which was not what we intended the process to be about. Towards the end of the exhibition period we began to receive more messages as e-mails and using the flyers that we had left in the gallery, most of these were responses to the exhibition and to a lesser extent to the issues we had proposed. The idea of 'Space' was more often discussed than 'process', as the responses considered the spaces that artists create, as rooms that created subjective responses in the viewers, in different ways. However it was clear, particularly in the discussion session that we held in the gallery that there was resistance to our theoretical suggestions, expressed as criticism of our attempt to control the terms of discussion, with most of those who responded to the debate at that time putting forward a preference to a personal, subjective response to the art. Our intention to put curating at the center of the debate was problematic in Feedback0, as the original curator was not present. The contributions to the open response invited as the project continued, which are published now, repose the question of curating in a wider field.

Most of our respondents were people with a specialised and specific involvement with art or curating. We were expecting more responses from visitors to the gallery. We did receive some communication on why people did not contribute, that they had not seen the exhibition and that visiting the gallery was seen as an essential part of taking part, that the website/e-mail and the physical space of the gallery were separated (it was not possible to e-mail from within the gallery, even though what we offered seemed to be the random communication of a chatroom), and an unwillingness to participate because to do so would support the power of the gallery, and uphold the galleries selection of artists to show, or a resistance to freely handing over the hard-won knowledge of the artist, their "cultural capital", to the institution, which would receive the credit.

Critical and Theoretical Observations, Elpida Karaba

The Platform

Looking back to Feedback it seems that it belongs to the kind of projects - which in the last years have become quite popular- projects which in a way create a kind of podium for people to talk about art. Small "Hyde Park corners", which some times successfully, lead to wider platforms and some times are purely utopian and are not leading anywhere. As mentioned in the discussion for Feedback0 a fragment of which is the following text- it is not possible to give answers to issues of authority, institutional art, participatory platforms and relations between artists, curators, audiences in one go. And it is exactly this impossibility to give firm answers which creates different art forms and expressions, different attitudes in the art world, new ideas. If we try to track down the history of different responses we will come across with anti-institutional critique, dematerialised art etc, but instead of trying to historicise on this, one could add and combine these different efforts to find out what comes out as a result, a little bit as a the game of the hidden image, where one should colour different bits to reveal the final image. Thus, as these very issues gradually became urgent, sometimes and somehow outshined issues such as the genius of the artist or the curator, aesthetic language etc., it seems that the very urgency of such issues tends to create a new form in art, the Platform, which sometimes takes the form of a discussion, some times the form of a small publication, some times the form of a workshop or a symposium, some times the form of participatory art projects and so on. Other times platforms take the place of artists' studios and become the set where art works are created, using participation, process and on going dialogue. The Platform most of the times does not seem to be interested in being focused as its interest is to be, open, eclectic and hybrid and many times work as a rhizomatic network. Platform is, therefore, a presence to be used and gradually to be replaced.

FeedBack 0

From the discussion on 17/5/03 @ the Whitechapel

When we were thinking about this project we, following a known path, thought to open up the dialogue by creating a loose thematic as a base for this communication. As we were discussing other issues in relation to the project (which, shortly my colleagues mentioned), issues of distribution, dialogue, opening up etc we didn't think at the time that even setting up thematics is a paternalistic approach to the project because setting up thematics maintains something of the authority of the author, curator in this instance.

I have started with this observation because in a broader way this project gave us the opportunity for one more time to *think around issues* that seem to be crucial for the curatorial practice. Thus, (emphasizing the thinking process) the results of this project are formulated more in questions rather than in firm and concrete answers:

The basic idea of this project is informed by ideas of *equation between curator- artist institution and audience*. This discussion which is around for some time now, mostly derived from practices which started as an institutional critique emphasizes the fact that in such equation is more likely to succeed plurality, to have a richer, more diverse and challenging result (a richer field for artists, curators, institutions, non-institutions, audiences). This project asks in a quite pragmatic way if this idea of equation is after all possible or is it another utopia: is it possible for projects like this to overpass the authoritarian, guided and paternalistic attitude of the author? Is it possible for these projects to involve a really diverse and challenging audience which will include both people that they are, for various reasons, familiar with these issues and people that they are less familiar, in order to really have the broad and diverse result we imagine (to use a term we have used when we were setting up our thematics, as I feel that it is in the space between the real and the imagined that projects like that are put together).

