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Embedded Artists

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Frédéric Martel, Hartmut Wickert (Eds.)

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Artists Outside the Art World: The World in Quest of Artists

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The following Publication is a documentation of the "Embedded Artists Conference", which took place at the Zurich University of the Arts in November 2018.

The aim of the conference was to answer questions related to the proposition that artistic work increasingly focuses on fields that lie beyond the traditional fields of artistic activity. The search for definitions for this shift in focus, which sees artists as producers of the new, as leading figures within social processes and as co-creators of an expanded concept of art, shaped the composition of the participants, the questions of the contributions, as well as the perspective on a possible implementation of the results of this discourse in the programs of arts universities.

The conference focused on the following questions:

The arts and every form of artistic practice as artwork or production methodology are sources for the development of new models of (cultural) leadership. How can a conceptual field be defined that is called "management through art" or "artistic management"?

Which artistic working methods can be transferred to the field of management?

Looking at artists who work in non-artistic terrains and non-artists who work in artistic domains: Which tools, qualities, competences and skills of artists find application outside the artistically occupied domains?

What are the connections between artists and society?

Which domains could use artistic methods to manage their problems and topics?

By pursuing these questions, we try to work towards the development of a new, sustainable training idea for artists, as well as to question, deconstruct and expand the discussion about the role model "artist".

Table of Contents

Embedded Artist: Opting In

BACKGROUND

The Embedded Artist Project *(EAP)* ran as a formal program with the City of Chicago from 2008–2012. The program was based on the experiments from an informal engagement between myself and the Cuyahoga County Planning office in Cleveland, Ohio from 2004–2006. Here a conversation about the contributions of artists to sustainability planning for the region ran parallel to the work on a new trail and greenway project (1) under discussion. These linked processes produced documents and strategies that were later deployed in the Chicago program. Chief among them was the insight that the intellectual and creative "free agency" of artists is key to their ability to contribute to "possibility". Their varied research and working methods can and must be allowed to operate within and alongside the highly structured multidisciplinary and consultative processes typical in public planning. A "knowledge claim" document entitled *What do Artists Know?* (2) (SEE PAGE 15 OF THIS PUBLICATION) *(2006)* emerged organically from this conversation and has proven useful as both method and message for the kinds of *(tacit)* skills artists deploy with engaged and embedded practices.

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SUSTAINABILTY + AGENCY

This experimental program enacts the speculative proposition that un-sustainability is at core a cultural problem, and that it can be located in specialization—that the systemic disconnects are created by our current disciplinary model and habits of mind *(as developed for example by Fry from Bourdieu).* The aim of the EAP is to test this strategy, test the "cultural hypothesis" that artists can contribute to a more sustainable world by joining the work of multidisciplinary teams and (re)integrating cultural perspectives into the formulation of civic projects. Can art/artists contribute to a culturally informed *trans-disciplinary* method as other disciplines are challenged themselves to do? This experiment can also be understood as a performing of E. O. Wilson's *Consilience:* the jumping together of knowledge, a critique of practice based in enlightenment knowledge models.

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Frances Whitehead, *The 606*, Chicago, 2015. Opening
day bike parade at the west end Observatory. Created from
trail construction soils, the spiraling seasonal earthwork
re-grounds audiences in their geographic and cultural reality.
Photo: The Trust for Public Land.

Although we made a rhetorical point of claiming knowledge not
just creativity, we entered the engagement understanding that we
would most certainly learn from each other, and expected a reci-
procity that was for the most part openly met. The apparent
tradeoffs between artistic autonomy and increased agency did not
prove to be the critical dynamic. Reflecting the inherently collab-
orative formulation and execution of these ideas and programs, I
typically employ the pronoun "we" unless I am referring to a unique
individual experience.

OPTING IN: THE DIPLOMACY OF ART
In this trans-disciplinary framework there is no focus on artistic
autonomy—those opportunities continue to exist elsewhere. Nor
do we work solely within the symbolic economy of art practice.
Although Embedded Artist was not conceived primarily to chal-
lenge authorship or autonomy specifically, long-held conventions
are called into question nonetheless, along with ideas about art's
usefulness and uselessness, purpose and purposelessness. Here
1.1   there is a renegotiation between the symbolic and the practical, or
as Janeil Englestad frames it, to *Make Art with Purpose* or as Tania
Bruguera frames it, *Arte Util (useful art)*.

We are also not concerned about instrumentalization. Clearly the
urgency of climate change demands our participation, but this is not
the only factor. We have learned that in a good multi-disciplinary
collaboration, structured around shared interests, ethics, and goals,
one's voice is amplified not diminished. As an experiment in reci-
procity, we are there to be of service and thus are content to defer,
at least temporarily, the question of "art" which can limit the ability
to re-conceive possibilities. The idea is integration and multi-va-
lency, and the creation of new working models; not the maintaining
of borders or old modalities.

Conventional activist art strategies are therefore extended by this
"opting IN". Through this engagement we have learned to speak
the languages of other disciplines, both nomenclature and attitude,
reflecting multiple intents and values. Cultural geographer Mrill

Ingram has called this, the "diplomacy of art" (3), a symbolic hand-shake, reaching outside art practice towards the work of others, to become value-added. This diplomacy sometimes disrupts these practices by operating within their sphere differently. Some would claim this as an act of "generosity" (4), a joining in, dot connecting. This also disrupts "art".

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What do Artists Know?

Beyond a wide range of material practices, histories and techniques, concepts and theoretical frameworks, artists are trained to use a unique set of skills, process, and **methodologies**. *These include:*

- Synthesizing diverse facts, goals, and references – making connections and speaking many "languages". Artists are very "lateral" in their research and operations and have great intellectual and operational agility.

- Production of new knowledge as evidenced by the 100+ year history of innovation and originality as a *top criterion*

- Creative, in-process problem solving and ongoing processes, not all up-front creativity: responsivity.

- Artists compose *and* perform, initiate *and* carry-thru, design *and* execute. This creates a relatively tight "feedback loop" in their process.

- Pro-active not re-active practice: artists are trained to initiate, re-direct the brief, and consider their intentionality.

- Acute cognizance of individual responsibility for the meanings, ramifications and consequences of their work. (The down side of this is that artists are not always team-oriented or willing to compromise due to the high premium placed on individual responsibility and sole authorship.)

- Understanding of the language of cultural values and how they are embodied and represented – re-valuation and re-contextualization.

- Participation and maneuvering in non-compensation (social) economies, idea economies, and other intangible values (capital).

- Proficiency in evaluation and analysis along multiple-criteria -- qualitative lines, qualitative assessment. Many are skilled in pattern and system recognition, especially with asymmetrical data.

- Making explicit the implicit -- making visible the invisible.

- Artists do not think outside the box-- *there is no box.*

Frances Whitehead 2006 ©

Frances Whitehead, *What do Artists Know?* Knowledge claim document co-created with city planners, Cleveland, Ohio, 2004–2006.

Embedded Artist: Double Agent (Part 2)

EMBEDDED ARTIST + ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

The structure of how the "artist" enters the non-art/civic setting can vary a great deal. These different structures may reflect assumptions about "art" and "art-making" and reflect contested ideas about the role of the artist in society and "socially engaged art". These structures also reflect different ideas about what can be achieved by having an artist in government. Simply put, is the artist there to make "art"? Are they there to make "change"?

We might begin by recognizing that an "embedded" or "placed" artist differs from other kinds of city engagement strategies such as the Artist-in-Residence model, and the City Artist or Town Artist. Each type of engagement has art historical precedents including the work of the Artist Placement Group *(APG)*, David Harding, Glasgow Town Artist, and Mierle Ukeles as NYC Department of Sanitation Artist-in-Residence, where Ukeles is still active. These different approaches negotiate and model ideas about artistic integration and/or autonomy, and reflect different "theories of change".

In the Artist-in-Residence model, an artist might primarily reflect on the milieu around them but remain outside the principle tasks of the city workgroup, and instead maintain artistic autonomy to create artworks from, with, and about the city systems. Marcus Young's *Everyday Poems* for St. Paul, Minnesota may reflect this concept. In contrast, likened to the "embedded photographer" model of a journalist embedded in military units, the Embedded Artist is a conscious joining *(without becoming)*, demonstrating the role of public artist as a new kind of problem solver, or sometimes problem finder. The challenge of problem articulation and problem definition is a key challenge to sustainability planning and an area where artists can be quite adept due to their criticality and lateral thinking. Some cities are framing their artist engagements as City or Town Artist, which in some cases blends the two strategies, or perhaps leaves it to the artist to navigate and experiment. However, due perhaps to the complexity of the projects undertaken, we have found that without the support and buy-in at the Commissioner level, it is hard for city staff to prioritize these collaborations in relationship to their other duties and less can happen. At its most basic, Embedded Artists seek to take a seat at the collective table;

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to work upstream from the domain where most art projects operate and aim to impact the everyday work of the government and policy, even while "art" may *(or may not)* be made.

LIKELY PARTNERS + PLACEMENTS

Outside arts discourse it is crucial to recognize which city departments and individuals are receptive to engagements with artists, and *why*. Reaching into established networks can help identify imaginative partners willing to embrace these experiments, or whose departments face such challenges and such urgency that they are open to new ideas and unorthodox methods. We continue to find receptivity in departments of planning, environment, transportation, housing and technology; sometimes greater than the receptivity in offices of cultural affairs or among public art officials who are oftentimes locked into older modalities and highly prescriptive genre definitions. Those charged with civic innovation or those who face intractable social problems and are hungry for new ideas are often the best prospects, as was the case in Chicago when we began.

1.2 Some of your best partners may not be motivated by the same factors or find value in the same aspects as what brings artists forward. This has the potential to broaden the program and develop potentials that the initiators did not envision.

In addition to receptivity, matching the expertise and interests of the artist to the "placement" is also important. There will be a steep learning curve on both ends and having some shared background will allow for meaningful work. While we in the arts might choose to focus on what city workers will learn from artists, the reality is that we learn from each other, and therefore duration is also important. Our rule of thumb is that all placements should be for a minimum of two years, longer for big projects. It will be interesting to see what cities undertaking shorter engagements can make happen.

STRUCTURE: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

While Embedded Artist with the City of Chicago, I was placed first with Land Use Planning working on the 2040 Food Plan and subsequently with the Department of Environment working on brownfields. From the artist perspective, the first placement was less successful because the structure, process and outcome were predetermined and there was no opportunity for re-direction. In the second placement, a visionary commissioner structured the placement in a much more open-ended way. Teamed with the City's top brownfields expert, we were charged to consider a series of conditions and questions, after which we would collaboratively make a proposal directly to the Commissioner. In this case, we were able to bring new questions to the typical literature review, and propose a new culturally based soil remediation program. The multifunctional social and environmental program known as *Slow Cleanup* (1) was conceived and launched. Here both collaboration and free agency were encouraged, harnessing the lateral thinking of artists towards our collective goals. We were thus able to help shape a program that reflected our individual intentions. It was not exactly "artist led" it was more collaborative and shared.

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Over the three years of working in the Department of Environment we had to move from theory into practice, and the idea of sculpting the civic space became real *(civic art practice)*. I believe that many city workers learned things from working with artists but it is unclear how they understand these insights. Unfortunately there was no formal assessment done of the program. On our end, we learned that there are many constraints that dampen the energies of the even most creative staffers, and that there is a world of difference between career civil servants and elected officials and "politicians".

BOTH/AND ART: DOUBLE AGENCY

A corollary to the embedded artist is the concept of the "embedded artwork". Here we explore multi-valency of voice, expertise and "type", and the possibility that something can be understood as BOTH art AND also as something else *(remediation, community development, education, etc.)* The melding of cultural logics and

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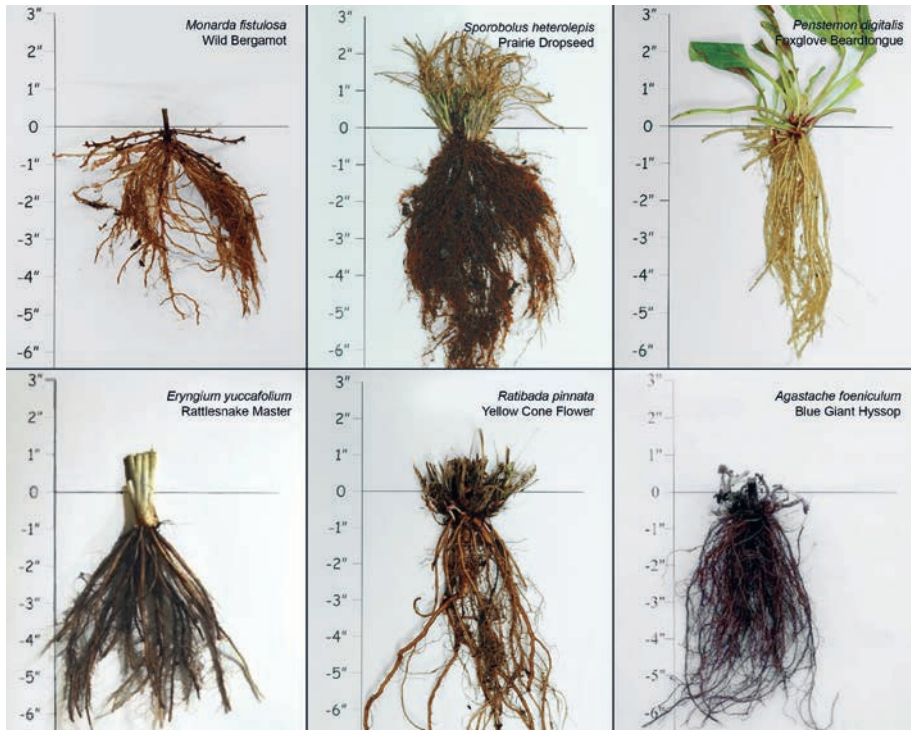Frances Whitehead, *SLOW Cleanup Program—Civic Experiments in Phytoremediation*, 2010–2012. Greencorp horticulture trainees installing large woody species at the Slow Cleanup field trials site. Photo: Frances Whitehead + City of Chicago.

Frances Whitehead, *Slow Cleanup—Community Lab Garden.* Field trials for petroleum remediation test species, 2012. Photo: Frances Whitehead + City of Chicago.

figurative thinking *(tropes)* into the multidisciplinary team model of civic projects produces what we have called elsewhere, the "tropo-logical transdisciplinary" (2).

So while we explicitly enacted a critical multi-valency, and openly sought free agency, we also understood that some of the transgres-sive and subversive strategies of artists had to remain unspoken or in some cases, be suspended in order to address urgency and coop-eration. In true trickster fashion, we recognize that our role is also intentionally disruptive, that we are present as change agents, for "redirective practice ", or as Sacha Kagan would say, to *"play on the rules rather than in the rules"*(3) or *"entrepreneurship in conventions"*.

But what of the rules of art? In what ways does Embedded Artist also re-direct conventional art practice? These BOTH/AND art pro-jects, which form the core of this *civic art practice* are not always legible to art worlds as art, and the status of the projects are often contested. Here the strategic knowledge *(metis)* of the artist turns on art itself. Using the double agency of this practice to redirect the "cultural quo", Kagan's *"double entrepreneurship in conventions"*, the embedded artist shuttles between worlds like a cross pollinator, border hopping, changing both sides in equal measure.

Beyond the "free agency" of arts thinking, beyond re-directive practice, disruption and change agency, the Embedded Artist is at core a double agent, working inside and outside conventions, inside and outside worlds, *a double change agent*.

Frances Whitehead, Root masses of native prairie forbs under investigation for petroleum remediation in the Slow Cleanup plant trials. Courtesy of Prairie Moon Nursery.

Embedded Artist as Epistemic Disobedience

From 2006 to 2016, I undertook a series of epistemologically driven practice experiments under the concept of Embedded Artist *(EA)*. These engagements are described in the previous texts, *Embedded Artist: Opting In* and *Embedded Artist: Double Agent* (1) *(2015)* and have been further theorized in other papers including one delivered at ZHdK in Fall 2018. These civic engagements were driven by environmental concerns and situated primarily in a North American post-industrial context, informed by a western knowledge model with its familiar disciplinary divisions. These post-enlightenment experiments were a response to these specializations, and the subsequent disconnects and systemic problems that have evolved under that episteme known collectively as "wicked problems" (2). They were experiments in "knowledge production"; in "knowing how to know" (3). These experiments also have implications for Wickert's thesis (4) regarding "artistic leadership". In the "professional" western context, it is imperative to conceptualize artistic practice as the enactment of meta-typologies of practice, and thus to consciously model new typologies for the future.

