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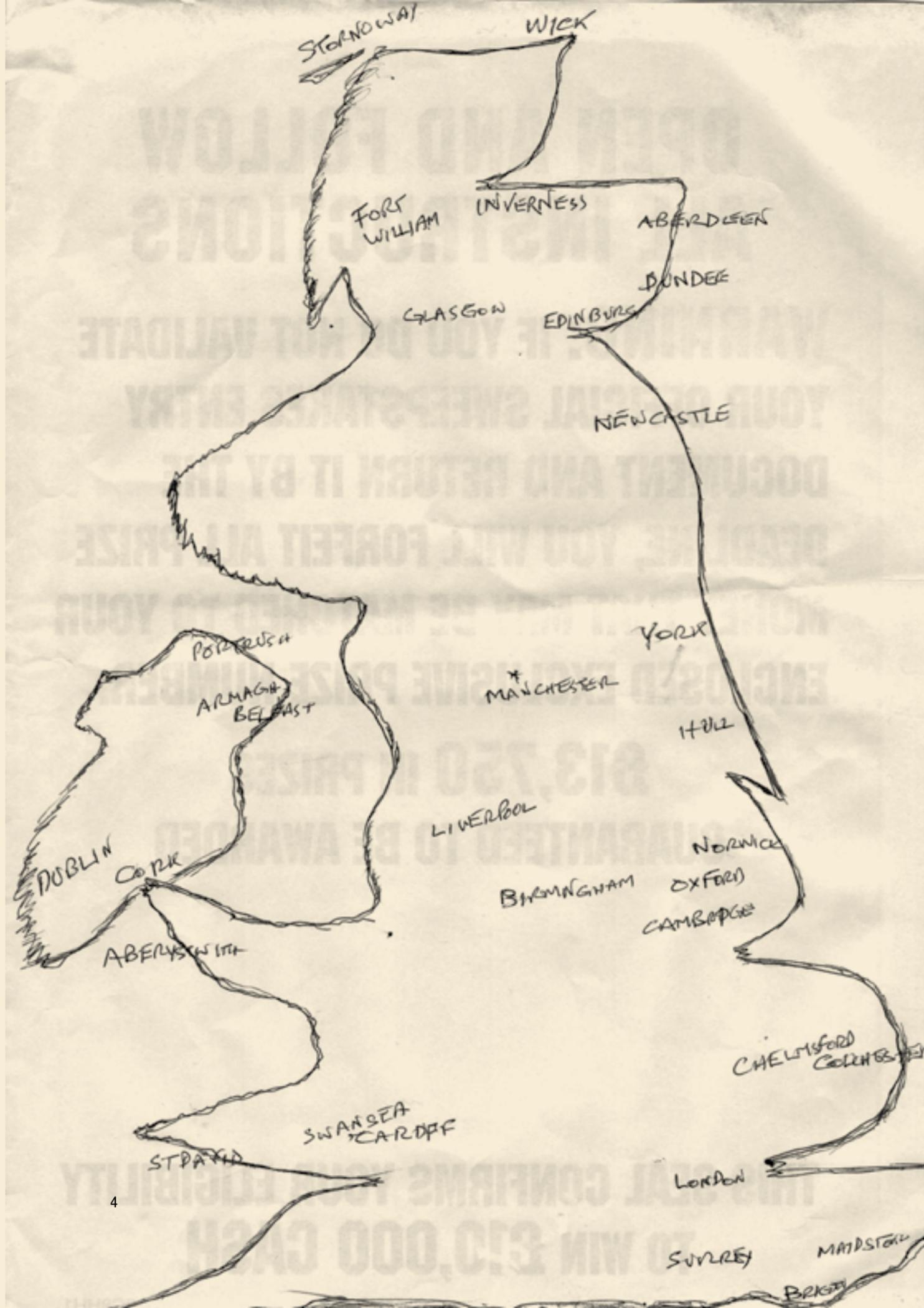# FUTURE

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SPONSOR'S FOREWORD

Bloomberg is delighted to mark its long-term support of the Serpentine Gallery's groundbreaking social and education projects with this exciting new publication, *Art + Care: A Future*. Bloomberg has supported Serpentine Gallery's Projects since 2007 and was a lead sponsor on *Skills Exchange*: Urban Transformation and the Politics of Care, the results of which are published in this book. We are proud to be associated with a public programme that has established such a significant track record for engaging diverse audiences in dynamic new models of learning and participation.

As a leading financial-information services company providing news and information globally, Bloomberg is dedicated to effective communication across cultures and social boundaries. For this reason, we are particularly pleased to have supported leading UK-based contemporary artists in their collaborations with older people living and shaping London neighbourhoods. Bloomberg's sponsorship of Skills Exchange is part of a global programme of sponsorships committed to innovation and access in the arts.

DIRECTORS' FOREWORD

The Serpentine Gallery is proud to present *Art + Care: A Future*, a publication that speculates on future alliances between the fields of art and elderly care. The book is based on essays by key thinkers on issues of aging and the future, and is contextualised by case studies from five years of the Serpentine Gallery's work in placing artists, designers, researchers and architects in the field of elderly care through the project *Skills Exchange: Urban Transformation and the Politics of Care.*

There are currently 10 million people aged sixty-five and over in the UK, and by 2050 there will be 19 million. Of those aged sixty and over, 1.1 million live in homes that do not meet minimum housing standard and many face intense forms of segregation and isolation. The needs of older people are complex and studies have proved the importance of artistic and creative opportunities in increasing well-being and reducing isolation of the elderly.

As contributors to this book suggest, beyond these immediate needs the concerns of the elderly intersect with those of many others. Sylvia Federici's essay argues that decreased welfare-state contributions for the elderly have a significant impact on women, who, with migrant workers, bear the unpaid or underpaid brunt of care. Franco Berardi (Bifo) argues that the postponement of state pensions has equal ramifications for a younger precarious generation of workers, who reach the workforce later in life as a result. It is only through understanding the intersections between elderly care and other social sectors that we can begin to imagine what the future could look like. How can artistic practices assist in this re-imagining of elderly care and all of its complex interdependencies?

Responding to this question and to broader public debates regarding housing, pensions and the well-being of the UK's aging population, in 2007 the Serpentine Gallery launched *Skills Exchange: Urban Transformation and the Politics of Care*. Initiated by then Head of Programmes Sally Tallant and Projects

Organiser Louise Coysh, the project was developed by Projects Curator Janna Graham. Through *Skills Exchange*, the Serpentine Gallery placed artists, architects, researchers and designers into spaces and services for older people in five London Boroughs. *Skills Exchange* began with the idea that people in the later stages of life possess vital skills, insights and experiences that should be shared and exchanged.The project aimed to bring the voices and concerns of this often marginalised section of society into contact with a range of artistic practices. Through these exchanges, participants in the field of art and care realised that the picture of the elderly that we have seen to date does not reflect the myriad of experiences, desires, plans, ways of knowing and networks that older people possess. Indeed very few *Skills Exchange* projects in the end focused on older people. What we heard from our *Skills Exchange* collaborators was more often related to broader social changes that they wanted to make: the destigmatising of social-housing tenants; the preservation of local street markets; the right to imagination at the end of life, and the creation of more equitable relationships in caring.

Each *Skills Exchange* project was based on an extended artistic residency in a space of elderly care, through which participants were invited to engage with the creative process to challenge stereotypes and social norms. Projects took place during periods of imminent change – the relocation of a care home, the transformation of a neighbourhood or a point of transition in the cycle of life – since these are the times when elderly people are more often marginalised and excluded. Though each project started with the union of artists and older people, the communities surrounding them grew to include children, students, care-givers, market-traders, local activists, media figures, policy-makers and many others.

Projects by Åbäke & Markus Miessen with Westmead Care Home; Barby Asante with Inspire, Southwark; Marcus Coates and Alex H with St John's Hospice; Beatrice Gibson with Camden Homes For Older People; and Tom Hunter with Age UK, Hackney, resulted in proposals for local areas as well as presentations in the Sackler Centre of Arts Education at the Serpentine Gallery.

These gallery presentations engaged a broader public in discussions, propositions and responses to the issues related to aging and its intersection with broader social concerns. *Skills Exchange* projects were experienced by over 50,000 people at the Gallery and reached an even greater number through media attention. This exposure heightened the profile of issues and debates of concern to elderly people.

A research team from Goldsmiths Community and Urban Research Unit led by Dr Alison Rooke accompanied each project. With the participants they issued the report *Modalities of Exchange*. Included in section two of this book, the report outlines the benefits and challenges of exchanges between artists, care workers and older people through the words of many of the project's participants. The report argues powerfully that art should not be seen as a service for the care sector, but rather a mode of exchange that challenges the marginal status assigned to older people.

We are indebted to all of the project artists, researchers, older people and workers in the care field, the full list of whom is available on the contributors page.

Neither this book nor the *Skills Exchange* project would have been possible without the very generous donors to the project. Included in this list are Bloomberg, who over five years enabled the Serpentine to build its Projects strand of programming, bringing art to a range of social environments; the Rayne Foundation; the Big Lottery; the Arts Council of England; Camden Council; Westminster City Council; Smoke + Mirrors and Film London.

The Council of the Serpentine is a remarkable group of individuals, whose commitment to the Serpentine enables the Gallery to realise its ambitious projects. We are especially thankful to them for making the *Skills Exchange* project possible.

We are also appreciative to the Learning Council of the Serpentine Gallery's dedicated support of the Gallery's Education programme, 'Learning Through Art', which makes a critical contribution to the Gallery's engagement with people of all ages across diverse communities.

Julia Peyton-Jones
Director, Serpentine Gallery and
Co-Director, Exhibitions and Programmes

Hans Ulrich Obrist
Co-Director, Exhibitions and Programmes
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On Elder Care

Silvia Federici

Introduction

"Care work," especially eldercare, has come in recent years to the center of public attention in the countries of the OECD in response to a number of trends that have put many traditional forms of assistance into crisis. First among these trends have been the growth, in relative and absolute terms, of the old age population and the increase in life expectancy (Kotlikoff and Burn 2004), not been matched, however, by a growth of services catering to the old. There has also been the expansion of women's waged employment that has reduced their contribution to the reproduction of their families. (Folbre 2006: 350) To these factors we must add the continuing process of urbanization and the gentrification of working class neighborhoods, that have destroyed the support networks and the forms of mutual aid on which older people living alone could once rely, as neighbors would bring them food, make their beds, come for a chat. As a result of these trends, it is now recognized that for a large number of elderly, the positive effects of a longer life-span have been voided or are clouded by the prospect of loneliness, social exclusion and increased vulnerability to physical and psychological abuse. With this in mind, I present some reflections on the question of eldercare in contemporary social policy, especially in the US, to then ask what action can be taken on this terrain and why the question of elder care has been absent in the literature of the Marxist left.

My main objective here is to call for a redistribution of the 'common wealth' in the direction of elder care, and the construction of collective forms of reproduction enabling older people to be provided for when no longer self-sufficient and not at the cost of their providers' lives. For this to occur, however, the struggle over elder care must be politicized and placed on the agenda of social justice movements. A cultural revolution is also necessary in the concept of old age, challenging its degradation as a fiscal burden on the state and the younger generations (on one

side), and (on the other) its mystification as an 'optional' stage in life that we can 'cure,' 'overcome,' and even prevent, if we only adopt the right medical technology and the 'life enhancing' devises disgorged by the market (Joyce and Mamo 2006).[1] At stake in the politicization of elder care are not only the destinies of older people and the un-sustainability of radical movements failing to address such a crucial issue in our lives, but the possibility of generational and class solidarity, which for years have been the targets of a relentless campaign by political economists and governments, portraying the provisions which workers have won for their old age (like pensions and other forms of social security) as an economic time-bomb and heavy mortgage on the future of the young.

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[1]As Joyce and Mamo point out in "Graying the Cyborgs" (2007), driven by the quest for profit and an ideology privileging youth, a broad campaign has been underway targeting the elderly as consumers, promising to "regenerate" their bodies and delay aging if they use the appropriate farmaceutical products and technologies. In this context, old age becomes almost a sin, a predicament we bring on ourselves, by failing to take advantage of the latest rejuvenating products.

1. The Crisis of Elder Care & the Era of Neoliberalism

The present crisis of elder care, in some respects, is nothing new. Eldercare in capitalist society has always been in a state of crisis, both because of the devaluation of reproductive work in capitalism and because the elderly, far from been treasured, as they were in many pre-capitalist societies as depositories of the collective memory and experience, are seen as no longer productive. In other words, elder care suffers from a double cultural and social devaluation. Like all reproductive work, it is not recognized as work, but unlike the reproduction of labor-power, whose product has some recognized value, it is deemed to absorb value but not to produce it. Thus, funds designated for eldercare have traditionally been disbursed with a stinginess reminiscent of the 19th century Poor Laws, and the task of caring for the old, when no longer self-sufficient, has been left to the families and kin with little external support, on the assumption that women would naturally take on this task as part of their domestic work. It has taken a long struggle to force capital to reproduce not just labor-power 'in use,' but the work-force throughout its entire life cycle, with the provision of assistance also for those who are no longer part of the labor market. However, even the Keynesian state fell short of this goal. Witness the Social Security legislation of the New Deal, enacted in 1940 in the United States, and considered "one of the achievements of our century" (Costa 1998: 1). It only

partly responded to the problems faced by the old, as it tied social insurance to the years of waged employment, thus excluding unwaged house-workers from it, and provided assistance only to those in a state of absolute poverty.

The triumph of neo-liberalism has worsened this situation. In some countries of the OECD, some steps were taken in the 1990s to increase the funding of home-based care, and provide counseling and services to care-givers. [OECD 2005; Benería 2008: 2-3,5] Efforts have also been made to enable caregivers to 'reconcile' waged work and care work. In England and Wales, where it is reckoned that 5.2 million people provide informal care, starting in April 2007, caregivers for adults were given the right to demand flexible work schedules. (Carmichael et al.: 7).[2] But the dismantling of the welfare state and the neo-liberal insistence that reproduction is the workers' personal responsibility have triggered a counter-tendency that is gaining momentum and the present economic crisis is accelerating.

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[2]Benería cites as an example a law passed in Spain in 1999, mandating employers to provide "different forms of temporary leaves to facilitate care work" (p.5), followed by a more extensive one in 2006-7 "funding a portion of the expenses individuals household spend on care." (ibid.) In Scotland, the Community Care and Health Act of 2002 "introduced free personal care for the elderly" and also redefined caregivers as "co-workers receiving resources rather than consumers…obliged to pay for services." (Fiona Carmichael et al. : 7).

The demise of welfare provisions for the elderly has been especially severe in the US, where it has reached such a point that workers are often impoverished in the effort to care for a disabled parent. One policy in particular has created great hardships. This has been the transfer of much hospital care to the home, a move motivated by purely financial concerns and carried out with little consideration given to the structures required to replace the services the hospitals used to provide.[3] As described by Nona Glazer (1993), this development has not only increased the amount of care-work that family members, mostly women, must do. It has also shifted to the home "dangerous" and even "life threatening" operations that in the past only registered nurses and hospitals would have been expected to perform.[4] At the same time, subsidized

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[3]According to various surveys, as a consequence of these cuts, … 20-to 50 millions family members in the US provide care that has traditionally been performed by nurses and social workers. Family care givers supply about 80% of the care for ill or disabled relatives and the need for their services will only rise as the population ages and modern medicine improves its ability to prolongs lives.….With more terminally ill people choosing to remain at home until their final days, family members or friends now serve as informal caregivers for nearly three fourths of sick or disabled older adults living in the community during their years of life, according to a report in the Archives of Internal Medicine of January 2007 (Brody 2008).

home-care workers have seen their workload double, while the length of their visits has increasingly been cut forcing them to reduce their jobs "to household maintenance and bodily care." [Boris and Klein: 180] Federally financed nursing homes have also been taylorized, "using time- and-motion studies to decide how many patients their workers can be expected to serve." (Glazer, ibid.: 174)

[4]As a consequence of this "transfer," the home (Glazer writes) have been turned into a medical factory, where dialyses are performed and housewives and aides must learn to insert caterers, medicate wounds, while a whole new sort of medical equipment has been manufactured for home use. [Glazer 154ff.]

The globalization of elder care in the 1980s and 1990s has not remedied this situation. The new international division of reproductive work that globalization has promoted has shifted a large amount of care-work on the shoulders of immigrant women. (Federici 1999: 57-8, Pyle 2006: 283-9) As is generally recognized, this development has been very advantageous for governments, enabling them to save billions of dollars they would have had to pay to create services catering to the elderly. It has also enabled middle class women to pursue their careers and has allowed many among the elderly, who wished to maintain their independence, to remain in their homes without going bankrupt. But this cannot be considered a solution to elder care. Beside conferring a new legitimacy to the neo-liberal doctrine that governments have no responsibility for social reproduction, this policy is condemned by the living and working conditions of the paid care workers, which reflects all the contradictions and inequities that are characteristic of the process of social reproduction in our time.

It is because of the destructive impact of economic liberalization and structural adjustment in their countries of origins that thousands of women from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean Island, and the former socialist world, migrate to the more affluent regions of Europe, the Middle East and the United States to serve as nannies, domestics, and caregivers for the elder. To do this they must leave their own families including their children and aging parents behind, and recruit relatives or hire other women with less power and resources to replace the work they can no longer provide. (Pyle 2006:289; Hochschild 2002) Taking the case of Italy as an example, it is calculated that three out of four "badanti" (as care workers for the elderly are called) have children of their own, but only 15% have their families with them. (Di Vico 2004) This means that the majority suffer a great deal of anxiety, confronting the fact that their own families must go without the kind of care they now give to people across the globe. Arlie Hochschild has spoken, in this context, of a "global transfer of care

and emotions," and the formation of a "global care-chain." (2002: 26-7; 2000: 134-5). But it is a chain that most often breaks down, as immigrant women become estranged from their children, stipulated arrangements fall apart, relatives die during their absence.

Equally important, because of the devaluation of reproductive work and the fact that they are immigrants, often undocumented and women of color, paid care workers are vulnerable to a great deal of abuse: long hours of work, no paid vacations, or other benefits, exposure to racist behavior and sexual assault. So low is generally the pay of home care workers in the US that nearly half must rely on food stamps and other forms of public assistance to make ends meet. (New York Times, 1/28/09) Indeed, as Domestic Workers United –the main domestic/care workers organization in New York, promoter of a Domestic Workers Bill of Rights– has put it, care workers live and work in "the shadow of slavery."[5] It is also important to stress that most elderly people and families cannot afford hiring care-workers or paying for services matching their real need. This is particularly true of elderly people with illnesses who require day-long care. According to statistics of the Cnel of 2003, in Italy only 2.8% of elderly receive non-family assistance at home; in France it is twice as many, in Germany three times. But the number is still low. (Di Vico 2004) A large number of elderly thus live alone facing hardships that are all the more devastating the more invisible they are. In the 'hot summer' of 2003, thousands of elderly people died, throughout Europe, of dehydration, lack of food and medicines or just the unbearable heat –so many died in Paris that the authorities had to stack their bodies in refrigerated public spaces until the families came to reclaim them.

When family members care for the old, the tasks falls mostly on the shoulders of women[6], who for months or years live on the verge of nervous and physical exhaustion, consumed by the work and the responsibility of having to provide care and often perform procedures for which they are not usually prepared. Few jobs are as demanding as adult care; not surprisingly, a high percentage of family caregivers show symptoms of clinical depression. Those who have jobs outside the home are especially penalized.

[5]The Bill of Rights Domestic Workers United has campaigned for was finally introduced in the legislation of New York State in November 2010, the first in the country to recognize care work as work. Similar campaigns are presently taking place in other parts of the US, especially in California.
[6]However, in the US the number of men caring for elder parents has been steadily increasing. (New York Times)

Though the number of adults caring for their parents has greatly increased,[7] employers have made no provisions to help workers carry out this task. On the contrary, at a time when the power relation is in their favor, they expect workers to spend more hours on the job and are reluctant to make any concessions. Thus, according to a recent AARP report, workers caring for their parents, in the US, must hide the fact that they are care-givers for fear of being refused a raise or loosing their jobs, well-knowing that lay-offs are always around the corner. They also fear the resentment of their co-workers (Abrahms: 12) Particularly stressed are those referred to as the "sandwich generation," who simultaneously are raising children and caring for their parents. [Beckford 2009] The crisis of care work has reached such a point that in low-income, single-parent families in the US, teenagers and children, some no more than eleven years old, take care of their elders, also administering therapies and injections. As the New York Times has reported, a study conducted nationwide in 2005 revealed that " 3% of households with children ages 8 to 18 included child caregivers." (New York Times, March 2009: A18).[8]

[7]According to a recent AARP report, in 2009, the number of US family care givers providing care for an elderly was estimated at 42.1 millions, the estimated monetary value of their contribution amounting to $450 billions. aarp.org/bulletin, September 2011, p.10.

[8]Other countries where children have become care workers include Britain and Australia, which often recognize them the right to participate in "patient-care discussions" and ask for compensations for their work. (New York Times ibid.)

The alternative, for those who cannot afford buying some form of assisted care, are publicly funded nursing homes, which, however, are more like prisons than hostels for the old. Typically, because of lack of staff and funds or these institutions provide minimal care. At best, they let their residents lie hours in bed without anyone at hand to change their positions, adjust their pillows, massage their legs, tend to their bed sores, or simply talk to them, so that they can maintain their sense of identity and dignity and still feel alive and valued. At worst, nursing homes are places where old people are drugged, tied to their beds, left to lie in their excrements and subjected to all kind of physical and psychological abuses. This much has emerged from a series of reports, including one recently published by the US Government in 2008, which speaks of a history of abuse, neglect, and violation of safety and health standards in 94% of nursing homes. (New York Times, 8/30/08) The situation is not more encouraging in other countries. In Italy, the country beside the United States that I have most researched, reports of abuses in nursing homes perpetrated against disabled or chronically ill elders are very frequent, as are the cases in which needed medical assistance is denied.[9]

[9]See on the topic: Francesco Santanera "Violenze e abusi dovuti anche alla mancata applicazione delle leggi" in Prospettive Assistenziali, n.169, gennaio marzo 2010. Prospettive Assistenziali is a journal in existence since 1968 dedicated to struggle against social exclusion, especially of disabled and elder people. Santanera's article can be read also online: http//www.superando.it/content/voew/5754/121. According to government controls realized in 2010, one third of institutes for the elderly violate the legal norms.

2. Eldercare, the Unions, & the Left

The problems I have described are so common and pressing that we would imagine that eldercare should top the agenda of the social justice movements and labor unions internationally. This, however, is not the case. Unless they work in institutions (hospitals, nursing homes), as is the case with nurses and aides, care workers are usually ignored by labor unions, even the most combative like COSATU in South Africa. (Ally 2005: 3) Unions negotiate pensions, the conditions of retirement, and healthcare. But there is little discussion in their programs of the support systems required by people aging, and by care workers, whether or not they work for pay. In the US, until recently, labor unions did not even try to organize care workers, much less unpaid care-workers. To this day, care workers working for individuals or families are excluded from the Fair Labor Standards Act, a New Deal legislation that guarantees "access to minimum wages, overtime, bargaining rights and other workplace protections." (Boris and Klein 2007: 182) And the US is not an isolated case. According to a ILO survey of 2004, "cross-national unionization rates in the domestic service sector are barely 1%". (Ally 2005: 1) Pensions too are not available to all workers, but only to those who have worked for wages and certainly not to unpaid family caregivers. As reproductive work is not recognized as work and the pension systems compute benefits on the basis of the years spent in waged employment, women who have been fulltime house-wives can obtain a pension only through a wage-earning husband and have no social security in case they divorce.

http//:www.ansa.it/notizie/rubriche/cronaca/2010/02/26/ visualizza_new.

Labor organizations have not challenged these inequities, nor have social movements and the Marxist Left, who, with few exceptions, also seems to have written the elderly off the struggle, judging by the absence of any reference to elder care in contemporary Marxist analyses. The responsibility for this state of affairs can be in part traced back to Marx. Elder care is not a theme that we find in his works, although the question of old age had been on the revolutionary political agenda since the 18th century, and mutual aid societies and utopian

visions of recreated communities (Fourierist, Owenite, Icarian) abounded in his time. (Blackburn 2002: 32, 39-41; Nordhoff 1966).[10]

[10] As Robin Blackburn points out, it was at the time of the French Revolution that the first proposals for paying pensions to people in old age and want appeared. Tom Paine discussed the issue in the second part of Rights of Man (1792), so did his friend Condorcet who offered a plan that was to cover all citizens. On the footsteps of these proposals, "The National Convention declared that 10 Fructidor was to be the date of the Fête de la Veillesse and that there should be old people homes established in every department... The Convention adopted the principle of a civic pension for the aged in June 1794, just a few months after the abolition of slavery" (Blackburn 2002 : 40-1).

