THE EXPLOITATION OF ISOLATION: URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE ARTIST'S STUDIO

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Have you heard about this house

Inside, a thousand voices talk

And that talk echoes around and around

The windows reverberate

The walls have ears

A thousand saxophone voices talk

You should hear how we syllogize

You should hear

About how Babel fell and still echoes away,

How we idolize,

Theorize

Syllogize

In the dark,

In the heart

— Pere Ubu, 'Dub Housing'

In 2010, in the wake of the 2007 subprime and 2008 financial crisis we wrote, No Room to Move: Radical Art in the Regenerate City, a book which assessed the growing role of public art in urban design in the United Kingdom post-1945 and involved discussions with contemporary artists critical of urban regeneration processes.[1] We anticipated that

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1 Josephine Berry Slater and Anthony Iles, *No Room to Move: Radical Art and the Regenerate City*, , London: Mute Books, 2010.

the cultural benefits promised by regeneration schemes would be progressively dumped in the era of austerity, as the developers' naked profit principle became an acceptable and open objective, positioning artists increasingly as collateral rather than agents of urban change, and art became a vernacular veneer to be cloned by developers and local authority bureaucrats alike.

However, the reignition of the housing market triggered by the subprime crisis blew away even our worst expectations. The wholesale commodification of urban space in the, by now very much global, city of London, which rapidly escalated the economic crisis into the current housing crisis, has impacted artists' living conditions, working conditions, art practice and the public display of art more generally.[2] Yet how is the spatial precarity that has resulted from this unprecedented transformation of real estate into the main lever of the British economy, and worsened by austerity, made legible in the field of contemporary art? In other words, how does a scarcity of space or spatial scarcity – which, as a fundamental use value necessarily affects all of social production and reproduction – become a directly legible influence on art, both historically and today, and with what effects? The intensifying struggle over housing and workspace must surely manifest in art's internal development as much as in the more externally legible forms of social contestation and organization that involve – but as often implicate – artists. Here, therefore, we attempt to construct a brief overview of the relationship between the urban mode of production, the studio, the social figure of the artist and the nature of their practice.

Here we continue to develop a framework by which we understand art as developing both in relation to and distinction from capitalism's spatial fixes.[3] In David Harvey's analysis, capitalism both fixes space for value production, and then later disaggregates it in order to provide for new areas of innovation, opportunity and profit.[4] Capital's needs for transportation, communication and storage structure space and the environment.[5] In the post-war period, particularly under the pressures of reconstruction, this restructuring was undertaken by the state as a unified programme of public works, within which art was integrated, for the first time, as exceptional and autonomous, serving the purpose of no purpose e.g. spiritually edifying public art, albeit within a context tailored to the

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2   Of course, there has been a *housing crisis* in London and the UK for most of the twentieth century, arguably for the entire course of modernity, and this is directly linked to the capitalisation of land in the United Kingdom which laid the basis for, and is tied up with, London's centrality to the global accumulation of financial, industrial and landed capital. For a series of cogent arguments about the longevity of the British economy's relation to a 'history of residential inflation', questions about the term *crisis* and the necessity of high land and house prices to the health of UK 'state political authority' see Danny Hayward, 'Fire in a Bubble', *Mute,* 15th September 2017, available at: http://www.metamute. org/editorial/articles/fire-bubble [Accessed 20 August, 2018].

3   See: David Harvey's 'The Spatial Fix: Hegel, von Thunen and Marx', *Antipode,* Vol.13, no. 3, pp. 1–12, 1981 and 'Globalization and the 'Spatial Fix', *Geographische Revue*, No.2, 23-30, 2001.

4   Harvey, 'The Spatial Fix: Hegel, von Thunen and Marx', op. cit., p. 25.

5   Costas Lapavitsas, 'Financialisation, or the Search for Profits in the Sphere of Circulation', London: SOAS, 2009, Available at: http://www.soas.ac.uk/rmf/papers/file51263.pdf. [Accessed 20 August, 2018]

needs of industrial capitalist development.[6] Later, capital's need for spatial fixes become the response to crises of overaccumulation and temporary solutions to the destructive effects of competition — driving the 'annihilation of space by time'[7] — achieved by earlier revolutions in transport and communications.[8] Spatial commodification develops from being a corollary of industrial development with some speculative outcomes (railways and real estate in the 19th century) into a core area of accumulation[9] in the late-20th and early 21st centuries due to the increasing prominence of global finance. It is through this dynamic, according to Michael Hudson[10] and Loren Goldner,[11] that finance ceases to serve investment in productive industry and becomes the central motor of (and in fact barrier to) development as financialization determines the form through which first corporations, then almost all enterprises of every form and function, both large and small, reproduce themselves. Within this emergent field of intense global competition between cities, vying to solicit investment from the swarm of nomad dollars[12] seeking profit worldwide, urbanization becomes a key mediator,[13] and art is at stake within it because as Harvey argues, 'claims to uniqueness and authenticity can best be articulated as distinctive and non-replicable cultural claims.'[14] This provides us with the credible linkages between finance and urbanization which help to structure our framework, as well as the periodization of art within capital's self-development.

Here, we prioritize the studio as a spatial container within which the current production conditions of art are crystallized. The studio offers a window onto the life of the artist in all its distinctness from other working practices in the city which makes it highly desirable to processes of commodification. It is also a spatial frame that allows us to track the totality of the artist's activities. Therefore, the studio presents a surface upon which are etched capitalist financialization's desires for exemplary creative practices, embodied in artists, and at the same time, the minimum conditions required by artists to actually create work. By tracking the historical transformations of the artist's studio we can illuminate the impact of the changing mode of urban production on the figure and practices of artists and thereby sharpen our reading of the effects of spatial crisis on art today. Within this we understand art's negotiation of its spatial conditions as a struggle to both reproduce the

6   See, for example, the debates around the exclusion of industrial art in the post-war formation of the Arts Council of England (See: Michael T. Saler, *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England: Medieval Modernism and the London Underground*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 167–169). Notable here is John Maynard Keynes dual role in the integration of art into the state as exception to the division of labour in society and his central importance to the economic reform of the post-war State generally.