However, since writing the 2015 texts, I have been involved in two contexts that both extend and challenge these strategies. These new sites and communities include the highly disturbed urban landscape of Gary, Indiana, where I have worked since 2016 with a largely African American community on a civic fruit growing initiative, Fruit Futures Initiative Gary *(FFIG)*. More recently, I have been working within the semi-rural agricultural "hinterlands" *(Kei Uta)* of Kuku, Horowhenua, Aotearoa *(New Zealand)* where I have been "embedded" with an indigenous Maori community. Here I have been invited to work with a group of artists, designers and community members, the Kei Uta Collective, seeking to explore how the matauranga Maori (Maori knowledge or episteme) might link to other knowledge systems, in order to envision climate adaptation strategies for this longstanding, Maori coastal community (5).

These new situations have allowed and required me to see Embedded Artist in a broader way; a more geo-political proposition beyond working with municipalities and multi-disciplinary team-based civic projects. What is now clear is that the Embedded Artist is practicing what Walter Mignolo calls *Epistemic Disobedience* (6).

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EMBEDDED ARTIST UNEMBEDDED-
CO-CREATIVITY

As success with the Embedded Artist model grew, so did the reality that this is a professionalized model, a "top down" practice best suited to large-scale endeavors. In response to this condition, we moved our studio practice to the extreme post-industrial region of Gary, Indiana, just south of the Chicago metropolitan area to work in a different way.

Gary is dominated by steel production. Like all company towns, this unsustainable economy has faltered under globalization and automation, leaving behind: population loss, environmental devastation, rampant suburbanization, and institutionalized racism. Although we are in touch with people in city government—*what remains of it*, we are working most directly with a handful of long term Gary residents, "bottom up". This EA model replaces "expertise" with "co-creativity".

Lisa Grocott (7) has written about the importance of the transferability of knowledge, and what happens if we can transfer in a divergent and speculative manner rather than a convergent and directive manner. While Grocott's open-ended transferability creates greater uncertainty, it may also create "possibility" and agency. Thus, in Gary, we asked a new set of questions regarding knowledge: Could we transfer the knowledge already captured by previous EA placements? And could we transfer the "agency" held within that knowledge in order to build capacity in the community? This is the Embedded Artist *Un-embedded, a new kind of civic* engagement, deployed through divergence and uncertainty; "deep hanging out".

The Gary Projects *(FFIG)* also pose questions about time and scale which impede our understanding of other "natures", ongoing but invisible, and uncounted by the western mind. Recognizing the larger bioregional ecology, FFIG cultures a pan-animistic worldview, offers non-anthroponormative regional futures, de-growth and post-development possibilities, micro-industrialization, and (just) transition economics. FFIG and the liminal spaces of post-urban Gary are a monument to the failure of specialization, and em-

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body critiques of both western "rationality" and also capitalism; opening space for Afro-futurism, deep localism, poetry, participation, "tactical magic" and a "pluriverse" of wonder.

ARTIST EMBEDDED IN KAUPAPA MAORI
(OR NOT)

This critique of western rationality as part of the western episteme, links directly to the dynamic, bi-cultural context emerging in Aotearoa/New Zealand which is actively indigenizing *(de-colonizing)* art, research and the discussion about knowledge (8).

In our Spring (their summer) 2019, I was "embedded" at the Tukorehe Marae, a traditional spiritual and community center, in a cross-cultural *wananga*, an intensive forum and collaborative process based in Kaupapa Maori, a holistic Maori methodological approach to research. As part of the Deep South Science Challenge-Vision Matauranga Programme (9), the aim is to "ground science in culture, and to communicate complex knowledge and data through art and design strategies" (10). Key features of this approach include the use of *hikoi*, walking together on the land, as an embodied, kinesthetic form of learning that is simultaneously an act of political demonstration and solidarity. Daily *hui* meetings and active *korero* discussions complement the introduction to core, integrative, Maori concepts such as *whakapapa*—the genealogical linkage of people and their connections to all things.

The *tiro a-Maori ki tona ake ao or Te Ao Maori*, the Maori worldview, sees knowledge as shared, passed down, ancestral, accumulative; not "produced", not industrial or instrumental—it is a value proposition. Mignolo (11) refers to "knowledge making" rather than "knowledge production" to acknowledge the shared authorship and ancestral processes that inform indigenous "knowing".

Matauranga Maori, the Maori knowledge model is integrative, and like other indigenous perspectives, contrasts with the western view that dis-integrates the world into disconnected disciplines. Here nature and culture are not separated, and nature is also not

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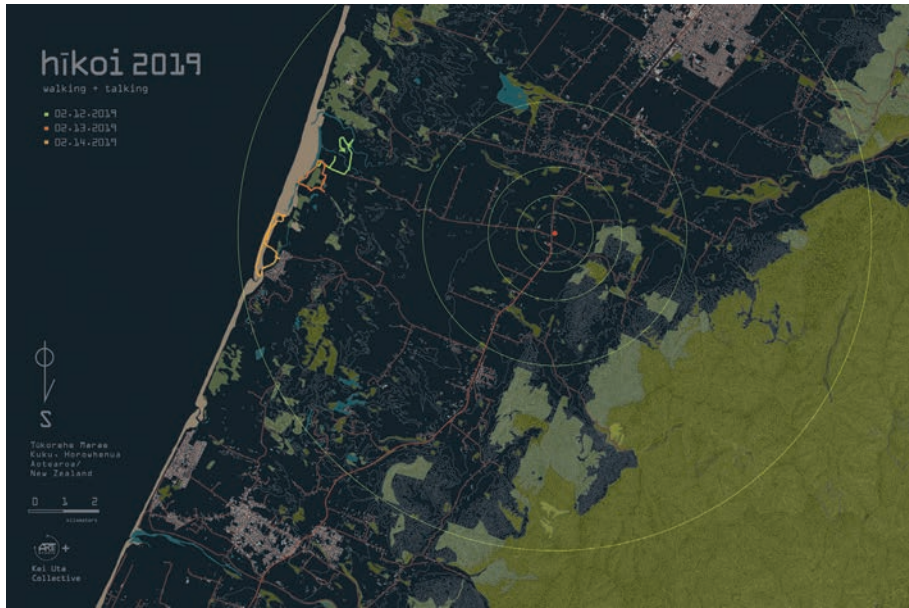
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Frances Whitehead, *Fruit Futures, Community Lab Orchard*, Gary, Indiana, 2017. Planting day with members of the Orchard Collaborative and community members. Video stills from documentary film: Rava Films for A Blade of Grass Foundation.

conceptualized as the place conveniently lacking humans, ready for western colonization. This worldview does not embrace the fashionable "anthropocene" concept, as this concept reflects the underlying western assumption which universalizes the "human" as responsible agent in the climate crisis, when it is, in reality, a product of western thought and action (12). It is also crucial to recognize that the Maori indigenous worldview suffered under colonialism, and is undergoing a process of reclamation and revitalization; a process that is simultaneously cultural, political and epistemological (13).

To be "embedded" within this bi-cultural knowledge experiment is to reflect on these underlying epistemological differences regarding knowledge making and its meanings, requiring the Embedded Artist to be an epistemic "diplomat" as Stengers would say, to "turn contradiction *(either/or)* … into a contrast (and, and)" (14).

EPISTEMIC DISOBEDIENCE
What began as a disruption of disciplinary boundaries within the western professional system of expertise has grown into a reassessment of the epistemology that underpins this entire system. More than mere institutional critique, or disruptive innovation, this view of knowledge and of belonging challenges not only the western system of thought but also its metaphysics. Can you be "embedded" within an integrative worldview where all elements are already linked; where there is no inside/outside? The inter-epistemic and inter-cultural initiative underway in Kuku, Horowhenua is a site for exploring these questions.

Interestingly, the view that nature and culture are not separate connects the Maori perspective to land use policy in Indiana. Inside post-urban Gary, vacant land, including fragments of native landscape, do not legally qualify as "natural". Through this inconsistent land use policy, "nature" and "ecology" are not available to Gary's largely African American residents, supporting racial inequality in the area.

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Frances Whitehead + Kei Uta Collective, *Hikoi 2019: Walking + Talking 1*, GPS track and GIS mapping—digital inkjet print on rag paper. Dimensions: 20in × 30in.

Embedded Artist started as a change strategy, motivated by seeking to operate somewhere else: upstream or downstream, or inside, outside or *be-side,* some perceived boundary or limitation so that we can know *(or understand)* something else. Clearly the making of knowledge and the contestation between different kinds of knowledge and different ways of knowing are not neutral propositions. Perhaps the Embedded Artist is useful for reconnecting *ecologies of practice* (15) and also as a method for broader geo-political aims; the decolonization of knowledge through *Epistemic Disobedience.*

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From correspondence with Dr. Huhana Smith, 5.30.2019. Smith notes: "We must recognise the radical disruptions that had to take place amongst Maori and wider society of Aoteaora New Zealand during the political rights era of the 1970s, the development of Treaty of Waitangi jurisprudence to today, and how Maori had to overcome deficits for iwi and hapu, and for them reclaim and revitalize their indigenous worldviews or ways of being for now, and into the future."

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Creative Transformation

How can artistic ways of thinking and procedures contribute to the development of new narratives for the Alpine region? And how can creative milieus emerge there that develop and test sustainable forms of life and work beyond clichéd ideas of what constitutes a life in the mountains?

In a nutshell, these are the questions that led to the founding of the creativealps_lab *(ca_l)* at the ZHdK. Aesthetic, cultural-analytical and creative-economic expertise was supposed to go uphill, Alpine expertise was supposed to descend into the valley—and thus allowing prototypical montane-urban complicity to emerge.

Yet the foremost challenge thereby was to productively deal with the clichés that shape the collective "image of the Alps". And it turned out that the central task for projects within the framework of the ca_l is to *pass through* Alpine clichés, to work on one's own view and, through aesthetic development methods and the project-based creation of montane-urban collaboration contexts, to test in practice which perspectives for the future development of the Alpine region arise from this.

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KEY IMAGE (1) WORLDS

One definition of the term "cliché" is "imitation without intrinsic value" or, more directly, "poor copy" (2). Actually, the word borrowed from French refers to the "printing block", i.e. that with which an unchanged reproduction can be produced. In the case of the Alpine clichés, these are mainly continuously reproduced images. The German term "Bild", however, does not allow a distinction to be made between "image" and "picture", which is essential for the following considerations. "Picture" connotes the picture that can be hung on the wall—"image", on the other hand, connotes the picture that is imagined, that is "in the head". If one applies this distinction to the relevant Alpine pictures and, to a lesser extent, to the corresponding narratives, then Alpine pictures mostly represent mountain romanticism, mountain drama, village and mountain pasture idyll, people in traditional costumes and traditions, etc., The repertoire of Alpine pictures is therefore relatively manageable and characterized by a core stock of "key images" (ABY WARBURG).

Alpine images, on the other hand, are fed by the highly complex web of imaginary stocks that have evolved over centuries of history and in whose cultural imprint we find ourselves, whether we like it or not: from the travellers who, since time immemorial, have had to cross the Alps on their way from north to south, or later the scientists who brought their sometimes flowery stories with them from the mountains (3) and thus shaped the collective horizons of imagination in the regions outside the Alps—since the late 18th century onwards, it was the Alpinists who created the hero myths of their present time and thus created the "Playground of Europe" (4), or the Romantic painters who contributed the "typical" points of view on, or rather the view of the mountains, their inhabitants and their ways of life. All this thus mobilized the still unbroken tourist interest in the Alpine region, starting with urban bourgeois circles that built their counter-worlds to bourgeois society in the Alps. Motifs such as "nature" versus "civilization", "tradition" versus "progress" or even "standardization" *(in the cities)* versus "heterogeneity" *(in the various different valley cultures)* function to this day; equally the motif of the mountain adventure, the idyll presented in romantically misty-eyed visual language, the social community that supposedly transcends borders *("above 1,000 metres one is on a first-name basis"; at the hut human equals human)* or the supposedly "authentic" life of the mountain people on the Alpine pasture, etc. The Alps formed and form a resonating space for a wide variety of investment in longing (5).

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SUBLIME FASCINATIONS
However, there are good reasons why it is precisely the Alps that are suitable as foils for such cultural "charges". It would therefore be premature to interpret the Alpine images solely as a contingent social construction to be called up via Alpine pictures. For the cliché dimension is subject to a more general depth dimension, which is connected with the specific cultural significance of mountains for people. If—as intended in ca_l—a substantial revision of the established Alpine clichés is to be promoted, at least a fundamental consideration of their reference horizon, both from a cultural historical and in the broader sense an anthropological perspective, is required.

First of all, the *geomorphology of mountains* should be mentioned: mountains materialize the infinite variety of possibilities, the field of tension between earth and sky, traction and spiritual flight, terror and fascination, beauty and the sublime courage and despair—to name but a few. In this respect, they function as "soul landscapes" and within our aesthetic experience make us aware of what it means to be human. It is not for nothing that our language is full of montane metaphors; we are at the peak of emotions and in the valley of tears, standing on the precipice or we are "over the mountain" (6).

Another dimension is the *vertical logic* of the mountain, which represents an axis from bottom to top. In many cultures the mountains are the intersection to the world of the gods. In the western tradition the spirit of the human—an upright being—strives upwards while the body remains bound to the ground. Walking on or climbing mountains can be seen as a continuation of the vertical axis in the direction of the free spirit. Everyone may have their associations here, but formulations such as "in the mountains the mind is free" can be interpreted in such a direction.

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Finally, the fact that mountains are obstacles is also essential. In the truest sense, they stand "in the way" of people on the move and must be overcome or "conquered" if they want to "cross the mountain". Hence, they also stand for a capacity to overcome resistance, but at the same time also as passages between "before" and "behind" or "here" and "there".

One could continue the excursion into this depth dimension of the human-mountain relationship in detail (7)—but here the relevant point is that the "allure" of the mountains, which essentially shape the Alps and thus ultimately also the durability of the Alpine images fed there, has its humus in an array of deep existential experiences. In other words, the Alpine mountains provide a panorama of the horizon of human sensitivities. The clichéd Alpine pictures "activate" this process and in a certain way control the thought-horizon of the Alpine images. But this also means that the view of the Alps remains overlain by clichés, drifting away before it can encounter a reality that in fact shapes life in the Alps today. In concrete terms,

thinking about the future of the Alpine region remains, so to speak, concealed by the images of the Alps, which are shaped by the pictures of the Alps.

CREATIVE TRANSFORMATIONS

This is the starting position with which the ca_l was confronted as a constructive cliché deconstruction project. This required finding strategies that could also change the Alpine images by transforming the Alpine pictures by means of aesthetic expertise and creative ways of thinking and proceeding, as they are used in the arts, creative disciplines and the practices of the creative economies—in short: the "creative milieus".

In the urban context, it has now almost become standard practice to use the so-called "creatives" to set in motion processes of change according to the following scheme: New, trendsetting and attractive milieus with corresponding informal atmospheres, who find cheap rents for apartments and project spaces as well as a certain socio-cultural creative leeway for unconventional life formats, are reviving problem districts. Through the re-use or conversion of existing infrastructures, the real estate portfolio is upgraded, new resident mixes are created, neighbourhoods are made more attractive etc. Certainly, in reality this does not run quite as smoothly and, above all, not according to a standardised plan; moreover, the downsides of these developments *(keyword "gentrification")* are sufficiently well known. Nevertheless, it is worth asking and subsequently testing whether such "upgrading" concepts are also possible in mountain areas. This is particularly the case where there is rural depopulation or where for large parts of the year the regions are virtually abandoned due to strong seasonal fluctuations in the tourism sector. Here, at least, the need for concepts for socio-cultural and economic dynamisation is at least as great as in urban contexts and in many respects existential. In concrete terms, the aim is to counteract the impending disappearance of entire communities in structurally weak mountain regions or the transformation of communities into temporary ambience service areas without real community life. Properties that have been abandoned or are vacant outside the

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Max Bachmeier, *Alpen-Wimmelbild.*

season could be used by creative milieus and thus en passant the preservation or restoration of basic infrastructure and supply structures could follow. The maintenance of local supply, medical care, kindergarten and school, bus connections, difficult to maintain access roads, etc. poses major problems for many communities, as the elimination of such structures sets off a downward spiral: the local elementary school is closed, the frequency of public transport is reduced, the small shop closes, the distance to opportunities for paid employment grows—these are no conditions that meet the needs of those social groups that are particularly relevant to the future—young families—and motivate them to stay, return or move in.

MILIEU TRANSIT

However, the work of ca_l showed that the urban configuration is not to be transplanted tel quel into corresponding regions. Rather, creative milieus must expose themselves to a complex process of creating collaborative contexts. This process must not only take note of local socio-cultural, infrastructural and, in a broader sense, atmospheric aspects, but actively mobilize them. First of all, the creation of a milieu requires attentive community building at eye level. In view of the coming together of different spaces of experience and horizons of expectation, openness for the other is just as necessary as curiosity and respect toward the states of charge of the respective stocks of knowledge, capabilities and the potential that lies with them. It is therefore not a question of development aid for the establishment of "trend villages". Rather, it is about working collaboratively with the expertise and motivations of different actors with curiosity, the joy of experimentation, the desire to do things, commitment and relevance orientation along the question of what makes life in the specific place a good life—and then to go about putting such ideas to the test (8).