At this point I would like to try to give a more concrete identity to FeedBack rather than calling it "a project like this". Could we place FeedBack into the field of *process based projects*? In our minds and through the way we were trying to built it, we put a dot but we didn't know what the line would be, we didn't have (or we were trying to avoid) any preconceptions on the type of reactions this would create and in which direction this would go. Using the internet as tool (and the help of IT professionals) and the light heartness this sometimes creates (the feeling that you can do almost anything with it and most importantly very economically-if this is true is a different story) we started a "process of discourse".

But of course the idea of discourse as it is attractive and holds up possibilities at the same time made us think of how something like that could be read as a "*promotional*" platform on the part of the institution or a self promotion tool on the part of the curator? He can make contacts, put his texts into context, and invite his associates to participate. This brings to my mind an image, a work by Coleman (Les, 1975), *Air and Water*: two glasses and a ball, when the glass is empty (air) the ball is in the bottom of the glass, when the glass is full with water the ball is in the surface (looking at that image it feels that when the ball is on the surface one can easier throw it and make it roll), in that sense still with this "process of discourse" one can choose: one can read the responses of the participants and ignore the texts of the curators, read both or read none and just participate. In other words questions of self- promotion, authority, but most importantly of possibilities and opportunities are open, and some to the surface. Hoping to roll?

Moreover, the image of "in and out" (of the glass) in relation to the "process of discourse" brings forward another issue: *in or out of the institution*? As mentioned before from Jaqueline some people are even reluctant to give their "cultural capital" to the institution as this results to a "framed capital"? If this is true we can choose to work outside the institution but then it is likely for the "process of the discourse" to create another institution and then what kind of institution that would be?

At this point we couldn't and we wouldn't really want to answer these questions. We would prefer to believe that this process based project can help to open up the field of networking to

add something to a re-evaluation and re-discussion (in as much as possible a free style) of the powers enforced from all members involved, of the identity of the process based projects, of the character of institutions and above all of the utopia or reality of a discourse-process based situation.



From the open discussion on Saturday 17 May 2003



At the end of the discussion, Saturday 17 May 2003

Biographies

Sotirios Bahtsetzis received his M.A. in Art History and Comparative Philology from the Technical University of Berlin in 1998. He teaches history of culture, visual culture and academic writing for the BA Fine Art at the London Metropolitan University. His PhD thesis in History of Modern and Contemporary Art, will be published summer 2004 in Germany. He was research coordinator of the 2003 volume *Installation Art in the New Millennium* (Thames & Hudson). He also works as an independent curator. He has been the recipient of the German Academic Exchange Service scholarship and the Senate of Berlins' fellowship for postgraduate research.

Ruxandra Balaci is an art critic and curator, founder and former Head of the Department of Contemporary Art at the National Museum of Art in Bucharest, co-director of *Artelier* magazine, appointed Scientific Director of the recently founded Museum of Contemporary Art in Bucharest. Contributor to *Manifesta 2: Luxembourg*, *After the Wall* (Moderna Museet Stockholm, Berlin) *Traversées* (ARC de la Ville de Paris) catalogues, curator for *Bucharest nach89*, Ludwig Forum Aachen, commissioner of the Romanian pavilion at the 49 Biennale di Venezia., contributor to [www. Anthology-of-art.com](http://www.Anthology-of-art.com) (Univ of Karlsruhe/Univ.of Rennes), *Boundless Borders* (Belgrade, Sarajevo, Thessaloniki, Bucharest, Kassel), *In Den Schluchten des Balkans* (Fredericianum, Kassel) expert referent for MOMA NY's project *Primary Documents*. Articles and interviews in international magazines (*artpress-Paris*, *Journal de Geneve*, *Imago-Bratislava*, *European Photography-Gottingen* etc) and Romanian art magazines.

Gair Boase is a student of the Curating Contemporary Art MA, at Royal College of Art.

Jacqueline Cooke is Subject Librarian for Visual Arts at Goldsmiths College, University of London where she is also researching ephemera of contemporary art .

Charles Danby, MFA Slade School of Fine Art 2000-2002, Artist, Curator, Writer

Lillian M. Davies was born in Austin, Texas. Lillian earned her BA degree from Columbia, majoring in Art History and Religion. She has worked at the Austin Museum of Art, the Guggenheim Museum in New York, and the Gagosian Gallery in New York. Lillian is now in London, pursuing an MA degree on the Curating Contemporary Art course at the Royal College of Art.