7   Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, Trans. Martin Nicolaus, New York: Vintage, 1973, p. 538.

8   Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. Trans. D. Nicholson-Smith. Oxford; Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1991.

9   Lapavitsas, 'Financialisation, or the Search for Profits in the Sphere of Circulation'.

10   Michael Hudson, *Super Imperialism: the Origin and Fundamentals of U.S. World Dominance,* London; Sterling, Va.: Pluto Press, 2003.

11   Lauren Goldner, 'Fictitious Capital for Beginners', *Mute*, Vol.2 No.6, 2007.

12   Goldner, 'Fictitious Capital for Beginners'.

13   Louis Moreno, 'The Urban Process Under Financialised Capitalism', *City*, Vol.18 No.3, 2014, pp. 244–

14   David Harvey, 'The Art of Rent', *Socialist Register*, 2002, pp. 93–102, p. 98.

artist and reproduce art. This is not commensurate with class struggle, but, given art's difference from processes of capitalization – art is neither defined directly by socially necessary labor nor utility,[15] and derives its force through a critical remove from the status quo of any given societal formation[16] – art's spatial struggles overlap both with other struggles for social reproduction and critiques developed by antisystemic movements.

Five Stages in the Studio's Genealogy

In order to set art's defining relationship to finance in a broader historical context and to tease out this and other factors structuring its relationship to space and the city, we have constructed a comparative genealogy of the artist's studio in modernity. As Daniel Buren commented in 1979: 'Analysis of the art system must inevitably be carried on in terms of the studio as the unique space of production and the museum as the unique space of exposition.'[17] If, as a man of his institution-critical times, Buren focused on exposing the studio's continuity with the museum as the artwork's intended destination and implicit limit condition, we will adapt this connective approach to our own times, replacing the museum with the city.

The museum, as a space apart, functioned as a laboratory for concentrating knowledge during the Enlightenment as well as reflecting the rigid divisions of production within the first phase of capitalism. But within post-Fordism, the city becomes the factory (of creative labor and financial self-valorization) and the crucible of knowledge production which, like the brain itself, thrives on its multiplicity of interactions.[18] If we want to read the studio as a vessel connecting the (financialized) transformation in shifting production conditions to changing conceptions of art and its exhibition which accompany this process, it then becomes necessary to formulate a genealogy in keeping with Michel Foucault's epistemological strategy.

Drawing histories is emphatically not, he argued, about creating consoling continuities between the past and the present moment wherein we rediscover ourselves, but rather a way to 'introduce discontinuity into our very being', to uproot our presuppositions. 'This', he concludes, 'is because knowledge is not made for understanding; it is made for cutting.'[19] By returning to the past we want to emphasize that history is not only a knife to cut backwards through time, but also forwards into the virtual futures stored in the present. In presenting the following brief genealogy of historical models of the studio, we want to emphasize not only what has changed, but also the many historical elements

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15   Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar, Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987 and Dave Beech, *Art and Value: Art's Economic Exceptionalism in Classical, Neoclassical and Marxist Economics,* Leiden: Brill, 2015.

16   Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory,* trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor, London; New York: Continuum Press, 1997.

17   Daniel Buren, 'The Function of the Studio'. *October*, Vol.10, 1979, pp. 51–58, p. 51.

18   Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, New York, Random House, (1961) 1993.

19   Michel Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', *The Foucault Reader*, Paul Rabinow ed., London: Penguin Books, 1984, p. 88.

which persist within current studio culture and architecture. While these presiding elements inform the condition of the contemporary studio, they gain a new function and meaning under present conditions, bearing only a resemblance to their former identity.

Fig. 1: Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Theodore Watts-Dunton in Rossetti's Studio by Henry Treffry Dunn, 1882, Gouache and watercolour on paper now on card, National Portrait Gallery.[20]

The Isolated Studio (c. 1800 – 1950)

The isolated studio arises with the modern metropolis and the solidification of capitalist society with processes of urbanization. It is a cell, withdrawn from but surrounded by the bustle of the city. Often situated at the city's fringes or derelict zones, partially rural or pastoral in character, it is the situation of the existential artist, laboring over their metier in retreat.[21] Yet, though the studio may contain a particle of the pastoral, its eyrie-like remove from the city also provided a

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20   License: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/.

21   Buren, 'The Function of the Studio'. Honoré De Balzac immortalised the archetypal inwardness and nobility of the artist's studio in his 1845 short story, 'The Unknown Masterpiece'. Here is the scene where the young painter Nicolas Poussin first encounters Master Porbus's studio: 'All the light in the studio came from a window in the roof, and was concentrated upon an easel, where a canvas stood untouched as yet save for three or four outlines in chalk. The daylight scarcely reached the remoter angles and corners of the vast room; they were as dark as night, but the silver ornamented breastplate of a Reiter's corselet, that hung upon the wall, attracted a stray gleam to its dim abiding-place among the brown shadows. [...] The walls were covered, from floor to ceiling, with countless sketches in charcoal, red chalk, or pen and ink. Amid the litter and confusion of color boxes, overturned stools, flasks of oil, and essences, there was just room to move so as to reach the illuminated circular space where the easel stood. The light from the window in the roof fell full upon Porbus's pale face and on the ivory-tinted forehead of his strange visitor.' (Honoré De Balzac, 'The Unknown Masterpiece', 1845, available at: https://www.gutenberg.org/files/23060/23060-h/23060-h.htm#link2H_4_0002.)

vantage point from which to reflect upon and unveil its mysteries. The studio exacts its charge precisely from its distant proximity to the people and things that bustle and bristle past. From it, art springs out to bring revelations about urban life into appearance. In early post-studio artist Daniel Buren's condensation:

1. It is the place where the work originates.

2. It is generally a private place, an ivory tower perhaps.

3. It is a stationary place where portable objects are produced.

[...] the studio is a place of multiple activities: production, storage, and finally, if all goes well, distribution. It is a kind of commercial depot.[22]