This is where what was described above as a central task of the ca_l—cliché deconstruction—becomes concrete. "In the making", contexts of experience emerge that produce new Alpine pictures, which in turn stand for new Alpine images: in a concrete effort to work together beyond the dichotomies of the mountain

village-metropolis, tradition-modernity, brainwork-handicraft, etc. to re-appropriate the creative sovereignty over one's own living environment.

An example of such an approach is the Future Academy Rätikon, which was carried out as a pilot project in the small mountain village of Schuders in the summer of 2017: an experiment in which six young artists, architects and scientists worked together with the local population on future scenarios for three weeks. The guests lived with the locals and worked within their professional contexts for two days a week. Conversely, the locals were invited to participate in the work of the temporary cohabitants. The school building became a coworking space. One of the results of this academy was the project "Schuders macht Schule", which is currently being promoted by ca_l member Jelena Moser.

The aim here was not to start another "fly in-fly out" campaign, as is now being carried out in the Alpine region with many artist-in-residence programmes, festivals or summer schools used to develop destinations. Rather, the aim was to render the transformative potential of new creative milieus resulting from collaborative processes fruitful for regional development.

CREATIVE TRANSFORMATION

However, our experiences within ca_l have shown that this proposition is not immune to falling into cliché traps. "Urban" thinking is not the unique feature of urban space and the village character is not the unique feature of one particular mountain village. Depending on where you are—e.g. in intermediate city constellations, such as the Rhine Valley, developed tourist destinations such as St. Moritz, "Alpine metropolises" such as Innsbruck or out-migration areas such as northern Ticino. Even if it seems almost banal to have to differentiate here: to do this appropriately in appropriate projects, to recognize the local logics, to form fruitful montane-urban complicities to find the necessary degree of personal involvement, to fruitfully address mutual expectations and stereotypical prejudices, etc., in practice proves to be a highly demanding task.

At the same time, however, dealing with this task also represents an essential opportunity for the success of "creative transformations", since it is the actual supporting medium for their implementation. After all, verbalizing and bringing to the fore imaginary contexts, habitus forms, working methods, visions of the future, etc. is what constitutes the aforementioned emergence of new collaborative creative milieus. This cannot succeed without the explicit will of all parties, or their willingness for conflict, without the common conviction that what is does not have to be as it is, and without the shared courage and motivation to practice designing living space as "prototyping".

The aim of the ca_l was to explore the possible contribution of creative thinking and procedures from the arts, creative disciplines and concepts of entrepreneurship from the creative economies to overcome or leverage the challenges in question as well as to fathom opportunities and test them in a project-based way. Even if it was likely only a first step, it has been taken and hopefully woken interest and desire for more.

NOTES

1
The german Word "Schlagbild" (literally "key image") is used analogous to "keyword" by Aby Warburg.

2
Pfeifer et. al.: *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Deutschen*, München: dtv, 3rd Edition. 1997, p. 671.

3
cf. Reichler, Claude: *Entdeckung einer Landschaft: Reisende, Schriftsteller, Künstler und ihre Alpen*, Zurich: Rotpunktverlag 2005.

4
Stephen, Leslie: *The Playground of Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1894.

5
cf. Mathieu, Jon: *Die Alpen. Raum – Kultur – Geschichte*, Ditzingen: Reclam 2015.

6
German proverb, similar to "out of the woods" [TN], cf. regarding the topic of geology Böhme, Hartmut: Kräfte und Formen der Geo-Ästhetik, in: Ermacora, Beate et. al: *Die Kräfte hinter der Formen. Erdgeschichte, Materie, Prozess in der zeitgenössischen Kunst*, Cologne: Snoeck 2016, pp. 23–33.

7
cf. Böhme, Hartmut: "Berg" in: Konersmann, Ralf: *Wörterbuch der philosophischen Metaphern*, Darmstadt: WBG 2007, pp. 49ff.

8
cf. the project "creativeALPS", which was developed in "Phase XI" of the German Centre of Excellence for Cultural and Creative Economies and elaborated on this question: http://logbuch-phase-elf.kreativ-bund.de/logbuch/creativealpslab— retrieved 24.04.19.

"…the eye of the stranger": a practice led research perspective on the embedded artist

INTRODUCTION: THE EMBEDDED JOURNALIST AND THE EMBEDDED ARTIST

The term "embedded" refers to a state in which an object is deeply and firmly fixed within a surrounding mass (1). As a description of a role in culture and society it invokes the war correspondent who is attached to and follows a unit in battle. In this context the embedded journalist has a different function from the surrounding military, tasked to document and report, to capture and reveal, to make sense of the reality of a war and, in this way, to shape public understanding. The term has become transposed to the arts to describe an increased interest among contemporary artists to work directly in public life and in social change, building new forms of practice that are fit for this purpose. Like the embedded journalist, the artist undertakes a distinctive function in the contexts in which they work, bringing to bear a different set of skills and sensibilities, with "the eye of the stranger" (2) in the Harrisons' sense.

The meaning of "embedded" in both the context of war and journalism and art and social change has emerged relatively recently, indicating perhaps the chaotic times in which they are appearing. The "embed system" for war correspondents came out of the Bosnian conflict of the 1990s and was then developed as a formally instituted system for reporting war in Afghanistan and Iraq in the early 21st century (MCLAUGHLIN 2016, PP. 141–160). The embedded artist is an iteration of the social turn in the arts that emerged in the mid 20th century as a counterpoint to the increased commodification of the arts that had overwhelmed other ways of developing and valuing the function of art in society (BISHOP 2012, DOUGLAS 2018, KAPROW 1993).

Embedded artists share the desire with their counterparts in military contexts, to shape public understanding. However there are important differences. Firstly in relation to content artists are interested in conflict of a different kind from war correspondents, addressing instead environmental damage and governance or class, racial or gender inequalities, for example. Secondly while they may choose to simply tell a story about what they experience in the field, more often such artists seek to open up levels of ambiguity and contradiction that are not possible or even desirable in reporting a war. Thirdly many such artists intervene in and generate experience.

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These differences open up a deeper question of what we are looking for in the arts as a function of culture and society and how notions of the embedded artist might enrich this function and our expectations.

Mierle Laderman Ukeles (3), Helen Mayer and Newton Harrison (4), Hans Haacke (5), Frances Whitehead (6) and Suzanne Lacy (7) in the US and John Newling (8) and Lorraine Leeson (9) in the UK, Tania Brugera (10) in Cuba have all felt a strong need to break out of visual traditions, reinventing these by exploring new kinds of connections between art and life as the life around them undergoes profound change. These examples do not form a coherent, well-defined set of principles or way to practice art i.e. a new canon. They question, challenge and encourage us to unfix some of the hardened assumptions that underpin the way that we live. They are part of an iterative process of reconnecting art with life that flows out of social/cultural change and the need to reimagine what kind of art is meaningful to a particular moment in time and context.

This chapter explores how the practices of embedded artists open up new possibilities to engage experientially with life and in particular, our potential as people to shape social, cultural and political circumstances. It is not predominantly concerned with what narrowly defines the embedded artist in juxtaposition to other contemporary forms of practice. I would like to open up the question of whether radical practices such as that of some embedded artists can be usefully imagined as a form of leadership and if so, in what sense.

In previous work I have defined artistic leadership in terms of an approach that tests the boundaries of a medium in such a way that this comes to exist differently in the world (DOUGLAS 2016) (11). The question of artistic leadership has emerged at the same point in time in which the arts are increasingly opening up to issues of public life, a trajectory that began in the mid to late twentieth century and that has gained momentum in the twenty–first. Leadership is a difficult concept in the arts as it conjures up the image of managerialism and control in a neoliberal society (12), and in so doing undermines the kind of autonomy that a creative individual such as an artist desires. Nonetheless as a provocative concept artistic leadership could be

helpful in rethinking the function of the arts in a civic society at a moment in time in which the systems on which life depends are failing, including environmental, economic and social systems.

Artistic leadership creates a shift of perspective from artists imaging themselves as particularly skilled or talented individuals, creating products that embody meaning in relation to a particular market or economy, to artists creating the means for us, the public, to enter imaginatively, critically and at times practically into living systems. While objects may emerge, these support a different quality of relationship, inviting participation, rather than spectatorship and ownership, into the artistic process. The artist as leader undertakes a process of cracking open the systems and values through which we live to reveal what these are. They also propose what might be, seeking opportunities to self-correct. In this chapter the synergies and differences between notions of "embedded-ness" between the arts and the war correspondent are explored here only in as far as they contribute to understanding where the embedded artist becomes a practice of artistic leadership.

3 The work of Mierle Laderman Ukeles is a particularly vivid and complex example of an artistic practice in this sense. Her work forms a case study in this exploration of what the concept of "embedded" might offer as a practice of leadership.

MIERLE LADERMAN UKELES: COLLISIONS OF MAINTENANCE AND FREEDOM (13)

In 1977 Ukeles became the first official, unsalaried artist-in-residence in New York's Department of Sanitation *(DSNY)*, one of the largest municipal systems for managing waste in the world. Between 1977–84 she developed a durational work *Touch Sanitation* in three parts: *Touch Sanitation Performance (1979–80)*, *Touch Sanitation Celebrations (1983)* and *Touch Sanitation Show (1984)*. In *Touch Sanitation Performance* she followed the routes and practices of sanitation workers across the entire city of New York from rubbish collection to landfill site to headquarters. This experience generated discrete performances such as Handshake Ritual (*1978–9)*(FIG. 1) in

which she shook the hands of 8,500 sanitation workers to personally thank them for maintaining the city, effectively keeping it alive by keeping it clean i.e. clear of refuse.

In a letter from the artist inviting 8,500 sanitation workers to participate in *Touch Sanitation Performance*, Ukeles comments:

> "I want to make a chain of hands: the public – the makers and users/and the sanmen – the make-roomers and carriers away. Hand to hand. A hand-chain to hold up the whole City. Or a web, spun hand to hand. Circling the City, bound round and round until it's all woven together."
> (PHILLIPS 2016, P.101)

Later in conversation with the artist Linda Montano, Ukeles describes the experience as follows:

> "I felt I had absorbed eight five hundred volts of electricity through my right hand from shaking that many hands, and the energy was residing in me. I needed to pass it along. I needed to send the energy back to the people because it was always for them. I was the medium, the battery that had to get rid of some of that energy or I would explode." (IBID., P. 99)

The visceral, sensory and affective way of knowing through experience is underpinned by a strong desire to reach out to a sector of society that was undervalued. It is a gesture of empathy, of seeing from a different, unfamiliar perspective without necessarily understanding or feeling what the other feels. Ukeles sees that new energy may be harnessed by not defining a problem and imposing a solution, but through her acting as a conduit through which other possibilities might emerge.

UKELES' CONCEPTUAL UNDERPINNING

Prior to this work in 1969 Ukeles had developed a work entitled *Manifesto for Maintenance Art, 1969!* It was a proposal for an exhi-

bition Care. While the exhibition did not evolve as planned, the Manifesto has subsequently underpinned her life's work over the following 50 years (UKELES 1969, PP. 622–624).

The Manifesto juxtaposes two notions of value: the "Life Instinct", based in care and acts of maintenance associated with the domestic and the "Death Instinct", based in values of dynamic change, progress and ambition. The two polarities came out of Ukeles' personal experience, the collision between expectations of marriage and motherhood and those of a career artist. They revealed and effectively challenged a commonly held hierarchy of values and their inherent conflict. Notions of progress in terms of dynamic change and technological advancement do not recognise their inbuilt dependence on maintenance and care, she suggests, just as notions of the avant-garde in art result in works of art that need sophisticated institutions, such as museums, to uphold their cultural value. Cleaning and clearing away what human society discards, or simply maintaining what we invent and come to depend upon, are the least valued activities in society. They are hidden from sight, if not reviled.

In a second part of the 1969 Manifesto, Ukeles introduced three scales to maintenance and care ranging from the domestic to the general/civic and onwards to the global/planetary. All three scales focused on waste and pollution by drawing on the private, domestic experience of family life and linking it with a public scale and context. The capacity to make sense of public life through private experience, to intertwine these spheres in both practical and conceptual ways is a quality of Ukeles' work. This quality is also crucial to understanding how leadership works in the arts in a way that is perhaps different from other forms of cultural engagement.

Ukeles, as an embedded artist, shares characteristics in common with the embedded reporter in as far as she undertakes this set of "real world" issues and brings these into public awareness. This aim is clearly evident in the *Touch Sanitation* work in a memo that the DSNY Commissioner, Steisel, wrote in support of Ukeles' residency at the outset.

"She is interested in greatly improving public understand-ing and appreciation of the complexities and difficulties of our work" (PHILLIPS 2016, P. 90)

Her depth and breadth of research into the complex history, systems and infrastructure, in particular the volatile technological, social and cultural dimensions of sanitation work, might well correspond to what we expect of good journalism. *Touch Sanitation* came at a time when the whole infrastructure of DSNY was at risk through severe budget cuts in the wake of the 1970s recession following the stock market crash of 1973-4. Instead of pursuing the newsworthy aspects of this research, Ukeles focused instead on mapping the routine and mundane in the crisis i.e. all 59 districts of DSNY and the routes that the refuse collectors followed in daily eight-hour shifts, three a day (FIG. 2). This deep mapping is more than under-pinning information "about"waste management in this context. It is a means to enter into its flows of experience and of becoming entangled within them, to learn from experience.

Like the war correspondent Ukeles followed the work of each district "picturing" the whole operation by meeting workers face to face in a manner that was carefully negotiated and pre-arranged. Her visits were announced by telex. It was extreme in terms of endurance.

Unlike the war correspondent, this overall structure and realisation took on a rhythmic, performative quality down to the detail of observing and mimicking the bodily movements involved in refuse collection (FIG. 3). This is not a simplistic move to "aestheticize" the ordinary, everyday aspects of living, using these as material for an authored artwork. Ukeles avoids this through the sheer saturation of her experience of the "sanmen" *(her term for refuse collectors)*, in their everyday work patterns for their own sake and not as a means to an artistic end. She worked durationally through painstaking attention to detail, guided by her insight into the importance of care from the domestic to the civic and global. This framing enabled her to find value in what is normally overlooked.

In this way Ukeles created new knowledge out of her experience and this became the material to potentially re-frame the social order

through art. Her mode of communication through public performances raised difficult questions, and importantly assembled around these questions, participants from across social hierarchies and communities. The performances were frequently touched with irony and humour.

An example is *Ceremonial Sweep (Sanitation Celebrations 1983, part II of the Touch Sanitation work)* (FIG. 4) that involved DSNY Commissioner Steisel and high level staff, the presidents of the two Sanitation Unions, reporters, municipal leaders, art experts and her own family in sweeping the entire 32 blocks of Manhattan's parade in place of the sanitation workers (IBID., P. 125). In this ceremony the importance of the activity of maintenance of the civic space was experienced as a shared endeavour in which everyone, irrespective of their place and role, needed to take responsibility.

Given this example, how might we understand the function of this work of embedding art in society as a function of leadership?

CULTURES OF REASON AND RATIONALITY: CONFRONTING IMAGES OF SELF AND (AN) OTHER

Barend Van Heusden, the Dutch cultural theorist, in discussing the role of culture in Europe, suggests that Western culture has struggled between seeing itself in terms of rationality on the one hand and in terms of reason on the other.

Rationality is a construct in which we imagine life as pre-determined by the laws of nature and logic. It leaves no space to act differently. Rationality does not enable us to recognise and embrace difference within collective value systems; different cultural practices, ideologies or religions let alone individual experiences or emotions (VAN HEUSDEN IN GIELEN 2015, P. 134-5, P. 137). A culture of rationality fixes values and hierarchies. Ukeles observed this in her daily life in relation to low paid/unpaid maintenance work in contrast to the more highly valued practices of progress and change. The one is of greater numerical value than the other.

In cultures of reason (IBID.), Van Heusden argues, individual experiences encounter each other across differences. We need to learn to defend values and beliefs in public space and also accept the disjuncture between what we think and remember and what we actually experience in "reality" as life pushes back. Ukeles could be said to have established a culture of reason across the eight years of *Touch Sanitation*, raising questions such as: Whose version of reality comes to be influential? Whose voice enters into public space and how? Whose voice counts in public space?