Janna Graham is an educator, writer and cultural organizer. She works in the Education Department at the Art Gallery of Ontario, creating collaborative projects in galleries and public spaces with community groups and artists. She was Interim Head of Education at Whitechapel Art Gallery from September - January, 2003 and is an associate editor at *Fuse Magazine*. Recent collaborations include: *Echoes and Transmissions*, workshops and a pirate radio station at the Morley Community School with artist Cheryl L'hirondelle and curator Candice Hopkins (Morley Reserve, March 2004,), *An Open Interview with the City of Leeds...And Lunch with Susan Kelly and 16 Beaver* (Leeds, July, 2003) and *Audge's Place*, a collaborative performance with De-Ba-Jeh-Mu-Jig Theatre Group and people in the communities of Toronto and Wikwemikong (Art Gallery of Ontario, March, 2003).

Elpida Karaba studied Philosophy at the University of Athens, Department of Philosophy. She did her Master degree at City University, London in Arts Theory and Criticism. She continued her studies at Goldsmiths College at the Department of Creative Curating (postgraduate research). She is an independent curator and teaches Art Theory in Vakalo School, Athens. More recent exhibitions and projects: *Synergia*, Contemporary Art Centre, Larissa, 2004, *A-topia*, Goethe Institute, Athens, 2003, *cHarta*, an archive of Balkan young artists, 2001-, *Established*, Brighton Media Centre, Brighton, 2001

Julienne Lorz. Originally from Germany, Julienne initially studied contemporary dance at the Laban Centre for Movement and Dance in London, where she gained her first degree. Ten

years later she decided to pursue her interest in contemporary art, which led to a MA in the subject at Sotheby's Institute followed immediately by a 2-year MA in Curating Contemporary Art at the Royal College of Art, London. Julienne is currently in her final year at the RCA, where she, together with 11 other students on the course, recently curated 'This much is certain', a group show exhibiting 15 British and international artists.

Alicia Miller is Head of Education and Public Events at the Whitechapel gallery, London. Previously she was associate director of San Francisco Camerawork. Her writings have appeared in a range of publications including Art Monthly, Art Review, Flash Art, Sculpture, Afterimage and Source.

Konstantinos Stafylakis Lives in Athens, Greece. He is an artist and theorist, and graduated from the Athens School of Fine Arts in 2001 (section of painting). He holds *MA in Modern Art and Theory*, Graduate School, History and Theory of Art Department, University of Essex. *MA in Continental Philosophy*, Graduate School, Philosophy Department, University of Essex. He is currently researching towards a Phd at the Department of Political Sciences and History of Panteion University of Political and Social Sciences (Athens, Greece). The title of his research is *The New Ideological and Political Platform in Art after Documenta 11 (Kassel 2002). From Late Modernism to the Limits of Disenchantment*.

Zuky Serper completed his MA in Fine Art at Chelsea in 2000, whilst working part-time as a gallery technician at the Whitechapel Gallery. The techniques used to build stud walls for art exhibitions have been incorporated into Zuky Serper's project of Revolution Machines; co-operations which bring low-tech architectural interventions to various sites. Currently, Revolution Machines has evolved to a working-group for projects in London and Berlin. Other activities include: art education, seminars, writing and translation. Zuky Serper is based in London.

Kostis Velonis is an artist. He studied Visual Arts at the Paris VIII University, (Maitrise, D.E.A) and Cultural Studies (MRes) at the London Consortium (Birkbeck College, ICA, AA). He is co-editor of the www.art-omma.org online cultural magazine. This year he received a Grant from Fulbright Foundation, New York.

Andy Weir is an artist based in London. He graduated from Goldsmiths College 'Art History / Visual Cultures' MA in 2003 and has since been working mainly in the collaborative arts practice 'allsopp&weir'.

Nayia Yiakoumaki is an artist and curator and is based in London. She is currently researching at Goldsmiths College, Department of Visual Arts, Creative Curating. She has been teaching since 1991 in art colleges and has realised many projects as an artist and curator in the UK and abroad. Recent projects include *Secrets* at Museu da Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro and *A-Topia* at the Goethe Institute, Athens.

FeedBack Information

FeedBack 0 and FeedBack 1 are archived at <http://www.whitechapel.org/feedback/>

E-mail feedback@whitechapel.org

Continuing FeedBack is available at OpenMute <http://feedback.omweb.org>

where you can take part in debates.

A case study on FeedBack was published in GAS on August 2003. To read it log on and register at www.fuel4arts.com and search for FeedBack Case Study.

FeedBack 0 and FeedBack 1 was curated by Nayia Yiakoumaki, Elpida Karaba, researchers in Visual Arts, Creative Curating at Goldsmiths College with Jacqueline Cooke, Subject Librarian for Visual Arts at Goldsmiths College Library as archivist of the project. The curators have asserted their moral rights.

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Colophon

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