Although modern artists, such as Edouard Manet and Claude Monet, made forays into the city and country, to paint en plein air, they set out from the studio or reassembled it outdoors (Monet had his Bateau Atelier so he could paint the light-industrial river life at Argenteuil), returning to the isolated studio to complete their work. By the mid-19th century, the artist's studio perhaps already began to seem like a colonial outpost or hunting hide from which to launch explorations into the unknown and increasingly far-flung territories generated by the dynamic forces of finance's first urban transformations. Indeed, it was Baron von Haussmann's credit-fueled redevelopment of Paris (1853-1870) that pushed out manufacturing and the working classes from the city center, creating industrial suburbs such as Argenteuil (where Monet lived and worked), Courbevoie, and Asnières-sur-Seine (where Seurat painted factory workers relaxing) whose hybridization of gritty industrial production and pleasure seeking fascinated the Impressionists. As the old artisanal quarters were dismantled, where housing and manufacture had mixed and self-organized along with the classes, they were replaced by the repetitive uniformity of the new Paris – kiosk, bench, street-lamp, kiosk, bench, street-lamp – ubiquitously evoking industrial standardization and efficiency, not to mention a more rigid spatial division of classes. We can trace the consequences of early financialization's spatializing effects in the siting of the Impressionist studio within the new suburban peripheries, the intensification of speed and mobility, and the attention to the drama of class differences in their paintings.

With the old quarters and lifestyles gone, there was a brash proletarianization of the freshly built public sphere producing a caustic shock to bourgeois sensibilities and, it should be added, creating perhaps the most important subject of 19th century painting and writing. The shock is tangible in the following diary entry by the bohemian bourgeois Goncourt brothers of 18 November 1860:

Our Paris, the Paris where we were born, the Paris of the way of life of 1830 to 1848, is passing away. Its passing is not material but moral. Social life is going through a great evolution, which is beginning. I see women, children, households, families in this café. The interior is passing

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22   Buren, 'The Function of the Studio', p. 51.

away. Life turns back to become public. The club for those on high, the café for those below, that is what society and the people are come to.[23]

The first speculative housing boom was paid at the cost of the displacement and broken autonomy of the city's working class, but it also unleashed the anomic bacchanal of mass leisure, giving the petit bourgeois new standing in a reborn public realm. While this mass appearance certainly led to the temporally disjointed flâneur and the probing bateau atelier,[24] it caused an equal and opposite reaction, necessitating the romantic retreat into the existential gloom of the studio in which modernity's headlong transformations could be sifted and digested as art. If artists could be existentially gloomy, however, it was because their studios afforded at least some privacy; the very thing that will become unavailable in the neoliberal city's cloning of the artist's atelier and developers' penchant for large glazed facades behind which there is no place to hide and for which there are no curtains big enough! But 19th century Parisian gloom was perhaps more psychological than architectural since it was there, between 1900 and the 1930s, that the maison atelier or studio-house[25] was invented with its top-floor studios and large windows with living quarters below.[26] The atelier model of light, spacious and multipurpose living spaces would be integrated into modernist open-plan principles of design (e.g. Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation, 1947-1952), driving a reimagination of lifestyle that has underwritten middle class appropriations of loft living from the 1970s until today.

Fig.2: Fluxhouse Cooperative 1967—89, Fluxhouse by edenpictures is licensed with CC BY 2.0.[27]

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23   Edmond and Jules Goncourt quoted in T.J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999, p. 34.

24   Monet had a bateau atelier or studio boat at Argenteuil in which Édouard Manet famously painted a portrait of him working accompanied by his wife, *Claude Monet peignant dans son atelier* (1874).

25   The modernist studio-house Zukin refers to is Le Corbusier's Maison-atelier du peintre Amédée Ozenfant, Paris, France, 1922. This itself is a significant upscaling of features drawn from 19th century light-industrial artisans' workshops, often located in the suburbs and working class areas of Paris, used as live-work studio spaces by modernist artists such as Alberto Giacometti, Amadeo Modigliani and Pablo Picasso.

26   Sharon Zukin, *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982, pp. 80-81.

27   To view a copy of this license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/.

The Factory Studio (1962-1989)

Warhol's Factory studio helped pioneer the appropriation of former industrial space by artists in Manhattan as the city stepped up its planned displacement of industry.[28] The studio as factory expresses a dual process of the western city's deindustrialization and art's experimental reimagination of itself as participating in general production: collective, industrial, site-sensitive, gendered, prototyped, banalised, libidinal, democratic and mediatized. The factory studio was a space for collapsing distinctions between art and production, art and life, art and technological reproduction – a laboratory for the contestation of art's distinction per se and the creation of large-scale, dirty, genre shifting, commerce courting, performative and intermedia works. For the generation that followed the Abstract Expressionists, the factory studio became a space not only for the reinvention of art, but for the reinvention of the self, which in turn was framed as art and put on display: 'In the mid- to late sixties, for example, the Conceptualists presented the process of making art as a work of art in itself.'[29] In this phase, the neo-avant-garde renewed art by challenging its originality, individualism, sexism and class elitism. The factory was therefore a space of liberated production in which to launch attacks on the lazy presumptions of an art system that had been embalmed within the museum and bourgeois class interests. The bones of working-class production were danced on, not in the sense that artists directly displaced industrial labor, but rather that their joyful occupation of these decommissioned spaces examined and overturned many of the social divisions that industrial production presupposes.

Artists also organized, as 'Art Workers', on the model of industrial labor but not (primarily) to 'campaign about wages or working conditions',[30] but instead to radically contest the disaster of bourgeois capitalism, racism, war and technocracy.[31] From Pop, to Performance and Land Art, artists were at pains to make explicit the relationships between art and commodification, art and the forces of production (industrial, administrative, cybernetic, heteropatriarchal). Like a can of soup, artworks could be generated by the dozen, sold by the yard, and everyone could be a celebrity for 15 minutes. Equally, the productive power of the factory could be desublimated, its repetitions and intense energies hijacked to produce new experimental gyrations of thought, sex, art, music and performance. Its expanse of largely unarticulated space provided an (almost) blank sheet for rearranging the conventions of living, working and creating (live/work).

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28   Of course this was not the first foray of artists into the factory, in the 1920s Russian constructivists had developed first a *laboratory productivism* in the studio before launching themselves into *practical work in production*. However, as Maria Gough and others' key studies indicate, the artist primarily entered the factory either as an educator, designer of products or re-trained engineer. See, Maria Gough, *Artist as Producer Russian Constructivism in Revolution*, Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. of California Press, 2007, pp. 100–119.