Van Heusden positions the arts in an interesting way in relation to other forms of cultural awareness such as journalism *(alongside history, politics or philosophy)*. Art gives form to lived experience in such a way that we can ponder, relive and debate meaning. It is a reflection upon life through imitation. It helps us to gain insight into ourselves in relation to others in humanity. He describes the insight that emerges out of an artistic experience as "self-image".

> "When we act, we do so on the basis of this self-image and the image we have of others. Not in an abstract, conceptual or theoretical way, but through the imaginative recreation of an experience. *As such art is one of the most important forms of cultural awareness we have, and it is the form that affects us most directly, precisely because it comes with and through an experience.* Which is why whoever is in power in a society also wants to control the arts—they mould consciousness" (IBID., P. 139, AUTHORS EMPHASIS)

In positioning art in this way, as cultural awareness developed out of an experience of form, Van Heusden points to a quite distinctive dynamic. He loops private experience into civic life by means of art. Where journalism, traditional and contemporary art all support a process of interpreting the world intentionally, the work of art in public life in Van Heusden's sense brings "life to life in movement, sound, artefacts, language and graphics" (IBID., P. 138). Through artistic forms, we become aware in a sensory way of the important issues of public life because these enter into our experience. Van Heusden establishes the autonomy of an individual in the world as the starting point to civic and social life. In this way we can be confident that

we can think for ourselves and in so doing contribute to the whole. The arts "mould consciousness" and this is powerful enough, as he points out, to threaten political power.

As a public artist in Van Heusden's sense, Ukeles presents us with a self-image of values of progress and maintenance through her experience of an actual community, that of civic maintenance in New York. This self-image has emerged out of years of observation and experimentation in practices of care that predate *Touch Sanitation*. It is uncomfortable. It challenges hardened beliefs and everyday practices in which we expect our waste to simply disappear. She proposes that what we have thought of as life is in fact literally killing us, and what we have thought of as death *(the routine or boredom)* is in fact a way to live through caring. She develops opportunities of different kinds in the form of rituals, exhibitions and performances threaded through questions, in which reality and belief come into collision. The point is made vividly through the declamatory form of the Manifesto:

> B. Two basic systems: Development and Maintenance.
> The sourball of every revolution: after the revolution, who's going to pick up the garbage on Monday morning?
> Development: pure individual creation; the new; change; progress; advance, excitement, flight or fleeing.
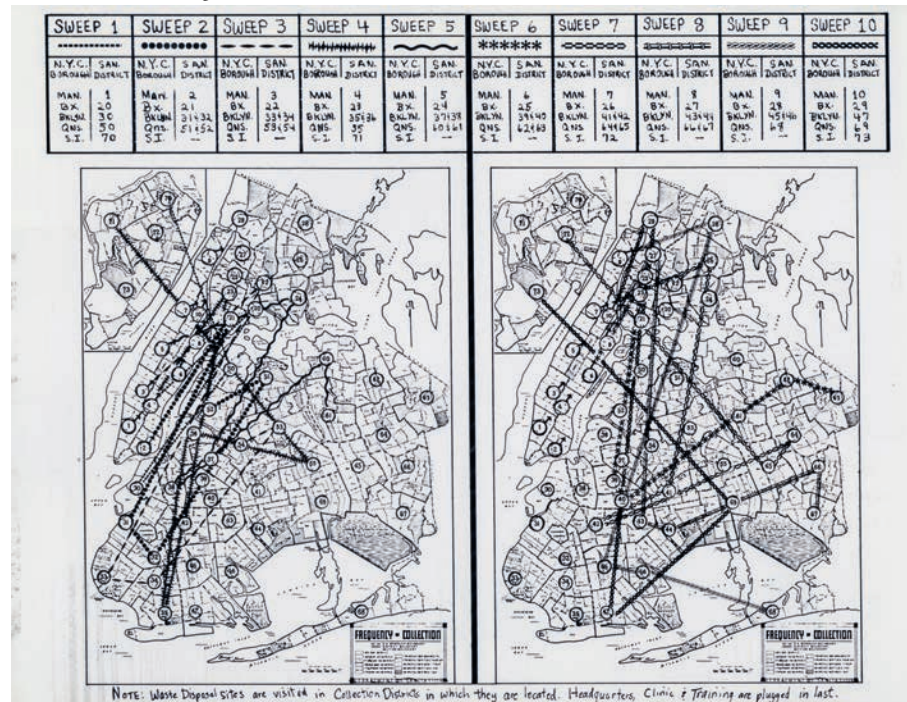> Maintenance: keep the dust off the pure individual creation; preserve the new; sustain the change; protect progress; defend and prolong the advance; renew the excitement; repeat the flight. (PHILLIPS, 2016, P. 42)

On the one hand leadership is evident in Ukeles' skill in turning our world on its head and involving us in her particular line of questioning about sanitation in the civic sphere. On the other and perhaps more importantly, she creates the conditions for participation both practically and conceptually that enable us to enter into an experience of a living system and become empowered to act through that experience. This is quite different from the heroic leader who tends to step in with a solution to a perceived problem.

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Mierle Laderman Ukeles, *Touch Sanitation Performance*,
1979–80. July 24, 1979–June 26, 1980. Citywide performance
with 8,500 Sanitation workers across all fifty-nine New York
City Sanitation districts. May 15, 1980, Sweep 10, Queens
District 14. Photo: Vincent Russo. Courtesy the artist and
Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York.

Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Artist's Letter of Invitation Sent to
Every Sanitation Worker with Performance Itinerary for
10 Sweeps in All 59 Districts in New York City, 1979. Printed
brochure, 11 × 8 1/2 inches. Courtesy the artist and Ronald
Feldman Gallery, New York.

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Mierle Laderman Ukeles, *Touch Sanitation Performance*, 1979–80. July 24, 1979–June 26, 1980. Citywide performance with 8,500 Sanitation workers across all fifty-nine New York City Sanitation districts. May 14, 1980, Sweep 10, Manhattan 11. Photo: Deborah Freedman. Courtesy the artist and Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York.

Mierle Laderman Ukeles, *Ceremonial Sweep*, 1983. Part of *Sanitation Celebrations*, NYC. Executive Committee & Labor Leaders & Media. Work Hierarchy Ritual Turned Upside down. Courtesy the artist and Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York.

3

Mierle Laderman Ukeles, *Touch Sanitation Show: Part 1, Transfer Sanitation Transformation,* 1984. Multimedia installation at Ronald Feldman Fine Arts and the West Fifty-Ninth Street Marine Transfer Station, New York. Courtesy the artist and Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York.

To show this difference I would like to turn to a story (14).

In Homer's Iliad, King Priam attempts to retrieve the body of his son, Hector, from his vanquisher, Achilles, a Greek hero. Troy is besieged by the Greeks. Priam and his wife, Hecuba, are enclosed within the city walls, a metaphor for a mental and emotional siege. Priam decides to alter his identity from regal figurehead to commoner to break the stalemate of this situation. His act, a reversal of the known protocols and values surrounding his status, creates an opening in seemingly locked circumstances.

In David Malouf's retelling of this story, *Ransom (2010)*, the following passage leaped off the pages on my first reading. It is a conversation between Priam and Hecuba, in which Priam outlines his plan. He ends by saying

> "If I do not succeed in this and am lost, then all is lost. We must leave that to the gods. Or to chance." There!— and a little shiver goes through him—he has said it. Chance?

3

> She looks up quickly. Surely she has misheard. "It seems to me", he says, almost dreamily, "that there might be another way of naming what we call fortune and attribute to the will, or the whim, of the gods. Which offers a kind of opening. *The opportunity to act for ourselves.* To try something that might force events into a different course" (MALOUF 2010, P. 61, AUTHOR'S EMPHASIS)

In this rendering of the story, Priam searches for a new concept to underpin his action. He seeks to free himself from a set of beliefs in which human life is determined by "fate in the lap of the gods". In embodying the risk of unforeseen consequences, Priam re-enters his world differently. He authors an approach in which he is neither in control nor seeks control of the way in which change unfolds.

Ukeles positions us in her work in a similar way. Through the work of *Touch Sanitation* clear social/cultural roles and their assigned values become unnerved, less certain, less demarcated. We have to think differently, unfix our positions and alter perspectives to engage,

following Ukeles' example of immersion, taking up her invitation. The image of the Commissioner and high-level staff of DSNY who undertook to sweep the streets in place of the sanmen in the ritualised performance *Touch Celebration*, plays out as a form of lived experience in our imagination. Ukeles takes us to a threshold of awareness in which we need to act for ourselves in order not to remain trapped in the contingencies of found circumstances. What is at work here is not leadership as an attribute of a person, but leadership as a particular process in which we become free to hold in tension two difficult realities and to exercise choice. In the case of Priam the tension lies between the public responsibility to be a political figurehead and a private need to grieve. In the case of Ukeles it is a tension between two very different systems at work: progress versus care.

In Malouf's story qualities of leadership and improvisation appear to converge in important ways. Priam has to wrestle with his sense of responsibility and status. This exerts a certain power of constraint.

> "He is obliged, in his role as king, to think of the king's sacred body, this brief six feet of earth he moves and breathes in—aches and sneezes and all—at once a body like any other and an abstract of the lands he represents, their living map" (IBID., P. 43)

This is not leadership in the heroic sense. The hero takes control, where Priam acts for himself with no guarantee that this will deliver positively. He authors this action aware that his chosen course has profound implications for the way his political world is imagined from that point on. He is self-reflective, recognizing a tension between being an individual, "a body like any other" in the private domain, and a body that is representing others, an abstraction or "living map" in the public domain.

In a similar tussle between private and public selves, *Touch Sanitation* and its particular ritualising of an ordinary everyday activity such as a handshake, transforms a one to one personal experience from an unremarkable incident into a means to inhabit the social order differently. It is the experience of a process as a symbolic act that is transformational.

MAKING SENSE AS A PUBLIC ACT

Hannah Arendt shares with Van Heusden and Malouf the sense that reality is formed as a dynamic encounter with difference. They all recognise that chance is at play in experience and can act as a powerful force in renewal. She articulates this as a form of rebirth. We are born physically into the world as a unique being, she observes. We are born a second time, out of an impulse that is, like birth, an urge, a desire to disclose or reveal our distinctiveness, one to the other. We need to be assured that others hear what we hear and see what we see. Our forms of communication and of action are highly nuanced to cope with this tension. If it were enough to grunt at each other, we would do so. Instead we practice extraordinary skills combining speech and action, developing and enhancing complex tonalities within sound and gesture, finding commonality within extraordinary diversity. It is perhaps the artist who refines and develops such skills self-consciously.

> "For us appearance—something that is being seen and heard by others, as well as by ourselves—constitutes reality" (ARENDT 1998, P. 50)

Arendt believed that the most intimate and personal experiences remain shadowy and uncertain unless or until they are transformed in a shape that can be shared by others. They need to be made "fit for public appearance" (ARENDT 1998, P. 50). "Reality" is in fact multiple, conflicting perspectives and experiences interacting in the same space. They are perspectives and experiences that we communicate, share, exchange, and that work on us, changing how we think, feel and imagine. Art may be a refined and developed form of this communication.

Through her deep knowledge of classicism, Arendt defines three domains in human life that in classical times was also reflected in the way society was structured: labour, work and action. Labour constitutes the day-to-day activities that keep everyday life going. Work constitutes those actions that move the human condition beyond mere survival through the creation of cultural artefacts such as books, works of art, craft practices. The third domain, action, is complex, conceptualised in relation to two interrelated

verbs in Greek and Latin; one is "to lead" carrying the sense of "to begin" or "set in motion" *("archein" in Greek and "agere" in Latin)* and the other is "to achieve", to "bear" or "finish" *("prattein" and "gerere" respectively)* (IBID., P. 189).

Arendt placed art in the domain of work and not in the sphere of action. Nonetheless her definition of action prefigures forms of artistic practice such as that of Ukeles, offering a possible way to think about leadership in the arts. Ukeles, for example, creates a beginning, setting something in motion that carries with it the impulse to follow through. She breaks out of outmoded ways of being in civic life in ways that encourage us to imagine living differently, attributing value differently. At each stage the next step is dependent upon the collaboration and support of others. Even if Arendt did not grasp the function of the arts as action in public life, she nonetheless opened up the possibility of imagining leadership as a dynamic process within civic life and its unpredictability as two aspects of the same activity.

What further concepts might we bring to bear to conceptualise and guide leadership as a form of artistic practice? It is important perhaps to draw on artists themselves, not just in the way that they work but in the way that they imagine and conceptualise ways of working.

ARTIST PLACEMENT GROUP (APG) (1966–79): A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR ART IN PUBLIC LIFE

The Artist Placement Group *(APG) (1966–79),* founded by Barbara Steveni and John Latham, held the belief that artists were fundamental to a critical perspective in society at a deep level in the way that they work.

> "The artistic method makes it clear what is for and what is against mankind". (JOHN LATHAM)

APG negotiated opportunities for artists to have a key role first in large industries such as the British Steel Corporation *(1969–70)* and

then in government agencies such as the Scottish Office *(1975–6)* and Department of Health and Social Security *(1978–79)*. Like Ukeles they wanted to reappraise the isolationist and marginal place of the artist in society of the 19th and early to mid 20th centuries. Steveni and Latham developed a framework for conceptualising the artist's role using a number of interrelated ideas (HENNING AND JORDAN 2016, PP. 2–3; HUDEK AND SAINSBURY 2012, PP. 3–6). While it is important to acknowledge that the US and UK forms of socially engaged, embedded art have evolved differently, APG's framework may be useful in capturing in what sense the embedded artist shifts ground towards undertaking a more critical transformative function of leadership in society.

CONTEXT IS HALF THE WORK

"Context is half the work" firmly positioned "the work" of art in a dynamic relationship between an artist and an organisation or institution. More broadly it reiterates the point in the story of Priam, of the need to be a person in the world, and of Ukeles choice to position herself within DSNY as a context for her practice over 40 or 50 years.

FEASIBILITY STUDY

Each placement was bound by invitation from a host organisation in a two-part process: first a feasibility study of one or two months, followed *(if desired by the host and the artist)* by implementation. This way of working was designed to invert the patronage model of art, bringing to the foreground new ways in which an organisation might benefit from artists' insights and artists might in turn benefit from the opportunity to develop new approaches.

THE ARTIST AS INCIDENTAL PERSON

While it is commonplace today to work with artists and certainly designers to enhance competitiveness in a commercial setting,

APG sought a different positioning. This was based on the idea that the artist as incidental person could imagine beyond the contingencies that constrain and order the workplace. As an outsider without portfolio or specified role, the artist could move across hierarchies and in that interval of freedom, cross fertilise ideas and raise uncomfortable social, economic and political issues that were at this time considered to fall outside of art. Steveni described the sixth principle for an effective form of association between artists and organisations as follows, "That, for optimum results, the position of the artist within an organisation *(in the initial stages at least)* should facilitate a form of cross-referencing between departments." (STEVINI 2004, UNPAGINATED)

Interestingly the first placement of the artist Garth Evans in the British Steel Corporation *(1969–70)* in the UK mirrored the issues that Ukeles was raising in Department of Sanitation New York *(DSNY)*, US. Evans focused on questions concerning the dehumanising effects on individuals of working in factory conditions on the same repetitive tasks year in and year out. He brought these questions to the attention of the management of British Steel

3 (HENNING AND JORDAN 2016, P. 4; HUDEK AND SAINSBURY 2012, P. 14).

THE OPEN BRIEF
The success of APG's process of placement was felt to lie in holding open the space of *not knowing* any outcomes of the relationship between individual and organisation for as long as possible. It was on this condition i.e the open brief that the host undertook to pay the artist a wage without preconditioning what might result in terms of material or other output.

In a way that is resonant of the opening up of art to public life in the US in the late 20th century, APG sought in the incidental person a performative role in order to escape the restrictions of an art world built predominantly on commodity and consumption. Through the incidental person, Howard Slater (2000, P. 23) observes, APG sought to open up the "flows of desire" within the social relations in a work place. They achieved this through careful

management of expectations, facilitated by the mutual agreement to spend three months without determining goals or outcomes. This particular way of managing expectations on either side, created an interval of freedom in which habit and judgementalism could be suspended.

However there were also risks to this way of working. Slater suggests that this open-ended approach also created something of a void, a lack of clarity of intention or goal or political position. In the gap the artist could end up simply replicating the particular dynamics and value system of either their host or of the institution of art, losing the "impulse to act" (IBID., P. 24). This risk is perhaps endemic to all socially engaged art practices. On the one hand there is a danger of simplistically fulfilling what is expected, reducing the potential for transformative change and on the other the danger of an unanticipated, undesired form of radicalism that does not bring people along with it. In this sense Slater's notion of opening up the desires of the workplace as the motive for action forms an important set of connections.