In Marx's time, forms of assistance against sickness, old age, and death, as well as unemployment, were provided by the "friendly societies," workers' clubs organized on the basis of trade, described by John Foster as "the one social institution that touched the adult lives of a near majority of the working population" (Foster 1974: 216). Moreover, while the zenith of utopian socialism was in the early part of the 19th century, as late as the 1860s communitarian experiments, committed to protect their participants

Marx was concerned with understanding the mechanics of capitalist production and the manifold ways in which the class struggle challenges it and reshapes its form. Security in old age and elder care did not enter this discussion. Old age was a rarity among the factory workers and miners of his time, whose life expectancy on average did not surpass twenty years at best, if his contemporaries' reports are to be believed. (Marx, Vol.1; Seccombe 1993: 75-7) Most important, Marx did not recognize the centrality of reproductive work, neither for capital accumulation nor for the construction of the new communist society. Although both him and Engels described the abysmal conditions in which the working class in England lived and worked, he almost naturalized the process of reproduction, never envisaging how reproductive work could be reorganized in a different, non-exploitative society or in the very course of the class struggle. For instance, he discussed "cooperation" mostly in the process of commodity production overlooking the qualitatively different forms of proletarian cooperation in the process of reproduction which Kropotkin later called "mutual aid."[11]

Cooperation among workers, in Marx, is a fundamental character of the capitalist organization of work, "entirely

from poverty, helplessness and old age, continued, especially in the United States. A contemporary journalist, Charles Nordhoff, counted at least 72 organized according to cooperative/communistic principles. For a powerful history of Fraternal Societies in the United States see: David T. Beito (2000), *From Mutual Aid to the Welfare State. Fraternal Societies and Social Services*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
[11] For Kropotkin's concept of Mutual aid see in particular the last two chapters of the homonymous work. Peter Kroptkin, *Mutual Aid. A Factor of Evolution*. (1902)

brought about by the capital[ists]," coming into place only when the workers "have ceased to belong to themselves," being purely functional to the increase in the efficiency and productivity of labor. [Vol.I, Chapter 13: 449, 451][12] As such, it leaves no space for the manifold expressions of solidarity and the many "institutions for mutual support", "associations, societies, brotherhoods, alliances," that Kropotkin found present amongst the industrial population of his time. (Kropotkin: 208, 221) Yet, as Kropotkin noted, these very forms of mutual aid put limits to the power of capital and the State over the workers' lives, enabling countless proletarians not to fall into utter ruin, and they sowed the seeds of a self-managed insurance system, guaranteeing some protection against unemployment, illness, old age and death.

[12] "As cooperators," Marx writes, workers "merely form a particular mode of existence of capital." The productive power they develop "is the productive power of capital." (*ibid.*)

Typical of the limits of Marx's perspective is his vision of the last stage of capitalist production as articulated in the famous "Fragment on the Machines," in the Grundrisse (1857-8), where he projects a world in which machines do all the work and human beings only tend to them, functioning as their supervisors. Whether understood as a utopia or a dystopia, this picture ignores in fact that, even in advanced capitalist countries, much of the socially necessary labor consists of reproductive activities and this work has proven not to be easily replaced by mechanization.

Only in part can the needs and desires of non-self-sufficient older people, or people requiring medical assistance, be addressed by incorporating technologies into the work by which they are reproduced. The automation of eldercare is a path already well traveled. As Nancy Folbre (the leading feminist economist and student of eldercare in the United States) has shown, Japanese industries are quite advanced in the attempt to technologize it, as they are generally in the production of interactive robots. Nursebots giving people baths or "walking [them] for exercise," and "companion robots" (robotic dogs, teddy bears) are already available on the market, although at prohibitive costs. (Folbre 2006: 356) We also know that televisions and personal computers have become surrogate "badanti" for many elders. Electronically commanded wheelchairs enhance the mobility of those who are sufficiently in charge of their movements to master their commands.

These scientific and technological developments can highly benefit older people, if they are made affordable for them. The circulation of knowledge they can provide certainly places a great wealth at their disposal. But this cannot replace the labor of care workers, especially in the

case of elders living alone and/or suffering from illnesses and impairments. As Folbre points out, robotic partners can even increase people's loneliness and isolation [ibid.]. Nor can automation address the predicaments -fears, anxieties, loss of identity, loss of the sense of one's dignity- that people experience as they age and become dependent on others often even for the satisfaction of their most basic needs, like walking, eating, washing, defecating. It is not technological innovation that is needed to address the question of eldercare, but a change in social relations, whereby the reproduction of our lives is no longer subordinated to the valorization of capital and is organized as a collective process.

3. Women, Aging & Elder Care In the Perspective of Feminist Economists

For a start, we need to recognize (as some feminist economists like Folbre have done) that the question of eldercare is essentially a gender question. Although increasingly commodified, most care work is still done by women and as unpaid labor that does not entitle them to any remuneration and pension. Thus, paradoxically, the more women care for others, the less care they can receive in return, because they devote less time to waged labor than men and many social insurance plans are calculated on the years of waged work done. Paid caregivers too are affected by the devaluation of reproductive work, forming an 'underclass' that still must fight to be socially recognized as workers. In sum, because of the devaluation of reproductive work, practically everywhere women face old age with fewer resources than men, measured in terms of family support, monetary incomes and available assets. Thus, in the United States, where pensions and Social Security are calculated on years of employment, women are the largest group of elderly poor and the largest number of residents of low-income nursing homes, the lagers of our time, precisely because they spend so much of their lives outside of the waged workforce in activities not recognized as work.

Science and technology cannot resolve this problem. What is required is a transformation in the social/sexual division of labor and, above all, the re-cognition of reproductive work as work, entitling those performing to a compensation, so that family members providing care are not penalized for their work. The recognition and valorization of reproductive work is crucial also to overcome the divisions which the present situation sows among care workers, which pit, on one side, the family members trying to minimize their expenses, and, on the other, the

hired care-givers facing the demoralizing consequences of working at the edge of poverty and devaluation.

Feminist economists working on this issue have articulated possible alternatives to the present systems. In *Warm Hands in a Cold Age* (2007), Nancy Folbre has outlined the reforms needed to give security to the aging population, especially elderly women, taking an international perspective, and pointing to the countries that are in the lead in this respect. At the top, she places the countries which provide almost universal systems of insurance. At the bottom there are the US and England, where elderly assistance is tied to the history of employment. But, in both cases, there is a problem in the way policies are configured, which confirms an unequal sexual division of labor and the traditional expectations concerning women's role in the family and society. This is one crucial area where change must occur.

Folbre calls for a redistribution of resources re-channeling public money from the military-industrial complex and other destructive enterprises to the care of people in old age. She acknowledges that this may seem "unrealistic," equivalent to calling for a revolution. But she insists that it should be placed on "our agenda," for the future of every worker is at stake, and a society blind to the tremendous suffering that awaits so many people once they age, as is the case with the US today, is a society bound for self-destruction.

There is no sign, however, that this blindness will soon be dissipated. With the pretext of the economic crisis and low growth, policy makers are turning their eyes away from it, everywhere striving to cut social spending and bring state pensions and social security systems, including subsidies to care work, under the ax. According to the dominant, obsessive refrain the presence of a more energetic elderly population, stubbornly insisting on living on, is making every social form of assistance unsustainable. It was possibly thinking of the millions of Americans determined on living past 80, that Alan Greenspan, in his memoirs, confessed that he was frightened when realizing that the Clinton Administration had actually accumulated a financial surplus! [Greenspan 2007: 217] But even before the financial crisis of 2008, for years policy makers had been orchestrating a generational war, incessantly warning that that the expansion of the 65 + population would bankrupt the Social Security system, leaving a heavy mortgage on the shoulders of the young. And as the crisis deepens, the assault on elder care, either in form of cuts to services or cuts to pensions, intensifies. Already in Greece, since 2010, pensions have been cut by 25%. In England, the ideology of the "Big Society" masks the attempt to place social services on a voluntary basis.

possibly to be picked up by laid off women. Meanwhile, in the US, conservative politicians (like the Republican candidate Rick Perry) call the Social Security system a "Ponzi Scheme," or mechanically repeat the system is collapsing and must be drastically restructured.

For sure, no one is arguing for an increase in government funding of elder care, or a reduction of working hours to make space for eldercare, or a remuneration of this work. (Watson and Mears 1999: 193)

It is urgent, then, that social justice movements intervene on his terrain to prevent a triage solution to the crisis at the expense of the old, and to bring together the different social subjects implicated in the question of elder care: care workers, families of the elders, and the elders themselves who are now told they are in an antagonistic relation to the young. Examples of this kind of alliance are already visible in the struggles over elder care, as nurses as patients, paid care workers, and families of their clients are coming together to jointly confront the state, aware that when the relations of re-production become antagonistic both producers and reproduced pay the price. Meanwhile, a "commoning" of reproductive/care work is under way.

Communal forms of living based upon "solidarity contracts" are presently being created in some Italian cities by elders, who in order to avoid being institutionalized, pool together their resources, when they cannot count on their families or hire a care worker. In the US, a younger generation of political activists has been discussed creating "communities of care,"[13] aiming at socializing the experience of illness, pain, grieving and the care work involved, in this process reclaiming and redefining what is means to be ill, to age, to die. These efforts need to be expanded. They are essential to a reorganization of our everyday life and the creation of non-exploitative social relations. For the seeds of the new world are not to be planted online, but in the cooperation that we can develop among ourselves, which is most tested when confronted with the task of ensuring that the lives of those who are tied to wheelchairs or hospital beds do not become a living torture, as it is so often the case in our society.

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[13]The organization of "communities of care" is the project of some anarchist activists, on both coasts of the United States, who are inspired by the solidarity work done by Act Up in response to the spread of AIDS in the gay community in the 1980s, which, against all odds, marked a major turning point in the growth of that movement. Information on "communities of care" can be found in a variety of zines produced on this subject. On this topic see "The Importance of Support: Building Foundations, Sustaining Community." In *Rolling Thunder. An Anarchist Journal of Dangerous Living*, Issue Six, Fall 2008, 29-39.

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WHEN OLD PEOPLE FALL IN LOVE II THE AESTHETIC-POLITICS OF AGING AND THE DARK SIDE OF DESIRE

Franco Berardi (Bifo)

In his film *Cloud Nine* (Wolke 9, 2008), Andreas Dresen stages a simple love story: Inge is married to Werner, but she meets Karl and falls in love with him. She decides to leave her husband and goes to live with her lover. One night, while she is sleeping in the arms of her beloved Karl, Inge receives a phone call: Werner has killed himself.

Well, so what? It's a simple love story, as I said. But I neglected to note something important: Inge, Werner and Karl are between seventy and eighty years old. Dresen has made a beautiful movie: *Cloud 9* breaks a silence, a sort of denial of the sexuality of older people. But is it really a denial? Love between old people is a subject that, with very few exceptions, has not been touched upon in literature and cinema, and one about which we know very little. This is for the simple reason that old people have never existed. Until some decades ago, people aged over sixty were such a small minority that they were lonely and rare – sometimes surrounded by an aura of respect and veneration, but more often rejected and pushed to the margins of society, and always alone, deprived of the means for survival, unable to form a community. A hundred years ago, one might have read about a person who lived into his eighties, but he was such an oddity that he became considered either the wise old sage or the crazy person; in either case, the exception. The problem of sexuality, of the body, was totally out of the picture because it was not a social reality.

So, we know nothing about the sexuality of old age. I discover every day what this means, but we have no literature about it. King Lear is of course an old person, but he is a father, not a lover, and you can't imagine his bodily existence on a sexual level. Dresen's movie breaks this ignorance and locates old age in the body in a way that is absolutely new, because he speaks about it as a normality. Old people in love are not freaks.

Other references that come to mind that are very different in this respect.

When I was twenty-five years old, I saw Hal Ashby's *Harold and Maude* (1971), the story of a woman of seventy-nine, and a young man who asks her to marry him. At the time, I didn't really understand it, but it was beautiful for me as a yippie. It was a very delicate, intelligent movie and I loved it precisely because their problem was the problem of freaks – strange people, so hippy that they were strange even for hippies like me!

In Jun'ichirō Tanizaki's book *Diary of a Mad Old Man*, the title character falls in love with the wife of his son. It's platonic love; he buys beautiful things for her, but nothing happens. However, it's not so platonic. It's all about looking, imagining, stalking. He talks about his craziness, his desire for his daughter-in-law. He is presented as a 'Mad Old Man'.

Jou Pu T'Uan (The Prayer Mat of Flesh) by Li Yu is a novel from the seventeenth century. It is a frankly erotic, almost pornographic novel, which is about an old man who wants to have sex. He needs sex. So what can he do? He has sex with a dog. It's totally surreal. But still he's a freak.

In contrast, *Cloud 9* is about the new reality of aging and the body.

The West has always been obsessed with the fundamental mythology of youthful energy. This is not only the central feature of sexuality, but also of politics, arts, beauty. 'Energy, is eternal delight', says William Blake. But we know that this point of view is a social problem, a cultural problem. And it is probably going to change – not only because older people now have a consciousness of their social existence, but also because social perception is shaped by changes in circumstance.

Ten years ago, the middle-aged parents were the wealthy people in the family. Now, these forty-year-olds are no longer the richest. Now, it's common for the sixty- and seventy-year-olds to pay for their nephew's or grandchild's education. People of my age are paying both for their children and their children's children. The market is paying special attention to this relatively rich generation with products like Viagra: to give a new value to the sexual life of old people means to give a new value to the consumerist life of old people. It's interesting

to note from Italian statistics, however, that these products are primarily used by younger people. Thirty percent of sexual-performance enhancement drugs are used by twenty-year-olds, thirty percent by 30–50 year olds, and so on.

This is interesting because it links the sexuality of the old person to that of the young person, whose 'performance' is affected not by age or physical deterioration, but by the fact that he must deal with the precariousness of life, not only in work but also in terms of the constant sense of, and need for, the acceleration of time. If, contrary to the opposing aesthetic representations of older and younger people, they are indeed linked in sexual experience, how might old and young be linked in political experience? Because we know very little about growing old, and we know nothing about old people's emotions, we also know little about their abilities with regard to social organisation, solidarity and political force. We don't know because we haven't experienced it. But now that experience is beginning.

In the coming years in Europe, one third of the population will join the ranks of the elderly. This is the generation that was born after the World War II, when the fulfillment of the modern promise of peace, democracy and well-being was apparently at hand. Five hundred years of brutal capitalist expansion were supposedly alleviated by the political force of organised workers. The generation born in the years from 1945 to 1975 carried in its cultural background the expectations of freedom and peace and justice, as if they were universal values. Of course, they are not, because universal values do not exist; they are the idealistic translation of cultural expectations produced by social relationships.

During the last three decades of triumphant Neoliberalism, the capitalist counteroffensive has destroyed the very conditions of the possibility of freedom and justice, imposing the brutal law of competition in a deregulated labour market, and subjugating social life to the unbounded domination of profit. The generations that are now coming to the labour market, who grew up during the years of the capitalist counteroffensive, do not possess the memory of the past social civilisation, nor the political force, to defend their existence from the predatory economy.

I first read about this in the 1980s, in an issue of the magazine Daedalus that reported a new phenomenon: 'squaring the pyramid of aging'. The 'pyramid' was once constituted by

a demographic structure with very few old people at the top and many young people at the bottom, but it has now begun to resemble a square because people are living so long, and at the same time the birth rate is declining: there are fewer young people and more old people. The magazine asked the question: 'What will we do when so few young people are available to work for so many old people?' This was the beginning.

The recent extension of average life-expectancy has so far been coupled with some reward for previous contributions to the growth of society: the right to retirement money. But in the 1990s, the Neoliberal discourse took the view that because we live longer, we have to work longer, or we create problems for young people. So we started to hear these claims: that you have to work more, that your pension must be postponed, and has to become increasingly privatised, transferred from the state to private investment funds. Ten years ago in Italy, there was a strong campaign persuading workers to stop asking for public pensions, and start private investments. In those days I argued against pension privatisation, using the experience of the 14,000 Canadian lumberjacks who lost their pensions with the fall of Enron in 2000. I said: 'Don't accept that deal! Don't take private pensions. Look what happened to the Canadian lumberjacks.' Luckily, in Italy a minority of people accepted the deal; but not so few: 30 per cent. And now, we're seeing what happens when you do this: pension funds are increasingly in danger; you can have a good pension if things go well, but you will have a bad pension or no pension at all if things go badly. Things are going badly! Just like they did for the Canadian lumberjacks ...

While much has been made of the privatisation of pensions, there has been less discussion about their postponement. My own story is indicative of this phenomenon. In 1978, I was offered a contract of permanent, regular employment teaching in an evening school. I refused it because I wanted to be a precarious worker (in the 1970s, we thought that to be precarious was good). In 1986 they called me in again and told me I had to sign. Again, I refused: 'It's good to be precarious!' In 1987, they told me, 'If you don't accept the regular job, you'll lose your job altogether.' So I said, 'OK, I like my job', and I signed the contract. I asked when I would receive a pension. They told me, 'When you're fifty-eight years old.' 'OK', I thought, 'fifty-eight isn't too bad.' So when I was fifty-eight, I went to claim my pension. They said, 'Sorry,

you won't have your pension at fifty-eight, you'll have your pension at sixty.' I protested. I left my job. I went to do something different for a time. In 2003, the reform of pensions was introduced in Italy. I was told, 'Sorry, you'll now have to wait for your pension until you're sixty-two.' When I turned sixty-two, they said I'd receive it at sixty-seven. You see? They keep pushing it back.

The pension is the new carrot on the stick. And millions of people are in this situation. This is not simply about delaying payment. The trick is easy: if you have an old person working, you can avoid paying two salaries. Because if I take my pension, i.e. get my salary, and a young person takes my place and gets his salary, there are two salaries. This way they only have to pay one salary. And the young person is unemployed or a slave, available to do any kind of free or precarious labour.

And amazingly it's the old who are blamed for this. When we hear statistics about youth unemployment, they're often accompanied by the statement: 'It's because people are living so long!' Young people are ideologically counterpositioned against the baby-boomers: 'Those communists who are living so long – they never die. So you can't find a job!' But in Europe, the 'precarisation' of labour has been made possible thanks to the postponement of pensions, not because of the increasing well-being of the elderly. Due to this, young people have been put in a situation where they may never find a job. They have to accept any kind of blackmail.

So far, this kind of manufactured ideological animosity has been working. But it is time for forging new solidarities between the young and the old. In my personal case, when I reached fifty-nine, I decided to stop. So I found a way to be expelled from the school for four months and a young person took my place. Then I went back to the school and discovered a policy from 1984 that said that if I was a candidate for a doctorate, I had the right to take a sabbatical for three years. I had my salary; I was on paid leave. So I went to Helsinki to see a friend of mine. I asked to become a doctoral candidate, a PhD student in my sixties, with an advisor thirty years my junior. He seemed uncomfortable, but I said, 'Don't worry, I'm not joking, I really want to be a doctor before I die!'

So now a young person is teaching in my place. This kind of trick is hugely important from an ideological point of view, because so many young people believe that pensions have to be postponed because older people have to work. But the real effect of this is that the old work longer than they'd like to, and the young

will be precarious forever. Older people are seen to have to work. People think, if you retire, you're a lazy person who is doing nothing. But as we know, the dissolution of the welfare state is based on the unpaid work of grandmothers and grandfathers, especially grandmothers! Beyond this, there is tremendous power in paid retirement – a life committed to care, to the education of self and others, to a good life. Valorising this good life is totally impossible for the Neoliberal mind.

So it is important that we begin to practice these micro-solidarities between young and old. Imagine a campaign targeted at the old: 'Adopt-a-precarious: leave your job!'

There are other issues and possibilities for solidarity, such as co-housing. In the 1970s and 1980s, we were living in communes; co-housing was normal. I lived for twenty years in a co-housing situation. At the beginning we were seven, then we were twenty, then twelve; it changed all the time. The documentary film Il Trasloco (Moving Out of the Future), which we made in 1991, when I was forty-one years old, was about this process. In it, the many people who had been living in the house, or visited it, recount their reminiscences as the removers strip it of its furniture. Meanwhile, the TV set shows the beginning of the Gulf War, the bombing of Baghdad in January 1991. So the metaphor is that the House of Utopia is ending and the war begins.

Co-housing was an important step in thinking about what could be, of people living together, taking care of one another, sharing skills, going beyond the very individualised ideas of ageing that we have today. However, if we manage to create an exemplary situation, it's not only about old people living together. We have discussed pension privatisation and postponement, fake generational conflict and the absent aesthetic perspective on the ageing body. We must also face the problem of exhaustion, not only as a problem, but as a cultural possibility.

Modern culture is based on the mythology of energy, Blake's 'energy of eternal delight', of growth, of expansion. 'Exhaustion' is the unspeakable word of Western culture. In this conception, exhaustion is perceived as a lack of something. The dominant conception of political action that has informed social movements since the 1990s, the idea elaborated by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri and others, is of an energetic desire, the permanent excitement of the multitude. This and Anti-Oedipus, the great book by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari upon

which it finds its foundation, present exciting but romantic notions. They belong to the tradition of the mythology of energy.

But energy is not infinite! Human intellectual energy and desire are not infinite!

In their late work, *What is Philosophy*? Deleuze and Guattari acknowledge this, in a reconsideration of the problem of desire. They speak of becoming old and of friendship and love. Friendship becomes a condition for sharing knowledge. And at the end of the book, in the chapter on 'Chaos in the Brain', they write that at a certain moment, you perceive the suffering of the universe as Chaos, going too fast for your brain to comprehend. In the relationship between the speed of the world and the relative slowness of the brain, there is suffering, which is the other side of desire. This dark face, the dark side of desire, is the result of a Universe that is going too fast. In Guattari's later work *Chaosmosis*, he speaks of the spasme chaosmique, the 'chaosmic spasm'. The chaosmic spasm is the perception that one is no longer able to follow the rhythm of the chaosmotic (or energetic) desire. Guattari calls for a new balance between the brain and universe. Desire is not only energy and speed. It is also the ability to find another rhythm.

I want to embrace this dark side of desire. Otherwise, I am unable to face old age. But it is not only a problem of old age; it is a problem of the reality of politics. The reality of social life is not only the pleasure, the energy, the excitement of the acceleration of social knowledge. It is also the suffering that this implies.

From here, how do we problematise the mythology of energy, the Neoliberal rhetoric that states 'I want to be active!' What does active mean? Let's try to see things from another point of view: the point of view of relaxation, of no responsibility, of self-care, the strong caring about the weak. I can tell you that being exhausted isn't so bad. How do we treat the problem of exhaustion as the contour of a possibility? Not only by facing and dealing with death, but by discovering the richness of facing death. How do we inscribe the reality of death into the political and aesthetic agenda of a social group that is currently, and not only for biological reasons, weak?

The older generation of Europe could become the subject of a cultural revolution aimed at preparing Western society for a long-lasting agreement on the redistribution of wealth and resources. Such a cultural revolution would start with a critique of this energetic juvenilism permeating modern culture. The ideology of unbounded growth, and the cult of aggressive competition, are the foundations of capitalist development; they also nourish the romantic and nationalist ideologies that have aggressively mobilised Western society in late-modern times.

A mature culture aspiring to 'ungrowth' and the reduction of the consumerist push due to the activation of solidarity and of sharing, seems today – I must concede – a very unlikely possibility. The recent elections have shown that the European population is determined to defend its privileges by all means possible. But this stance cannot bring anything good with it, and is already bringing a lot of evil. An inter-ethnic civil war is lurking in daily life, and we are going to see it explode with unimaginable violence. Young people accustomed to very hard living conditions are surrounding the fortress. They are bearing the unconscious memory of centuries of exploitation and humiliation, and they are also bearing the conscious expectation of those things that advertising and global ideology have promised them.

During the past several decades, Europe seemed to be a continent of peace and social justice, but now it is sinking into a sea of sadness and cynicism. Young people seem unable to change the social conditions, and are wandering in the labyrinth of a society that lacks solidarity and relaxation. The older population could be the bearer of a new hope if they were able to face the inevitable with a relaxed soul. They could discover something that humankind has never known: a love of the aged, of the sensuous slowness of those who do not expect any more good from life except wisdom, the wisdom of those who have seen much, forgotten nothing, but look at everything as if for the first time.

HOW OLD IS OLD? DESIGNING PARTICIPATION TACTICS TO NURTURE THE INGENUITY OF AGEING FOR OUR FUTURE SELVES[1]

Yanki Lee

1. Introduction: Ageing and design

According to the United Nations 2009 report, the global population of people aged 60 and over is 680 million, representing 11 per cent of the world's population and the figure is increasing very year. Specific questions are raised for/by design researchers to this global phenomenon: *who should be our research subjects and where is the starting point to design for ageing*?

Historian Peter Laslett once stated that ageing is '*a unique experience for each individual*' and his famous slogan was '*live in the presence of all your future selves*,' which promotes a life-course approach to address ageing issues. In other words, ageing is a condition that we will experience in our life course.