29   Zukin, *Loft Living*, p. 80.

30   Julia Bryan-Wilson, *Art Workers: Radical Practice in the Vietnam War Era*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009, p. 114.

31   Julia Bryan-Wilson's book cogently and sensitively discusses the formation of the Art Workers Coalition and its offshoot, The New York Art Strike against Racism, War and Repression, during the early 1970s in terms which bring the politics of labour and art-labour to the fore in their complex and contradictory web of associations, identifications and disidentifications.

One of the most ambitious artists' housing projects, George Macunius' Fluxhouse Cooperatives (1966 to 1975), crosses over with Warhol's Factory, sharing the conditions of New York's deindustrialization in the late '60s and early '70s, but put them to use under a very different model. Whilst Warhol's Factory has latterly been celebrated as a living artwork and business model, Fluxhouse Cooperatives were conceived as a multiple from the beginning. They were a bohemian capitalist fantasy of a communist cooperative trading under the name Fluxus Cooperative Inc.[32] Maciunas imagined Fluxhouses or the Fluxcity (of which the coops were the basic building blocks to be multiplied and scaled-up) as a Kolkhoz (collective estate). Yet the pragmatism of negotiating New York's zoning laws and the difficulty of raising finance meant this was to become only replicable on an individualist and increasingly capitalized basis by an incoming middle class and the developers that followed hard on their heels.

For a short period during the 1960s and early 1970s then, Loft Living,[33] was a cheap fix for artists and a radical new way to think about creating and living in the city — one that inspired many imitators. Zukin argues, however, that through the growing willingness of artists to present their work in their place of both living and work, 'consumption of art in the artists' studio developed into a consumption of the studio too.'[34] This appropriation of the studio by the middle class meant that an inadvertent outcome of performance and conceptual art was 'the success of the studio' itself. The studio became a coveted model for metropolitan living. After artists had appropriated the spaces freed up by displaced industrial work, a new middle class in turn struggled for the same spaces, turning the ex-industrial into a booming property category. The studio loft has become a key urban trope, reappearing in modulated form in all subsequent cycles of post-industrial real estate boom and bust (1980s, 1990s and 2000s). On the other hand the gentrification process that ensued produced shared conditions between artists and low income residents in the fallout zones of capital's reoccupation of the inner city and this was generative of new struggles and solidarities around housing and space, notably in NYC's Lower East Side.[35]

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32   Revisiting Macunias's projects in the long recession of the 2010s, Florian Cramer and Renee Ridgeway discuss how 'Fluxus was just as much an economic as it was an artistic project' and in Macunias's ambitious projects 'its performativity and processuality were not merely aesthetic but also biopolitical and bioeconomic choices that resulted in manic-depressive business cycles.'
Florian Cramer, 'Depression: Post-Melancholia, Post-Fluxus, Post-Communist, Post-Capitalist, Post-Digital, Post-Prozac', in Maya Tounta ed., *A Solid Injury to the Knees*, Vilnius: Rupert, 2016, pp.60-107, p.87. Macunias may be known as the 'father of SoHo' i.e. gentrification, or one of a handful of artists who halted Robert Moses's expressway from destroying swathes of Lower Manhattan, or the progenitor of small but beautiful artists' cooperative housing projects thriving in post-crisis USA presently; what is clear is that his successes were not the ones he had intended:
'Maciunas may be seen as an artist whose primary works were economic experiments, the lifelong endeavor of translating a communist concept of political (= macro) economy into viable micro-economies. Projects that boomed and busted, running in perpetual bipolar cycles of euphoria and depression. In this sense, Maciunas did not only pioneer gentrification but he also preempted the creative dotcom economy with its manic-depressive model of incubators and startups.' Cramer, 'Depression: Post-Melancholia, Post-Fluxus, Post-Communist, Post-Capitalist, Post-Digital, Post-Prozac', p.92.

33   Zukin, *Loft Living*.

34   Zukin, *Loft Living*, p. 80.

35   Gregory Sholette et al (eds), *Upfront: A Publication of Political Art Documentation/Distribution*, 1983

Open or Community Studio (1966-Now)

Open or community studios took hold where the concentration of marginalized (classed and raced) people met with conditions of economic decline and urban dilapidation. A phenomenon known as spatial concentration whose crisis point was reached in the 1950s in western cities and which would quickly reverse into spatial deconcentration;[36] a term which we use here to describe complex migratory processes such as white middle class suburbanization in the US and, in the UK, the planned working class displacement from major cities to new towns.[37] The open studio registers and responds to the assault on and abandonment of urban communities left in the wake of these processes. In the US the Black Arts Movement built on the radical political premise that the 'ghetto itself is the gallery'[38] by establishing theatres, concert halls, rehearsal spaces, exhibition spaces, art and music studios in largely black and poor areas of the inner city.[39] The venues generated served as the platform for a rapidly developing ethos of community arts, characterized by the attempt to deflect specialist audiences in favor of direct and immediate community provision. In the UK such spaces and the community arts they supported 'dated back to the 1960s and were associated with alternative bookshops, theatre groups and the so-called Arts Laboratories that had succeeded in attracting new, younger audiences'.[40] But after an Arts Council report (1974) the logic of community arts was formalised and increasingly attracted fine artists and professional protagonists together with an expanding list of media artists.[41] These arts 'spaces' drew upon infrastructures and funding streams which were the legacy of the post-World War II welfare state (e.g. public health and community education), they were often open air, flexible, temporary or mobile, and more informal than the traditional studio or gallery.

Most community artists had a base or 'resource centre' for their operations (sometimes a mobile one) and employed a variety of facilities, media and techniques – dance, drama and writing classes, festivals, inflatables, murals, performance, photography, printing presses, play structures, video – which they used to foster public participation and to teach skills.[42]

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and Neil Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*, London & New York: Routledge, 1996.

36   Yolanda Ward, 'Spatial Deconcentration in Washington D.C.' in Midnight Notes, *Space Notes – Midnight Notes*, No.4, 1981.