3 In this light it is notable that in *Touch Sanitation*, Ukeles was able to harness remarkable levels of collaboration and increasing support for a series of activities that fell well beyond the daily remit of a sanitation department, building a community willing and prepared to undertake a new journey through art. This follows the dynamic lines and oscillation of leading and following. A vivid moment of the recognition of high levels of trust between the artist and institution can be seen in *Touch Sanitation Show* Parts I and II, the third phase in the whole project. It is not only evident in the sheer scale of the resource given over to artistic purposes of exhibition, but the way in which the exhibition opens up a space for reflection and learning through sensory experience and emotional intelligence by imitating aspects of a way of life that are normally ignored.

> "…a sixty-five square foot site–specific installation at West 59 Street Marine Transfer station, sixteen sanitation vehicles, two barges, flashers from forty-four decommissioned collection trucks, a suspended trough holding

dirty work gloves, assorted support equipment,
cages of recyclable materials, text cut into an end wall
and a mound of sand." (PHILLIPS 2016, P. 127)

The exhibition framed a challenging question in public on the back
wall of the transfer station that could possibly only be voiced to an
audience that was in some sense prepared and able to follow and
accept its premise.

"No more Landfill-Space/What will we do with all
our garbage?" (IBID., P. 130) (FIG. 5)

In this way, the lived experiences of the one world *(the experience of
refuse collection)* could be seen and felt within the other *(the experience
of the work of art)* and vice versa. Both worlds became part of an
unprecedented process of exposure and exchange that was not
confrontational, but concerned with mutual learning. The impor-
tance of Ukeles' underpinning cannot be underestimated. The "Life
Instinct" and "Death instinct" became lived experience in the *Touch
Sanitation* work in ways that were highly structured but also respon-
sive and improvisational. The art was embedded in its surrounds
while refusing to be trapped by them.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
This chapter set out to explore how notions of the embedded artist
have usefully drawn on the embedded journalist as war correspon-
dent. Both shape public understanding through distinctive forms
of practice. Both involve durational processes of immersion in sit-
uations to which they bring an outsider's view, setting out to learn
from what is around them. More often than not both practices are
practices of endurance within unequal power relations between the
individual and organisation or institution.

The embedded artist diverges from its counterpart in journalism in
seeking an activist role that is more than reporting on a situation or
creating an account of what is experienced in a particular place and
moment in time. Artists do not seek to communicate information

"about" the world, but open up the complexity and contradiction
of experience itself. This might be said of all artists across history
taking a variety of forms: as entertainment, a pastime, a joke, an
object as a symbol of wealth and power. In some important sense
the practices of embedded artists function differently in public life
from these examples. Embedded artists seek to create and share
experiences in which as individuals we can exercise the right to
one's own imagination and critical perspective, and to connect this
with our need to live together as citizens. They do so in a way that
is quite distinctive from other cultural activities including journalism
and, as indicated, from mainstream artistic traditions.

Our (15) research into artistic and cultural leadership has evolved in
incremental stages: The Artist as Leader research *(2006–9)* devel-
oped three scenarios in which artists undertake leadership roles: by
acting as particularly talented individuals, by acting as artistic direc-
tors of arts organisations, effectively in a management role; and/or
by becoming activists within public life. They may take on one, two
or all three scenarios. Price's doctoral research *(2016)* that followed
and developed this initial thinking, revisited these scenarios, con-
necting them to the broader field of cultural leadership through
Arendt's concepts of plurality, boundlessness and unpredictability
as ways to imagine the dynamic nature of public life and to explore
how concepts of leadership change over time and political circum-
stances. We tested and disseminated the findings of both research
phases within a network of artists and cultural leaders in the third
phase of research, including Creative Scotland *(Scotland's Arts
Council)*, the UK's Clore Leadership programme and ENCATC, a
European network addressing leadership training. The discussions
enriched and developed our understanding, affirming the increased
importance of leadership as an issue for the arts and culture.

This chapter has provided the opportunity to explore practice. The
Maintenance Art of Mierle Laderman Ukeles, APG's way of think-
ing about art in public life and David Malouf's recounting of Priam,
all develop an idea of artistic leadership as opening up to the unpre-
dictability of life. It is a practice of risk, of taking a moment to act
for oneself as an autonomous being when events force upon us the
need to take a different course of action. This particular energy

springs from experience as well as skill and judgment. It is also improvisational in the sense of refusing to be trapped in the contingencies that surround us, leading out by example, not through control. Arendt and Van Heusden imagine this kind of energy as a rebirth, out of an impulse to reveal our distinctiveness as human beings, to share the image we have of ourselves. It is in this sense that Van Heusden evokes the power of art to be transformative. This power can be experienced in the private sphere of intimate exchanges of a poem or painting. However the practices of artists such as Ukeles, Latham and Steveni enter into the public sphere of organisations and institutions, creating new forms that set out to change how our systems work in relation to the values that underpin them. It is at this point that such practices become more than simply socially engaged or socially embedded and undertake the function of leadership.

NOTES

1
https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/embedded

2
Helen Mayer (1927–2018) and Newton Harrison (b. 1932), 'the Harrisons', have on many occasions discussed their approach to a new work in these terms of 'being a stranger'. "We have the advantage of the eye of the stranger, and the disadvantage of not knowing the place intimately. That always makes us get involved with people from the place we are working at, people who know it, who care about it and who help us to understand it." Said by Helen Mayer Harrison at the start of the video *Santa Fe Watershed: Lessons from the Genius of Place* (https://vimeo.com/49276657).

3
https://monoskop.org/Mierle_Laderman_Ukeles

4
http://theharrisonstudio.net/; http://www.centerforforcemajeure.org/

5
https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/hans-haacke-2217

6
http://franceswhitehead.com

7
http://www.suzannelacy.com/

8
http://www.john-newling.com/

9
http://adri.mdx.ac.uk/loraine-leeson

10
http://www.taniabruguera.com/cms/

11
This builds on a framework of research over twelve years including three research programmes: the Arts and Humanities' Research Council (AHRC) funded Artist as Leader (2006–9) (Douglas and Fremantle 2009) and Jon Price's Doctoral Study (2012–16) The Discourse of Cultural Leadership (2016) and the AHRC funded Cultural Leadership and

the Place of the Artist (2015–16).

12
Neoliberalism may be defined as an extreme form of capitalism. It positions the market as the organizing principle of all political, social and economic decisions (Giroux 1992/2005).

13
This subtitle draws on "Making Necessity Art: Collisions of Maintenance and Freedom" in the Queens Museum catalogue on Ukeles' Maintenance Art (Phillips, 2016, pp. 22–193).

14
The following analysis was presented in 2014 as part of a keynote lecture *Leading through Art: exploring action and improvisation* presented as part of the Macgeorge Fellowship at the Centre for Cultural Partnerships, Victoria College of the Arts, University of Melbourne.

15
On the Edge Research (OTE) (2000—present) (www.ontheedgeresearch.org) is a research programme that investigates the changing nature of art to public life, predominantly through a practice-led approach.

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Permeable, and disembedded in the end

The PROCESSING series by Elisa Duca and Robin Detje

PROCESSING is a performative installation format, durational, culture and site specific, developed by Robin Detje and myself, formerly known as bösediva. Each work of the PROCESSING-series requires several weeks of research. So far we have created and presented installments in Bangalore/India, Taipei/Taiwan, Dresden/Germany, and currently we are presenting a month long project in Berlin-Moabit.

PROCESSING is: Cultural exchange as an art praxis. A way of being part of globalization without assessing it.

Starting point is the assumption that our world is a network of objects and beings, where humans and non-humans are equal and endlessly entangled in relations. These relations are made visible by us as artists in the aesthetic space/time of the performative Installation. Starting point of our research is the mere observation of life. A "life" that for us is different from our everyday life. So to make PROCESSING happen, we need displace ourselves.

The main question we ask ourselves in the beginning of the project is: "What is foreign and what is familiar?" And what do the terms "foreign" and "familiar" mean in the context we are in and in the context we are about to create?

At first our focus is on what is "foreign". We collect objects and materials that are mysterious to us, that attract us, we observe every-day rituals, traditional techniques, the way people walk, eat, work, how they deal with public transportation, what they do when they are sick, how they sweep the streets, how they handle garbage, how the play chess or how they make a flower garland.

We follow our affects, much like children. Then we go deeper, research, ask, read. We take things and actions out of their system of order and create a new order. We put them into a new context, we create new patterns, that, through the performative character of the work, are lifelike and take on their own life.

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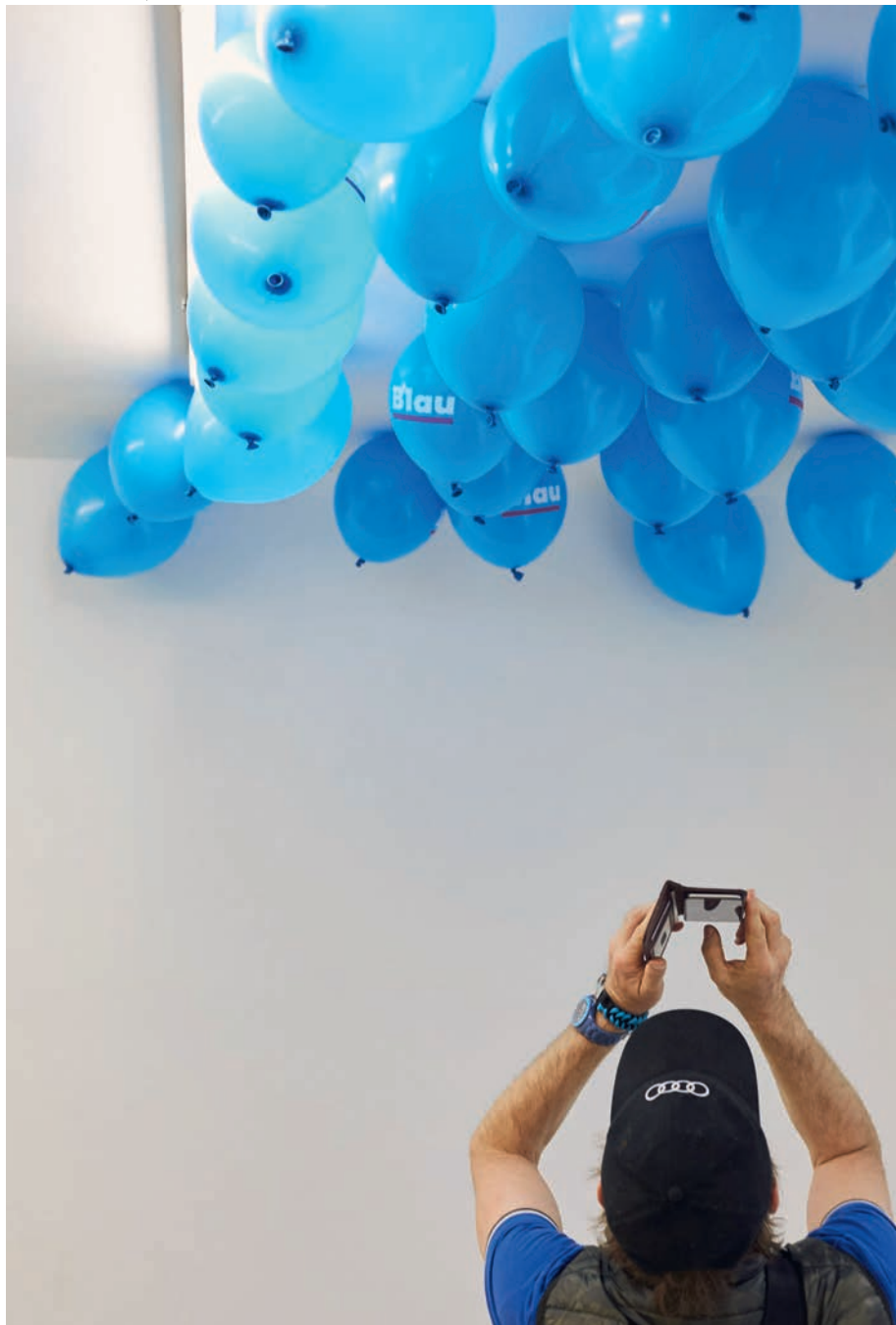
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The landscape of objects we create keeps changing—or in our own words: performing—even when the performative interventions are over. In our new system, objects that locals would not take notice of, because they were embedded in the texture of everyday life, become available for reconsideration, visible, something to discover again. We emancipate things. We crack them open. We create a landscape where they can network in many new ways.

And again, because of the performative nature of the work, meaning never stays, can never be pinned down, it keeps moving and producing new systems of order, there is a permanent flow between chaos and order, autonomy and community. At the core of our work we question the solidity of the object world. Its implicitness.

So are we embedded artists? Yes and no. Yes, we do our best to "embed" ourselves in the community and the space we work in. We try to be "in the flow of life", to understand and decode. But we do not teach anything to the communities we work in, and we do not try to change them. We stay within the framework of traditional artistic production. Within this framework we make ourselves more permeable to our surroundings than we see other artists do.

Permeability to me is first and foremost a physical experience. You need to make yourself accessible in order to access a new space and culture. Your body needs to open up in order to catch things you would otherwise miss. Paradoxically, research in a "foreign" space made me feel close to the objects that are most familiar to me. Simple, universal qualities strike you. Things like color, shape, smell, texture.

But as embedded as we might feel in the process, in the end we need to disembed ourselves from the community and the materials we have been collecting and studying so thoroughly for weeks. We need to separate ourselves. We need distance. We need the safe space of the white cube to be able to transform the material into something that hopefully, for the community, works like a distorting mirror.

4

Where they find and cannot find themselves at the same time. Where they see their own world become something more than their own world, something different and foreign.

Elisa Duca

4

Artists Embedded: Sector, Employment Status, Occupation, Industry, Employer Type, Place

Over two decades, with graduate students and colleagues, I have been studying the characteristics of US artists, distinguishing the post-graduate work experiences of visual artists, performing artists, musicians, and writers from others in the labor force. This work has emerged amid a striking resurgence of interest in, concern for, and new funding streams and criteria for individual artist support on the part of major public and nonprofit funders of the arts in the United States and elsewhere. Borrowing, with permission, an initial framework for research on artist embeddedness from DeNatale and Wassall *(2007)*, we show in our *Creative Placemaking* study (MARKUSEN AND GADWA, 2010) how artists, a component of the "people" sphere, intersect with businesses and organizations, on the one hand, and with place *(regions, cities, neighborhoods)* on the other. Our study informed and introduced the new Obama administration's National Endowment for the Arts *Our Town* funding initiative that continues into the Trump era. In turn, NEA team helped to spawn a major US philanthropy-funded companion, *ArtPlace.* We reflect on the emergence on these initiatives and especially on their ongoing research underpinnings, in our recent retrospective (MARKUSEN AND GADWA, 2018). (FIG. 1)

Our empirical findings, summarized here, are based on analyses of multiple data sources. These include the US government's Population Census, American Community Survey, and Bureau of Labor Statistics data sets, the National Endowment for the Arts research group's publications, original data surveys by nonprofit research organizations *(the Cultural Data Project, the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project)*, and surveys undertaken with foundation funding by the Project on Regional and Industrial Economics *(University of Minnesota)* and Markusen Economic Research. We have also have conducted hundreds of interviews with artists, funders and gatekeepers that help us interpret the patterns revealed from data analyses.

We know from many studies over recent decades that the work lives of artists are challenging. Many artists choose to work in their art forms despite low pay and uncertain job and sales opportunities (FILER, 1986). Many moonlight to make ends meet and pay for art supplies (ALPER AND WASSALL, 1999). These circumstances persist to

5

5

1 People
Creative Workers

2 Businesses & Orginsations
Cultural Industries

3 Places
Creative Communities

5
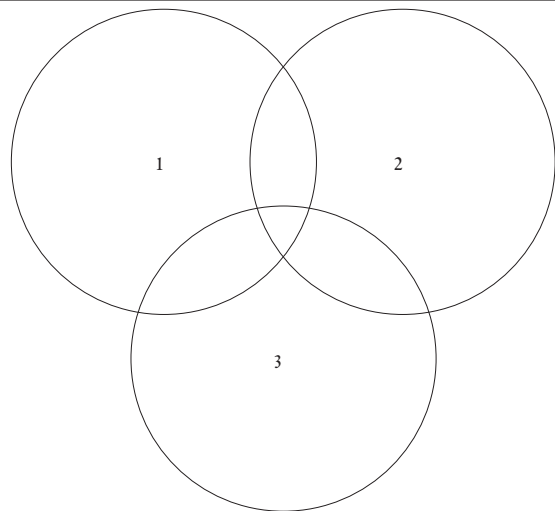
The Creative Economy: Workers, Industries, Communities.

this day. In the 1990s, artists' visual and dramatic acting out about the AIDS crisis almost resulted in the US Congress eliminating the National Endowment for the Arts, the top US public funding agency (BONIN-RODRIGUES, 2015; KILLACKY, 2011). Both funding and society-wide respect for individual artists has slowly emerged from its 1990s nadir.