In the beginning of 1990s, Laslett's concept was adopted by Professor Roger Coleman who extended it into the DesignAge[2] programme at the Royal College of Art, the first design movement in ageing. Its motto was '*Design for Our Future Selves*' and was set up as what Laslett described as '*an arranged marriage*' of an art & design school with the University of the Third Age (U3A). The relationship was claimed as '*a new collaboration between older people and young designers, and a new approach that is part of a growing trend towards a*

more thoughtful and respectful design process.' The goal of this mutual relationship was to develop better designs that include the needs of all users with the starting point focused on the needs of older people.

2. Typology of design participation

As we know from other forms of participation in design, particularly those in the area of housing, user involvement can range from mission-oriented tasks reduced to their instrumental value for top-down designers and developers to more emancipatory forms, in which the design process is undertaken by and with the people who are to be the most effected. This ethical dimension of design participation is not always clarified, causing some participatory projects with older people to fall short of Laslett's goal of creating a more 'thoughful and respectful design process'. This text argues that, in order to avoid tokenistic approaches to participation, more emphasis should be placed on the issues of 'how', that is on the concrete circumstances of participation in design practice rather than repeatedly returning to the 'why' or to grand claims of user involvement.

While there has been a great deal of excitement about collaborative design in recent years, it is important to note that these questions are not new. The first attempt by the UK design community to formally address user participation in the design process was an international conference entitled 'Design Participation' in 1971, which was sponsored and organised by the Design Research Society (DRS), the multi-disciplinary learning society for the worldwide design research community. In a climate of widespread growth of community action and social movements fighting for social democracy in the 1960s and early 1970s, the conference was the first to define 'Design Participation' and bring 'everyman' into the field (Banham 1972). Its aim was to discuss the importance of user participation in different forms of design practice and establish a community in the design field concerned with such issues.

Since then, participation has become important within design as an economic necessity (Turner 1972), an element of government policy (Ward 1985) and a political initiative targeted at neighbourhood renewal, regeneration, employment, etc (Broome 2005). Beyond the creation of places and things, participation in design has extended to the design of experience, services and processes (Suri 1990). Additionally, involving end users in design has become an essential component of design research (Sanders 2006).

Different design ideologies are referred to by different names by practitioners and academics; for example, at the Royal College of Art, Product Design is called Design Products and Interaction Design is termed Design Interactions. Inclusive Design, which was introduced as design for social inclusion (Coleman 1994) with the focus on older and disabled populations, but has since expanded its definition to include other marginalised groups.

Because the fields and uses of participation are contradictory, deriving from both altruistic ideas of emancipation and empowerment and driven by economic and political projects seeking to seduce publics into top-down processes, the term 'participation' is today somewhat controversial. Architects and other professionals involved in housing development are regularly criticised by emancipatory and self-organised groups for using the term participation to signal only symbolic community involvement.

To distinguish the myriad of new terms from the original social aims of people's participation, I prefer to use the term derived from the 1971 conference, Design Participation (DP) over Participatory Design (PD). Where the latter still relies on a more static notion of design, the former suggests that we might attempt to change the nature of the design through the process of participation and prefaces an ethical commitment to collaboration.

Using Henri Lefebvre's (1972) social/spatial analysis- that the world is divided into two worlds of practice: abstract space for experts and concrete space for people is instructive here. Dating from the era of modernism these two worlds were separated, with professionalism being held to be a world apart and above, while people were treated as the subjects for reactive information. When the two worlds rejoin, a new form of in-between space might be created and called the 'realm of collaboration' (Lee 2007).

But this collaborative field cannot be one in which the professional is re-inserted as the ultimate authority, such as can be the case in the more recent craze around user-centred design. In 'Design for users' users are often rendered the subject of analysis rather than active participants in the design decision- making process. Equally, and of particular interest to issue of design for aging, many user researchers i.e. in technological development focus on specific kinds of users such as so-called 'early adopters', who are usually young people. Because of this 'lead user concept', many older people are viewed as 'passive receivers of innovations who are often in need of help to understand new designs'. In 2004, even the UK Government's Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) was critical about user-centred design (UCD). After visiting top design consultants in the USA to track the development from user-centred design (UCD) to people-centred design (PCD), their report suggested using the 'people' over 'user', because, in their words, '...Frequently, UCD becomes merely "user testing" and is brought in at the end of the product development cycle. Users are often conceived in a task-centric way that fits into current technology-led business models.'

3. Design for the ingenuity of ageing

Through my own work as a designer/design researcher I have attempted to demonstrate practices of participation in design through a number of projects. Through these I have developed a design participation typology. Following other attempts, e.g. Arnstein's ladder of participation (1969) and Christina Lindsay's pyramid of user-led design (2003), I have asserted this typology to delineate classification systems for the participation-phenomenon drawn from different disciplines and differentiating between those which intend to create hierarchies of participation and those that encourage more equitable collaboration and interactions.

Figure 1 is a diagram of interaction of Lefebvre's dialectical configuration of abstract space (the realm where designers and experts work) and concrete space (the realm where people live). Applying this framework to understand Design Participation practice, 'working with designers' and 'working with people' are opposite poles of an axis that can be mapped parallel. Three modes of participation are identified, including Public Participation (PP) in abstract space, Community Participation (CP) in concrete space and Design Participation (DP) across the overlap space of the realm of collaboration.

Table 1 intends to distinguish between different ways in which people practice participation and articulate its characteristics. For the design community, Community Participation projects become part of Design Participation when there design inputs in the processes or when designers take the initiative. When Public Participation projects involve community, especially involving the public realm, they will start to merge with the domain of Design Participation.

Types of Participation	Operating Space	Initiator	Expected Outcome	Approach	The roles of architects and designers
Community participation (CP)	User World, Concrete Space	Social workers from NGOs or users, especially from grassroots community	Social service - oriented (social justice)	bottom up approach	Advisers to give professional advice
Public Participation (PP)	Expert World, Abstract Space	Policy –makers or public service agents/ public sector	Policy-oriented (civic education)	top down approach	Producers under the instruction of public policy makers
Design Participation (DP)	From Realm of Collaboration extends to the other spaces	Designers or users	Design –oriented (design innovation)	can be top-down or/and bottom-up	Strategists aiming to develop innovative design or better design to improve people's lives.

Table 1.
Comparisons between community, public and design participation

Table 2 indicates where the Design Participation practices operates, the purpose (also suggested their names), the designer/user relationship and finally the roles of designers and users.

Space of operation	What's Design Participation for?	The relationship between the designers' space and the users' space	The role of 'designers'	The role of 'users'
Designers' space	1. Innovation (designer only)	working with design community / working with users	Masters/ authorities	Imagined user/ representatives
Realm of collaboration (between designers and people)	2. Collaboration (designer-driven)	working with design community / realm of collaboration / working with users	Co-designers/ facilitators	Co-workers/ partners
Users /people space	3. Emancipation (user-driven)	working with design community / working with users	Stimulators	Creative people/ advisers
	4. Motivation (user only)	working with design community / working with users	Craftsmen/ builders	Active clients

Table 2.
Design Participation Typology

Although there is no hierarchical intention as in other classification systems, there is a difference between the use of names to 'classify' different practices in the field.

In Design Participation for 'innovation' and 'collaboration' practitioners are mission-oriented. For them, knowledge is reduced to its instrumental value. They are conducting Design Participation activities with other designers *for* people. The 'emancipation' practitioners, on the other hand, are designing *with* people. These three types of Design Participations with designers' involvement cover the ideology of 'Co-Design'. However, the world of design is undergoing a massive change: design is becoming an everyday activity rather than a professional study (Lee 2007). In this context, the Design Participation for Motivation becomes more important and moves towards the co-design domain, even though they are initiated by people in concrete space. Within this fourth zone, the users have autonomy to steer the design process and have no fixed rules. This latter form of design participation has been described 'The Alternative Culture' by Banham (1972: 17), who concluded that the only real Design Participation is 'do-it-yourself', where participants invent their own rules.

4. Challenges in the Design Field

While design participation and co-design are on the rise, it is clear that designers are still often situated at a distance from user-initiated initiative or DIY or autonomous processes. There are a number of challenges to overcoming this.

The first challenge is that aesthetic processes as it is currently understood in design, is still the core knowledge of design professions and seen to be separate from the issue of participation. Much of design research, and research in participation in design in particular, is being conducted by other experts such as psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists, who are concerned with the effects and influence of designing than its forms. Very few design practitioners who are working in the high stress design field feel that they have the time, the training or the inclination to pursue the findings from design research done by these 'outsiders' (Mitchell 1993). This means that there are gaps between design or participation research by 'outsiders' and creative design practice by 'insiders' (designers) because of a lack of collaboration between the two groups. This creates a situation of inefficacy for those who have conducted and engaged in bottom up research processes and whose findings are not incorporated into designs. It also means that professional designers are somewhat buffered from the political stakes of communities and participatory processes in their designs, a distance that can be useful for commissioners engaging participation only to be seen to be involving users. The relation between design and people-led research could therefore become more creative and consequential for all stakeholders, and especially users if there were to be more professional designer involvement.

The other issue that can stand in the way of efficacious user involvement is the focus in the design field on innovation, understood in relation to the field of design-in-itself. It is quite possible that what is necessary in re-framing the relationship between designers and users is more of a focus on paralogy rather than innovation. As Jean-Francois Lyotard (1984: 61) explained,

> '*Paralogy must be distinguished from innovation: the latter is under the command of the system, or at least used by it to improve its efficiency; the former is a move (the importance of which is not recognized until later) played in the pragmatics of knowledge ... The stronger the 'move', the more likely it is to be denied the minimum consensus, precisely because it changes the rules of the game upon which the consensus has been based*.'

A focus on paralogy is then an understanding of the new shift in knowledge or reasoning that moves beyond a challenge or movement within design and amongst designers and has the potential to 'change the game' of the core assumptions in which a design process is situated, that is changing the hierarchical order of design in such a way that groups might change the hierchical order of the social fabric.

In many ways this reflects new thinking in the area of Design Participation, such as the work of Ehn, who alters the designer/non-designer paradigm to the concept of communities-of-practice organized around designing *socio-material design things defined as '… meaningful, potentially controversial assemblies, for and with the participants in a project*' (2008, 94).

Moving away from an over-emphasis on the design professional and into that of 'communities of practice,' involving designers and non-designers seems to be a logical way forward, but one that must be adopted by not only designers but training and commissioning bodies if it is to take place.

5. Design for the ingenuity of ageing

Ehn's assertions suggest that it is likely better to start from individual people's solutions in dealing with their own ageing problems, especially engaging with those who have more experience, i.e. the elderly. However, it is possible that designerly ways of researching can assist older people not only in solving the problems but in understanding the problems to begin with. For many social issues, problems are identified by public, corporate or NGO bodies and not citizen groups themselves. Designers trained in the arts, on the other hand, '…are capable of 'capturing fleeting moments and structures that others find ephemeral, imaginative, and unstable for serious research. They are also trained in re-framing ideas …and to imagine problems and opportunities to see whether something is necessary or not. (Koskinen, 2012)

Recently I have had opportunity to test these ideas through work on the Tsinghua University campus in Beijing. In addition to 30,000 students and staff members, there are over 6,000 retirees still living on the campus. Many elderly residents are ageing actively. They had been given apartments for life, pensions equal to half of their previous salaries and more importantly well connected communities and a respected social status.

Many are subject experts as well as mentors of China's current key political leaders in the Communist Party. As older people with adequate resources, they set up the Tsinghua Association of Senior Scientists and Technicians in 2005 and together with those from other universities created a website, www.china50plus.com offering information for those over 50 and a platform for retired experts to link with those looking for advice.

As a team consisting of a design researcher and a sociologist, myself and Dr. Denny K L Ho were interested in how people design their own lives and the role designers might play in relation to the 'tools' already put in place by older people. This learning process could be seen to inspire new and appropriate ageing innovation for our future selves.

To do this we developed two tactics. First we conducted Creative Dialogues with the group of older people in their homes or work places in order to identify their matter of concern and their utopia, which, in our view, is the driving force of participants to get involved in PD processes. Second, we developed a series of Design Festivals, developing pop up design stalls in conjunction with traditional festivals in the Chinese calendar. During the Design Festivals, participants made use of their own ideal picture to, on the one hand, evaluate the current situation on university campus and on the other, to search innovative ways to realise the utopian dreams at the same time.

As a group of 'ingenious' people, they worked with each other to tackle persistent myths about old age and aged people, a culturally based fear of ageing. They were dissatisfied with the image of a weak *Tsinghuaian* (Lee, 2012).

We designed a process for identifying the distances between the utopian and the concrete possibilities, assisting participants to shape their desires and ideas for future change. Rather than designers, we functioned as 'design triggers, codesign members and design activists' (Manzini and Rizzo, 2011). Our role was to ensure the smooth process of program and design born out in the Dialogues and Festivals for the common concern of the participants and their future.

It is clear that this situation of collective living with access to basic resource and a degree of social respect has become an incubator that allows innovations to happen both in self-organised culture and in the group's interactions with outsiders. They are constantly developing ways to maintain their quality of life, and enabling designers and others in their communities to play a more responsive role.

To advocating for stronger design participation in the aging process is not only to advocate in the design field, but for a society that provides the conditions for older and other people to become communities of practice in the making and shaping of their lives.

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GRAVE NEW
WORLD
TOMORROW
TO-MORROW
TO MORROW

Sally Tallant

The population of the UK is ageing. Over the last 25 years the percentage of the population aged 65 and over increased from 15 per cent in 1985 to 17 per cent in 2010, an increase of 1.7 million people. Over the same period, the percentage of the population aged under 16 decreased from 21 per cent to 19 per cent. This trend is projected to continue. By 2035, 23 per cent of the population is projected to be aged 65 and over compared to 18 per cent aged under 16.

The fastest population increase has been in the number of those aged 85 and over, the "oldest old." In 1985, there were around 690,000 people in the UK aged 85 and over. Since then the numbers have more than doubled reaching 1.4 million in 2010. By 2035 the number of people aged 85 and over is projected to be 2.5 times larger than in 2010, reaching 3.6 million and accounting for 5 per cent of the total population.

The ratio of women to men of those aged 65 and over is also falling. In 1985 there were 154 women aged 65 and over for every 100 men of the same age, compared to the current sex ratio of 127 women for every 100 men. By 2035 it is projected that the 65 and over sex ratio will have fallen still further to 118 women for every 100 men.[1]

The notion of "care" implies vulnerability and "need." There is an inherent co-dependency between "carer" and "cared for" and the question of whose agency and active participation in the world is valued becomes of utmost importance. People of working age in "good health" do not often consider themselves amongst those "needing care," but perhaps it is time that we should all review our perspective on this, as a lack of planning now is very shortsighted. If things around us appear to be bleak now we should consider the future shock that is in store for us. What kind of future can we envisage for ourselves as we get older and move towards the end of our lives?

The current conservative legislative and political shifts towards a more individualized social model along with the disinvestment in, and dismantling of, the Welfare State has created a situation where there is a growing distinction between rich and poor and a new explicit emphasis on and reference

1   Source: Mid-year population estimates, Office for National Statistics; The National Register Office for Scotland; Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.

to Victorian notions of the *deserving* and the *undeserving* poor. The increasingly pervasive idea that the (non) working class is lazy and *undeserving* is the result of a perverse and moralizing mentality. In the UK there is a progressive conservatism that is attempting to shift responsibility from the state to the individual. This is being articulated as the "Big Society," a notion that citizens and communities will take responsibility for services. The implication is that enormous demands will be made on unpaid time, and because some people have much more control over their time than others there is an inherent inequality to how this will impact on communities that currently struggle to make ends meet. The idea that people should do unpaid work to be

legitimate in terms of public value is a patronizing intrusion into civil liberties; in other words, moral choices are being eroded and articulated as moral obligations. People who can afford it can choose to spend their time "usefully" and lead deserving lives. For the rest— the majority of people— these are not choices but expressed as a culture of obligation that emphasizes moral frailties and expanded duty.

As the ageing population increases we are told that we should prepare for older age; that we should make sure that we are "deserving" of the care that we will inevitably need. In the current economic situation, there is a reality that both the future of pensions and early retirement seem more and more remote to a younger generation of people. This suggests the need for a new understanding of older people and their contribution.

Representations of ageing and related policies often reinforce perceptions of older people as marginal, dependent and powerless. The reality is that this demographic group has time and energy to engage critically, creatively, productively and often voluntarily in society. The key here is the element of choice: when this becomes an obligation there is a danger that skilled social work will be replaced by a culture of volunteerism and unpaid labor.

We are making the most of, and trying to extend, our youth, pushing the duration of our lives as far as we can and ensuring that we are kept busy, employed, and useful. How can we resist the current trends and thinking, and value the contribution and lives of others, of individual voices that may need support but should not be reduced to the category of those who simply need to be "cared for"? Is it possible to see the contribution of this growing number of people who are no longer of working age as useful and meaningful? Can a complex culture of knowledge production and sharing lead to the possibility of employing the skills and knowledge amassed over a lifetime of experience rather than simply employing the labor of individuals for a brief period of their lives? What role do cultural producers and artists have in shaping this future?

If science fiction offers us glimpses of the future, we can look forward to an over populated world where we will be medically adjusted to enjoy endure our lives. The bleak images conjured up by Aldous Huxley, Stanislaw Lem and Philip K. Dick warn that we should not rely on society but that we need to take responsibility. We need to demand that a universal approach to "care" is not "rolled out" but rather that individuals should have the opportunity to participate in a rich cultural life and community until the end of their lives.

In the novel *Island*, Huxley's utopian, fictional community has extended family groups through mutual adoption societies. Each person takes part in a birth and death, bringing these aspects of life into the everyday and ensuring that these stages of life are both better understood and integrated into living:

...Old people in institutions, old people cooped up in their own homes, old people living on as a burden to their children and grandchildren...we help them to go

their children and grandchildren…we help them to go on practicing the art of living even while they're dying. Knowing who in fact one is, being conscious of the universal and impersonal life that lives itself through each of us — that's what one can help the dying to go on practicing to the very end.[2]

It is easy to underestimate and overlook some of the things that are actually done well in the cultural sector. The "art world" operates at great intensity and speed and is perceived as being driven by new ideas and youth; but in fact we work in an environment that values the work of cultural producers throughout their lives; it is not unusual for an artist, architect

2   Aldous Huxley, Island (London: Vintage, 2005), 239.

or writer to be making new work in their eighties and nineties. People working in the cultural sector have a wider social role to play. There is a need to develop complex intergenerational situations where it is possible to work throughout a lifetime, possible to be valued and make a contribution until the end of life. This is already an extraordinary reality for artists, writers, intellectuals and those who choose to invest in cultural capital. Is it possible to look at this model of community and extend its reach?

The histories of community-based, feminist and public practices are significant in terms of how we consider questions of value in relation to art. The work of artists who took to the streets and to neighborhoods in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, and who believed passionately in the idea of cultural democracy rather than the more top-down idea of the democratization of culture developed socially engaged and collaborative practices. Significantly, this group included artists and writers such as Suzanne Lacy,[3] Arlene Raven and Lucy Lippard in the USA; and Artists Placement Group (APG),[4] The Art of Change (Loraine Leeson and Peter Dunn), Owen Kelly[5] and others in the UK. These histories are intricately linked to the subsequent gentrification of neighborhoods, to changes in policy in which art becomes purposeful to many forces of power. What we have learned from these movements between the spaces of emancipatory education and the processes of neo-liberalism underscores the complexity of our current experiments in this field.

3   Suzanne Lacy's practice and writing has significantly shifted understanding of possibilities for public art. See The Crystal Quilt (1987), Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art (1995), and Leaving Art (2010).
4   The Artist Placement Group (APG) emerged in London in the 1960s. The organization actively sought to reposition the role of the artist within a wider social context, including government and commerce, while at the same time playing an important role in the history of conceptual art during the 1960s and 1970s. The Observer journalist, Peter Beaumont, has described the APG as "one of the most radical social experiments of the 1960s."
5   Owen Kelly's book Community, Art and the State: Storming the Citadels (London/New York: Comedia Pub. Group in association with Marion Boyars, 1984) is a key text in relation to Community Arts practice in the UK.

The Serpentine Gallery in London has an integrated program of exhibitions, education, public programs and architecture. Artists, architects, writers, and cultural producers work across all of these stands of activity and it is an extremely intergenerational program. Many of the artists, architects and writers who are involved in the program are of an older generation. Oscar Niemeyer was ninety-six when he built his temporary pavilion for the gallery; Gustav Metzger, Maria Lassnig, Richard Hamilton were in their eighties when they had exhibitions. Eric Hobsbawm, Agnes Varda, Yoko Ono and Tony Benn were in their senior years when they worked with us.

Skills Exchange: Urban Transformations and the Politics of Care is a Serpentine Gallery project inspired by Ivan Illich's model of co-learning through an exchange of skills.[6] Artists have been working in collaboration with elderly people, market traders, care workers and young people to swap skills and develop ideas for social and architectural change. These complex projects have led to the production of works of art through interventions, films and installations, all of which have been exhibited at the gallery. Critically, they have unfolded over a period of four years. Each project has had its own duration and time to develop its own model of collaboration with individuals, groups and care providers.

Week 1 Weekending 5/10/09	Units	Mon 28	Tues 29	Wed 30	Thru 1	Fri 2	Sat 4	Sun 5
		D	L	E	D	L	E	L
	RH4	D	L	E	D	L	E	L
	Green	D	L	E	D	L	E	L
	Green	D	L	E	D	L	E	L
	Red	D	L	E	D	L	E	L
	Blue	D	L	E	D	L	E	L
	Respite	D	L	E	D	L	E	L
	Emer	D	L	E	D	L	E	L
	Interim	D	L	E	D	L	E	L
		E	D	L	E	D	L	E
	RH4	E	D	L	E	D	L	E
	Red	E	D	L	E	D	L	E
	green	E	D	L	E	D	L	E
	Green	E	D	L	E	D	L	E
	Respite	E	D	L	E	D	L	E
	Emer	E	D	L	E	D	L	E
	Emer	E	D	L	E	D	L	E
	Interim	E	D	L	E	D	L	E
	Interim	E	D	L	E	D	L	E
	Blue	E	D	L	E	D	L	E
	Blue	E	C	C	C	D	L	E
		L	E	F	L	E	D	D
	RH4	L	E	F	L	E	D	D
	Green	L	E	F	L	E	D	D
	Interim	L	E	F	L	E	D	D
	Emer	L	E	F	L	E	D	D
	Blue	L	E	F	L	E	D	D
	Green	L	E	F	L	E	D	D
	Respite	L	E	F	L	E	D	D
	Green	L	E	F	L	E	D	D
	Flexi	L	E	F	L	E	D	D
	Interim	L	E	F	L	E	D	D
	Red	L	E	F	L	E	D	D
		9 - 5	9 - 5	9 - 5	9 - 5	9 - 5	D	D
		9 - 5	9 - 5	9 - 5	9 - 5	9 - 5	D	D

Staff Rota 2010 Camden Homes for Older People

TOWARDS AN AUTONOMY OF CARE

Janna Graham

'*Old people remain the most separate, abstract and exceptional for the longest period of our lives. We carry this ostracism to the point of turning it on ourselves.*'
Simone de Beauvoir, *The Coming of Age*

In 2003, Canadian artist Vera Frenkel, created a virtual world, *The Institute, or What We Do for Love*, in which unemployed curators – victims of a de-funded arts sector – looked after ageing artists – castaways from a dilapidated health-care system – in a nursing home. It was at a time when hospitals were closing across Canada on such a spectacular scale that to describe these cuts to social welfare as acts of war on the poor no longer seemed hyperbolic. At the same time, a similar attack was taking place on the cultural front. Arts funding morphed from its 1970s ethos of general support for the lives of artists (with one head of the Canada Council for the Arts even declaring that government funding could be used equally for artists' dental work as for the making of works of art) towards funding contingent on the marketing of artists' works and the propulsion of their careers into the global market.

A decade earlier, I worked for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. I was fresh out of university, starving, but committed to community-led television, and was offered the opportunity to become a freelance producer on the programme '50 UP!' It was a show for older people that had historically been used by seniors' advocacy groups to share information and lobby on health care. The show was under new management, and the previous producers (unionised, with stable contracts) had been laid off to make room for a younger, more 'creative', flexibly employed group of freelance producers, who were called upon to project a more vibrant image of ageing. I was asked to pitch segments on seniors in fashion, sex and the elderly, and what older people could teach twenty-somethings about swing danc-

ing, the latest craze on the local club scene. Those who did not 'sex-up' the aged in the weekly pitch meeting were not awarded a segment. Those who were not awarded a segment did not get paid and generally worked for free for those who did. There was no one over the age of forty working on the show. Where, prior to this moment, there had been an alignment between the work of middle-aged media producers and older actors in the field of elderly care, a new set of precarious workers was now charged with a re-branding, relegating the concerns of low-income pensioners to the realm of silence.