37   Peter Mandler, 'New Towns for Old', in B. Conekin, F. Mort C. and Waters, C. (eds), *Moments of Modernity: Reconstructing Britain, 1945-1964*, London; New York: Rivers Oram Press, 1999, pp. 208–27.

38   Emory Douglas quoted in Steven W. Thrasher, '"The ghetto is the gallery": black power and the artists who captured the soul of the struggle', 2017. [online] Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/jul/09/ghetto-gallery-black-power-soul-of-a-nation-lorraine-ogrady-melvin-edwards-william-t-williams [Accessed 20 September, 2018].

39   Notably these were each focused on large experimental music ensembles formed by black artists. Two recent studies: George E. Lewis, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008 and Benjamin Looker, *Point from Which Creation Begins: The Black Artists' Group of St. Louis,* St. Louis, MO: Missouri Historical Society Press, 2004, emphasise such community spaces in the development of radical black art.

40   John A. Walker, *Left Shift: Radical Art in 1970s Britain*, London: Tauris, 2002, p.130.

41   Walker, *Left Shift: Radical Art in 1970s Britain*.

42   Walker, *Left Shift: Radical Art in 1970s Britain*, p. 131.

Fig.3: David Hammons, Bliz-aard Ball Sale, Cooper Square, New York, 1983. Photo by Dawoud Bey.[43]

In the UK, as the attempt to take art to the people faltered along with post-war optimism, the modus operandum of community arts increasingly fused with engaged and post-conceptual art taking it into the classroom (as in Central St. Martin's 'A' Class), the hospital (Loraine Leeson & Peter Dunn) as well as the factory and prison (Artist Placement Group).[44] Later, during the 1980s, a period of austerity, cutbacks to welfare provision and state retrenchment, the same inner-city areas where community arts had become integrated into local state service provision and funding became sites of spatial deconcentration, i.e. the breaking up of the ghetto and gentrification of working class areas.[45]

In Africa, group practices such as Laboratoire AGIT Art in Senegal and Huit Facettes established community studio projects in both urban and rural situations as responses to the harsher social climate and degenerating prospects for critical art created by Structural Adjustment Programmes.[46] The community or open studio tended to embed itself within sites of social reproduction, but as that is disaggregated, then to respond to and encompass a situation of actual or perceived spatial dispersion. Whilst poor or poorly maintained housing would be a central theme throughout this moment, the exhibition, display, performance or presentation of art tends towards the street or local public realm. In the West, as working class people began to be displaced from areas where community resources had helped develop

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43   *David Hammons - Blizaard Ball Sale* (1983) by Cea. is licensed with CC BY 2.0. To view a copy of this
      license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/
44   See Walker, *Left Shift: Radical Art in 1970s Britain.* and Marina Vishmidt, 'Creation Myth' [online]
      Available at: http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/creation-myth [Accessed 20 September, 2018].
45   Yolanda Ward. 'Spatial Deconcentration in Washington D.C.' in Midnight Notes, *Space Notes – Midnight
      Notes*, No.4, 1981.
46   Okwui Enwezor, 'The Production of Social Space as Artwork, Protocols of Community in the Work of
      Le Groupe Amos and Huit Facettes', in Gregory Sholette and Blake Stimson (eds.), *Collectivism After
      Modernism*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007, pp. 223–252.

their autonomy (buildings, squats, social centers), community arts took to the street, often framing the struggles for self-determination and the bathos of economic survival on the breadline as resistant creativity.

The community studio's spirit of improvisation and spatial repurposing was gradually incorporated into the governmental push for a non-stop programme of visitor-friendly arts festivals whose presence marks a wider geopolitical competition over place making, cultural tourism and inward investment. For those communities who initiated these participatory practices, the managerial turn in cultural commissioning replicates a more widespread shift in the nature of power which claims to speak in the name of the voiceless, vapidly invoking communities while divesting them as a source of meaning making from their own representations.[47] The authentic community studio lives and dies with the waning of universal provision and in inverse relation to the rise of built space as high rent-yielding private property. With declining social tenure and public ownership tracking an exponential rise of community arts, the community studio has all but disappeared, retreating to bedroom production and the corporate ghettos of social media.

Fig. 4: Makrolab mkII, Rottnest Island /Wadjemup, Western Australia, 2000, Part of the Home exhibition, Art Gallery of Western Australia and Perth International Festival. Photo by Marko Peljhan.

The Networked Studio (1989–present)

The administrative and informational aesthetics pioneered by 1960s factory-based conceptual artists and inspired by cybernetics and communication technologies, would reemerge in the ubiquitous office metaphor that was incorporated into the computer desktop and popularized

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47   Walker, 2002, op. cit. and Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, London: Verso. 2012.

by the Apple Macintosh from 1984.[48] Turing's universal machine was to produce a new spatial topology in which art can pass as — and be mistaken for — generic labor within the cybernetic society. To the casual observer, computer use by artists is largely indistinguishable from that of a service worker, journalist, architect or engineer. The conceptual techniques of the 1960s were eventually reassembled and compacted in the 1990s network studio and the figure of the immaterial laborer.[49] The isolated studio does not necessarily move position but becomes increasingly networked by communications technologies, services, changing terms of building insurance, health & safety specifications, and the further development of financial claims which feed the growth of tertiary industries and bureaucracies. The artist in the networked studio responds to the limits breached by their precursors who collapsed the divisions active in wider society and, in the first wave, overlapped significantly with the DIY community spirit of the open studio artist. The network studio camouflages itself in a number of guises be that the office, the artist's loft, the hacklab, social center, cybercafé or simply the portable laptop. We can therefore position the network studio as having an uncertain, deceptive and possibly anxious relationship to built space. This can be connected to a double movement, identifiable within its brief history, of artists occupying spaces that advertise their networked infrastructures and those that dissemble them within the shell of the old city.