In what follows, I summarize what we know from primary and secondary data analysis about the embeddedness of US artists. These insights are also informed by hundreds of interviews and the writings of others. US public funding for artists is not as generous as that in most European countries. It would be interesting to compare these finding with patterns in Europe.

ARTISTS POST-GRADUATE OCCUPATIONAL EMBEDDEDNESS

Many artists who earn art degrees end up working in occupations not considered to be "art" by official government definitions. Thanks to a decade of surveys of artists who have graduated from US arts high schools, colleges, universities and conservatories, we know that almost as many artists are currently working in occupations outside of those designated as "artist" as those who report they are working as artists (FIG. 2). The Strategic National Arts Alumni Project *(SNAAP)* classifies as artists those who identify as visual artists, performing artists, musicians, writers, designers, and architects. Major non-arts occupations for these grads include trainer, librarian, communications and management. However, a majority of SNAAP respondents working outside of more narrowly-defined artistic occupations value their arts education as important to their performance in their current occupation (SNAAP, 2011).

Artists are more likely to be self-employed, either by choice or in desperation, than workers in most other occupations. Compared to the entire US employed workforce, artists are more than four times as likely to be self-employed (FIG. 3). In the last full US Census, 2000, 65 % of writers, 57 % of visual artists, 41 % of musicians and 36 % of performing artists were self-employed, compared
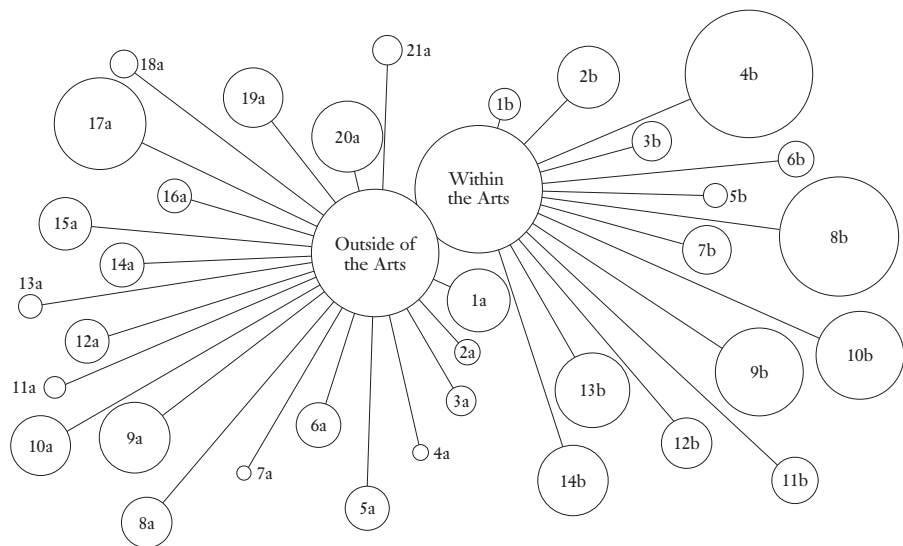
Outside of the Arts		Within the Arts	
1a	Other Non-Arts	1b	Architect
2a	Transportation/Material Moving	2b	Arts Administrator/Manager
3a	Social Services	3b	Craft Artist
4a	Services/Personal Care	4b	Arts Education
5a	Sales	5b	Dancer/Choreographer
6a	Office/Administration Support	6b	Curator/Dealer/Gallery Owner
7a	Military/Protective Services	7b	Film/TV/Video Artist
8a	Manufacturing	8b	Design
9a	Management	9b	Musician
10a	Legal	10b	Fine Artist
11a	Human Resources	11b	Photographer
12a	Healthcare	12b	Theater
13a	Food Preparation	13b	Writer/Author/Editor
14a	Financial/Business	14b	Other
15a	Farming/Fishing/Forestry		
16a	Engineering/Science		
17a	Education/Training/Library		
18a	Construction/Extraction		
19a	Computer/Mathematical		
20a	Communications		
21a	Building/Maintenance Installation/Repair		

5

Post-Schooling Occupations of Arts Higher Education Graduates,
USA 2011.

Occupation	Self-employed	Primary job	Secondary job
Writers	65 %	71'369	10'056
Visual Artists	57 %	69'470	13'549
Musicians, Singers	41 %	65'618	32'728
Performing Artists	36 %	113'178	37'494
Actors	37 %	32'652	3'817
Producers & Directors	22 %	11'879	949
Dancers & Choreographers	12 %	3'029	na
Designers	32 %	132'122	24'095
Architects	28 %	31'295	3'068

5

Self-employment rates, artistic occupations, US, 2000.

with 8 % of all US workers. We are using 2000 Census data because its reliability for fine-grained analyses, especially for artists, who form a small share of the national and regional workforces, is much superior to its successors. (1)

METROPOLITAN WORK OPPORTUNITIES FOR US ARTISTS

Opportunities for artists to find work, whether employed or self-employed, vary by region, city and community size. The largest metropolitan areas in the US differ markedly in their ability to support artists. Compared to the US norm, three of the largest metros support higher proportions of artists in their workforce: Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco (FIG. 4) than do others in the top 30 metros. The Los Angeles metro supports three times the average national density of artists in its workforce, followed by the New York metro at two and a half, and San Francisco/Oakland at 1.8. Five other metros provide 20 % to 40 % more artist work opportunities: Washington DC, Seattle, Boston, Minneapolis-St. Paul, and San Diego. Surprisingly, San Jose and Houston, both younger metros, support below average artist job opportunities, along with the older industrial metros of Cleveland, Pittsburgh and Detroit.

Urban work opportunities for artists vary by art form. Performing artists find employment opportunities more easily in Los Angeles and New York, both major film, TV, radio, and live theatre centers, than in other major metros. Musicians are relatively more evenly spread among metros, and they are also more likely to find work outside of major cities due to dispersed jobs in churches and other religious organizations.

ARTIST DISTRIBUTION ACROSS AND WITHIN FOR-PROFIT, NON-PROFIT AND SELFEMPLOYMENT SECTORS

Artists work across three basic enterprise types in the US: private, non-profit, and public sector. Their opportunities vary depending

5

	All Artists	Performing Artists	Visual Artists	Authors	Musicians
Los Angeles, CA	3.0	5.4	2.3	2.7	2.0
New York, NY-NJ	2.5	3.7	2.0	3.0	1.9
San Francisco-Oakland, CA	1.8	1.9	1.8	2.5	1.1
Washington, DC-MD-VA-WV	1.4	1.5	1.0	2.3	1.1
Seattle, WA	1.3	1.1	1.5	1.5	1.1
Boston, MA-NH	1.3	1.2	1.0	2.0	1.1
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN-WI	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.2
San Diego, CA	1.2	0.9	1.3	1.1	1.2
US AVERAGE	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
San Jose, CA	0.8	0.7	1.0	0.9	0.6
Cleveland, OH	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.7	1.1
Pittsburgh, PA	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.9
Houston, TX	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.9
Detroit, MI	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.7

Artist Concentration Ratios, Large U.S. Metros, 2000.

on the regional economies in which they reside (FIG. 5). In a study of artists across Los Angeles and Bay Area artists in California, we found that both the Los Angeles *(54 %)* and San Jose *(52 %)* metros offered proportionally more jobs with private sector employers than did San Francisco/Oakland *(43 %)* and Santa Rosa/Vallejo *(northern Bay Area) (25 %)* metro. The San Francisco/Oakland metro provided more non-profit sector opportunities for artists, while the northern-most counties, largely suburban, hosted the highest shares of self-employed artists *(64 %)*.

Nonprofit organizations hire artists, but compared with their management, finance and programming staff, they tend to hire artists part-time and often without benefits. A large data set funded by arts philanthropies, the national Cultural Data Project, has been collecting data on arts nonprofits for almost two decades. For a commissioned study on California, we explored the structure of that large state's arts nonprofits, including their workforce (MARKUSEN, GADWA ET. AL., 2011). California nonprofit arts and cultural organizations paid more than 137,000 people for their labor in 2008. Artists comprised more than half the total. A remarkable 77,700 artists earned at least some income from the California arts and cultural nonprofits that year. However, they logged many fewer hours than other arts nonprofit workers, the equivalent of just 10,300 full-timers (FIG. 6). Of artist who worked for arts nonprofits that year, only 8 % found full-time work in the sector, suggesting why so many simultaneously work in the for-profit arts or in jobs unrelated to their creative skills.

Arts nonprofit administrators and fundraisers, in contrast, are highly likely to work on payroll full time, perhaps because of sensitive proprietary strategy and information involved in their work (FIG. 6). People working in programming are more apt to work part-time than full time or as contractors. Overall, then, less than 13 % of people paid by arts and cultural organizations are working full time, though they account for 45 % of hours logged. Along with interns, apprentices, and volunteers, the part-time and often intermittent nature of the nonprofit arts and cultural workforce presents full-time managers with a considerable personnel challenge.

Metro Areas	Los Angeles	San Francisco Oakland	San Jose	Santa Rosa Vallejo
All Artists	76'090	24'688	4'677	3'556
Employed (%)				
Self-employed	40 %	44 %	36 %	64 %
Private Employer	54 %	43 %	52 %	25 %
Nonprofit, Public	6 %	13 %	12 %	11 %

5

Artists Embedded by Employer Type for Large California
Metros, 2000.

Numbers Employed	Artists & Performers	Programmers	Fundraising & Admin

	Artists & Performers	Programmers	Fundraising & Admin
Total	77'700 57 %	39'700 29 %	19'900 14 %
Full time	1'600 1 %	7'500 5 %	8'200 6 %
Part time	16'000 12 %	17'200 13 %	5'200 4 %
Independent contractors	59'500 43 %	15'000 11 %	5'500 5 %

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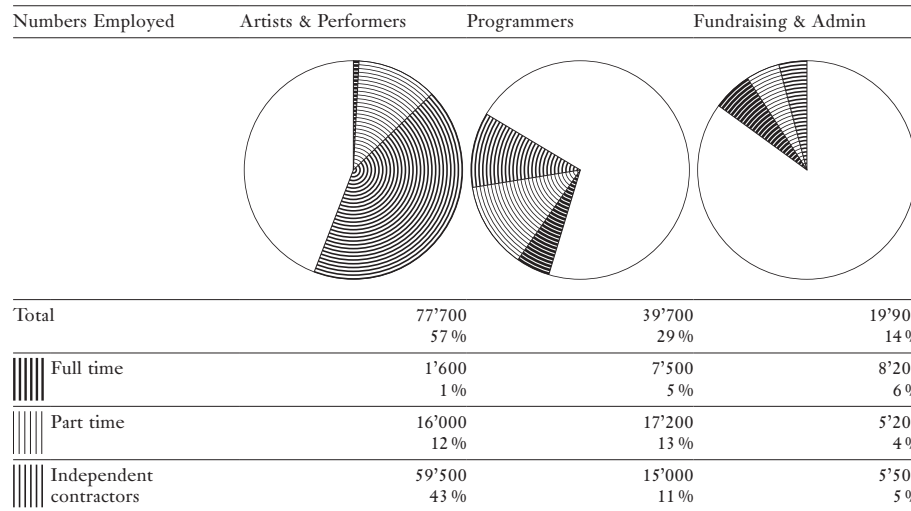
Employment Structure, California Nonprofit Arts, 2008.

ARTIST WORK OPPORTUNITIES BY INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

Economists study the distribution of workers by industrial sector as well as by occupation. My teams have mapped the distribution of artists, including by artistic genre, across major US industries. Apart from the ungainly "industry": independent writers, performing arts and spectator sports, which account for about 30 % of all occupations, artists are found in relatively large concentrations in "other" professional, scientific, and technical services *(most photographers are found here)*; radio and TV broadcasting; motion picture and video industries; religious organizations; and sound recording industries (FIG. 7).

In metropolitan areas like New York and Los Angeles, the presence of artists in industries like motion pictures and video, sound recording and advertising will be much denser than in these same enterprises in other regions that are principally serving local populations. Chicago enterprises employ disproportionate shares of artists in advertising, and Boston enterprises employ higher than national average shares of artists in radio and publishing. In research mapping occupation and industry across groups of metros, we've found that the occupational structures can vary quite substantially (MARKUSEN AND GADWA NICODEMUS, 2013).

Artists are more likely to move from one metropolitan area to another, state to state, and rural to urban settings and back, than are people in most occupations. They do so over schooling and work life cycles and pursuing jobs and marketing opportunities. Figure 8 shows the net movements of artists among the largest US metro for 1995–2000, the last for which we have detailed five-year migration data (FIG. 8).

Over this five-year period, more than two artists arrived in the Los Angeles metro for every one that left. Some fast-growing metros like San Diego and Orange County also attracted artists. Reflecting the concentration ratios we explored earlier, older industrial metros like Detroit, Cleveland and St. Louis lost artists to net outmigration. But so did fast-growing metros like San Jose and Houston. San Jose in this period was experiencing a tech boom that made living in the

Industry	Total	Visual Artists	Performing Artists	Musicians Composers	Writers	Artists as % Industry
Independent artists, performing arts, spectator sports	259'066	92'256	40'005	69'998	56'807	45.3 %
Other professional, scientific and technical services	64'536	63'383	395	44	714	22.8 %
Radio and television broadcasting and cable	61'263	7'152	49'230	1'172	3'709	10.4 %
Motion pictures and video industries	55'403	8'987	40'364	1'255	4'797	17.9 %
Religious organizations	55'362	595	797	53'037	933	5.6 %
Advertising and related services	36'048	18'523	4'284	155	13'086	6.6 %
Publishing, except newspapers and software	23'545	9'192	865	223	13'265	5.6 %
Specialized design services	22'785	21'843	369	0	573	8.4 %
Newspaper publishers	21'240	11'588	103	76	9'473	4.2 %
Colleges and universities, including junior colleges	20'268	4'785	7'230	2'421	5'832	0.7 %
Toys, amusement, and sporting goods manufacturing	12'685	12'404	169	0	112	9.4 %
Drinking places, alcoholic beverages	11'284	56	8'258	2'970	0	5.1 %
Other amusement, gambling, and recreation industries	9'846	2'249	4'984	2'120	493	0.7 %
Printing and related support activities	8'547	8'034	148	80	285	1.0 %
Sound recording industries	7'700	540	2'305	4'571	284	20 %
Management, scientific, technical consulting services	7'170	1'841	605	90	4'634	0.7 %
Restaurants and other food services	7'111	432	935	5'215	529	0.1 %
Civic, social, advocacy, grantmaking organizations	6'992	473	1'327	817	4'375	1.1 %
Elementary and secondary schools	6'571	940	1'516	2'389	1'726	0.1 %
Computer systems design, related services	6'147	3'046	988	78	2'035	0.5 %
Artists, All Industries	837'862	340'561	185'413	155'593	156'295	0.6 %

Artist Embedding by Industrial Sector, US, 2000.

	In/out migration ratio	New artists as % of total	Moved into metro	Moved out of metro	Artists 2000
Los Angeles, CA	2.16	22 %	19'250	8'918	88'325
Phoenix, AZ	1.56	23 %	2'105	1'346	9'247
Portland-Vancouver, OR	1.48	24 %	1'634	1'105	6'876
Orange County, CA	1.47	26 %	2'814	1'914	10'881
New York/Bergen, NY-NJ	1.44	21 %	20'591	14'348	96'196
Dallas, TX	1.42	27 %	3'064	2'162	11'517
San Francisco-Oakland, CA	1.37	28 %	7'258	5'285	26'071
Riverside-San Bernadino, CA	1.34	22 %	1'519	1'135	6'992
Tampa-St. Petersburg, FL	1.28	21 %	1'406	1'100	6'674
San Diego, CA	1.25	24 %	2'680	2'144	10'961
Atlanta, GA	1.22	26 %	3'971	3'255	15'282
Kansas City, MO-KS	1.21	23 %	1'236	1'021	5'412
Washington, DC-MD-VA	1.14	24 %	5'436	4'749	23'016
Seattle, WA	1.11	22 %	2'482	2'244	11'428
Newark, NJ	1.05	26 %	1'708	1'626	6'643
Boston, MA	0.98	24 %	3'770	3'847	15'552
Minneapolis-St Paul, MN-WI	0.97	16 %	1'994	2'047	12'275
Baltimore, MD	0.95	21 %	1'784	1'869	8'608
Pittsburgh, PA	0.93	16 %	872	939	5'550
Detroit, MI	0.89	12 %	1'282	1'438	10'450
Chicago, IL	0.83	16 %	4'379	5'288	27'612
Philadelphia, PA/NJ	0.82	15 %	2'248	2'753	15'498
San Jose, CA	0.81	28 %	1'379	1'699	4'904
St. Louis, MO-IL	0.63	15 %	912	1'448	6'275
Cleveland, OH	0.53	12 %	669	1'255	5'805
Nassau Co, NY	0.51	12 %	1'034	2'034	8'304
Houston, TX	0.37	21 %	2'008	5'388	9'725

Migration of artists into and out of largest
US metropolitan areas, 1995–2000.

area very expensive. As a push-back, the City of San Jose launched a special study and task force to increase the presence of artists, to explore what factors were responsible, and to craft initiatives to reverse the outflow (MARKUSEN, GADWA AND SHIFFERD, 2008; MIRIKITANI, SEVIER AND MARKUSEN, 2009).