These two situations – Frenkel's fictionalised futuristic Institute where precarious young creatives looked after creative old people, and a TV show where a young, creative flexibilised labour force was charged with the re-branding of the old – foreshadowed an imminent rhetorical animosity between the young and the old. It is now commonplace to hear that the young of today are bearing the burden of 'an ageing population', who have taxed the welfare state and sunk the country so far into debt that no-one could possibly expect to be taken care of in their old age. Such divisive narratives habitually 'forget' expenditures related to war, bank bailouts and corporate tax subsidies.

When, a decade later in 2008, I inherited the project *Skills Exchange* – an attempt to intervene into the field of elderly care through which creative workers (artists, designers, architects) in the London were literally to swap skills with residents and workers in care homes, hospices and activity programmes for older people – this contingent relation again came to the fore. How, before the backdrop of a crumbling Welfare State, Big Society voluntarism in the social-care sector, and the dubiously instrumentalised position of the creative worker as harbinger of the 'new' (pitted against *old* social housing, *old* benefits programmes and *old* working contracts) could we collaborate to counter the cynical and deeply patronising tendencies of a newly fabricated division between the creative, the young and the elderly?

The project, initiated by then Serpentine Head of Programmes Sally Tallant and Curator Louise Coysh, was situated in five spaces of elderly care: two care homes, two social programmes for older people in neighbourhoods undergoing massive redevelopment, and a hospice. Almost all of the older participants were on State support. Through funding necessity and institutional convention, the nar-

ratives surrounding the *Skills Exchange* project on my arrival – derived from both Serpentine staff and those who worked in care spaces – followed a number of tangents. On the one hand they related to promoting exchanges between older and younger people in the name of inter-generational learning; on the other, to artists or creative people 'helping' older people by making them feel 'less isolated', 'giving them a voice', generating greater 'social cohesion' with their neighbours or making them feel 'more comfortable' with changes to the institutions and neighbourhoods in which they lived. Yet another discursive strand focused on the work that artists would make through their encounters with the elderly, ideas of 'quality production', supporting 'important' or 'emerging' artists, and creating a work worthy of a Serpentine Gallery commission. In this early configuration of the project, older people themselves were not described as the initiators or narrators of the project.

GENEALOGIES,
or What We Learned from the APG

This structural logic is not exceptional. It is in keeping with the legacy of ambivalence that surrounds social-art placements in a neoliberal era. Genealogies for the project can be located in collaborations like the Artist Placement Group (APG), whose immensely important history has come to greater public attention in recent years. Initiated by artists John Latham and Barbara Steveni with David Hall, Barry Flanagan, and involving many other artists, the APG was active in the UK and elsewhere from 1966–89, when its name was changed to Organisation + Imagination. The group's proclamation that 'the context is half the work' foreshadowed *Skills Exchange* and many other similarly oriented projects in its rejection of art's segregation from the social sites from which it derives its often socially urgent questions.

Another tenet of APG's manifesto: 'That, the status of the artist within organisations is independent, bound by invitation ... rather than by instructions from authority within the organisations, department, company', was also an important point for the artists involved in *Skills Exchange*. The gallery had its own ideas about quality art, and many of the participating care organisations had ideas of what they would like to commission: murals, pictures for the doors of the rooms of residents, pro-

grammes to ease the anxiety of a pending amalgamation of homes, or changes on a housing estate. Nevertheless, the discourse of artistic autonomy, sometimes allowed enough breathing space for artists to listen to the older people with whom they would work directly, and ascertain the distances between their own desires and those of their institutional representatives.

However, from project descriptions of the 'social effects' of the APG's activities we can learn the dangers of such a claim to artistic exception. Repeating modernist notions of avant-garde artistic subjectivity, these descriptions often position APG artists as agents of rupture or change for its own sake, as in the case of an installation by George Levantis, which was 'thrown over the side of the ship' of the shipping company with whom he worked because it was 'not what the commissioners expected'; or the case of Gustav Metzger, who shouted at a British Oxygen executive at an APG conference, 'I want to burn down your factories!'

When the APG artists move from corporate placements into government departments, their descriptions make few distinctions between identifications with managerial discourses, i.e. changes to social policy from above, and what might be described as a social or popular discourse, in which placement enabled people to instigate change from below. An example of the former approach is the role of artists in the production of audio-visual 'Reminiscences Aids' for the participants of Age Concern, while the latter is exemplified by the APG's creation of a communication vehicle in Birmingham Housing Department, through which residents could speak directly to local government about the effects of housing policies on their lives. Nor do descriptions of the APG validate non-artists in their appropriation of artist-initiated work. Stuart Brisley's Artist Project Peterlee, for example, is described as becoming 'perhaps not quite what the artist had intended' when changed by local collaborators to the 'Peoples' Project Past and Present'.

While it is hard to imagine any institution today allowing open conversations between the corporate elite and the artists and activists who 'want to burn down' their factories, the archival description of the APG's work was an important backdrop for approaching *Skills Exchange*. This is true in particular because the mutable idea of the artist's autonomy was very present in each *Skills Exchange* project, si-

multaneously opening up a potential space for collaboration and posing the risk that the artist would effectively ignore the political stakes in the social field in which he or she was operating. This confusion of the notion of artistic autonomy with that of political autonomy often causes artists and other operators in the artistic realm to misunderstand the opportunity of their placement in social contexts – that is, to align and act in solidarity with their partners in the social field.

Many of the *Skills Exchange* projects oscillated between notions of autonomy, social utility and solidarity. Marcus Coates, for example, posed the question 'What service can an artist provide?' to those working in and using a hospice in St John's Wood. Where in past works he has assumed, even parodied, the role of the artist-as-shaman/consultant/all-seeing fixer, designing bespoke rituals for conflict resolution in areas he knew little about, his collaboration with hospice workers and day-service user Alex H adopted a much less heroic understanding of artistic utility. Alex H made use of Coates's input as an artist, asking him to travel on his behalf and observe and narrate what he saw, while at the same time acknowledging his power in doing so and questioning the very premise of what could be relevant or helpful at the end of one's life. In this way, Coates and Alex H resisted a simplistic or paternalistic approach to the notion of service in favour of one that could accommodate the feelings of futility and impossibility that he was experiencing in relation to the project. While conversations between Alex H and Coates did not activate what we might conventionally understand as political solidarity, they did suggest that the point of departure for artists interested in being involved in processes of servicing, rupture or social change is an open discussion with their collaborators around the issues of power, equality and doubt at the core of any relationship.

Other Genealogies

The problems of heroic, avant-garde or helping narratives in social art are not particular to the APG, but to those who describe the field in general. Like those in other neglected fields, its champions and practitioners can be overly fixated on justifying their practices using the terms and conventions of the field of art as their primary reference point, or relying on unspecific and generally liberal notions of 'good'. In so doing, they/we have produced a

blindspot to one of social art's greatest potentialities: its capacity and indeed necessity to link with other fields of life whose proponents share desires for social emancipation and possess the skills for realising it. In the words of artist Suzanne Lacy, the challenge is: 'to politicize yourself as a person and then learn to integrate those politics into everything you do'. Creating a descriptive and relational terrain that is based on desires and commitment to social change, rather than particular professionalised communities, shifts the focus, provides other criteria and unlocks the genealogies of fields whose practitioners have more experience in creating collaborative and equitable social projects than have historically been characteristic in the production of art.

Through *Skills Exchange*, we wondered if it would be possible to instigate solidarities between those who fall on either side of constructed divides – between the young and the old, between the artistic and care fields – but also to be clear about the co-relation of political, social and aesthetic stakes. Could we move away from the configuration in which the artist was positioned as God-like clairvoyant, somehow endowed with the ability to 'give voice', to fix all, while confirming the elderly as those always already without? How could we create hybrid and truthful articulations of the exchanges that take place when art conjoins with the care field (mediated by their institutions), particularly when the fields of Art and Care share this cloak of the good, the noble and the satisfying while its practitioners work under conditions that bear evidence of the very opposite? Who would be our teachers?

Residential Radicals

In Simone de Beauvoir's book the *The Coming of Age*, she surveyed articles written in the 1950s with reference to over 500 people who had reached the age of 100 in three different countries. The characteristics they shared included active involvement in political and social issues, an interest in the future, and the desire to co-habit in an inter-generational context. These observations were echoed by the Grey Panthers, a US-based network of older and younger people concerned about ageing in the 1970s, who staged struggles for shared housing or 'congregate living arrangements' and the right to create 'families of choice'. Informed by the Black Panther movement and involving some of its members, the group has historically contested the idea that decisions

about social needs should be solely placed in the hands of technocrats, or professionals asked to 'service' the elderly, desiring instead that social assets should be paid for by the State but placed under community control.

In their idealistic aims, such movements were much equally relevant precursors to *Skills Exchange* to their counterparts in the arts. Elements of this ethos were expressed by many of the project's participants, who shared the idea that constructed social segregation – of young and old, of productive creatives and the unproductive urban poor – was socially and personally detrimental. *Skills Exchange* did not create 'families of choice' or manage to enable autonomous community-led decision-making lobbies for State resources, but in many cases it did create preliminary contact zones for encounters between seemingly opposing groups.

In this regard, we might equally look to the histories of experimental or Institutional Psychotherapy, such as those found at La Borde Clinic in France. La Borde was founded by Jean Oury in the 1940s on the legacies of St Alban, a refuge for resistance fighters in the 1920s. Led by Catalan psychiatrist François Tosquelles, St Alban developed what it described as 'geo-psychiatry' – a combination of psychiatry and traditional local activities, based on the de-segregation of the mental-health institution and the local town. Built on this legacy, La Borde was organised around the Daily Activities Commission, which met every day after lunch to discuss all aspects of the running of the place. Developed by Félix Guattari into 'The Grid' in the 1950s, this central aspect of institutional life was a kind of collectively articulated schedule or rota for the distribution of tasks and responsibilities that altered hierarchies between medical staff, admin workers, patients, cleaners, cooks, interns, philosophers, artists and other outsiders. 'Doctors would work as administrators, psychiatrists would do the dishes', Oury describes. Pay was also a matter of redistribution, with greater amounts allocated to the less desirable tasks. The rotating distribution of tasks enabled the constant reinvention of the practices at La Borde, and promoted new modes of reflection upon them. The belief at La Borde was that rupture, altering hierarchical and professional relations, challenged assumed structures contributing to illness. Dealing with the anxieties that came from these ruptures was seen as fundamental to the analysis of the distribution of power in the production of care and, as

a result, to patient and social health.

This kind of institutional experiment seems unimaginable in organisations of residential elderly care in the UK today. Nonetheless, during *Skills Exchange*, The Grid was a loose reference point for the work of design collective Åbäke and care worker Phyllis Etukudo at the Westmead Care home in Westminster, who not only focused on making shifts in the daily practices of the home, but also on the ways in which staff and participant routines in both spaces of care and spaces of art reinforce social segregation. To break these patterns they worked with staff at the home and at the Serpentine Gallery to map desires across the two institutions and enact points of convergence and exchange, including an art swap, a birthday party, tours and a cake-making class.

For Beatrice Gibson, George Clarke, Sally Mercer and other *Skills Exchange* collaborators at the Camden Homes for Older People, the creation of collective 'linguistic' configurations that centred around the non-linear spoken responses of those with dementia, rather than the medicalised notions of patient progress, was the basis for the development of a collective script. In this they linked experimental traditions in social work and geo-psychiatry to those in the cultural field, referencing the BBC's *Play for Today*, the scores of Cornelius Cardew and the Scratch Orchestra, and BS Johnson's *House Mother Normal*.

Other Criteria: PAR

If genealogies of institutional intervention provide a more detailed set of possibilities through which to understand the terrain in which social and aesthetic realms meet, non or anti-institutional histories are equally important. The legacies of Participatory Action Research (PAR) for example, address what a co-articulation of art, care and social research might look like from a wider, non-institutional perspective. PAR came about in the 1970s when researchers left the university to offer skills and methodologies of social analysis to poor and disenfranchised communities involved in anti-colonial struggles. Responding to groups such as the Bhoomi Sena or Land Army – who were disaffected with their experiences of the paternalistic agendas of social workers and researchers – PAR practitioners put their skills and training to work in the generation of collective findings that could be used by those directly impacted. They suggested that dialectical logic enabled them to

work from the basis of shared social contradictions – between co-researchers with sociological training and those with 'organic' knowledge of conditions. Verification of their findings no longer needed to enter the academy and privately owned publishing companies when one could assess their relevance through their situated use in struggles for social justice. Suggesting that the widely regarded notion of academic neutrality simply masks the orientation of knowledge production towards society's ruling classes, they were also critical of dialecticians from the avant-garde intelligentsia whose sense of superiority often blinded them to their own abuses of power.

Our attempts to adopt PAR methodologies in both the research and aesthetic components of *Skills Exchange* were not always successful, for a number of reasons: because projects were framed by an art gallery and therefore from their onset embodied the conflicting goals of artistic commissioning and critical community action; because not all of the communities were already organised themselves and did not enter into the project with a sense of political ambition or agency; because there was not enough time to develop consensus on the use and understanding of PAR's methodologies; because of habitual tendencies to validate the role of art rather than understand its role in social change; because groups were in a relationship of dependency with care homes and support services, some dealing with chronic illnesses; and, most importantly, because of the time and budget constraints on care workers, artists and researchers.

The projects that came the closest included that organised by InSpire history group in Southwalk with artist Barby Asante and researcher Christina Garrido Sánchez around the pending privitisation of a working-class street market, as well as the work of the Woodberry Downs Estate Coffee Group, who, by working with artist Tom Hunter, aimed to change stereotypes about council-housing tenants. Intuitively, these projects adopted PAR's four main strategies in:

a) departing from collective dialogue to ascertain aims of the investigation;
b) engageing in critical recovery of histories of struggle; valuing and using local culture as the basis for analysis of conditions;
c) putting collective ideas into action and testing them;
d) producing and diffusing knowledge within and beyond the context of their struggle.

In the case of the former project, this allowed for inter-generational exchanges between older market union organisers in East Street Market and other market campaigns in the city. In the case of the latter, a film was made about the history of the estate and used by the coffee group in the community as well as by organisers in other neighbourhoods facing gentrification.

While in art terms the project – which unfolded over four years – was a lengthy one, project ends often felt more like beginnings. Where one aim of the project: to ensure that more people were exposed to the concerns and lives of working-class older people was met, it is uncertain whether any of the *Skills Exchange* projects will have achieved what is the final aspiration of any PAR project: their ongoing continuity without outside intervention. The issue of collective narration in the projects' representation and entry into the field of art also remains only partially solved. All the projects, at some time or another, slipped out of collective narratives, with artists or myself asked to take on the role of author and the work credited singularly. Researchers at times privileged artistic authorship or their own analyses over cultivating and representing the polyphony of voices in the project. When projects entered into the space of the Serpentine Gallery, they did not always challenge habits of centring art and authorship over the social role of participants.

At the Carer's Congress, a meeting held between the different groups involved in *Skills Exchange* to reflect on its processes and impacts, the following observation was made about the persistent use amongst artists and care-workers of infantilising language to speak about their older collaborators, and about artists' tendencies to focus on their own field: 'today we did actually reproduce some of the stereotypes [related to older people] in the framing and in the way people talked about projects … art people are sometimes over-professionalised and tend to talk about their own process … Challenging the language that we use to talk about these things is so important.'

Care Workers, Culture Workers, Non-Workers: Towards an Autonomy of Care

Many of these shortcomings can be read in direct proportion to the conditions under which those who participated in the project live and work: care workers, culture workers and low-income pensioners frequently operate in conditions of precariousness. The proj-

ect's greatest insight was to give a glimpse of the possible points of solidarity between them. If not artistic autonomy, and not quite political autonomy, perhaps what it revealed was the potential for what we might describe as an Autonomy of Care. This could be understood as an underlying principle fought for by all those who attempt to care in environments that are no longer designed with this in mind. Autonomy would not indicate a group that has left the system, like the PAR practitioners who left the university, but the idea that caring – or the kind of critical, equitable and resistant caring described in many of the genealogies above – is under threat in most aspects of life, but particularly in the places deemed as spaces of care today. Short funding cycles, reduced labour pools, movement from contractual to freelance (and increasingly piecemeal) staffing, budget cuts, endless restructurings, tendering and retendering of bids, the rebranding of communities – conditions that surrounded and indeed shaped the *Skills Exchange* project and its participants at every turn – render those who continue to care part of a quietly resistant community. The autonomy of this community is not located only in the care field or in a fictional elsewhere, but at the intersection of fields and in the midst of practices that are equally ambivalent in themselves as they are in conflict with the dominant policies shaping lives and communities.

If an Autonomy of Care exists, it is not yet a conscious or articulated struggle, but one that is in the making and whose barriers also form its ground. We heard whispers of this in our discussions at the edges of the project: anger and sadness over staff reductions; the closure of tea groups and day centres; cuts to cultural institutions; the demise of multi-year funding; reduced time for training and reflection; constant movement from one workplace to another to make ends meet; articulations of loneliness; the demands of new forms of measurement – for better outcomes in less time; and fear at the crumbling foundations of state support, such as they were. We saw glimmers of its potentiality in project activities that attempted to reflect on these conditions and engage with their struggles, though sometimes not directly enough. And there was a profound sense of energy in the rare moments when all of the constituencies involved were able to share the same space, raise questions about their own practices, and imagine what it might be like to continue.

For this Autonomy of Care to proceed there is much more work to be done and many underlying questions. How do we make use of art's resources to stage our concerns publicly and honestly? How do we secure the time we need to listen and collaborate across sectors, particularly with those for whom crisis is regularly imposed? How do fields of work avoid becoming paralysed as they attempt to survive new regimes of austerity? It is through asking and attempting to answer these questions that we can begin to map the equation Art + Care = a Future.

This analysis is derived from the exhibition The Individual and the Organisation: Artist Placement Group 1966–79 at Raven Row, City? autumn 2012. [Is this note in the right place?]

Ina Conzen-Meairs, 'From 0–1 to 0+1' in Art After Physics, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, 1992, p.29. [Again, not sure this is the right note]

See Marcus Coates and Alex H (2010) The Trip, Koenig Books and Serpentine Gallery, London.

Suzanne Lacy and Lucy Lippard, 'Political Performance Art' in Suzanne Lacy, Leaving Art: Writings on Performance, Politics and Publics, Duke University Press, Durham, 2010.

Of course, there are many exceptions to this generalisation, including the feminist collective work of the 1970s and 80s, the histories of artist participation in the struggles against HIV/AIDS, art produced in the counter globalisation movements and, perhaps most prolifically though most often invisibly, in arts groups working within anti-racist and anti-colonial struggles. Unfortunately, these practices have had very little influence on mainstream notions of the artist or on artistic training, which still tends to rely heavily on individual artistic production and careers.

Simone de Beauvoir, The Coming of Age, WW Norton Company, New York, 1972.

www.globalaging.org/elderrights/us/2009/panthers.htm www.globalageing.org/elderrights/us/2009/panthers.htm

Muhammad Anisur Rahman, 'The Theory and Practice of Participatory Action Research' in O Fals Borda (ed), 'The Challenge of Social Change', Sage, London, 1985.

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REPORT

Modalities of Exchange

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Serpentine Gallery

Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

The Skills Exchange Findings: From Service Delivery to Embedded Exchange

Building on the Baring Foundation's finding that involvement in participatory arts can raise awareness of age discrimination and break down pervasive self perceptions and external stigmas, the Skills Exchange Project made efforts to increase democratic participation – moving from a **paradigm of service** to one of **embedded exchange.**

The Report

✔ Reviews the way in which art is discussed in social care and social care is discussed in art.

✔ Surveys five case studies and the ways in which participants re-shaped the original project aims.

✔ Identifies Modalities of Exchange developed across the studies and summarises them for consideration by funders, policy makers, care-workers, administrators of organisations of art and care.

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Modalities of Exchange

We identified eight categories of exchange developed across the Skills Exchange Project which could be of use to others undertaking this kind of work:

Exchanges of Power & Agency:

✔ Skills Exchange invited older people to shape the aims of each project. In the majority of cases, groups communicated an overwhelming desire to make change in their neighbourhoods / the world, and took this to be the basis for empowered exchange.

✔ Project participants intervened directly in issues such as the privatisation of street markets, the negative stigma attached to social housing residents and the social silence around issues of death and the dying.

✔ Through this work both institutional attitudes and broader social perceptions changed from thinking about older people as recipients of care to those who care for their community.

Exchanges of Time

✔ Skills Exchange revealed that the highest benefit for participants was found in those projects that engaged in consistent relationships and regular visits over a period of 1–2 years.

✔ Longer durations allowed those involved to develop ethical relationships, that were truly interrogative of power, isolation and discrimination.

✔ Participants suggested that key to the future of an ethical relationship between art and care is the adequate resourcing of time for all those involved.

Exchanges of Visibility and Invisibility:

✔ Through exposure at Serpentine Gallery and in local and national press, projects reached over 60,000 viewers and challenged dominant stereotypes and forms of discrimination against older people.

✔ Viewers consistently stated that projects allowed them to see a part of life they had not seen before, and that they read the works as a call to action.

✔ Questions of access and elitism associated with art galleries were addressed as a central concern.

Exchanges of Space:

✔ Skills Exchange projects provocatively interrupted the routines of the various settings – care homes, community centres, day centres – to which older people often feel assigned and isolated by creating physical exchanges, trips, walks, and public space performances.

✔ Participants communicated that changing spaces enabled them to see each other beyond their role as 'older person', 'carer' or 'artist'.

✔ Care workers suggested that changes to the environment and spatial routines increased the memory capacity of those with dementia.

✔ Speech therapists suggested that introductions of new elements to the care environment expanded speech patterns.

✔ The projects reiterated the crucial role of group work and the need to restore and build on spaces in which older people can meet, particularly at a time when so many of these spaces are at risk.

Exchanges in Strategy:

✔ Skills Exchange participants suggested an overwhelming interest in exchanging strategies concerning how they might more effectively intervene in the representations of and changes to their environments.

✔ This was posed against definitions of 'fixing' their problems or illnesses.

✔ This sense of strategy provoked participants to engage inter-generationally and beyond their immediate constituencies to find others engaged and interested in these issues.

Exchanges of the Past and Future:

✔ Many participants felt that reminiscence projects can frame older people as subjects immersed in nostalgia and unable to adjust to the global multi-cultural postmodern city.

✔ Participants suggested that where this work can neutralise activism, by positioning older people as those who lived through historical change rather than agents of that change, 'Memory Work' enables participants to make use of their past in decision-making about the future.

✔ This orientation of the past towards the future is also the basis for strong-intergenerational connections.

Exchanges of Empathy:

✔ Where many of those working in care suggested that in their training they had been told 'not to get attached', Skills Exchange Projects demonstrated the importance of empathy on both sides of relationships of care.

✔ Attention to the interests and involvement of care workers enabled deeper and less ritualised relationships between them and residents.

✔ Gallery workers, artists and visitors equally valued the learning and exposure they were offered in the process, describing this as changing their perceptions from a sympathy or 'helping' mindset to an empathetic way of relating to aging.

✔ Valuing the form of speaking of all participants – including those with dementia and speech difficulties – was central to the development of empathetic relationships.

Exchanges of Trust:

Participants suggested that critical elements for the building of trust included:

✔ Taking time to listen to each other before imagining the work.

✔ Consistency in visitation: the embedded model.

✔ Open discussions of ethics in the production of the work were central to success.

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Acknowledgements

Introduction

Skills Exchange: Urban Transformation and the Politics of Care was a collaborative art and social research project that took place between January 2007 and April 2012. It brought together an international art gallery, artists, community and care-workers, older people and the agencies and institutions who work with the elderly and various social agents such as market traders, housing activists, young people and others to explore and generate new dynamics of relationship and exchange.

The project took as its field of investigation the elderly in the city, and specifically the civil spaces available for older people to participate in. These included spaces of care and sociability and citizenship. Here people from different backgrounds and specialisations have worked to generate exchanges that intervene into dominant definitions of people, services and the nature of social inter-connections within a context of demographic and urban change. Dominant formulations of 'care' often place the elderly in the role of the 'serviced' or 'cared for', as those 'without', or 'after' the peak moments of their lives, while the artist or social-worker are placed in the role of the 'skilled' or the 'carer'. This project, in contrast, begins from a notion that artists, older people, care-workers and others might exchange their skills, and, in this process, alter roles and well-rehearsed relations through processes of creative exchange. In examining these modalities of exchange the research examines the underlying or prevalent understandings that underpin the exchanges that took place and the space of possibilities the project points towards.

The ideas behind *Skills Exchange* stem from readings across a number of ideas including Ivan Illich's notion of 'useful unemployment', the theories of Michel Foucault, D.W. Winnicott, Felix Guattari, Celestin Freinet and Jean Oury regarding the political and therapeutic benefits of exchanging social roles, experiences from the field of social and participatory design, and from artistic practices such as the Artist Placement Group.