The networked studio in its most extreme form is the mobile home that the infonaut carries with them through their connection to the network. The early network artist affirmed spatial precarity as digital nomadism like it was a blessing. This 1990s affirmation of the network as a replacement of fixed spatial relations tended towards the production of singular, albeit hybrid spaces (eg. London's Backspace, Ljubljana's Ljudmila, New York's Rhizome, and Zagreb's MaMa), in which artists built assemblages of hard- and software to explore and magnify the dawning universal space/time of the internet. The network studio provides a place to tune into and amplify an increasingly chaotic out there. The most iconic example of this was perhaps the Makrolab (1994-2007), devised by the Slovenian artist Marko Peljhan, who had grown up in non-aligned Yugoslavia listening to CB radio and transposed the experience of remote and isolated listening to the noise of the information age.[50] The Makrolab was a mobile communications monitoring hub that looked like a space-pod and moved between ever more isolated places gathering the public and monitoring the often secret or invisible telecommunications exchanges of incipient global capitalism.

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48   Benjamin Buchloh, 'Conceptual Art 1962-1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institution', *October*, No.55, 1990, pp. 105-143.

49   Maurizio Lazarrato, 'Immaterial Labour', in Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt (eds), *Radical Thought in Italy: a Potential Politics*. Minneapolis, Minn; London: University of Minnesota Press (Theory Out of Bounds), 1996.

50   'One of the current projects I am doing for Documenta is called Makrolab. It is a project that will research isolation strategies: how to isolate oneself from society to reflect and see this society better. It is an opposite of the usual going into the society and trying to change or make things. My thesis is that a small amount of people in an isolated and insulated environment with completely open possibilities of communication and monitoring of social events, but physically isolated, can provide a much faster, further and more efficient "call" (?) for social evolution. It is my thesis, not just an idea, and I am going to prove it.' Peljhan quoted in Josephine Bosma, 'Interview with Marko Peljhan', 2011, available: http://www.josephinebosma.com/web/node/61 [Accessed, 11th September 2018]

This mobility, however, also presages the impending spatial precarity of the millennium in which to survive is to keep moving on, to 'replace […] the inevitability of being uprooted with the strategy of pitching and breaking camp', as the urban stickering campaign of artist-collective Inventory had it (Inventory, 1999–2002). It is striking that the isolation Makrolab achieved was underwritten by the same forces of globalization that its periscopes peered at; not only satellites, cables, deep dishes, antennas and data flows but, indirectly at least, the transnational investment strategies of George Soros and his Open Society Institute.[51] Thus, the networked utopia of the artist-infonaut dovetailed beautifully with the migratory practices that would be the prerequisite of globalization's 'race to the bottom', and in this sense the mobile isolation of the studio can be seen as an analogue to the precarious and alienated status of the worker within the new world order, the so-called digital nomad.[52]

The appearance of the digital avant-garde also coincides with the advent of the last great real estate boom, (in the UK and US), of which we are yet to see the end. In this moment artists, often collectively, obtained workspace in the inner city if only for a brief while. These digital artisans were often artists who moonlighted as web designers and could be found producing artistic and commercial work on the same machine at the same desk. To the office workers next door, their activity was indistinguishable from white-collar work. While at first the network studio had projected itself as an anomaly amidst the commercial zones of the city, this possibility was rapidly eradicated by rising rents based upon projections of burgeoning commercial demand. The network studio was soon to give way to businesses that understood themselves as creative in themselves. Characteristic of the new format of businesses moving into fill these spaces were built-in signifiers of leisure (ping pong tables, bean bags, office pets, drinks trolleys, beer taps, house plants) incorporated into the new corporate aesthetic. The technology which denizens of the networked studio had experimented with swiftly began to reconfigure the space between previously separated spheres, not least labor and creativity. The playful 'hacking' of the social outcomes of computer technologies, now incorporated into a host of new business models, gave way to a calculative logic bearing down on what had previously remained uncalculated, profoundly disrupting the social through understanding it as a field available for continuous commercial speculation. Now profits could be sought through the elimination of space/time between those previously discreet social forms, objects, sites and resources within a 'becoming topological of culture' in which any data point can be connected to any other.[53] The integration of cybernetics with a competitive and reifying economic logic (sorting, ranking, data-banking, locating, connecting) unleashes a ubiquitous entrepreneurialism based on processes of disintermediation. Through disintermediation, points in space, along with buyers and sellers, can be connected in new ways that undermine older spatio-temporal exclusivities. This opening of the social field to disruptive reconfigurations fed into the emergence, in the late 1990s, of an entrepreneurial subject constantly on the look-out for commercial opportunities (and venture capital) within

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51   The Open Foundation attempted the cultural integration of eastern with western Europe invaluable to the creation of the *smooth space* required by the transnational movement of capital (Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Culture, nd.).

52   Tsugio Makimoto & David Manners, *Digital Nomad*, New York: Wiley, 1997.

53   C. Lury, Luciana Parisi, Tiziana Terranova, 'Introduction: The Becoming Topological of Culture', *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 29, No 4-5, 2012.

new and unstable proximities, be that physical, resource-based or both.[54] Within this new paradigm, the operator of the network studio, who had up to this point sought to dissolve their distinction in the hybrid commercial-cultural spaces of the city and the internet,[55] made a counter-movement, seeking instead, against the creeping creative branding of the dot com economy to claim the distinction of art and the activity of the artist. The networked studio began to disappear as all studios became digitally networked-by-default. The chaos that deregulated transnational capitalism unleashed in the form of financialization and labour force restructuring would be converted, at an urban scale, into the blow-down of social housing estates and the vertical eruption of steel and glass office blocks in which there is no longer hope of stable and affordable studio space. The networked studio can be seen as the early warning signal for the studio's permanent ungrounding.

Fig. 5 The Artworks Pop Up container park, Elephant & Castle, privately run but heavily sponsored by developer Lendlease, photo from September 2014.

The Pop-up Studio (2000–2020)

The post-conceptual artist doesn't need a studio just as much as they can no longer have a studio. Nonetheless the studio picks itself up and walks on its own two feet, apparently popping-up in new and pre-fabricated pseudo-public spaces. It is a creature of municipally-led regeneration schemes that imitates and fuses with a prior moment of artist's self-organized exploitation of tenancy breaks in commercial properties, such as Tracy Emin and Sarah Lucas'

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54   AirBnB has come to epitomise such a topologisation of culture and the networking of social and physical relationships which intensifies a reifying logic throughout the social field.