Artists also migrate between metro areas and smaller cities, most in their hinterlands or in surrounding states. At young ages, artists leave non-metropolitan areas for major metros, presumably to find markets, mentors, further education and work opportunities. For the 1995–2000 period, Figure 9 shows the dramatic outmigration of working artists from "greater Minnesota", the portions of the state outside of its major Minneapolis-St. Paul metro, followed by two spurts of reverse migration in the age groups 44 to 55 and over 65. Our hypothesis is that reverse migration in the mid- and late-career stages reflects artists' attainment of markets and reliable income streams *(from publishing, gallery sales elsewhere, travelling to perform)*, preference for more affordable workspace at lower prices, outdoor living experiences and preferable community attachments.

Finally, research that we've conducted on where artists live within major metros reveals a marked preference for living relatively near to the urban core compared to other occupations in the metro workforce. This centrifugal orientation is strongest among performing artists, shown in the mapping we've done for the Los Angeles, San Francisco and Minneapolis-St. Paul metros. It is weaker but still marked for writers and visual artists, with musicians somewhere in-between. Among Los Angeles metro artists, our mapping (FIG. 10) reveals a pronounced centrifugal tendency for performing artists to live close to the Hollywood film and music complex, which offers many jobs for writers as well. Musicians, the lowest paid of the artistic disciplines, are more likely to live farther from the high housing cost Hollywood area. In the poorer and working class communities of east and south of the Los Angeles metro, where artist shares of the workforce are lowest, musicians and visual artists account for larger shares of the resident artist population.
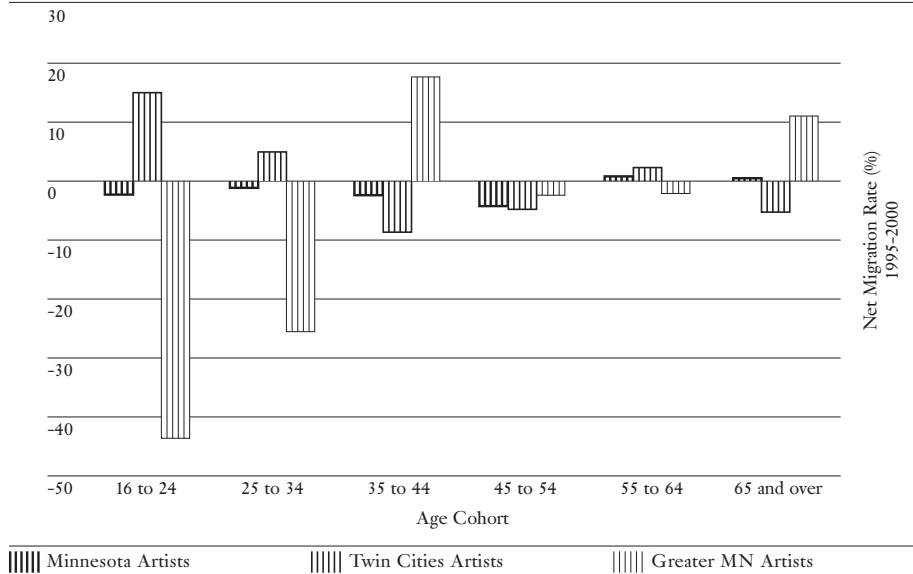
Rural to Urban and Back: Migration by Age Cohort,
State of Minnesota Artists, 1995–2000.
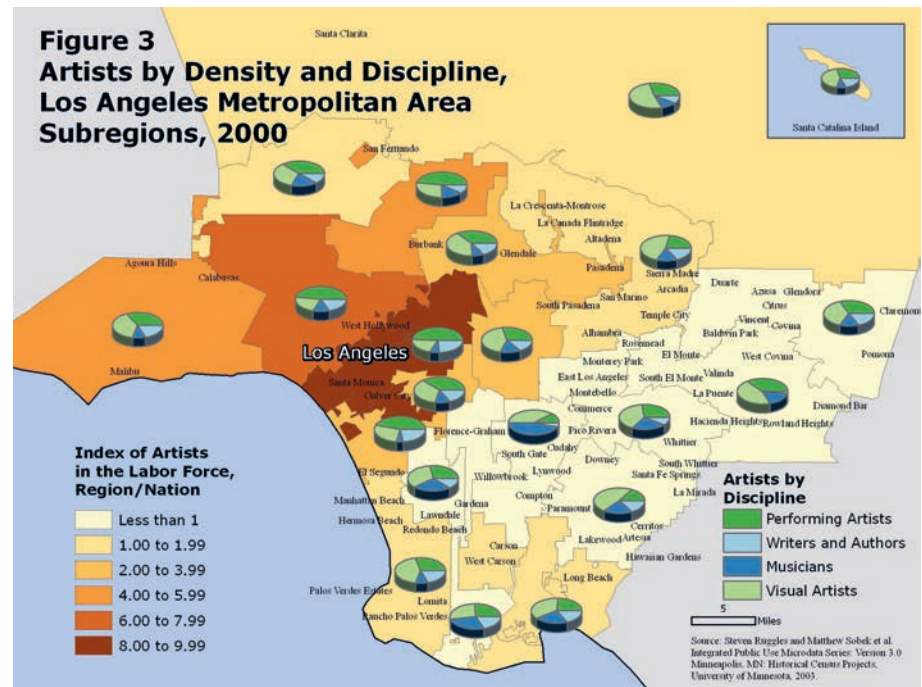
Artists by Discipline, Residential Concentrations,
Los Angeles Metro Area, 2000.

NOTES

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After 2000, the U.S. eliminated the decennial population census and instituted, beginning in 2006, the American Community Survey, a 1% sample of the population each year. The decennial censuses had surveyed 5% of the population on its "long form", which included more data, e.g. on migration, than the new ACS. With artists comprising such a small percent of the workforce, the ACS is unreliable for any one year. Some researchers are combining results across years, though this makes it impossible to chart year-by-year changes accurately. For this reason, I use the 2000 Census results for many of these data points. The share of artists in the US workforce has remained relatively stable since 2000.

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LIST OF FIGURES

Handgriffe

In 2002, I went to a dinner party. At this party, someone asked me what my job was. I answered, as always, that I work as a dancer. I had been answering this question many, many times but this time, something happened. After I had said that I work as a dancer, I said: "But not always". The guy who had asked me the question about my job looked at me with astonishment and asked: What do you mean?

What did I actually mean? Is the job of a dancer to dance in dance pieces? If so, than what is the job of a dancer when he does not dance in dance pieces? Does he still work as a dancer?

> When I don't work as a dancer, I do other jobs. And I don't get these jobs by applying for them as a dancer. For this, I must create another professional identity. So I move, speak and dress differently. That's exactly what I do when I am onstage and work as a dancer. Salespeople also move, speak and dress differently when they work. They perform their jobs, just like I do. But they don't work as dancers. Unlike them, I perform the performing of jobs.

To find out what makes my work the work of a dancer, I decided to make a dance piece about that. When I went to work, I observed myself performing jobs trying to understand how I did these jobs being a dancer. How does a dancer perform bartending? And even more important: Can bartending be defined as dance when it is performed by a dancer? This process, and thus the dance piece in the making, I called "perform performing". The jobs I performed I defined as dances—as they were executed by a dancer. So these jobs allowed me to call myself a dancer even if I wasn't dancing in a dance piece. This gave my a strong sense of a professional identity.

As I was considering performing my jobs as a dance piece, I had asked the city council to support this artistic process by paying the rent of a rehearsal space. I needed this space to execute my dance moves and analyse how these moves were different from the moves I performed at work. After submitting an application, a jury considered the artistic process to be worth a support of 6,000 Euros. But when the end of the first month came and I had to hand

6

in the rent, I got notified by the council that the city had overdrawn their annual budget and couldn't pay me anymore the money they had promised.

If you need to earn money quickly because your city has put a freeze on cultural funding, there is a special category of job. These jobs function on the commission principle: the more you sell, the more you earn. Over the past month I sold an electronic muscle trainer for the ABGymnic company. Actually I don't understand much about electronic muscle trainers, but I had a good performance. In economic language this means that I sold a lot. For me, a good performance means I performed well onstage. A performance as a salesman is not that different from a performance as a dancer. As a salesman or a dancer, one must

a) be well received
b) seem competent
c) sell oneself well

I sell the muscle trainer with the argument that it is innovative and has a smart concept. I try to sell this performance with the same arguments. And if I sell myself well, I have a good performance.

When you are folding T-Shirts at H&M, preparing beds in the sleeping car to Paris, stuffing envelopes with advertising cards, or bartending, your job consists of executing manual hand actions, something that translates into German as "Handgriffe". If you look at the German compound word "Handgriff", the first part of the word obviously means hand and the last part means grip. So the German term for manual hand action reveals an idea of how to work a job with your hands so that it becomes graspable. Wasn't that a perfect definition of my job as a dancer? With that definition in mind, I performed the manual hand actions of my jobs—in my jobs but as well on stage, in my dance piece called "perform performing".

On the day of the premiere of this dance piece, I received a call from the city council that they were now able to release the 6,000 Euros to support the creation of my dance piece. I was in limbo: I had already created my dance piece by working manual hand actions off- and on-stage. What should I do with this money? Was this a call to do a dance piece, that kind of dance piece that dancers do?

Last Saturday, I came to the supermarket shortly before closing time. In front of the exit were five unemployed people who always stand there and beg for money. One of them asks me what time it is. When I say it's about closing time, he says to the others, "Hey, guys, we're almost done. It's almost quitting time. And then it's finally weekend!" My dictionary defines work as goal-oriented physical or mental activity directed towards the accomplishment of something. When I apply for money from cultural foundations to work as a dancer, I ask myself how much my work is worth. My work is worth something to the cultural foundations when they give me money to work as a dancer. When they give me no money, I cannot work as a dancer and my work as a dancer has no value.

The only solution I had about this limbo was to re-work the dance piece and observe what would change if I knew that every manual hand action was not an act of financing my dance piece but a manual hand action performed as a result of financial subsidies. I had to find out what was the difference between a manual hand action preparing a Gin and tonic and a manual hand action preparing a dance piece.

This was a big task. I now had to think of movements that would qualify as being worth public funding.

The taxpayer has a right to see the art he wants to see. After all, he pays for it with his tax money. With this money, he should be able to control art production. For one tendu that I do onstage, for example, one harbour worker in Hamburg has to load 3 potato sacks onto a ship. Now! How
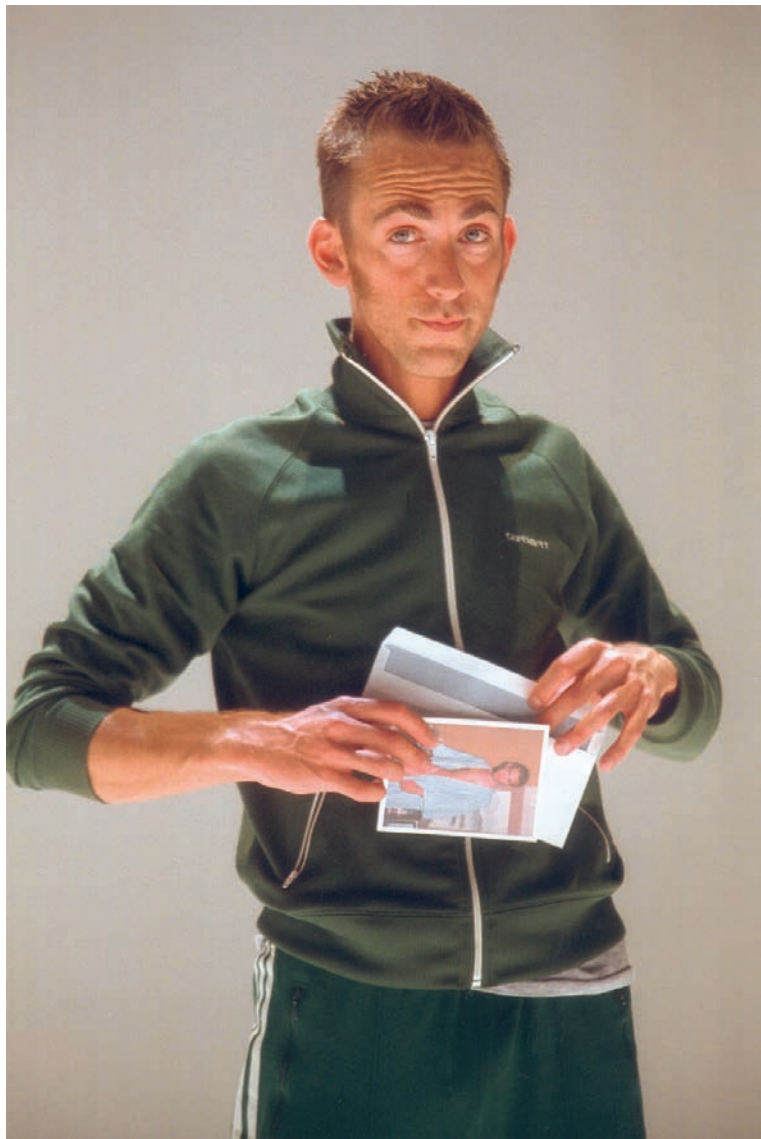
Friedemann Simon (Photography), *No Money, No Love*, 2002.

can I justify doing a tendu onstage to the harbour worker? Only by attempting to get the tax money back, by doing the tendu. This means I have to do a tendu so well that word spreads throughout Germany about what kind of awesome tendu Roller can do… Let's go to Hamburg then. When the tourists are in Hamburg, they take a harbour cruise before the tendu show and therefore subsidize the harbour, which in turn gives the harbour worker his work. In this way, a fabulous give-and-take ensues—the harbour worker heaves sacks of potatoes and I do tendus. Through this, my tendus will be in such high demand that I will tour internationally and make Hamburg worldwide known as "tendu city". Then, even more tourists will come and the investment of tax funds into my art has been fucking worth it.

Trying to come up with movements being worth public funding naturally drove me into artistic insanity. I figured the question was not about the quality of the tendu I made on stage but about the context in which the tendu was made. Doing a tendu on stage was using dance as a format for my argument if dance could be considered work. I realized I could use the process of making dance to process information, just like I use words in this presentation to process information. This means that dance can be considered a valuable format for problem solving, with the dance move generating new perspectives in a given argument.

It's the year 2045. When cultural funding started being cut and the fight for the last artistic jobs worsened, I changed careers, shocked by the news of a Flemish choreographer who'd had her Berlin colleague knocked off by a contract killer in order to get her funding money. I took on a job in a fitness club and developed "power-tendu" as a training method, which rewarded me with a modest commercial success. When I reached retirement age, I noticed that I'd worked my entire life as a free-lancer and had to get by with the monthly pension of 200 Euros. Luckily, a new flu virus got me, and I passed away. Since my death, I observe earthly life from another perspec-

tive. Recently, things have occurred that I would have thought impossible during my lifetime. When the unemployed outnumbered the employed, there really was another revolution. An army of unemployed people took up a bloody crusade, starting in Leipzig and covering all of Germany, taking jobs from those who were working. The workers who'd had their jobs taken away in turn joined the army of unemployed, creating a hopeless vicious circle. At some point someone remembered Jeremy Rifkin's theory from the early 21st century, in which everyone would have work if everyone worked half-time. For a time it looked as if everything would work itself out. Leisure facilities were heavily frequented and the economy prospered. After a while, the people didn't know what to do with their free time; sects drew large crowds, especially The Church of Performance Art. Every night, this sect celebrated a mass where video documentation of performances from the time of cultural funding were shown. The sect's followers devoutly sat in front of the monitors and felt liberated from the emptiness of their existence. Soon, however, the university's collections of video documentations were completely plundered and no more videos were left to be viewed. For this reason, the sect members tried to develop their own performances. At the beginning, this undertaking was very difficult; no one had done anything like this since the end of cultural funding. Gradually, however, with the help of the historical video documents, the sect members adapted to their ancestor's techniques and were soon capable of holding a nightly live-performance mass. A huge new cathedral is under construction right now in Berlin— besides nine stages upon which simultaneous masses can be held, there is a foyer with a golden altar that contains the holy videotapes. My videos are in the right side wing in the second to the top shelf.