Skills Exchange was initiated through the Projects area of Serpentine Gallery, a gallery for modern and contemporary art located in London's Hyde Park. The Serpentine's Exhibition, Architecture, Education and Public Programmes attract up to 800,000 visitors in any one year and admission is free. As a core strand of the Serpentine's integrated approach to programming, Serpentine Projects challenge where art is experienced and by whom. Projects build on over ten years of experience producing art in the social realm, linking national and international artists with dedicated collaborators from organizations specialising in mental health, education, elderly care, housing and homelessness and migrant support. These projects take place both in and outside the gallery and address processes of social and political marginalisation.

While Serpentine Projects have historically been based on the artist-led residency model, with one or a small group of artists working intensively on projects with one particular constituency, the *Skills Exchange* project is the first in which social and cultural impacts have been the basis for both collaborative art-making and a long term participatory action research project at multiple sites across London. Beyond the production of the project, *Skills Exchange* has attempted to track the value and complexities of raising both artistic and social questions in the context of care in the city.

Skills Exchange was funded by Bloomberg, the Rayne Foundation, the City Bridge Trust, The National Lottery through Big Lottery Fund and Camden Homes for Older People. It was delivered in partnership with Age Concern Hackney; Westminster Housing Care Services; Camden Homes for Older people; the InSpire programme at the Crypt, Southwark; St John's Hospice, Camden; and Westmead Care Home, Westminster.

The Skills Exchange Researchers

The Centre for Urban and Community Research (CUCR) at Goldsmith, University of London, was the research and evaluation partner for Skills Exchange. CUCR were commissioned because of our background in work concerned with older people. Past projects undertaken by the Centre have included: Mobilizing Knowledge, which brought planners and older people together to consider the impact of aging on urban experience and how planners might better listen to older people; Extending Creative Practice, a European project which explored the potential of digital storytelling to address the digital exclusion of older people. CUCR also has a long track record in participatory action research and collaborative art, working at the interface of experimental research methods and the possibilities of art as both a form of engagement and an expression of sociologically significant ways of seeing and knowing the world.

Aims of the Project

At its onset Skills Exchange aimed to:
✔ Reduce the isolation of older people and increase their active participation
✔ Improve intergenerational relationships
✔ Reduce the discrimination against older people
✔ Improve awareness in national and local government, who are the developers and providers of older people's services and are responsible for examining issues and possible solutions for housing and caring for the aging population.

Once projects began and teams of older people, artists, researchers and other community members were organised, aims were re-figured by working groups set up around collective interests. In most cases these aims were changed so that they would orient towards pressing social questions that situated older people within the fabric of community and not outside and separate. Even those who were most isolated were passionate about the world outside of their doors, how it was changing and what of their knowledge might be used to make an impact. Groups turned their attention to issues of public housing, to the importance of markets for the sustainability of history and community, the importance of thinking about the future, and the re-organisation of relationships to facilitate real exchange within and across spaces of care.

Understanding the ways in which the aims of the original Skills Exchange proposal were re-shaped by the concerns of participants was the basis for our study, as this in itself represented a significant shift in power: from those who imagine older people, artists and other social segments as marginalised, to those older people who define themselves and their desires using very different terms from mainstream and social policy perceptions.

The primary assessment of the groups who participated in this study suggest that in order to meet the project aims the project had to move from a model of service delivery, in which users and their needs were predicted within their assigned social segment, to one of real exchange in which the people involved (artists, older people, care workers and others) participated actively in defining the processes of social change important to them, in which they listened to each other and in which they articulated the methods and contents for shifting social perceptions. As such, the research sought to identify and elaborate on the different modalities and circumstances of exchange developed through the Project.

The research also re-positions the concept of care. Care is understood by project participants as not only a kind of labour that takes place in places such as care homes, day centres and medical settings, but the ways in which older and other people care for/care about each other, for their neighbours, as well as their neighbourhood or estate. Familiar social spaces such as the street market or the housing estate, or less familiar ones, such as the hospice for example, are sites where older people enact feelings of care, rather than merely being the cared for. Realms such as the imaginary, the memorial and the poetic are, as articulated by participants, of significant importance.

The research thus speaks to both broader social contexts — preconceived institutional attitudes which hold the meaning of being older in place, the policies around care and aging which reduce the possibilities of agency, and the processes of gentrification and re-housing which impact upon the possibilities of older people's participation in the city — and the micro-political processes and interpersonal encounters which marginalise older people.

Research Methodology

Principles of exchange and participation have been integral to the research methodology. Central to the research has been the role of five research assistants who have had a long —term engagement with the project, charting, and in some moments stimulating, two core aspects of the project:

✔ The 'Skills Exchange', that is the shifting of roles from stereotypical perceptions and habituated patterns of relating to more generative means of engaging their immediate social contexts, and
✔ The degree to which the project enabled participants to increase the efficacy of their engagement with local, urban contexts.

The Skills Exchange research assistants Cristina Garrido Sánchez, Ananda Ferlauto, Laura Cuch, Mara Ferreri and Katey Tabner worked as part of the team of artists, agencies and participants as the projects unfolded. The methodology was based in the methods and principles of Participatory Action Research (PAR). Initiated and named by practitioners in the global south, PAR re-orders the traditional positioning of the researcher as a silent observer and the research subjects as the object of the study, to suggest that research questions, outcomes and methods be shaped by those who are the basis for the study and who are most likely to be effected by its findings. Research in PAR is oriented towards realising social justice and social change collectively and thus speaks directly to the aims of Skills Exchange.

While the methods used in this study, which included ethnographic participant observation, facilitated discussions, mapping, interviews, and research diaries, did not always differ from more traditional sociological research methods, PAR mobilises these methods towards larger social questions about the distribution of power and voice, both within groups and the wider society. Thus the role of the researcher is active and one that can be questioned and re-shaped by the group.

For this reason, in the studies that follow, research assistants have taken on different roles. In some projects they have worked alongside the artists and participants from the outset of the project, instigating group reflection on the process and the exchanges that took place as they unfolded. In other cases — where groups did not have regular meetings — they have worked with participants individually, relaying reflections to other participants. In others, the role was related to the recording of events as they took place or tracking people's reflections after the fact. The research participants, whether older

people, those who work with older people, or artists and other cultural workers, were co-researchers on this project. They played an active role, often deciding on the shape of the methods used. At times this meant that groups refused methods and suggested other means to get at the same questions, thereby shaping the research and the artwork as it developed. These subtle refusals and discussions led to moments of reflection — between artists, older people and research assistants.

Other aspects of the research overlapped directly with artistic process i.e. the making of interviews, recordings of group conversations. They were not replicated by university researchers but were made use of in the overall project analysis. The research archive thus includes art works and social initiatives, opening events and manifestos in addition to interview transcripts and social mappings, each oriented towards the cultural and socio — political changes groups hoped to enact. The openness, conflictual responsiveness and reflexivity of the groups were integral to the development of the projects from artistic, research and social perspectives. At best this meant that all involved learned to create inspiring responses to the many contradictions between institutions, participants and social contexts to which they were responding. Other times, due to the habits of art-making, research and/or social care, or indeed the busy schedules of participants, this full ambition of embedded and reflective research was not realised. Here we have the opportunity to reflect and learn.

Who This Report is For

This report is aimed at two (hopefully overlapping) audiences. First, it is aimed at those interested in, recipients of, involved in or making decisions about the provision of social activities, care and

residence to Britain's aging population, which also overlap with those planning for other sectors. The sites that the Skills Exchange took place in included: a social programme for older residents of a social housing estate undergoing regeneration; older people living independently in the community; a hospice; a local market; and two residential care homes. The findings, therefore, are relevant to a wide range of institutional and residential settings in which older citizens find themselves. Second, it is aimed at those interested in, involved in or making decisions about cultural production in socially engaged settings. The project involved six important contemporary artists working across a number of media (film, architecture, design, visual art and participatory art), a major public gallery, and several public sector partners. The findings, therefore, speak to a range of issues around the conduct and commissioning of artistic practice and the role of culture in assisting people to reach their social and aesthetic aims.

The Structure of the Report

This report is a qualitative assessment making use of material generated by five projects or studies set up by the Skills Exchange Project. It does four things:

1. Reviews the ways in which art is discussed in social care and social care is discussed in art and where Skills Exchange located itself

2. Surveys each case study and its findings on its own terms

3. Reads Modalities of Exchange across the studies

4. Summarises these Modalities of Exchange for consideration by funders, policy makers and others.

Situating the Studies: Older People, Urban Change and Economies of Care

As we have described, the laboratory for these artistic interventions has been a range of social settings where older people come together in the city: care homes, social groups, day centres and hospices, as well as estates and neighbourhoods. The project was concerned with the spatiality of older people and the geographies of service and care that older people experienced. However, these micro-level geographies that the project encountered must be understood within wider demographic trends on aging, economies of care and the macro-economic and political context of aging in the city.

These are discussed in turn below.

The Demographics of Aging in the UK Over the past two centuries the global population has been aging due to an ongoing decline in fertility and increasing longevity. It is predicted that in the developed regions of the world a third of the population will be aged 60 or over by 2050[1]. These changes will impact on human life: family composition, living arrangements, urban planning, social support, economic activity and social security. The UK is getting older, as older people are living longer and people are having fewer children. While only a tenth of the 1940s generation was childless, a fifth of the 1980s generation will be. This has led to an increase in the percentage of the population aged 65 and over and a declining proportion of those aged under 16. In the UK there are currently nearly 12 million people of state pension age, and about 650,000 people turn 65 each year. There are now more people in the UK aged 60 and above than there are under 18[2]. In the United Kingdom, in 2005, according to estimates based on the 2001 Census of Population,

there were more than 11 million people of state pension age and over (11,244,000). It is estimated that between 2006 and 2031 the UK population will grow from 60.6 million to 71 million while over 65s will increase from 9.7 million in 2006 to 15.8 million in 2031, from 16 to 22 per cent of the population. Over 85s will increase from 1.2 million to 3.9 million over that period, yet half will have some form of disability[3]. With these trends in mind it is worth considering the limits of language commonly used to describe older people. Even the terms used to describe older people are debated over and problematic. The terms 'older people', 'seniors', 'elders' and 'the elderly', are used in a range of settings but these terms can hide differences among older people themselves. A recently retired person is likely to have different abilities, needs and expectations than someone in their mid-eighties for example. The social and geographic contexts in which they are living are also key to understanding when and where it is useful to analyse this age group and its needs as separate from those of the community overall.

Economies of Care

In the next decade the care of the aging population will be a significant challenge for policy makers, as the demographic changes to the UK population has profound effects on all UK residents. The cost of care to the national purse will gradually increase as the proportion of the population who are elderly grow at the same time as working-age taxpayers gradually becomes a smaller proportion of society. Simultaneously, in a late-capitalist economy which demands a mobile, flexible workforce who can adapt to changes in the global employment market, extended families will be more likely to live away from an older relative and be less available to provide day to day familial care[4]. Today in the UK, as in many other post-industrial societies, demographic pressures, as

discussed above, combined with societal and political pressures to provide cost effective services, have led to older peoples care services being fragmented due to the increased marketisation of care services. Older people's care services cross the public, private and voluntary sectors. Care services purchased from the private sector, made up of both 'for-profit' and 'not-for-profit' providers, has recently become the major provider of domiciliary services for older people living in the community, while local authorities have been reducing their capacity. Today many local authorities' main responsibility in relation to older people's care is to supervise the spending of public funds for the provision long-term care, i.e. to ensure that these funds are used effectively and appropriately, and to organise care services for people who are entitled to them. The social and health impact of dementia and its implications for care provision is also a topic of considerable debate in discussions of aging in the UK. It is estimated that 820,000 people in the UK are living with dementia, with considerable associated economic implications. The majority of the work of caring for older people with dementia is unpaid and carried out by family members[5.] No interventions have yet been developed that prevent, change or reverse the progressive decline of brain functions. People with dementia are at an increased risk of physical health problems and become increasingly dependent on health and social care services and other people. The progressive nature of the disease associated with significant changes to daily living activities, behaviour, appetite and eating habits may make people more susceptible to other diseases. Working with people with dementia clearly presents considerable challenges for care organisations.

The Work of Caring

Exploring the social, cultural and political contexts within which care occurs is important in understanding the ways that care is experienced and recognised (or not) and the prevalent understandings of those who are involved in the work of care. The social nature of caring means that it is an activity which is both paid and unpaid, and work and not work[6]. Much of the care and support that makes up care is embedded in close social relationships. Whether care is undertaken for love and/or money and whether paid or unpaid, it can be understood as a form of emotional labour[7] i.e. working on the feelings of others with an aim of affecting their emotional state[8]. Sociological research in this field examines the ways care is embedded in relationships of affection, duty and obligation with classed, gendered and racialised characteristics[9]. For example, research by the University of Leeds finds that Black women aged between 50–59 are disproportionately concentrated in jobs as care workers/care assistants, in the social care sector[10]. In 2009 women made up around 80% of social care workers and between 85 and 95% of workers in direct care and support providing jobs[11]. This is clearly a sector that has historically been reliant on women, who combine low paid part-time work in social care with unpaid caring responsibilities for families[12]. Feminist sociologists have explored the gendered nature of care work, challenging the trivialisation of women's caring role and have asserted the significance of being involved in care as significant in the production of women's subjectivity and moral frameworks. Recent work has explored the cultural and social norms and discourses that inform and compel women to adopt caring responsibility and respectability[13]. The contexts within which individuals are involved in caring activities frame and influence what is seen as care, the ways care is performed

and received, and how different roles and identities are read[14]. The social care employment sector, which includes care assistants in residential care homes and in-home care services, is one of the lowest paid sectors of the labour market (Low Pay Commission 2010). In spite of the introduction of the National Minimum Wage in 1999 average pay levels for social care workers, particularly in care homes, have remained at or just above the minimum wage[15] with pay levels being lower in the private sector compared to the public and voluntary sector.

The median hourly pay rate for care workers during 2009 was £6.45 (Hussein 2010: 6). Unfavourable employment conditions such as shift work and a lack of career opportunities have made this sector unattractive to a range of groups of potential workers in the UK. More recently, there has been an increase in the employment of migrant workers from within and beyond the European Union, meeting high levels of demand (particularly in London) due to significant difficulties in the recruitment and retention of social care workers[16] due to unfavourable employment conditions such as shift work and lack of career opportunities have made it unattractive to a range of groups of potential workers in the UK. Such conditions do not always make it favourable to risk-taking and experimentation with methods of care and exchange. As one worker suggests:

… there can be a lot of tension for key workers and care workers about how much they do get involved because they know that they have got a set activity for a set amount of time, so to bond and talk to the residents is a time out of the normal daily routine… a lot of the care workers used to come up to me at the beginning of the session to say "Am I just here to sit and support? Am I here to take part or...?"

Sally Mercer

Older People and Urban Change

People's experience of the places they live changes as they grow older. Their needs, experiences and ability to move around the city change profoundly as does their ability to partake in all that cities have to offer. However, ageing should be considered a positive experience. Longer life should be accompanied by continuing opportunities for health, participation and security. The World Health Organisation has adopted the term 'active ageing' to express the process by which we can achieve this vision: "Active ageing is the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age"[17.] Here the word "active" refers to continuing participation in economic, cultural, spiritual and civic affairs, not just the ability to be physically active or to participate in the labour force. Active ageing aims to extend healthy life expectancy and quality of life for all people as they age (Hanson 2004)[18].

Just as ageing impacts on our experience of the city and our access to it, it also impacts on our experience of home. As people age their needs change. While people generally prefer to remain in their home for as long as possible, close to family, friends, neighbours and familiar routines, the demands of caring for older people and the needs of older people often result in a change in what was home, whether this is an adaptation of ones own home, a move to sheltered or supported housing or a care home. Paradoxically this happens when home becomes of greater importance to older people as they spend more time in it, especially if health or mobility deteriorates (Gilroy, 2008)[19]. Current research indicates that 90% of older people in the UK are living in 'mainstream housing'. The remainder live in care homes and supported housing. It is worth noting that 35% of the homes

occupied by older people (60+) in England fail the decent homes standard (approximately 2.7 million households). Over three quarters of a million people aged 65 and over need specially adapted accommodation because of a medical condition or disability and 145,000 of them report living in homes that do not meet their needs. Unsuitable housing can lead to older people becoming, for all practical purposes, confined to one room, which can contribute directly to their isolation and exclusion and (lack of) access to the city.

The most severely isolated and lonely are those people over 75 years of age, and women are at greater risk of isolation because they live longer than men. Isolation and loneliness are also particular risks for older people from minority ethnic or immigrant groups and for people who live in rural areas[20]. A suitable home environment can be crucial to independence, health and well being in later life. The introduction of the National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society (DCLG, 2008a) aimed to improve housing choices and provision for today's older people, as well as 'future proof' homes so that they will meet the lifetime needs of future generations of older people, thereby reducing the cost of residential care. Designing more accessible and easily adaptable 'lifetime housing' has been promoted as a long term cost-effective way of improving older (and disabled) people's independence and quality of life [21]. In the UK today there has been a growing trend towards, and funding of, Extra Care Housing which provides support services alongside independent living (Housing LIN, 2010)[22]. As the trend towards living at home is fostered and in home care is on the rise, the issue of isolation is of increasing concern. To address this three Skills Exchange projects took place in home or outpatient service organisations, to understand what collective artistic processes might lend to this type of living arrangement.

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Participatory Art in the Care Field: The Evidence Base

There is a considerable body of research concerned with older people and the benefits of arts participation. This body of research seeks to identify the value of participatory art using different methodologies, being evaluative, quantitative, concerned with identifying and evidencing impact systematically.

There is a long history of the therapeutic uses of art and creative activity for those in need of social and health care. There is considerable quantitative and qualitative research which has sought to evidence the value of participation in arts for older people and the sick[23] and to demonstrate the value of people, who may be isolated or stigmatised, coming together to be creative in an unstructured setting. A great deal of the research in this area is quantitative, coming out of the field of health science and occupational therapy. A review of the key literature and published research in this field over eight years finds that creative arts occupations in therapeutic practice may have important qualitative value in relation to health and wellbeing[24]. The main outcomes that are repeatedly identified in this research are: enhanced perceived control; building a sense of self; expression; transforming the illness experience; gaining a sense of purpose; and building social support. Research into the impact of art and cultural programmes on older people in particular finds that participants report higher overall ratings of physical health, fewer visits to the doctor, less medication use, fewer instances of falls, and fewer other health problems. It also found that participants had better morale and less loneliness and increased activity than a comparison group[25].

Research by the Baring Foundation entitled Aging Artfully[26], which consisted of 120 UK case studies, for example,

sets out some of the personal and social benefits of the arts for older people, these include health benefits (improving physical fitness and co-ordination, reducing isolation, improving mental capacity, self esteem and confidence) and benefits to personal and community relations (generating intergenerational respect and understanding, finding common ground, building up relationships with non-family members). A subsequent systematic review of the impact of participatory arts on older people[27], also commissioned by the Baring Foundation, found evidence of the 'tremendous potential' for participatory art to improve the quality of life for older people's mental and physical well being at individual, community and societal levels. Participation in art, whether visual, performing arts such as dance and theatre, playing music and singing or storytelling, was found to enhance mental well-being, improve cognitive functioning and self-esteem, increase enjoyment of life, improve memory and creative thinking. It also found evidence of the development of meaningful social contact, friendship. Significantly for the Skills Exchange research, the Baring study found that participation in art has the potential enhance older people's sense of 'giving something back' to the community while raising awareness of age discrimination, and positively transforming attitudes to older people while challenging and breaking down pervasive self perceptions and external stigmas of being older that pervade popular societal culture (MHF 2011: 50).

This research review argues for the active support of participatory arts by local health, social care and mental health improvement agencies. Furthermore the Aging Artfully report identifies a clear need for arts organisations to reach out to day centres, residential and nursing homes and hospices. Reaching older people in what is sometimes termed the 'fourth age' i.e. people who have begun to experience limitations to their physical and mental fitness. This group often requires artwork that comes to them as

they may not be able to access art as an audience even when cultural activity is aimed at older people. The Aging Artfully report highlights some of the potential for art in improving residential care environments by reinforcing older people's sense of themselves, improving the memory capacity of people with dementia, improving the care environment with visual arts and improving the job satisfaction of carers[28]. The Aging Artfully report makes a strong case for the role of culture in enhancing care settings, suggesting that the provision of arts and cultural activity could be a factor that inspectors include when approving care provision. Certainly it would be helpful for regulators and care providers to meet arts organisations with expertise in this area to better understand what is on offer.

Care within the Art Field

The Skills Exchange project is working at a time when art and creativity is a resource being used in a variety of social and cultural settings. As seen above, and in recent government policy, much attention has been given to the ways in which socially-engaged art has been employed to address social issues and solve social problems.

Less central, and often totally invisible within debates regarding the impact of the arts, are questions about the kind of work art should do, which are questions circulated in debates in the art field i.e. How can art serve to address and engage with public issues that are defined by those directly impacted by them? What does art do that other forms of socially engaged practice, such as community work or social work, do not? Debate in the art field has focussed on the extent to which socially engaged practice should or should not be used to reach aims that are defined socially, that is increasing the well-being of participants through increasing their skills and impacting on

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'community cohesion', social welfare, citizenship and health. Some of these debates suggest the incorporation of social processes into definitions of art, claiming new forms of aesthetics informed by the 'relational' or the 'dialogic' [29] Others suggest that engaging in social fixing or filling gaps in the depletion of social service funding decreases the possibility for freedom, expression and creative autonomy [30]. Other, more conservative tendencies suggest [31] that socially engaged and participatory art is problematic because it does not make 'good' art [32]. Others, still, argue that art could offer processes and practices of political autonomy in relation to social problems — that is that art can address social problems — but not in ways that enact behavioural changes defined by the State, the corporation or other social bodies not directly involved in the day to day lives of those most impacted. This latter tendency — one adopted by the curators and many of the practitioners of Skills Exchange — suggests that socially based art has the ability to address issues as they are defined by participants in a collective process, making use of artistic skills in order to change perceptions and relations. This latter perspective draws from histories of social realism in television and film and of community arts in the UK in the 1970s, as well as from traditions of popular education deriving from Paulo Freire and others, radical care (Jean Oury, Felix Guattari, D.W. Winnicott, R.D. Laing), participatory social and artistic research (Fals Borda, B.S, Johnson) [33] and the use of art by social movements. It re-locates the question of whether art is 'good' to whether it makes use of aesthetic, relationship-building and communicative capacities to provoke political impacts that groups have defined as relevant and important.

This latter proposal, that art be effective socially but in ways defined by all participants—artists and other social groups in collaboration—alters the way in which participatory practice should be evaluated: that is in terms of its aesthetic or cultural use, its social impact on participants, and its wider socio-political significance. These issues are central to the ways in which socially-engaged arts practices, or perhaps activities better described as social processes that include the use of art, are conceived, delivered and evaluated.

In the artist-facilitated participatory practice, exemplified through Skills Exchange, artists assume a variety of roles: as educators, activists, researchers, and collaborators. Participants also move from the role of recipient to that of active agent shaping and re-shaping processes. The ethics of dialogue and negotiation are integral to this process, and, as Grant Kester[34] would argue, part of how we should understand the aesthetic of the art itself. Such practices offer a spectrum of opportunities for engagement and participation. Central to these is a spirit in which the non-artist becomes a co-researcher, and co-creator, defining the issues at stake and the importance of the negotiation of its broader social significance. While the Skills Exchange project aimed to respond to and address the social relations surrounding older people and influence the bodies who work with older people, the project was also formed around the belief that there are aesthetic dimensions to all social and political production. The project was therefore not merely concerned with the production of artworks but with the desires of participants, what can be made apparent, what can be heard, what can be scrutinised and questioned in the process of unlikely collaborations. At its best it produced a space where all participants (artists, older people, and those working with them) could also step into the world of the imagination and the symbolic to re—imagine themselves and the range of actions available to them. The difficulties and moments of discomfort that sometimes occurred during the Skills Exchange project are instructive. These encounters were integral to the project's intention: to question the preconceptions held by all participants in this process: artists, institutions, carers and older people themselves.

Findings: From Service Delivery to Embedded Exchange

Katey: *What do you feel that role of art is here, and for the residents?*

Phyllis Etukudo: *It is something to keep them occupied with, a lot of them are interested in art and music, because it has been part of their lives. It has always been part of someone's life somehow.*

Interview with Phyllis Etukudo,
Activity Co-ordinator,
Westmead Care Home

As we have read, in many cases Skills Exchange participants challenged the aims of institutional partners, charting potential uses of art and creativity as a way of broadening out the concept of care by taking into account different elements of older peoples' well being [38] than those that are often monitored. Projects challenged many of the original expectations, taking as their canvas the representations that work to secure the perceptions and spatialisations of the elderly as well as the policies and economies that are built around notions of the elderly and their care. Dominant formulations of 'care' often place the elderly in the role of the 'serviced' or 'cared for', as those 'without', or 'after' the peak moments of their lives. Simultaneously the artists and those working with older people are placed in a role of the 'creative' 'skilled' or the 'carer'. Skills Exchange projects pushed at the notion that artists, older people, care-workers and others might exchange their skills, and, in this process, alter reified roles and well-rehearsed relations through processes of creative exchange.