55   Net artists Heath Bunting and Rachel Baker, for instance, liked to work in Easyeverything cafés among casual surfers: 'I like it there', Bunting has remarked, 'as most people are checking hotmail while I am doing programming – it's a good disguise.' Josephine Berry, *The Thematics of Site-Specific Art on the Net*, PhD Thesis, University of Manchester, [online] www.metamute.org/sites/www.metamute.org/files/thesis_final_0.doc 2001, 81)

The Shop on Brick Lane (1993). By this point, the isolated studio is not just surrounded by the networks of urban financialization, but directly integrated into their centers of development.

The pop-up studio is now a developer-led must-have for any land subject to speculative investment or seeking it. This speculative function of the studio is symptomized in the highly visible nature of these spaces of exception in which, regardless of actual requirements, glazed shop-fronts are installed, flashy signage and bright colors deployed, and artists expected to charismatically perform like artists no matter how dryly conceptual, computer based, post-studio or socially engaged their practice might be. In actuality, the pop-up studio is so integrated into the endo-colonial process of urban transformation that it is more isolated from both the artist's own agency and the social than ever. It comprises a significant push for art's role in incubating obsolescent spaces driven by both small arts organizations (or the microentrepreneurs steering them) and government policy. Pop-ups, meanwhile spaces, space ache, pop-up retail, interim spaces, slack spaces emerge as a new language directly after the 2007/8 financial crisis. The group Meanwhile Space pioneered the mediation between empty spaces, money-saving councils and investors on the prowl.[56] 'Empty spaces are a blight to communities, a financial drain to owners and stimulate wider civic problems. To us they are an opportunity'.[57] The pop-up has a specific temporality, its presuppositions are set by the speculative proposition that empty space will become realizable value and in turn it assists this prediction into becoming reality. Realizing the age-old logic of crisis as an opportunity, the pop-up also operates through art-without-qualities to arrive at the consensus that anything can pop-up but, as the rents rise, anything increasingly tends to look like some form of commerce. This may be the first time that the studio as a form fully precedes, presupposes and overcodes the activities of artists.

The pop-up is shot through with contingencies, requirements and conditions: a fixed creativity ratio prescribed in the developer's plan with the space allocated through competition. Its exceptionality provides the necessary association with excellence its commercial sponsors require.[58] Practice in the pop-up studio is transparent like a fishbowl, intended to be viewed, visited and displayed. A space in which artistic labor is as performative as it is absorptive. Whether it's filled with cupcakes or high-end abstraction this will be a conspicuously ethical performance, in which the performer fails to notice the conditionality their striving imposes on everyone else. What masquerades as inclusivity is in fact the conduit to exclusivity. But, given there is no specifically identifiable characteristic of pop-up art, who is the pop-up practitioner?[59]

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56   Mara Ferreri, *Occupying Vacant Spaces: Precarious Politics of Temporary Urban Reuse*, PhD Thesis, Queen Mary University of London, 2013, [online] Available at: <http://qmro.qmul.ac.uk/jspui/handle/123456789/8460> [Accessed, 28/09/2018]i, 2013).
57   Meanwhile Space quoted in Ferreri, *Occupying Vacant Spaces*, p.129.
58   An example of this is the Alumno / SPACE Studios / Goldsmiths University of London bursary in which 'one graduate receives one years [sic] rent free studio space in the artists [sic] studios Alumno developed and which are operated by SPACE in the former Southwark Town Hall Building which also houses Goldsmiths students.' http://alumnogroup.com/alumno-space-studios-goldsmiths-bursary-winner-2019/.
59   The Pop Up People report published in February 2012 by the Empty Shop Network, for example,

The pop-up studio is therefore: 'a very vexatious thing full of metaphorical subtlety and theological perversity'.[60] Behind a smokescreen of community it puts a young, precarious, flexible demographic to work as quisling managers, 'trusted middle persons'.[61] Their agency from the point of view of local government is that they stage a public which isn't the public local government is usually bound to provide services to. This trusted middle mediates interests which are closer to those of developers and international investors than those of artists or the community in whose name the spaces are contrived.[62] The pop-up people are then the front of house and community liaison for a back room that is selling off the entire house.

Now that pop-up retail is the norm, it is easy to forget the form's origins as a local authority strategy of allocating properties managed by them to temporary housing or community use. Throughout the 1970s short life housing had been both a means of alleviating housing need, and meeting demands for space for a wide range of emergent community needs in the face of local authorities' squandering of empty and decaying public property.[63] The pop-up has represented some sort of survival of the studio situation for artists and therefore also the short-life strategy, (even for those who end up refusing the instrumental roles imposed upon them in situ).[64] Through the intensification of property guardianship schemes after the 2008 property market crash many artists obtained live/work studios in former local authority housing. It is in just such a situation that photographer, Rab Harling, property guardian for Bow Arts Trust, turned his lens on the estate and his activist proclivities towards the peculiar public-private arrangements which had led to the eviction of both tenants and leaseholders previously living on the estate. At the Balfron Tower, artists and residents worked together to expose and block two particularly offensive public art works synonymous with the excesses of public art in regeneration.[65] Public art commissioning agency, Artangel, who site new major

offers a depiction of the personal and professional characteristics required to become a pop-up shop practitioner, and begins with the line "Pop Up People: are truly entrepreneurial, even if their project is more about community than commerce".' Thompson, quoted in Ferreri, op. cit., 2013, p.133.

60   Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy Vol.*I, Trans. Ben Fowkes and David Fernbach. London: Penguin, 1990.

61   Ferreri, *Occupying Vacant Spaces*, p.133.

62   In examining failures in democratic representation, it is also relevant to look at the professional background of elected members themselves. According to Paul Watt and Minton, in 2013 just under 20% of Southwark's 63 councillors worked as lobbyists, while the former leader of the council, Jeremy Fraser, went on to found lobbying firm Four Communications, where he was joined by former councillor and cabinet member for regeneration Steve Lancashire. Equally concerning is the 'revolving door' between council employees and elected members and developers. For example, Tom Branton was Southwark Council's project manager for the Elephant & Castle Regeneration Project until 2011, when he left the Council to work for Lend Lease, the lead developer on the project' See: Paul Watt and Anna Minton, 'London's Housing Crisis and its Activisms', *City*, 2016, available at: https://www.tandfonline. com/doi/abs/10.1080/13604813.2016.1151707 [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

63   Anna Bowman, *Interim Spaces: Reshaping London – The Role of Short Life 1970-2000.'*, 2010, available at: https://research-information.bristol.ac.uk/files/34489446/289648.pdf [Accessed, 10 March 2019], pp. 99-100.