Presenting the first and the second part of "perform performing" over the course of 3 years enabled me to generate enough money to finance a third part of the piece. After finding out in the first part

what it meant to be a dancer and learning in the second part about what it actually meant to dance, I now wanted to share the outcome of this artistic research not only with myself but with others. I opened the German telephone book and looked up if there were any people who were bearing my name—Jochen Roller. I called them up in order to talk about what had happened in the last 3 years and how they could benefit from my research on what a dancer does as work.

- Roller.
- Am I speaking with Jochen Roller.
- Yes.
- Jochen Roller here.
- Haha, very funny.
- No, wait please. I know that your name is the same like mine.
- That can't be!
- Yes it is. *(silence)*
- And what do you want from me, Mr. Roller?
- I'm working in Berlin on a dance piece in which I ask other Jochen Rollers whether they think that dance can be considered work.
- Hmmm. I don't want to say now that I just do everything, but this actually sounds interesting. And what happens with my answers?
- I record them on video and use them in my piece.
- And then you play the other Jochen Rollers?
- No, they play themselves.
- Oh.
- So what about a meeting?
- Well, I'll think about it.
- Good. Then I'll call again.
- Yes, please do that.
- Good, Mr. Roller. Have a nice day.
- You too, Mr. Roller.

I got to meet five Jochen Rollers with a variety of professions: an economist, a wine-maker, a train driver, a biologist and a racing driver. Concerning my research question, if they considered dance as work

they were all pretty comfortable about the fact that in the frame of public funding I was dancing their taxes away. I still doubt how far they went into accepting dance as a format for problem solving.

After 7 years of touring the three parts of "perform performing", I had done enough research in this field and asked the auction house Christie's if they were interested to auction off the choreographies of the 3 parts. The auction happened in August 2009 and generated 15,000 Euros in revenue that I gave to a fellow choreographer—to create a new dance piece, a new artistic research process.

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The Embedded Artist Worker: Shifting Perspectives on Artists in the Labor Force

For decades, primarily economists and sociologists have sought to understand how artist workers may or may not be different than other types of workers. How do artists' incomes differ from other types of workers? What about their return on formal education? How do self-employment and unemployment rates differ between artists and other types of workers? As a result, what we perceive to be true about artists, based on research, is largely colored by how they may or may not depart from the characteristics of the average comparable worker.

What has emerged from research on artists is a picture of the "bohemian" artist or artist "precariat". In other words, research on artists has generally shown that these individuals are passionate but starving, talented but poor, happy but miserable. In terms of income, the majority of artists earn less than workers with comparable levels of education. Thus, the return on an artistic education or degree is comparatively low. *(Nevertheless, there are some artists—the "superstars"—that defy the odds of succeeding in an artistic career—in other words, there is great income variability in this profession.)* Research has also shown us that because of the economic challenges associated with an artistic career, workers in the arts have comparatively low rates of occupational persistence. Furthermore, the longevity of one's career as an artist is strongly influenced by other factors such as age, gender, experience, and even choice of art form. For example, dancers are much less likely to sustain careers in the arts beyond young adulthood than, say, visual artists *(the latter might even start their careers much later in life).*

Yet, the picture that research on artists has painted is not entirely dim. Coupled with the economic challenges of survival as an artist worker is the sense that these workers choose personal satisfaction over financial success. Economists use the term "non-pecuniary motives" to mean choosing an occupation for reasons other than money. A traditional labor economics model would largely base a prediction of how many hours a worker devotes to a particular line of work on income. For artist workers, this model has been amended to consider how much the worker prefers one job over another, and aptly referred to as the "work preference model".

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While research on artist workers, and how these workers compare to other types of workers, is still relevant, more recent research in this area has started to focus on the ways in which artists work. In other words, recent research on artists has recognized that the characteristics of these workers might be different from other types of workers as a result of the different *methods* these workers use in navigating their very complex work environments. For example, in the US, artists are two to three times more likely to be self-employed than other workers with comparable levels of education. This characteristic—propensity of self-employment—reflects the project-based nature of artistic work, the emphasis of process over product in artistic work, as well as the need for artists to market their distinctiveness in a hypercompetitive workforce.

Several new areas of research that focus on how artists work have begun to emerge. Some researchers have begun exploring artist skillsets—in particular, what skillsets are specific to artists and the transferability of these skillsets between artistic and non-artistic industries and occupations. Another growing area of interest among researchers is arts entrepreneurship. Here, studies have begun to look at how artists might work as entrepreneurs, the relationships between artists and entrepreneurs, and again, the transferability of entrepreneurial skillsets among artists to other industries concerned with innovation. A third area of contemporary research on artists deals with understanding artists as flexible workers, especially in terms of how artists might embody the methods of workers in the new "gig-economy".

In the remainder of this essay, I describe a bit about what we have learned about how artists work with respect to these three areas of recent research on artists. In doing so, I argue that research on artists has seen a dramatic shift. While we were once concerned with illustrating the precariousness of artistic occupations, we are now focused on identifying occupational distinctiveness, which in turn has empowered and given agency to artists working in the world. (FIG. 1)

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1990   2000   2010

non-pecuniary   experience   embedded   product
art   superstars   work   complex
bohemian   occupational   non-arts   navigate
returns   motives   sectors   distinct
economics   output   gig-economy   arts
age   quantity   valuable   relevance
sociology   models   skillsets   create
work   variability   economic   global
eductation   preference   transferability   workers
forms   low   workforce   process
persistence   gender   flexible   landscape
model   income   industries   risk
ar-teest   entrepreneurs
quality   environments
precariat

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Timeline of Research on Artists.

ARTISTS' SKILLSETS

Research on artists has begun to focus on the unique skillsets of these workers. In particular, how we might think about adapting or transferring artist skillsets to other industries and occupations. Transferability of skillsets might take the form of artists working across industries and occupations, or learning from artists about how they do their work and adapting their methods in industries and occupations outside of the arts.

In terms of the former—artists working across industries and occupations—we tend to think of the "multi-disciplinary" artist. This term conjures up a picture of an artist working in an array of mediums *(e.g., the musician-producer-editor-videographer)* either by choice or through necessity. Frédéric Martel uses the term "positive economy" to refer to the ideal state for an artist, where she is free to pursue her art within the safety of a sustainable business model. Martel argues that in the 21st century, this positive economy for artists has been fueled largely by technology and the multitude of digital platforms that allow artists the opportunity to work in several mediums. Researchers in the US have observed similar patterns among art school graduates, where more and more of these workers are practicing across multiple mediums throughout their careers.

Perhaps more emphasis has been given to research on the apparent transferability of artist skillsets to non-artistic industries and occupations. We might think this is nothing new—artists have always worked in non-arts occupations and industries as a way to supplement income from artistic work *(we have used the term "moonlighting" to describe the secondary occupational activity of many artists).* (1) But the focus here has shifted; whereas we were once concerned with secondary job holding by artists as a means for economic survival, we are now interested in the ability of artists to lend their creative skillsets to non-arts industries to stimulate innovation. For example, cities across the US are instituting "artist-in-residence" programs where artists work within the confines of a government office with the goal of promoting creative thinking among public sector workers.

The outcomes of these types of artist-in-residence programs, which literally "embed" the artist in non-arts organizations, are not well understood. Do artists, just by virtue of being present, inspire or influence others to be more creative? Do artists need a "seat-at-the-table", so to speak, in order to affect innovative solutions to complex problems? Researchers at the Arts, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation *(AEI)* Lab at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, an initiative sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts, are investigating the effectiveness of artist-in-residence programs in public sector work. Specifically, the AEI Lab is trying to figure out the role that artists play in public sector innovation by running a series of experiments where artists work with public sector workers to solve civic problems. The results of this work will provide insight on how embedded the artist can be in non-arts sectors in order to produce appreciable effects on innovation.

Recent research on transferability of artists skillsets begins to shift the perspective articulated in early research that that artist is a worker who finds himself in precarious employment circumstances. Instead, recent research illustrates opportunities for artists to embed themselves in circumstances that might fall outside of their artistic domain. In other words, recent research on artists has started to emphasize that the process of embedding provides opportunities to artists that have traditionally not been recognized as part of an artist's typical career.

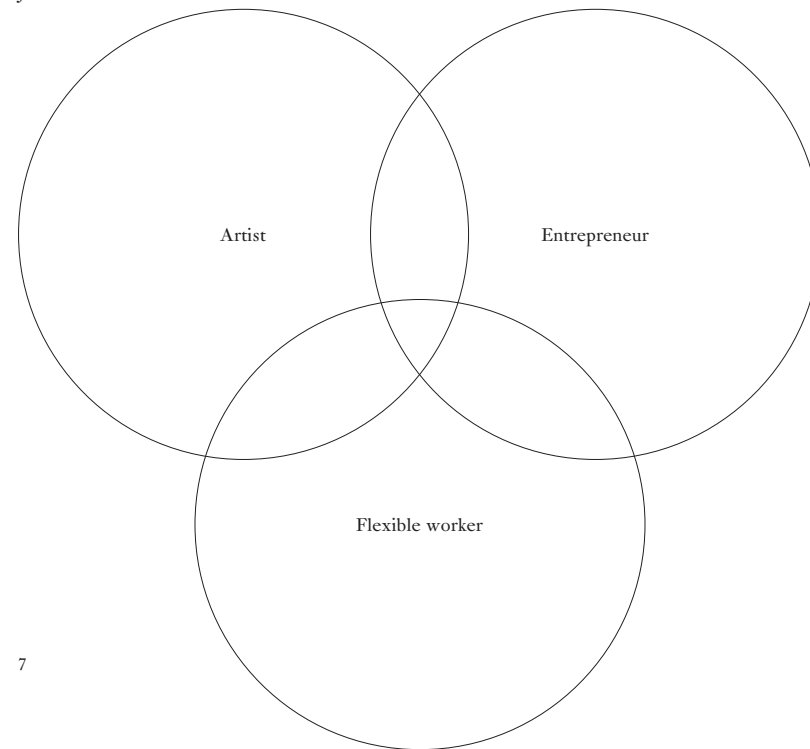## ARTISTS, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND FLEXIBLE WORK

Two other areas of emerging research on artists have to do with artists' relationship to entrepreneurship, and flexible work. I lump these areas together since they are often linked in studies on artists. Despite the linkages, there are also important distinctions to be made.

Artist is not the same as entrepreneur, which is not the same as flexible worker. Each has its own definition. In the literature, artists have generally been defined as workers—just like the carpenter, the

baker, and the teacher—who perform specific tasks in an occupation. The definition of entrepreneur varies, but generally means one who creates something out of nothing, or disrupts a process to create something new. The term "flexible worker" is commonly defined as a worker whose job does not require him to adhere to a traditional "9 to 5" schedule, but which allows him to perform a job during non-prescribed hours. Some might refer to flexible workers as "freelancers" or the new term, "gig-economy workers", or even contingent or contractual workers. (FIG. 2)

The distinctions between artist, entrepreneur, and flexible worker are important since they allow us to identify the implications from when these things do, and do not, overlap. For example, recent research in arts entrepreneurship tends to confound artists with entrepreneurship, but doing so prevents us from recognizing how artists might not work in entrepreneurial fashions. There are artists who work within organizations whose jobs require autonomy to use creativity similar to that of entrepreneurs, just as there are artists who work in prescribed roles within established organizations. There are also artists who work outside of formal institutions who also function more like entrepreneurs, and others whose work is more rigid. Similarly, there are artists who work as salaried workers, and others who work as freelancers—both whom have varying levels of flexibility.

Areas of overlap between artists, entrepreneurs, and flexible work-ers have been emphasized in recent research on artists. Recent research on artists has idealized the "artist entrepreneur" primarily by relating artists to entrepreneurs. The literature in this area has reported how the artist entrepreneur has a tendency to depart from prevailing norms—like an entrepreneur; to produce innovative and novel products—like an entrepreneur; and mix and match materials to create something out of nothing—demonstrating a version of "entrepreneurial bricolage". Similarly, recent research has profiled artists as the epitome of flexible workers. The literature in this area documents artists' flexible work schedules, footloose lifestyles, toggling between labor markets, and need for personal autonomy.

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Artist

Entrepreneur

Flexible worker

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The Relationship between Artists, Entrepreneurship, and Flexible Work.

In sum, we know that artists work with a variety of methods and within a multitude different employment circumstances. In addition, we know artists' career trajectories are far from static—in other words, many artists toggle between self-employment and paid employment, work several different jobs in non-arts and arts industries, and may even enter and exit artistic occupations across their lifetime. Recognizing the variegated circumstances of artist work allows us to understand how artist workers are distributed across the labor force, but also how art schools can approach training artists to respond dynamically to labor force changes.

ARTISTS' METHODS FOR MITIGATING RISK

As we have seen, the embedded artist has the opportunity to engage in different forms and functions of his work in the labor market. By understanding the landscape in which she works, an artist can also use her unique artistic skills to mitigate risk. One of the best ways to understand how artists mitigate risk is to observe the behavior of artists in risky economic conditions.

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The years 2008–2010 were generally defined as the period of the Great Recession, where for most occupations, including artists, the unemployment rate dramatically increased. In the US, the artist unemployment rate between 2008 and 2010 increased from 3 percent to 10 percent. During the Great Recession, we saw self-employment among artists increase *(for professionals with similar levels of education, the self-employment rate tended downward)*, and the number of artists in the labor force decreased. This suggests that self-employment among artists was partly a function of a lack of opportunities for paid employment in the arts. Thus, we can conclude that *one way in which artists mitigate risk is through self-employment.*

We also saw, throughout the Great Recession, an increased proportion of workers entering and exiting arts-related paid employment *(and entering and exiting arts-related self-employment)*. For example, the proportion of artist workers in the education *(e.g., teachers)* industry increased from before to after the recession. In

other words, we saw disproportionately high rates of entry and exit into flexible artistic work during the recession. This suggests that *artists toggle between artistic and non-artistic markets to mitigate risk.*

Another way to understand how artists mitigate risk is through analyzing artists' response to social policies. The very little we know about this topic suggests that artists disproportionately benefit from social policies compared to other workers. When the Affordable Care Act—which expanded health care access to low-income individuals in the US—was enacted in 2010, a larger proportion of artists enrolled in federally sponsored healthcare compared to other workers. Part of the Affordable Care Act also allowed young people to stay on their parents' health insurance for a longer period of time; we also saw artists take up health insurance through parental support more so than other types of workers. Therefore, *artists mitigate risk by taking advantage of social policies and programs.*

Finally, artists and organizations can support one another. Arts organizations, like many other private corporations, are increasingly relying on contract labor and freelancers as opposed to wage and salary employment. Research suggests that organizations use contract labor not only to save on costs, but also to innovate. Freelance artists can offer ingenuity to an organization's artistic production process. Moreover, organizations can serve as a haven for artists by offering flexibility between wage and contract employment, and providing an institutional structure to work within. Thus, *artists can work within organizations—a process that can serve organizational interests and ultimately help artists mitigate risk.*

Artists have options for mitigating risk. Contemporary research on artists has added more options to the ways in which artists have traditionally mitigated risk. For example, artists have always held secondary jobs, participated in unions, made use of spousal support. Many artists get degrees or formal arts training in order to help secure jobs. The point is, by understanding the options at hand, artists can take strategies to advance their careers.

CONCLUSION

Research on artist workers has shifted, which has implications for artists working in the labor force. Whereas research used to focus on the vulnerabilities of artist careers by comparing them to other workers, recent research on artists now recognizes that the differences between artists and other workers is a function of the uniqueness of how artists perform. We now understand that artists can use their skillsets in a variety of occupations and industries, and vary their employment status. Thus, the contemporary artist embeds himself in the workforce by adapting to myriad environments. Artists will be more or less successful in the process of embedding depending on their familiarity with the labor market. The more familiar the artist is with the opportunities he has to work, the better the artist can mitigate occupational risk.

Questions remain. First, how effective is the process of embedding in reducing artists' economic vulnerabilities? Second, is it artists' nature to embed—or do artists prefer to work in isolation? Third, is it artists' responsibility to find strategies to mitigate risk, or is it society's responsibility to provide support? Finally, are non-arts industries and occupations receptive to embedding artists, and how can we offer opportunities for artists to demonstrate their value in this respect? These, and other, questions continue to be addressed in recent research on artists, which will continue to inform how we consider artists' role in the labor force.

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NOTES

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We actually know very little about the employment behavior of artists in non-arts industries since employment data typically do not include information on jobs that do not provide the primary source of income. For artists, who often earn more from a non-arts job than an arts-job, this data limitation is very real.

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