The project made efforts to increase participation in ways that attended to the micro-political dynamics between people participating in projects, the power relationships of group settings, and the performance of static roles. It is important to note that this kind of work repositions older people (and their carers) as participants in a process, as co-producers, rather than recipients of art that is being delivered or provided.

It is our assessment that the moves and demands that artists and their co-researchers have made is a move from a paradigm service to one of embedded exchange.

Their move from service delivery was not a movement away from thinking of the usefulness or social function of art, nor from the importance of issues such as reducing isolation and discrimination against older people, but rather against paradigms in which outcomes were pre-determined by the institutional bodies prior to participation and group involvement.

The Serpentine Gallery and the institutional partners responded to this shift, adapting schedules, expectations and temporalities, and noting outcomes such as better relationships between older people and staff and between spaces of care and the broader community. Care workers — some of whom were sceptical at the onset of projects — expressed moments of surprise at the degree to which the modes of exchange developed could lead into longer term processes at the home and cultural workers also noted their own shift in perceptions about aging.

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STUDY 1:
A Palace for Us

Location: **Woodberry Down Estate**
Artist: **Tom Hunter**
Research Assistant: **Laura Cuch**
Co-Researchers: **Participants and Staff at AGE UK–Hackney Tea Group**
Care Workers: **Louise Owen, Janice Hunter**

Question: **How can the stories of an estate bring about positive representation of social housing residents?**

The research on this project began when Tom Hunter, a photographer who has a strong track record of working with communities in Hackney, North London and beyond joined elderly residents on the Woodberry Down Estate, and care workers from AGE UK Hackney (then Age Concern).

While the circumstances under which the project developed reflected an institutional belief that art and creativity are of benefit to the health and social wellbeing of older people, Tom and participants of the Woodberry Down project re-positioned these ambitions, towards their own desires to portray the rich social life of the last 50 years of the estate through the testimonies of residents who have lived there. Tom and residents converged in their belief in the importance of social housing and felt that at a time when the estate was undergoing re-development and social housing was regularly being socially vilified, it was an important moment to present another image of the social housing estate's history. Both Tom and the residents were aware of the way in which art is made available to older people in social and care settings, as a sometimes aimless means of filling time, and his work was an attempt to move away from this:

Here we are producing something. So it's not just all academic, we are going to do a piece of artwork and we will have been part of the production. Produce something real rather than practise something that feels like filling the time.

Tom Hunter, Artist

The importance of the making of the art work was derived from both the political and aesthetic ambitions of the group: to re-present social housing and working class people's lives with dignity and respect. Woodberry Down is a very large housing estate situated just east of Manor House underground station. During the early twentieth century this area had become the *well to do end of Stoke Newington*, home to

several wealthy Jewish families and to Albert Chevalier, the music hall artiste. In 1934, despite powerful opposition, the London County Council compulsorily purchased all of Woodberry Down and the construction of an *estate of the future* began after the war. 57 blocks of flats were erected on 64 acres of land. Woodberry Down School, now closed, became one of Britain's first purpose-built comprehensives in 1955 . Members of the group suggested that at the time the estate was described as 'a palace for us'. Many of the members of the group from the Woodberry Down Estate moved from the East End when the London County Council first built the estate. At this time this was a landmark housing project, being the first big estate to be built in Hackney, in order to clear out the slums of Shoreditch and Hoxton before demolition. The estate's population reflects waves of immigration to this area of London. The estate has many Jewish, West Indian and West African residents. Like many other utopian urban development schemes, through years of de-funding Woodberry Down became known as a flawed place in which to live, with an array of characteristically *inner city* social issues, flats with structural problems and few local amenities. Today the estate is one of the biggest regeneration projects in Western Europe. The regeneration of the estate is anticipated to take up to twenty years to complete, at a cost of over £150 million. Hackney Council has led the delivery of Woodberry Down's regeneration, in partnership with Berkeley Homes, Manor House Development Trust and Genesis Housing Group. The scheme comprises the demolition of approximately 2,000 residential units and some commercial floor space.

These are to be replaced by approximately 4,500 social rented, private and shared ownership homes, and a range of new facilities including a community centre, health centre, new Academy, and extended primary school, as well as retail and commercial spaces. For the last 5 years residents have been living through the beginnings of a 20 year long regeneration

program and the associated process of consultation and planning demolition and construction. The Skills Exchange project was organised around a weekly drop in tea and coffee session provided in partnership with Age Concern in Hackney (the arm's length management organisation (ALMO) managing Hackney Council's homes) and Hanover Housing (a Registered Social Landlord (RSL)). These sessions, had been running for two and a half years. In the first sessions, which were held in the regeneration agency offices, the group recollected their memories of the estate in relation to different periods in the estate's social history: from the golden days of the estate to the progressive loss of leisure amenities, such as parks and swimming pools, that were important to their quality of life. They expressed their opinions about negative perceptions of the estate which were imposed externally from non-residents, whilst in their experience the flats were actually in good condition and very nice from inside. They also expressed a sense that the Estate had declined as Hackney Council had removed the care and the social facilities they valued, resulting in feelings of being overlooked and dismissed in the regeneration process.

We were contacted six years into the into the regeneration process. They realised had not consulted, or even considered, or thought about the needs considered, or thought about the needs of older people in the process at all. After about 2.30 in the afternoon you wouldn't see an old person at all because of all that was going on: the drugs and prostitution.

Janice Wynter, Age UK Hackney

In the initial period of the project this was exacerbated by a degree of over-determination of the process by the fragmented institutional arrangements between Hackney Homes, Hanover Housing, the developer and Age Concern. Here three workers from three different agencies had responsibility for different aspects of the tea/coffee group. In reality

this meant that a small fraction of each of the three workers' time was funded to work with this group. Despite this there was an active and solid constituency involved. Many of the older people were already living with a sense of disappointment and lowered expectations due to the slow pace of the redevelopment, an earlier lack of regard for the impact of the process on older people and the slow moving decanting process. This impacted on their expectations of Tom Hunter's project:

It was better than I expected. It was a long time in the making. I know it was a lot of agro for Tom, going round, getting photos and everything. I am happy with it. [in relation to the changes to the estate] I was sceptical at first. They were going to do this, and going to that that, there were lots of rumours around the estate, about what was going to happen, but this was one thing that actually came through. It panned out.

Post screening interview with Erica Dobbs, Participant.

The tea sessions at the older people's centre had, in part, been created to offer a space for older people to come together. This was a kind of *safety valve* where bad feelings could be released (with a potential effect of de-politicising the situation and the older people's critical voices). The situation was symbolically exemplified by the layout of the room during early sessions in Woodberry Down. The early sessions took place in the Regeneration Agency's premises, *The Shop*, whilst Hanover Homes restored their older people's centre. Here the participants found themselves crushed up against architectural scale models of the redevelopment in the room being used. Regardless, discussions ensued about the role the film could play in changing perceptions of social housing and the urban poor that had taken over the experiences of pride people had felt. It was understood that representation - by the media and other agencies - had coincided with de-funding and neglect of the estates to paint a dark picture of the poor, the working

class and the distance between the young and the elderly on estates. Knowledge and re-presentation of the era of the *palace* was cited as critical to changing these perceptions and promoting different perceptions of social housing, a picture in which generations were more integrated and estates were not places of fear. Quickly questions of who might be in the film, who would like to share stories and what other roles could be played ensued. Members of the group came forward to present stories in one-to-one interviews with Tom, who was entrusted to make the script and the film with their input.

These stories were reviewed by Tom. At the time the scale and quality of the project had not been entirely realised by the Serpentine or its partners. Tom and the group imagined something of significant scale, with high production values and considered this integral to ensuring a dignified representation of social housing. A delay occurred while the Gallery raised additional funds to realise the film at the level of quality that Tom and the group had proposed. The funds were not enough to realise the film at its total ambition. Tom and the group had to make very tight decisions on which stories to include and decided to highlight the early days of the estate development. The film that was produced, titled *A Palace for Us* includes re-enactments of some parts of the stories that were shared in the engagement process, by both actors and participant's family members. This created an opportunity for interaction and skills/knowledge exchange between generations. The group were keen that the film be seen by as many people as possible but were most concerned that it be viewed in Hackney and proposed a screening at the Rio Cinema, which took place in February 2011 to a full house. This screening took place after the film was shown at the Serpentine Gallery. The film's presence at the Gallery expanded the audience to over 15,000 visitors and secured important media attention, including an article and excerpt on the Guardian's website and an interview with Robert Elms

on BBC London. The Guardian's Jonathon Jones said the following, picking up on its fulfilment of aims related to changing the discrimination against working class, older people living in social housing:

It evokes all our stories. Britain in 1945, out of the ruins of war, built the welfare state that clever rich kids are now so casually pulling apart. Estates like Woodberry Down embody an ideal of decent housing for all that was born out of the miseries of the 1930s and terror of the 1940s. A Palace for Us gently and acutely bears witness to this history that is now being dismantled. Hunter's film is not a rant, but a moving homage to lives and memories that today are obliterated by harsh and violent caricatures of the white working class. Everyone should go to the Serpentine to learn to see through his subjects' eyes. The government should go.

The testament by the Guardian's Jonathon Jones is a clear indication of the group's ability to meet their aims in changing representations. It is interesting that media reviewers consistently refer to A Palace for Us as 'Tom's' film, when those on the estate and Tom himself refer to it as *their* or *our* film. This demonstrates that there is work to be done in addressing the role of arts and social criticism in acknowledging the collaborative and participatory nature of such initiatives. In addition to media attention, in March, 2011 Tom and Serpentine Curator Janna Graham made a presentation to media journalists from Bloomberg - sponsors of the project - describing the importance of changing perceptions of social housing and its residents and the importance of older people being involved in doing so. Some members of this group of over 50 people came to speak about the way they have felt they contributed to and would like to change such perceptions. Beyond this foray into the public domain, Tom continued his visitation of the tea/coffee groups even in the months after the film was released and was invited to present awards to Age Concern staff and local donors at the tea group during recent celebrations.

STUDY 2: Barter with The Future Self

Location: **Westmead Care Home, Westminster**
Architects/Designers: **Markus Miessen and Åbäke with Kees de Klein, Photographer Sophie Bellmer and Writer Yanki Lee**
Researchers: **Alison Rooke and Katey Tabner**
Co-Researchers: **Staff and residents at Westmead Care Home, Westminster led by Phyllis Etukudo, Staff at Serpentine Gallery AGE UK –Hackney Tea Group**
Care Workers: **Louise Owen, Janice Hunter**

Question: **How could exchanges between culture and care workers and residents result in tangible change?**

Working with a very different constituency and approach, a second project took place at Westmead Elderly Resource Centre and Care Home owned and run by Westminster City Council. Westmead provides residential care for 42 older people, many of whom have dementia and experience few or no visits from outsiders. Two design teams collaborated with care home workers over a four year period. The first was developed by Markus Miessen in relation to architectural change. The second, related to social, programmatic and spatial design, emerged from the collective Åbäke. CUCR research assistant Katey Tabner and researcher Alison Rooke worked on the research component of the project and Activities Coordinator Phyllis Etukudo also played an important role. Westmead was a particularly interesting site as it is a relatively small care home that retains a domestic and human scale. In his first site visits and discussions with site manager Julia Patton, Miessen described the space as follows:

Westmead is, from my point of view, a typology that seems to work very well for many reasons. There is an intriguing quality of this place. It is difficult to put it in words for those who haven't been there… there is a shocking divide, which is between the public areas and the private areas of this place.' He asked 'How can one adapt existing places and propose policy issues at the same time? Simple adaptations can change the use of those spaces.

Markus Miessen, Architect

Markus' proposition was to include a space powered by Skype as case study/ pilot project to showcase how existing institutions can be changed by altering only a small number of strategic settings/parameters: what he described as 'acupuncture rather than complete makeover.' Designers Åbäke took up this idea in their approach, testing the Skype Room and a number of other proposals. Their initial idea was to enact a Skill Exchange chart with residents and care

workers to swap skills. They reasoned that

> *With the combined age of the residents alone being 3500 years, staff and residents offer a tremendous learning resource to us and each other.*

However, upon attempting this they realised that the language of 'skills' was not used in the home, amongst residents in particular. Instead, members of Åbäke spent an extended period of time holding group sessions and listening to people in the home speak in their own way and on their own terms. They talked to people about the use of common spaces, used by many for watching television, and began working with people individually to understand modifications that could be made to alter the space and programming of Westmead.

This period of listening was somewhat de-stabilising for care home staff, particular the Activities Coordinator Phyllis Etukudo who described it as difficult.

> *I could not get a handle on the schedule or what they would make with people, she said. She was used to Timetables and schedules and making something to put on the door.*

It was unsettling to have people coming and going and difficult to schedule around the existing scheduling. In response, better and more reliable times and visits were set up to accommodate, with the concession that outcomes would not be known in advance.

Running parallel to the process of listening in the home, Åbäke spoke with their own friends and other cultural workers to understand how they might be implicated in the question of aging and care.

If older people are isolated in care homes, why are the arts and creativity so often isolated in their affiliations with youth and the young? they asked. Attempting to make a 'group' that bridged the art gallery / care home divide they looked at the institutionalisation of caring relationships and the ways that social roles are interpellated, e.g. of older people and of carers, and the significance of

creativity in such a context. With Westmead staff, residents and gallery workers, they undertook a process that took the title of the project Skills Exchange quite literally. While instigated by Åbäke from their conversations with participants, a series of exchanges were enacted by this loose group of cultural workers, residents and care workers.

As a visual representation of this, an art swap was the first exchange to take place. Furniture and artwork went from Westmead to the Serpentine Gallery's Process Room while limited edition prints from the Serpentine Gallery were hung in the corridors of the Westmead home. Staff from the Serpentine engaged in discussions with Westmead staff and residents. Where many had expressed fear in this change — on both sides, in the care home in particular staff were afraid that the introduction of contemporary art works would 'dis-orient' themselves and residents. One resident when asked suggested it 'might be fun'.

In the conversations about the work a series of memories came out. In response to one work, by Rirkrit Tiravanija, resident Denis suggested, *I see a radio and this reminds me of the one we had in our kitchen in Ireland. I listened to it every day as a child. The stories seemed very far away.*

Another resident, Edna, responded to a work by the Kabakovs: *I see a place like this one, many doors and rooms, but this one is more open, more airy. Maybe we could change this place to look like that?*

Others in the home came forward to share information that they had on the work when gallery workers were present. Shera suggested in passing *I dressed up for today. We don't get many visitors.*

The cultural workers also expressed their surprise at what had come out of the conversations and how the works changed in meaning from thinking about authorship to what they catalysed for people. As stated by Curator Kathryn Rattee in an interview:

We pass these images on our own walls every day and hardly notice them. Here they have opened up in different directions. Equally, Westmead's speech therapist suggested:

There were changes to the patterns of speech after the art works arrived and those discussions were had. Dennis, in particular, spoke more and about different concepts than usual, pronouncing words at a higher level.

Cultural workers and care workers also went through a process of attempting to understand better what it means to age and not simply 'help' the aged. Through photoshop, a number of the workers, and in some cases their families, were aged 40 years by Kees de Klein & Åbäke to create closer mental proximity between those in the home and those working with them. This was an attempt to get away from the tendency to imagine care as 'for them' and adopting an othering or more patronising stance between older people.

For me, this was a profound shift said Curator Janna Graham.

> *In cultural work it is common to hear people suggest that art is 'helping' those that it encounters in the social realm and [is] not itself profoundly shaped and helped by these encounters. I make it a habit to work against the inequality of this idea, but seeing myself 'aged' altered this commitment to exchange from a mental exercise to a practice. I had to incorporate the otherness of this image into my own life. This also changed the way I related to people like Dennis, Joan, Shera and others living in the home.'*

Janna Graham, Serpentine

Opportunities for carers and gallery staff to work together also occurred in preparing for a birthday party at the Gallery for Westmead's oldest resident Ellen, including attending cake decorating classes and creating a space for the party in the gallery. Whereas care staff were anxious about

how the residents would respond to the trip to the gallery, and gallery workers were equally anxious, particularly when residents expressed anxiety about leaving the door. Once on the bus, however, there was an outburst of Irish rebel songs and stories stimulated by seeing architectural structures of the city. At the gallery, Serpentine staff, Westmead staff and residents celebrated the birthday together. Gallery staff described the feeling of being moved by the opportunity to 'care' within their workday and the rarity of being implicated in those social projects that so often take place or are *outsourced* beyond the walls of the gallery.

Phyllis Etukudo described the importance for her of the visit for those who attended, suggesting that many remembered the event for much longer than their usual memory spans. She also later used this in her own work discussing older people and dignity with fellow professionals.

> *[At] That party, the staff were fantastic. It was just like a street party from the old days, with the balloons and the banners and everything, and eat! I have never seen them eat so much. Ahh they just had such a lovely time, and the way the staff treated them was just so wonderful. They weren't condescending or you know… They treated them as equals. So the dignity and respect was there, the way they got them up to dance and sing. You know it was all stuff from their past. Some of them talked about it for days afterwards. Some of them [the residents] actually remembered.*

Phyllis Etukudo,
Older People's Activity Co-ordinator,
Westmead Care Home

At the Gallery a series of exchanges took place in the room housing Westmead's furniture and art to enable participation by younger people from schools and on a Family Day. Carers and their families and passers by of all ages were invited to visualise and imagine their future selves and the objects which may be useful in

the future on a timeline from 1960 to 2060. While younger people expressed changes in their opinions of aging by going through the aging exercises, the room itself brought back the stereotypes of aging people as 'out of date'. 'This room is scary for me' said one young man. A Skype operation was enacted to link students and families to those living in the home. While when successful it captivated those in the gallery space, but, for the most part the technology and the interest amongst residents at the home was lacking.

A series of propositions followed these experiments based on how well they were perceived to be successful by participants. The final proposal included a regular programme of exchanges between cultural workers and care workers and residents at Westmead, a rotating 'art wall' for collaborative curating and art projects between Westmead residents and workers and cultural workers. Though the open—endedness of the project had originally been a problem, by the end a convivial and critical relationship between the care and cultural institutions, often imagined as incredibly separate, was forged. It is also important to note that the project ended with a proposition for future work and collaboration, a determination that consistency was a critical factor in altering the traditional relationship between the art and care fields.

STUDY 3:
The Trip

Location: **St. John's Hospice, St. John's Wood**
Artist: **Marcus Coates**
Co—Researchers: **Alex H, outpatients and workers at St. John's Hospice, including Andrew Gallini and Sheena Boyd**
Research Assistant: **Ananda Ferlauto**

Question: **What can an artist provide for those nearing the end of life?**

In Camden, North London, Marcus Coates, accompanied by research assistant Ananda Ferlauto, explored the role of the artist as a vicarious agent for imagination and experience. Marcus Coates worked with out-patients on issues around the emotional and imaginative in the context of St John's Hospice, an independent hospice that provides palliative and end of life care. Here people are at the end of their lives, as their physical and spatial world shrinks. Through considered dialogue, Marcus worked closely with several of the Hospice's residents and finally selected one collaborator with whom to work. Beginning by asking *What can I do for you?*, he asked participants if there was something which they would like to enact vicariously through Marcus, to explore their wishes, interests and dreams. Marcus did not imagine this as a simple act of service but an exchange in which he might learn something of what it is to be at the end of ones life, a secret and under-discussed knowledge in broader society.

Directed by Alex H, Marcus went on a trip to the Ecuadorian Amazon. Under Alex's instruction it was documented by sound and in writing. Marcus then returned to share the story of his experience with his collaborator. Their conversations, in which Alex's desires and use for the project, and his interests in challenging Marcus' own assumptions about what it is to die, were recorded as the soundtrack for a film installation shown at the gallery, and produced as a book. Experienced by an audience of 21,000 the work was sadly not seen by Alex, who passed away before the installation date.

For staff at St John's Hospice the project pushed at some of the Hospice's boundaries. In an early interview Andrew Gallini, Director of Clinical Services, St John's Hospice discussed the Hospice's hope for the projects usefulness to the Hospice's approach to art and creativity.

I think it will be really good to have a sense of what has come out of it, and how that developed a piece of work, and then how

that started to generate some discussion about what that means to us as the staff, and how we might be able to start thinking about doing [creative] things differently.

Andrew Gallini,
Director of Clinical Services,
St John's Hospice

This more risky approach to art in a hospice setting required that all concerned manage this with consideration of the ethical implications of the project. Dr Chris Farnham and Andrew Gallini discussed their reservations in interviews. The ethical implications of the project and an understandable sense of responsibility to a very vulnerable client group were discussed. Here the institutional exchange involved a long introductory period where Marcus Coates' previous artwork was presented to the staff and, more importantly, he was guided by the staff team in advance of him meeting with residents. His work was initially perceived as unusual and 'quite way out' compared to the Hospice's earlier art participation initiatives. However, after a period in which he listened and learned from the Hospice team, they were somewhat reassured and left with an impression that Marcus was *genuine and honest*. Here relationships of trust gradually developed between all concerned.

Andrew Gallini, Director of Clinical Services, discusses his early concerns about the ethical dimensions of the project.

He came from the Serpentine and he came across as very genuine and honest. We did do some thinking about this, the 'vicarious wish'. I did think at first, 'What will the patients get out of this? It's nice for Marcus to go off to the Amazon or whatever, but what does the patient get out of this? The relationship [between Marcus and Alex] made it. If you didn't have that relationship you could easily have the patient feeling disenfranchised or, disillusioned or resentful, not getting much out of it while, the artist has had a nice trip.

It was in the nature of the relationship, made visible and audible in the film, that was at stake in this process, which lay on ethically negotiated terrain. The exposure of the negotiations of power between Marcus and Alex, became the subject of research. As we see here the order of interrogation and therapeutic intervention is reversed from the artist doing for the dying, into a more complex negotiation of relationship:

A: *Did you find doing this on my behalf, that sometimes you wanted to dominate and take over? I don't think one could have resisted it, but I can't imagine that you are that self-controlled. I could be wrong.*

MC: *Yes, I kept thinking, is this something that Alex would be interested in, should I focus on this, or this over here? I'm getting really interested in this, but would Alex get interested in this? In the end I had to just go with what I'd do, in a way, and just imagine that whatever sparked my imagination, those would have to be the bits that I brought back to you in the end, because those are the bits that are most lived through, and the things that are the most vibrant for me, so I just really assumed that I'd be able to talk to you in a way that transmitted that vibrancy and that life, really. I thought because I couldn't help living it for myself, I thought that would be the best way to live it for you and hopefully that would inform your own imagination, and you going up this river into the unknown.*

A: *The unknown for some people is way in the distance and for some people it's a little nearer. One is always going into the unknown. You don't have to have an illness to know that. With your interpretation, one has been able to experience, not completely as if one was doing it oneself – you can't expect that – but it's got very near it.*

The honesty of the exchange was also evident to those who came to see the final work at the Gallery. Visitor comments there suggested that listening to Alex and Marcus, *helped me re-imagine my mother as someone who is not simply a person with an illness*; or shared knowledge about the deep philosophical exchanges that take place with those at the end of life, conversations that *'are very hard to discuss with others' and 'rarely ever make it into the press.'* What was clear in the exchange was also that Marcus' original offer of a 'service' was met with Alex's honest account of the impossibility of assessing impact in its entirety. The act both offered something as an act of exchange and generosity but also complicated the nature of this occurrence in the months before his death.

MC: *Can you imagine that this journey, if I did this for you, would be helpful or beneficial? Worthwhile for you?*

A: *That's a hard one. Yes I think it would, but in a very selfish way. That someone had put themselves out to do it on my behalf, that would be important. That I can re-live for seconds or half an hour, whatever it is, something I've wanted to do. But then I don't know if it matters one iota if I'm going anyway, to have that extra experience or second-hand experience. It's not going to alter the whole finality of my life.*

MC: *Just another experience.*

A: *I don't know and I don't think anyone can tell you what experience you carry on with you, providing you carry on in some aspect or another.*

Following on from the Skills Exchange encounter, there has also been an opening up in the imagination of the role of art and creativity in the Hospice as Andrew Gallini describes here:

… It has been a catalyst. [] It has opened up our eyes to what is possible. So we will be a lot more receptive, so with the environmental stuff here, thinking differently. It is a lot better than we expected it to be. The staff were interested in the story of Marcus and Alex, but more powerful were the messages that came out of the film. The things that we so often see here but never get crystallised in the same way'.