64   Richard Whitby, 'Angels, The Phoenix, Bats, Battery Hens and Vultures – The Bow Arts Trust Live/ Work Scheme', self-published 2011, https://www.academia.edu/2560146/Angels_The_Phoenix_Bats_ Battery_Hens_and_Vultures_The_Bow_Arts_Trust_Live_Work_Scheme [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

65   Caroline Christie, 'Hey Creatives, Stop Fetishising Estates', *Vice*, 14 July, 2014, available at: https://www. vice.com/en_uk/article/jm953d/balfron-tower-art-fetishising-estates-157 [Accessed: 15th July 2019]

commissions in edgy locations, may be considered pioneers of pop-up art which parasites off and re-encodes blighted spaces. The resulting temporary artworks often function to rebrand an area or iconic building by socializing the site differently, drawing the attention of those deemed most likely to invest in its future. With artists often working in situ, such commissioning approaches have arguably prepared the ground for the pop-up studio sited temporarily in the midst of development zones, whose users are encouraged to make work as visibly as possible and regularly offered ad-hoc exhibition opportunities until the available space dries up.

Viewed retrospectively, after the cycle beginning with the financial crisis of 2007-2008, the pop-up was a moment in these former places' violent transport onto the open market. Striking here is how it is now the council flat or residential estate that has become newly designated as a (temporary) site of studio production or artistic intervention. In the same way that industrial spaces were planned out of the city in the 1960s, curtailing their actual utility, financialized urban development's need for new sites of value extraction chaotically inflicts long-term obsolescence on entire communities and their homes producing only short-lived opportunities for artists. This constitutes a total inversion of avant-garde modernism's dreams of masterplanning the city, with artists no longer employed as visionaries but rather encouraged to pick over the bones of social housing provision.

The house, whether in the form of the evacuated single terraced British House (Rachel Whiteread, 1993) or the housing estate maps refined through painterly abstraction, as Estate Maps (Keith Coventry, 1991-1995), became a central motif of art in the UK at a moment when the model of habitation seemed at once connected to geopolitical change and reflective of the waning of artistic modernism and a microcosm of wider social antagonisms. If 1990s houses in art were ciphers for a mourning of the past or for socialism, the late-2000s placement of artists in former local authority housing would produce critical meditations on the image of the house and the social question of housing (Jessie Brennan, 2015-ongoing and Laura Oldfield Ford, 2008-ongoing) as well as some very public moments of hubris as artistic ambition met with raw discontent over housing poverty and the mistreatment of tenants facing estate regeneration (Mike Nelson, 2013). The small number of artists who revolted against these grotesque conditions from inside them to expose exactly how they were not inevitable or natural, were making and inventing politics where they had been effaced as much as a critical art where a feebler sibling was intended to emerge.[66] Looking back from 2009 to the present, this is one of the few perspectives from which housing privatization, art, space and property enter into a fully antagonistic and dynamic entanglement by which art's critical relationship to society is exercised and developed.

and Hannah Ellis-Petersen, 'Decaying East London Tower Block to House 12-hour Macbeth Production', *The Guardian*, 19 June, 2014, available at: https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/jun/19/east-london-balfron-tower-macbeth-production [Accessed: 15 July 2019].

66   Christy Romer, 'Artist squares up to Regulator over "manifestly unreasonable" fundraising investigation', *Arts Professional*, 2017, available at: https://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/news/exclusive-artist-squares-regulator-over-manifestly-unreasonable-fundraising-investigation [Accessed: 20 September 2018].

Conclusions

If, throughout modernity, succeeding generations of artists dreamed of accelerating both thought and creation to the tempo of technological production they could not but fail. The paintbrush's pursuit of fugitivity moved at a slower pace than the steam age, while the Futurists' ecstatic white-heat left the terrestrial assembly line in the dust. Temporal non-coincidence with prosaic production has been inherent to art, whether intentionally or not, for centuries. Yet the artist's requirement to pop-up, fill-in, engage and performatively be there, evidences an inescapable synchrony with the accelerated and aimless cycles of creation and destruction, bubble and burst, borne of financialization.

That Mayor Sadiq Khan's recent London Plan calls for the provision of permanent spaces for artists is more an indication of the problem than a sign of its solution.[67] The pecuniary provision of such spaces echoes the exceptionality that art still monopolizes while in practice poisoning it at the roots, since it entails the creation of special protections for existing studio spaces and thereby imposes requirements on art to do something in return for its permission to exist. The studio as the space of a practice distanced from the rest of life seems to be facing extinction, either because it's unaffordable, it now lies too far from home, or its occasional possibility of fulfilling the terms of its conditions overwhelms practice altogether. But if the gulf between an earlier womb-like isolation and today's developer-fantasised spectacular creative performances seems too great to retain art as their common denominator or outcome, there is inevitably a secession from both these models that is where whatever might actually feel like art is taking place. This truth is as likely to entail the total obsolescence of the, in historical terms, relatively short-lived model of autonomous art as to relocate it safely elsewhere. Capitalism's unending production and destruction of space has mutated the physical auspices of art's production, and those spatial evolutions have likewise driven a transformation of artistic practices and vice versa. The inhabitation of available spaces or conduits of production can be said to condition the dialectic of art's relationship to the social world as well as artists' opportunistic infestation of niches of survival. That this process has itself been converted into the paradigm and lubricant of spatial prospecting may finally mean that, as with the burning of the earth's carbon resources, like life new art is ever more unsustainable. Yet as we are starting to see, the cannibalization of art by capitalism engenders encounters between vagrant aesthetics and planetary dispossession that cannot but unite against the very forces that condemn them to a plodding nomadism or show pony servitude.

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67   https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/draft_london_plan_chapter_7.pdf.

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