Andrew Gallini, Director
of Clinical Services, St John's Hospice

One of the impacts of this process has been an interest in continuing to work with longer term, embedded arts practice at the hospice. Doctor Chris Farnham discussed how the Skills Exchange project *'opened a door'* giving him, as Director of the Hospice, the courage to bring in art projects that involve the residents and the staff to a greater extent than the model of workshops or one off commissions. Crucially the St John's team have begun to think about the ways that the skills of creative professionals could interrelate to those of medical professionals, and the possibilities of such collective endeavours when trying to improve communication skills and the possibilities of this moment of life. For the Gallery and Marcus, the reaction of people in the Gallery to the work indicated the degree to which death is not discussed in public culture and could be the basis for future work.

STUDY 4:
Trading Spaces: An Investigation into the Future of London Street Markets

Location: **InSpire History Group, Southwark**
Artist: **Barby Asante**
Research Assistant: **Cristina Garrido Sánchez**
Co-Researchers: **Jayne Lloyd, InSpire Southwalk, Barbara Akers, Rose Campbell, Pat Davies, Eleanor Geoggrey, Teresa Mcgee, Mary Meehan, Emina Mustafa, Ekins Perch, Maureen Perch Architecture Crew, Jennifer Aseidu and Eduardo De Costa, Rev'd Saunders and participants in the Sarsaparilla Summits**

Question: **How can sharing memories of the past support those working to save affordable London Street Markets?**

The Inspire community project at St Peter's Church, in Walworth, South London sits between the Heygate and Aylesbury housing estates and is home to a reminiscences group. Artist Barby Asante approached the group in of women age 65 and over, who collectively decided to investigate East Street Market. Barby, accompanied by CUCR research assistant Cristina Garrido Sánchez, and the women discussed the changes to the estates nearby, undergoing large-scale and long-term change as part of the Elephant and Castle regeneration masterplan. They discussed their concerns for the future of the East Street Market, one of London's oldest and busiest markets. Street trading has taken place in Walworth since the 16th century. Their project Trading Spaces, was concerned with the ways older people experience urban change and the significance of the social space of the market for older people. The project brought together older people, market workers and traders at the InSpire Centre to find new ways of archiving the past and recovering memories of the everyday social worlds which are so often lost and quickly forgotten in future oriented regeneration processes. This intervention was intended to create a response to the changes to the local area which included the proposed demolition of the Heygate Estate and the associated threats to the social fabric of East Street market. Here participants met weekly, organised meetings, local walks, a stall on the market where they created and exchanged some of the more traditional fare that has disappeared from the market in recent years (such as the soft drink Sarsaparilla), for market stories and memories with the intention of producing a book which recorded this process. This collaboration also led to two 'Sarsaparilla Summits', which brought together elders, artists, activists and academics concerned with the past, present and future of London street markets in the context of regeneration and gentrification.

The group's work at East Street market was oriented toward the future of the market but engaged through the collection of memories of a city neighbourhood undergoing dramatic change due to large-scale regeneration. Barby facilitated the participants' embedded knowledge of the area and the changes it has gone through, evidenced in the shrinking of the market, the decline in the diversity and quality of goods on offer, the closure of favourite shops and stalls owned and run by local characters. The group worked together collecting local memories and histories, taking a walk with a local man John, aged 72, a volunteer at InSpire who had grown up in the area. These stories were shared in the context of a critical orientation to local regeneration plans. In this process the participants met with market managers, local traders and activists concerned with street markets from parts of London undergoing similar changes. To make their research public, Barby worked with participants to create a market stall, which was run by the InSpire group for the day. It was decked out with bright red, white and blue bunting. Behind the counter participants displayed cakes, rabbit dumplings and drinks of Sarsaparilla ready to give away. The idea behind this artistic intervention into the space of the market was deceptively simple. The participants all made food to share, and trays of sarsaparilla, a drink that used to be sold in the market by the herbalist Baldwins located around the corner on the Walworth Road. In exchange for free food and drink the participants were asked to exchange memories and stories about the market. Passers-by were asked to fill out a very short questionnaire, which asked them: How long they had been coming to the market? What was the most unusual thing they ever bought? What their favourite memory of the market was? How the market had changed? And what they would like to see in the market. In taking over a market stall for the day the women moved out of their role as customers in front of the stall, to become traders themselves. The stall also temporarily upset the dynamics of exchange typical of the market. The stall created a temporary social sphere where taken for granted roles were undone for a day. These exchanges captured the value of the market for older people. The street market is a place filled with social exchange. It is not just money and goods that change hands here; the market is filled with banter and conversation. These are intensely sociable places, prices are negotiated, clothes are tried on, and stallholders invite passers-by to comment on their wares, jokes are made. The exchanges that took place in this project captured the ways that the market was a place of shopping but also entertainment.

Tommy Cooper's brother had a record stall here, outside Foxes. We used to shout to him, what have you got? Then we used to stand there and sing all the old songs.

They were all characters. If you came down here and you had the hump, they'd put the music on, Irish jigs, Caribbean music. You would end up having a knees up. It was a lot of fun. Some of them had a sense of humour. What about Old Mutton Eye, remember him? He'd give you a shilling to measure out elastic in yards.

Memory Exchange at the Market Stall

John: *And Annie's, the Jewish lady. If you so much as passed her shop, you only had to stop to look in the window and she would fly out, drag you in her shop. 'Come in dear, come in. Now how much are you thinking of paying for this dear?'*

Margaret: *Lovely coats in there.*

John: *She was a super saleslady. George used to sell bankrupt stock. He used to say, come on ladies and gentleman. I want to send my mother-in-law on holiday. The more you buy the further I can send her. He used to put scent on his cheek, ask you to smell it, then as you went to sell it he used to kiss you on the cheek.*

Market walk with John
The InSpire group investigations into East Street market captured the vibrancy of the everyday multicultural working class life in London where exchanges of culture and identity take place. Today, many of the older people coming to the market return each week from far and wide, having travelled by bus from more leafy parts of south London to return to the neighbourhood of their childhood. Interviews that were conducted with local stallholders during a walk through the market identified some of the factors that are impacting on the area. Stallholders, who had inherited stalls from their parents, were the last of their line as their children did not want to be market traders. Market traders recognised the value of this social space for older people compared with the impersonal supermarket shopping experience. The impact of Sunday trading and car boot sales was also discussed. This project also pointed towards the economic significance of these un-gentrified markets. Those involved appreciated the opportunity to buy very small amounts of fruit and veg (one pepper, three eggs), to handle goods before they bought them and the opportunity to enter into a verbal exchange to get the best price.

I like that stall because you can pick and choose. You couldn't do that with the English people. They tell you to leave well alone. She was selling two punnets of strawberries for £1.50. I said how much for one, and she said £1. With the foreign stallholders they will half it for you. I am on my own now. I don't want large amounts. I can buy what I want, pick it myself.

Memory Exchanges at the Market
The scope of this project extended beyond East Street to explore threats to street markets due to regeneration and gentrification across a number of sites. Two Sarsaparilla Summits held at the Serpentine Gallery and the InSpire Centre in Walworth, brought together market users, academics, artists, traders and campaigners working on markets to exchange food and drink from London's street markets, to present

projects and enter into dialogue regarding the significance and future of these spaces. The exchange of food and recipes in the summit reflected an understanding of the ways that connections are generated. It is worth noting that the arts are a central to contemporary urban creative strategies that seek to transform city spaces such as street markets. Transforming the untidy and sometimes unruly street markets into picturesque 'feel good' city spaces such as farmers markets, through street-scaping, public art, façade improvements and heritage developments are part of wider development strategies which seek to make use of art and culture to produce a sense of place which appeals to the more affluent and that are attractive to young urban professionals and the middle classes (sometimes described as the 'creative class'). In the recognition of this dynamic the Sarsaparilla Summit exchanges were also valuable opportunities to think critically about the role of the arts and the artist in urban change, as Barby Asante discusses here:

There are connections and collaborations to explore here. And to think about the role of the artist in these processes, in facilitating these processes and conversations, dialogues and the potential of creativity which is something I have been looking at with the group.

Barby Asante, Artist

These summits placed the threats to East Street market within a wider context of the privatisation and gentrification of London's street markets. Conversations focused on the ways in which markets are increasingly governed through a planning paradigm which aims to attract an affluent upwardly-mobile young urban clientele, rather than the local working class populace in search of bargains and everyday necessities. These processes were already evident in East Street Market in plans to change the design of the market stalls (impacting on opening times of the market), the development of an 'arts and crafts' market in nearby Burgess

Park and plans for a large shopping centre nearby. In the second Sarsaparilla Summit, that campaigners held at InSpire, local traders dropped in to meet campaigners from other markets and shared their sense of the value of local markets, and their difficulties with local authorities and private developers. Here a valuable exchange took place sharing the strategies employed to try to sustain these spaces and fight the threats to local markets and histories, such as the traders union, now defunct, of which contemporary market campaigners knew very little. This inter-generational dialogue went beyond the sharing of histories but towards the sharing of histories to impact upon the future of an area, moving reminiscence into action. The project manifested in a map and manifesto to be given to market traders to sell, the profits of which would be given by traders to their local market campaign.

STUDY 5:
The Future's Getting Old Like the Rest of Us

Location: **Camden Homes for Older People, Wellesley Road**
Artist: **Beatrice Gibson with writer George Clarke**
Research Assistant: **Mara Ferreri**
Co-researchers: **Thomas, Elvira, George, Iris, Joyce, James, Anne, Victor and other residents with care home staff and Programme Coordinator Sally Mercer.**

Question: **What thoughts and ways of speaking emerge when talking about the future in spaces of residential care?**

This project developed out of a desire to engage the Serpentine in the process of planning for new older people's care homes in the city of Camden. Several artists were brought to Camden by Serpentine staff, out of which Beatrice Gibson's work was selected. Beatrice had a proposal to meet with care home residents to develop a script and to adopt a process similar to those used in realist TV dramas such as *Play for Today* and B.S. Johnson's 1971 experimental novel *House Mother Normal* to develop conversations with those in the homes about their feelings about life and the future. At the onset, institutional aims and aspirations were different than those of the processual practice suggested by Beatrice. Beatrice Gibson's work in Camden developed in the context of a period significant reorganisation of older people's care provision. Here four residential homes (Wellesley, Ingestre Road, St Margaret's and Branch Hill) run by the London Borough of Camden were to close. Residents were to be rehoused in a new purpose built facility run by a private sector care provider. Camden's Older People's Care team certainly recognised the opportunity the Skills Exchange project offered and the potential value of a participative artistic process in bringing older people together. At first the project was commissioned in order to help residents through a time of transition from one home to another. Beatrice's project, says Sally Mercer, was:

...we wanted to create something with the residents that could then go into the first care home, so to give them a sense of ownership, as well as bringing residents together. Because residents will be coming together from the different homes [] So, I think it begun with a specific idea which was, these new care homes were being built, and for the people who were being moved who wanted a piece of artwork that could then go into the new care home and be a testimony of residents working together.

Sally Mercer,
Homes for Older People Project Worker,
London Borough of Camden

Beatrice's idea, however, was to create an open platform for conversations about the future in which uncertainties and conflicts could register. How it would manifest was not known entirely at the outset. She was concerned that the older people involved and in particular the language that they used had agency in a reflective process. Beyond helping the participants cope with the transition to a new home — assuaging their criticisms and fears — participants expressed their various relationships to the future, mapping out thematics that are not often associated with older people. The first part of this investigation with participants was organised through fortnightly sessions with residents from a range of Camden Council care homes who will be re–homed together in a newly built care home. A worker from Camden's Homes for Older People Project also attended these sessions together with several carers from the care homes to be amalgamated in the future.

Here, most of the elderly residents have different degrees of memory loss and often drifted in and out of concentration. This was effectively addressed by avoiding the familiar 'reminiscing' format of many art projects involving elderly people. Beatrice and scriptwriter George Clark presented images of the future by screening films to trigger a dialogue about present, past and future issues and events, moving between temporalities, (for example exploring how participants thought about the future in the past through the motif of the moon landing) half following, half guiding the meandering form of the conversations. The shifting temporalities of the dialogic sessions were captured by a sound recorder and translated into a verbatim script by George Clark, who also participated in the sessions. This part of the project focussed on a negotiated exchange among the residents as well as between them and Beatrice. They shared political ambitions:

I was too busy planning the future in the communist party; we had two meetings a week. We were very active. We would discuss what was going on in America, and

what was going on in the Soviet Union and we would fight for what we thought was right. There was lots of discussion, politically. I think it's got worse.

Elvira

As well as more practical matters:

I don't sleep at night, I have too many cat-naps during the day, so that anytime I nod off you should wake me up. I need to be alive in the situation, otherwise I nod off during the day and then I can't sleep at night. Tea tea, I've been making tea for the last 70 years, I'm bored of tea.

Elvira

And those concerning the pending move:

That's the time and the future, we are going to build more and more. The future, it's getting old, like the rest of us.

Joyce

Beatrice recognised the importance changing routines and making something that shared their actual opinions about care and the future were important:

They told me they thought that would be really interesting for lots of reasons. Either because they were involved in films when they were younger, or they were interested in films or actually they were just interested in having their say. I think the idea that they were actually producing something or that is was all going towards something, I think they really liked that idea and it kind of gave a purpose to what they were doing as well as just giving them time to chat. [] I think sometimes that if just the group is just a general discussion group after a while it can seem a bit aimless to people'.

Beatrice Gibson, Artist

The second part of the project centred the making of a film from the verbatim script of the workshops. The words of the script

were played by actors, from the original era of *Play for Today* television. The resulting film, whose title was derived from their conversations, *The Future's Getting Old Like The Rest Of Us*, is their interpretation of those who were from an earlier generation themselves. Some of those interpreting the script in fact knew those who spoke in the script.

While those in the workshops did not necessarily imagine the film as a common project *'it must be interesting to work on a film'* says one of the residents in the script, there was an incredible fidelity to the words and language that emerged in the workshops. Reflecting on many issues simultaneously the film brought to light their language, for audiences who very rarely have access to such a space.

It demonstrated the multiple and complex voices amongst older people, and broke the stereotypes of older people that are frequently adopted:

> *One idea that I don't really like is that older people are somehow far less tolerant than younger people to a wide variety of things and then... On one hand some people think that they are more tolerant and don't mind what you do to them 'cause they are happy and grateful for whatever they get', then on the other hand people always seem to see older people as always xenophobic...'*

Sally Mercer,
Homes for Older People Project Worker,
London Borough of Camden.

These seemingly disconnected conversations, when attended to on their own terms, point to the active cultural and political pasts and presents of those who participated in the workshops who created other kinds of meaning in the spaces in between language. In the following page of the script, for example, there is a conversation in which language poetically re-constructs political relations:

Tony Blair...He take over from Margaret Thatcher. He was much better and a 100 times too, but what he did when he go and fight that war…it's that what take out the goodness … he had no right to go and kill those people … He make a fool of himself, he spend millions to go and fight that war.

Thomas

It was an education for me, my time in the communist party, I learnt more being there than I would have in any university. We've learnt something from it. We've learnt … I used to fight for the Soviet Union because … I felt that America was far too advanced and was just out for capitalism

Elvira

Do you know the... well the best place, to buy jellied eels, I was out with my wife shopping, which is a very unusual thing, I hated shopping, so err we're in Selfridges in the food hall and there was this little girl and her mother was at the counter, so she said mummy, mummy, mummy they got some jellied eels, so ... she gets up, so I said they must be expensive, she said no 99 pence, so I said I'll have 4 of them,

Joyce

Rather than reading these moments strictly as pathological, or as signs of a disease, the film attempts to make something of the poetic social analysis of a language born in group dialogue. Issued also as a musical score, the script is edited into a vertical structure, featuring eight simultaneous monologues. These scripts and the film were shown to an audience of 16,000 people at Serpentine Gallery in an installation, in addition to a screening attended by 400 people. At this screening, actors and participants met and discussed the film. In a pre-screening at the Serpentine Gallery, some participants responded directly to their conversations in the film, recognising them.

As previously discussed, visits to the Gallery are part of the continuum of Skills Exchange. The experiences of these exchanges for participants were a very positive outcome of the project. Participants took great pleasure in attending a screening of *The Future's Getting Old Like the Rest of Us* at the Gallery, and being treated 'like VIPS', with due importance, dignity and respect. Many commented on their *'change of perception'* in relation to people with memory loss. The project worker registered her own change in perceptions as the project unfolded:

> *Where care workers came to that group, they thanked me at the end saying "I really didn't know that about so and so" and so actually... I think it must be quite hard for residents some times because they know that people are trying to assess them and looking for certain things so I think that it depends how free people can feel sometimes, to just kind of wonder off and see their own thoughts and to express those to people and whether there is time for that and actually I think the group provided that opportunity'.*

Sally Mercer,
Homes for Older People Project Worker,
London Borough of Camden.

Though remnants of the work will appear in the home as a reminder of this process, understanding how to work with people in their language and on their terms moved the work from the model of a commission of an art piece for a new care home, to a processual piece that broadened the scope of possibilities and 'difficult knowledge' in the representation of aging.

Findings: From Service Delivery to Embedded Exchange

Katey: *What do you feel that role of art is here, and for the residents?*

Phyllis Etukudo: *It is something to keep them occupied with, a lot of them are interested in art and music, because it has been part of their lives. It has always been part of someone's life somehow.*

Interview with Phyllis Etukudo, Activity Co-ordinator, Westmead Care Home

As we have read, in many cases Skills Exchange participants challenged the aims of institutional partners, charting potential uses of art and creativity as a way of broadening out the concept of care by taking into account different elements of older peoples' well being [38] than those that are often monitored. Projects challenged many of the original expectations, taking as their canvas the representations that work to secure the perceptions and spatialisations of the elderly as well as the policies and economies that are built around notions of the elderly and their care. Dominant formulations of 'care' often place the elderly in the role of the 'serviced' or 'cared for', as those 'without', or 'after' the peak moments of their lives. Simultaneously the artists and those working with older people are placed in a role of the 'creative' 'skilled' or the 'carer'. *Skills Exchange* projects pushed at the notion that artists, older people, care-workers and others might exchange their skills, and, in this process, alter reified roles and well-rehearsed relations through processes of creative exchange.

The project made efforts to increase participation in ways that attended to the micro-political dynamics between people participating in projects, the power relationships of group settings, and the performance of static roles. It is important to note that this kind of work repositions older people (and their carers) as participants in a process, as co-producers, rather than recipients of art that is being delivered or provided.

It is our assessment that the moves and demands that artists and their co-researchers have made is a move from a paradigm service to one of embedded exchange.

Their move from service delivery was not a movement away from thinking of the usefulness or social function of art, nor from the importance of issues such as reducing isolation and discrimination against older people, but rather against paradigms in which outcomes were pre-determined by the institutional bodies prior to participation and group involvement.

The Serpentine Gallery and the institutional partners responded to this shift, adapting schedules, expectations and temporalities, and noting outcomes such as better relationships between older people and staff and between spaces of care and the broader community. Care workers — some of whom were sceptical at the onset of projects — expressed moments of surprise at the degree to which the modes of exchange developed could lead into longer term processes at the home and cultural workers also noted their own shift in perceptions about aging.

This chart maps the to/from trajectory of many of the Skills Exchange projects. While in many cases the 'Exchange Model' was not fully reached, the aims and ambitions were articulated on a number of occasions by its participants.

SERVICE MODEL	EXCHANGE MODEL
Focus on numeric indicators i.e. number of workshops, number of people, amount of time spent and financial spend per person	Focus on quality of encounters and the practice of groups articulating their own understanding and methods for determining success. (including qualitative and quantitative measures)
Creation of a known artistic outcome	Emphasis on a phase of listening to all participants in the collaboration, determining useful project outcomes.
Fulfilment of identified needs of participants is determined by an outside source (care or art institution, funders etc)	Desires of project are developed by artists and participants in collaboration and with disagreements allowed, and are then communicated back to host institutions for response. Monitoring of these were a regular feature of the group
The idea that the process was exclusively for the improvement of the lives of the elderly people and NOT others involved i.e. the artists, care workers and community members who became active.	Artists, care workers and older people all had opportunities to communicate social and aesthetic aims of the project. Frictions between the participants were openly discussed and negotiated. Where people could not communicate in this kind of language, groups adapted to this.
The idea that the final work was the creation of the artist for those in care and not a collaboration, that the community 'services' or becomes material for an art work	The art work(s) were one part of a collaborative project; participants were credited for their contribution and acknowledged by external sources.
Focus on individual expression of the participants and not on the formation of a group	Individual interests and group formation were balanced with room for conflict.

Modalities of Exchange and Participation

The findings in this report are organised through the concept of modality: a concept which is concerned with expressions of how the world might be and should be. The following section of this report presents eight categories of exchange developed across the Skills Exchange Project and possibilities that others could be of use to others undertaking this kind of work.

✔ Exchanges of Power and Agency
✔ Exchanges of Time
✔ Exchanges of Space
✔ Exchanges of Visibility and Invisibility
✔ Exchanges of Trust
✔ Exchanges in Strategy
✔ Exchanges of Past and Future
✔ Exchanges of Empathy

EXCHANGES OF POWER AND AGENCY

We don't all have to play bingo

Margaret,
Participant in the InSpire Group

One of the central concerns of the Skills Exchange project has been the relationship between the ways that older people are represented and the impact of these representations on older people themselves. The project sought to address the ways in which older people are interpolated into a variety of settings. Furthermore, Skills Exchange recognised participants' active pasts conceived in a conviction that the elderly still have a lot to give and exchange.

It is worth noting here that discrimination against people on the basis of age, and the stereotyping of older people as passive, dependent and intellectually disengaged, is damaging to older people's sense of themselves[39]. A

social process of infantalisation is often the result of the misconception that older people are needy and less intelligent than other adults. At times this attitude is expressed in well-meaning behaviour. (Research amongst older people found that 54% of older people believe people in late old age are treated like children[40]).

Negative attitudes to older people are also expressed in a preconception that older people are more conservative about social attitudes than the younger generation. However, it is worth remembering that today's 55–65 year olds would have been in their 20s in the early 1970s. This cohort includes those who witnessed and took part in tremendous social and cultural change and urban transformations. Today's 65–75 year olds would have been in their 30s at the end of the 1960s. As young adults they would have been at the forefront of the first post-war consumer boom in the 1950s. Clearly, this is not the older generation whose adult life was dominated by first-hand experiences of World War Two (which is often one of the primary ways in which older people's memory becomes framed through reminiscence). Research shows that the older people of tomorrow, (the 'baby boom' generation of today's 45-55 year olds) will have cultural values which have been defined by individualism and liberalism, being: less deferential; more anti-establishment; less religious; more tolerant of illegal drugs, and sex outside marriage; more gender neutral; more pro-European; and more concerned about the environment [41]. It is argued that,

One of the defining features of the baby boomers is that they are arguably the most diverse and divided generation to have reached this point in life.[42]

Skills Exchange sought to interrogate some of these attitudes to older people and recognise their intelligence, experience and agency. One of the risks of a service delivery model of art as

a 'time filling' activity is that it risks positioning older people as 'clients' or 'customers' or 'service users' who need to be entertained rather than respected for the way they would like to change the world.

In the recognition that participants are social agents and not merely recipients of 'art services' Skills Exchange attempted to make apparent, and at times disrupt, the pre-existing hierarchies of groups, organisations and practices. These aims brought tensions to some of the institutional framings of the research sites. In a session run by Laura Cuch with Woodberry Down Elders, Laura invited people to share their perspectives on Tom Hunter's film and its potential impact on perceptions of the area. Laura's questions framed the
participants as agents in a way that was problematic for some of the stakeholders, as her research diary makes clear:

The Housing Officer approached me to tell me I should be very careful in saying this film could make any differences to these people's lives because they would take my word and hold it for ever. I thanked her for her comment and told her I did not want to say that this would make any difference to their lives, but only that I wanted to ask them if they thought a project like this could make any difference at all. I wanted to find out about their expectations… I think some discomfort has come up because in posing some questions around the interests of different participants may have in the project, there could be a discussion around the politics of arts projects that take part in connection with urban regeneration processes.

Laura Cuch, Research Assistant,
Research Diary notes

Clearly this exchange highlighted the different expectations of the project partners. The regeneration and housing teams were cautious about the potential dangers of raising the residents' expectations. They also cautioned about

the danger of providing opportunities for learning and reflection or the facilitation of new desires. As a Housing Officer stated to the research assistant *these people have already learned before. They only want to have fun.*

Laura Cuch, Research Assistant,
Research Diary notes

The East Street Market research group also found the work with Barby Asante to be the basis for critical perspectives. Moving away from memory as nostalgia the project thought critically about the present and the future by focusing on the changes to the fabric of East Street market. This project was built up over time with participants shaping the project together, collectively deciding on weekly activities based on their priorities and interests, conducting their own research about the area, and inviting local people who had interesting local knowledge to contribute to the project. In group discussions participants reflected on their experience of past urban development and their awareness of the politics of 'decanting' and private housing development.

Rose: *Where will all these people go? I lived in a tiny street of 156 dwellings. We all had to move because they had to knock it down. We didn't mind because it was falling down. Back then I insisted that we got three options for a new place. Not one, not two, but three. They said 'oh no, you can't have three'. I said 'Yes we can, cause at the end of the day you are going to profit by us moving away'. That's what you want, but this is our lives. We have lived here for years. Now you only get one [choice]. This was our lives. We lived there. We needed those options. Now, when you look at the Heygate. When you think of all the lives inside those little boxes, right. They are all people, They've all had kids, or they have lived there a long time. And they are just…But who cares about them.*

Mary: *That property they are demolishing now, I remember it going up in the early sixties. It's not that bad.*

Barby: *I wonder if it will build another one that …*

Mary: *A load of rubbish.*

Barby: *Will it have the same lifespan, the new one?*

Rose: *Now they are not doing precast concrete for a start. That's ok for council housing but not for private housing. It's private housing. It will be by architects from all over the world; it will be financed from all over the world. It won't be anything like it is now.*

This group, who have lived through previous regeneration projects and the associated consultation exercises were somewhat sceptical about the professionals and other local actors who seek to consult local people.

Mary: *Now they have given the Elephant the go-ahead.*

Rose: *It made me laugh. We had a student came here and asked me what we thought about the regeneration of the Elephant and Castle. I said 'To be honest I couldn't care less. I have seen it all before. I didn't like what they did to it last time and I don't like what they are doing to it now'.*

Barby's relationship with the InSpire participants built up over time as they researched and recollected the area. This project was framed as participative art practice rather than pedagogy. A strong vocal, motivated and well-informed group developed. Here Barby was, in many ways, a facilitator, working alongside the group, asking critical questions, using her own social and cultural capital to help the project to be realised.

Activities which were seen as imposed upon the group were rejected by some of the group. For example, during one research session participants refused to co-operate in a mapping exercise led by research assistant Cristina Garrido Sánchez, which sought to explore the relationships that made the project possible.

Before I finished explaining the project one of the participants said it was horrible, like being back at school and refused to do it. I apologized and I said nobody was obligated to do the exercise. But that lead to a conversation about how, when they went to school, they were never encouraged to be creative, or to express themselves, that is why, when an exercise like the one I was explaining, was not nice for them, since they felt like being back at school'.

Cristina Garrido Sánchez,
Research Assistant,
Research Diary Notes

This was a rejection of activities they understood as more traditionally pedagogical (like being back at school) in contrast to the group's articulation of themselves and their political and social aims. This became the basis for understanding better how and on what the group would like to work. Åbäke's work with people at Westmead equally aimed to encourage a rethinking of the idea of what constitutes "care" by pushing care beyond a straightforward idea of carers as being low-skilled service workers who take care of older resident's immediate physical and emotional needs. Åbäke sought to disrupt the conventional arrangements of power in the care home, by intervening in its architectural arrangements and placing residents and carers into a different relationship.

Recommendations:

❑ Assumptions regarding the concerns of older people should be challenged through a spirit of openness to the ideas of the participants themselves i.e. privatisation of street markets, the negative stigma attached to social housing residents etc.

❑ All participants should have the right to intervene directly in methods, re-shaping activities to ensure that all voices are heard.

❑ Consider involvement in community action on issues that shape everyone's lives in an area, change perceptions about older people from those who receive care to those who care for their community.

EXCHANGES OF TIME

One of the central difficulties across all Skills Exchange projects was in the prediction of the timing they required. Given the nature of the projects and the movement from relations between institutions such as the Serpentine and its funders, the Serpentine and its collaborating institutions, and then to the working groups who developed the project, timing was in all cases underestimated. In addition to this, attempts to be responsive to those involved required additional time.
One of the challenges that arose for the Gallery team and artists working in care homes was the necessity of understanding, responding to and fitting in with the temporalities and practicalities of care homes.

> *[T] here is a bit of a tension sometimes between how arts organisations or arts projects can function and how care homes function. It's very well to send an email the night before. But actually that email may not be seen until the afternoon because the person that you are emailing may be out, or because there could have been an emergency, there could have been assessments. You have to have a longer term, so two or three days in advance you need to send an email, then you can ring, there's just a process'.*

Sally Mercer,
Homes for Older People Project Worker,
London Borough of Camden.

Care homes are not static, slow places with fixed routines but are rather very active places scheduled with many activities. The Gallery team and Skills Exchange artists had to adapt to these conditions. This included learning that care homes have complex staff schedules. Care workers are sometimes temporary, working irregular shifts and unable to sustain engagement in a project. This

impacted on the full participation of some of care workers. Furthermore, the temporality of a project in this context has to take account of frequent health incidents. These daily emergencies would understandably be prioritised by carers over a long–term engagement such as an artist's sessions. Some of the most difficult and pedagogical aspects of the project for the care homes teams have been the intersectoral exchanges between the Gallery team's more flexible ways of working and the Care home's tight schedules and need for structure. This was a factor at the start of the project at the Westmead home.

Katey: *What were some of the more difficult things about the project for you?*

Phyllis Etukudo: *Once we got going and I had the timetable, I didn't have any problems. …I like structure as with older people you have got to be able to plan, as from day-to-day you never know how they are going to be, whether they will be ill, their moods change.*

This also impacts on the ability to engage in group work that involves the carers as important participants in processes of changing the perceptions of older people. As Mara Ferreri 's research notes illustrate:

> *In practice, the highly complex rotating pattern of the staff and the frequent health incidents with the residents resulted in a high variation of interlocutors and participants.*

Mara Ferreri,
Research Assistant, Research Diary Notes

Equally, while cultural workers were interested in responding and engaging ethically, cultural labour is equally fragmented, with many required to work on multiple projects simultaneously (and often in different countries) in order to make ends meet. Artists on the project were paid a flat fee of £4000 for their

work and, in responding ethically or in building relationships over time, often did extensive work at their own cost, in many cases putting what they were paid back into the project's production. Where additional funding was required it took many months to secure, making projects delayed. Gallery staff and research teams equally worked on multiple projects. In addition to the five projects of Skills Exchange the Serpentine Curator assigned to the task was working on another ten projects simultaneously. In the cases in which participants played less of an active role in setting the terms and outcomes for the project, or in which group reflection did or could not take place, this was almost always attributed to time: to the time of access with groups, the timing of the exhibition that was to come, and the costs related to peoples' time.

While time and the resources that secure it cannot expand infinitely, our findings indicate that the highest benefit can only be met through the durations required to develop ethical relationships truly interrogative of power, isolation and discrimination. Key to the future of an ethical relation between art and care is the adequate resourcing of time for all those involved. There must therefore be adequate time for groups to decide upon the frameworks, goals and outcomes and to reflect upon their processes collectively. There must be time for conflict and for co-learning to occur within these activities.

Time was also an important factor in terms of how projects proceeded, in almost all cases enabling participants to move between the past, present and the future and not being locked into a frame of memory, or their thoughts on the future. What Skills Exchange participants spoke in volumes was the degree to which issues of the past can make an impact on the present and future of their communities. This movement between registers of time also removes some of the barriers of social segmentation. That is that old people are 'of' the past and young people are 'of' the future.

Recommendations

❑ Art and Care Projects must be thought of as consistent and long-term processes with aims at the outset but with outcomes decided by participants.

❑ Projects should be planned on a one – two year trajectory to enable them to move from participant desires to possible actions.

❑ During this time, weekly or bi–monthly visits should be assumed with a regular hourly rate factored in for the staffing of artists and cultural workers to ensure that they are compensated fairly.

❑ Taking on board the words of care staff, it is important that schedules are agreed upon and that projects begin with initial phases of development.

❑ Participants, in addition to their institutional hosts, must agree to time frames.

❑ Participants should also determine the movement between time periods that they hope to enact in relation to the themes and issues in which they have decided to intervene.

❑ Time should be scheduled for analysis and reflection on processes in the group to manifest in specific actions. Projects should not end with exhibitions but with reflections of all those involved.

EXCHANGES OF SPACE

In many cases, Skills Exchange projects provocatively interrupted the stability of the various settings to which older people and other social segments were assigned. This occurred in the very smallest scale changes such as changing the spatial layout of a room. As one researcher noted:

The spatial arrangement of the tables was a little bit like a barrier to communication. I could not follow what the people were saying. The fact that the group were sitting in a semicircle and the artist was standing in front of them perpetuates the idea of the artist leader. The rest of us were sitting outside the semicircle. This implied we were not supposed to be active in the conversation.

Laura Cuch, Research Assistant
Research Diary Notes

After reflection on this, the tables were arranged in a U shape by the group, to attempt to overcome these assumptions. Although these may seem like small mundane matters, they give shape to social spaces and the encounters which take place in them.

Other spatial alterations were seen in the movement of things from one site to a nother, as was the case between Westmead Care Home and the Serpentine Gallery, instigated by design collective Åbäke. Where it was originally thought that this movement would be dis-orienting, it in fact provoked a change in the relationships between the staff and residents of the two spaces, but also had implications on issues such as language patterns and memory triggers. It was important, however, that all were supported during these shifts as they were at times difficult for all involved.

Equally, the use of walking and touring were themes that ran across the projects. The East Street Market group recorded

walks through the area as a way of collecting the histories that they could use to draw attention to the importance of preserving East Street as a working class market. In the case of the Westmead project, a bus trip resulted in altered language patterns and increased memory capacity for the group. In the case of the exchange between Marcus and Alex H, the movement between places, because they were inaccessible to Alex, were grounds for a close and nonetheless experiential relationship to occur.

Equally, the re–location of the research of the East Street Market Group to a market stall was a significant gesture, which brought visibility to the work of a group that usually met behind closed doors at a nearby community space and brought the group into public dialogue. Conversations at the market stall happened less formally and involved an incredible cross section of people. This kind of exchange—convivial, informal and diverse—was also applied to the subsequent meetings of traders and market campaign associations.

Recommendations

❑ Attend to the power relationships as they are created in space i.e. changing the arrangement of chairs to change repeated patterns of authority.

❑ Change aspects of spaces, go on trips, exchange objects and use this as the basis for discussions. Care workers suggested that changes to the environment and spatial routines, had a positive impact on health, such as residents' capacity or those with dementia to increase memory and patterns of speech, when followed by facilitated discussions;

❑ Walk and tour spaces together to generate common knowledge on a topic (this touring can also be in the imaginary) as people with different kinds of memory and speech can respond;

❑ Put research and artistic outcomes into informal 'public' spaces instead of journals so that people get used to seeing older people as active agents.

EXCHANGES OF VISIBILITY AND INVISIBILITY

I live across the Italian Gardens. So, not too far from the Gallery. I've been there quite a lot. And some of the exhibitions are outlandish. How can I put it…? Beyond my comprehension. So as soon as I heard the name The Serpentine Gallery being involved, one word flashed on my mind… weird.

Andrew Gallini,
Director of Clinical Services,
St Johns Hospice

Barby: *Has someone here visited the Serpentine Gallery before?*
Rose: *I don't even know it, where is it?*
Barby: *Kensington Gardens.*
Mary: *I've only ever visited the lake.*

The Serpentine Gallery's position as an institution of what Pierre Bourdieu describes as 'high cultural capital' [43] has been significant to the project in several ways. Firstly, the Gallery's high esteem as a renowned international arts institution functioned as kind of 'quality guarantee' for many of the partner organisations. Although many of the partner organisations were entering into Skills Exchange based on prior experiences of working with arts 'delivery', whereby arts organisations have provided activity sessions, many were more willing to 'take a risk' based on and come out of their 'comfort zone' because of the Gallery's status. This capital was extended to the artists, who were thought to be of 'high calibre' due to the Gallery's cultural value. Throughout the project participants, whether older people, carers or those agencies working with older people, had the opportunity to spend time at the Gallery. The Gallery 'Process Room' was dedicated to Skills Exchange to screen and present final work. Participants had, on the other hand, varying knowledge and experience of the Gallery before going. In the case of the

Woodberry Down Project, visiting the Gallery secured an image of what could be possible in their own project:

The thing that cemented the project in their mind was the visit to the Gallery. We had a lot of fun there drawing. They were really creative. And just meeting the people from the Gallery, what they are like. It made them realise that the Gallery is a place of esteem that could be used.

Janice Wynter, Age UK Hackney.

That art world was largely unknown to them. We've definitely worked with people for who that art world is unknown.

Sadia Hussein,
Post–screening interview

These visits, as part of the continuum of Skills Exchange, generated exchanges that permeated barriers between perceived spaces of high art and those of working class people. They impacted positively on older people and care workers. Here Phyllis Etukudo discusses her impressions of the visit to the Galley by older participants from the Westmead home. On this occasion the participants had a tea party in the Process Room. Phyllis Etukudo later used this in her own work discussing older people and dignity with fellow professionals:

It was a dignity action day or something. I actually used that {the party] as an example of how older people can be treated with dignity and respect. Because that is a great thing now, residents have to have choices. Dignity and respect are a great part of social care. [At] That party, the staff were fantastic. It was just like a street party from the old days, with the balloons and the banners and everything, and eat!'

Phyllis Etukudo,
Older people's activity co–ordinator,
Westmead Care Home

It must be noted that this feeling of exchange and dignity resulted from months of work between carers and the staff at Serpentine, and a general familiarity with one another would not be an automatic occurrence.

At times there have been instances when participants have engaged with the Skills Exchange project with considerable confidence and savvy, displaying knowledge regarding the cultural significance of the Gallery. At St John's Hospice, for example, a participant who was approached to take part was very keen to use the project as a platform for exhibiting her own work. This involved her asking whether her paintings could be exhibited in the Gallery, displaying considerable knowledge of the art world, her position within it and the ways in which she might possibly capitalise on this opportunity, but it is clear that some people have a sense of purchase and use of galleries and some do not. In many cases, however, once they had been to the space, participants had a much broader scope in terms of their own imagined impact. The question of visibility was central to the issues of changing public perceptions across all projects, whether these perceptions were related to the capacities of older people, social housing estates, working class markets or dying. While in most cases the project favoured quality over quantity of participation, the large attendance figures and press profile provided by their presence in the Gallery guaranteed a significant viewership. However, discussions around strategies for making the projects visible, for how and when the work would be presented, and its interpretation as solely the work of the artist, were under–addressed issues in the projects overall. Once projects entered the frame of art, or the art institution, it was often the case that their collaborators in care were not as recognised, interviewed or referred to by those who came to see or review the shows. While this was not the intention of anyone involved, careful attention

must be paid to these issues so that the elitism of the arts institution is not just borrowed but altered by such projects. Many people discussed the significance of seeing their experiences represented on screen, and how important they felt when seeing their work at the Gallery. Here Erica Dobbs discusses her impressions of Tom Hunter's film *A Palace for Us,* which features her family history and personal memories:

The film gives a good view of people on the estate, what they are about. [ ] I hope people can see that although it was a big estate and there have been a lot of problems , with violence and crime. But there are decent people living on the estate. I think it reflects us quite well. I hope people enjoy watching it as much as we enjoyed doing it.

Post screening interview with
Erica Dobbs, Participant

However, this did not always instigate moments of reflection on feelings of marginalisation within them. The question of how galleries might become more porous in relation to communities was posed by Åbäke's subtle institutional 'acupuncture', but further developments of the question of who has the right to be involved in the running and programming of perceived cultural institutions would be a clear next step in the discussion, particularly within the current trend towards increasing private interests.

It is also interesting to note that 'making visible' art interventions in the Gallery did not take place at the end of all projects. In two out of five Skills Exchange Projects, the moments of gallery visibility took place in the process of the project's development. At Westmead, this was the basis for exchanges between institutions rather than its result, which was a series of propositions for future collaboration. For the East Street Market Project, the Gallery was an important stop in think-

ing about the market in a broader, London wide context. This research was then re-inserted into the process. For the East Street Market, as for the project on the Woodberry Down Estate, local visibility, in the form of a market stall in the former and a local theatre in the latter, was as or more important than visibility at the Gallery.

Recommendations

❑ Visibility in the Gallery changes perceptions about issues such as social housing, aging and death amongst the press and visitors;

❑ Discussions with those at cultural institutions about the mechanisms of making projects visible and how to ensure collaborators are also represented and credited when projects enter the art context are important.

❑ It is important to decide in the group when visibility should occur and when it is or is not important to do so at a gallery or in a local context.

❑ Groups should be able to communicate the ways in which the space of the gallery is 'elite' and engaged in true dialogue about the purchase marginalised communities have on galleries.

❑ It is important that when groups come to galleries they meet many of the staff and that there is a more continuous and direct relationship between the gallery and the social institutions with whom it partners rather than outsourcing.

EXCHANGES OF TRUST

Whatever the journey is, just be open to it. Because that is the nature of what happens here. That's the only advice I gave [Marcus].

Sheena Boyd,
Manager of Day Services,
St John's Hospice

One of the necessary conditions for the Skills Exchange project has been relationships of trust which developed over the lifetime of the projects' long-term artist residencies. This has been important on both an interpersonal and inter-institutional level. Without these affective relations, these exchanges could have been at best superficial or at their worst detrimental to the individuals and institutions involved. The modalities of exchange discussed are dependent on this development of trust. In turn it is one of the most difficult aspects of the project to describe.

In the Woodberry Down Project the centrality of trust in the creative process was clear. The exchange of trust in this project had two elements. The first was the importance related to collaboration. The second element was derived from the success of something compelling and communicative. In an interview, Tom discussed the practical aspects of creating this respectful aesthetic and gaining trust — for example using a large format camera, which carries a certain gravitas, or showing the residents Polaroids before capturing the final image, so that they could have some say over how they were represented. Central to this process was negotiation and consent, so for example sometimes Tom Hunter might have thought a participant's story was powerful but he would not use it if the person telling it did not feel comfortable with that.

These pictures are pretty much a collaboration … the stories have become more and more important for me … That is why I didn't want to do this as 'I am the great artist, I know what I am doing'. I'd love to create what they see, not what I see. That is the exchange for me… I am not going to let them be embarrassed or look stupid. Sometimes they don't know when they look silly and sometimes I don't know when they feel silly'.

Tom Hunter, Artist

Building relations of trust was central to Marcus Coates' work with a hospice team caring for the terminally ill. This project required that Marcus, together with the Serpentine staff, conducted careful negotiations with hospice staff. After much consideration Marcus decided to work with Alex H (as he asked to be referred to), a resident close to the end of his life. As these research dairy notes demonstrate:

*Marcus had been to the Day Centre four times before he could start recording the residents' or potential collaborators' ideas. The reason for it, he considered, was that he had to take his time listening to the residents' stories in order to establish relationships of trust…
…The conversation [with Alex] moved on to the first few encounters he had with Marcus. Alex was very complimentary about Marcus. Every time he mentioned Marcus' methods and attitudes he used words like easy, diverse and pleasant.*

When asked about the final work, Alex said:

There is an unpredictability of the final work's 'character'. I trust Marcus — to make something interesting and sensible.'

Ananda Ferlauto,
Research Assistant, Research Diary Notes

Throughout this process Marcus and Alex engaged in ongoing conversations

regarding the nature of the exchange. It became apparent that Alex was very clear about his ideas, about the focus of the trip Marcus was to embark on.

Visual ethics were also paramount here. Marcus realised early on that Alex might not want to be filmed. Furthermore, it gradually became apparent that it would not be appropriate for Marcus to be seen in the film either. Nor did Alex, Marcus or the curators want the final work to seem sensational, like a 'final wish' television programme. Significantly, aesthetic decisions were based on what was important to Marcus and Alex's relationship and the bonds of trust that it was built on, rather than more abstract artistic considerations. The final film, The Trip, is a reflection of and a realisation of the relations of trust that were central to this exchange.

Central to the relationship of trust was the ability of each party to alter their own ideas and initiatives. Åbäke's work at Westmead both challenged and conformed to the ideas and demands of the space, moving from the idea of a 'Skills Bank' to a much more disparate set of responses based on what they heard. Their ultimate propositions, that included elements of both change and consistency, reflected the responses of their own desires alongside of those of the care workers and residents of the home.

Recommendations

❑ Take time to listen to each other's desires before imagining the work.

❑ Trust comes from consistency and an embedded relationship between artists, carers and older people

❑ Stick to a schedule but also be able to respond to local and political issues as they emerge

❑ Push for what is important and let conflicts emerge and be addressed.

❑ Allow for a place for discussions of ethics in the work.

EXCHANGES IN STRATEGY

One of the themes central to the work with older people has been their exchange of strategies concerning urban change. During the project on Woodberry Down Estate, Hackney, it became apparent during sessions that the older people who had been living on the estate had a long history of activism. *They are part of the history of the urban*, as Tom put it. However, in earlier stages of the regeneration project, the regeneration partners had not taken into account the impact of the demolition and construction on older people. Furthermore older residents of the estate did not feel that they had been consulted regarding the estate's future. Many, for example, were not computer users and many aspects of the consultation process had been facilitated through computer technologies that were not generally accessed by older people[44]. This 'digital divide' amongst older people[45] impacted negatively on their participation in the process.

The meetings with Tom catalysed the development of a strategy for how to engage with the issues and to continue the struggle in relation to the regeneration. As Janice Wynter, Age UK worker for the estate, describes here:

Being involved in art has really gelled the group together, given them a sense of purpose, and they have been consulted at every stage in the art project, so it has really gelled the group together. [] Now the elders have got things in place, they have been very active. [] They are now peer mentors on the estate, going out to bring other older people in. And being involved in this project has really gelled the group together, given them a sense of purpose.

Janice Wynter,
Age UK Hackney

This sense of social connectedness and friendship was also discussed by Kit, one of the participants in the Hackney group:

When you are young, and you have got children, you get to know the people around you. There's not that when you are older. My son doesn't want me to stay here anymore. My son wants me to move, he has built an extension on to his house for me. But I said to him 'As long as I can walk about, and have friends here that I can see. I don't want to go yet'. I am happy here with what I have got. I've got friends, lots of friends because of the meetings we have here every week. I go and stay overnight, but I want my independence.

Kit Heathley,
Post screening interview

As in the Southwark and the Camden projects, an important aspect of the group's work has been actively listening to the residents'; this practice took on a greater prominence in the Skills Exchange piece than it had in Tom's previous work. As Tom describes here,

I realized people loved telling stories and they couldn't believe that they had a chance that someone would listen to their story and would be happy to hear it and that someone thought that their life was that important… ordinary lives of ordinary people are incredibly important, incredibly interesting and worthy of being recorded… In each meeting I learn to see things in a different way. That's why the research has been so important and then I didn't know what I was doing until I heard the stories and then that shows me the next step, and then the next step, so they are pointing me all the way through.

Tom Hunter, Artist

A Palace for Us is strategic in re-narrating the meaning of the Woodberry Down estate:

The film focuses on the past and the history of the place and the future. That

is a good thing as it will be impossible to recreate that when it is lost. It says more about the history than the future. The future is unknown. Things are going to change quite rapidly and the changes are going to be brutal and unknown. It will be a brutal upheaval in many ways and I think it is important to recognise that people have not just years behind them but a history. In changing that, it is important to do that in the right way.

Sadia Hussein, Age Concern Hackney

Strategy was also at play in widening out projects beyond their constituencies. The Woodberry Down Project, for example, strategically involved younger people on the estate to ensure that they knew its history and about a time when social housing was not vilified. Equally, the East Street Market Group engaged a wider community in the issues surrounding the market and, most poignantly, engaged market traders whose knowledge of the history of market activism had not been transferred.

This sense of strategy is often not attributed to older people and is important in understanding that participation should move beyond entertainment or 'fixing' the older people's problems.

Recommendations:

❑ As opposed to 'fixing' older people's problems, develop an open conversation about strategy to achieve the group's desires in relation their environment as a way to get out of the stigmas of helplessness;

❑ Engage in conversations about the strategies used to work on this issue historically in the area;

❑ Let the strategy for making social change be the basis for engagement with other groups and generations, rather than simply older people meeting younger ones. A common purpose also changes pre-conceptions;

❑ The group should develop tools for understanding if the strategy has worked rather than these being imposed on them by external agents.

EXCHANGES OF THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

As discussed, much of the creative work that older people are invited to participate in is structured around ideas of memory and reminiscence and situate older people in the social and historical context of the past. While this oral history approach is important, creating a social history with everyday accounts of the past and historically significant moments, it arguably orients older people to the past, and away from the present or the future.

By using a market stall and the exchanges that surround it, the work of the East Street Market group moved out of the familiar reminiscence scripts and allowed the participants to enact their memories of the past — through sharing food and drink and making their presence felt in the present and possible futures of the market. The group avoided some of the pitfalls of framing activities for older people around reminiscence whereby working with memory interpellates older people as located in the past, saturated in nostalgia for a time which has gone, and, crucially, resistant to or unable to adjust to the global multicultural postmodern city.

In reminiscence work older people can quickly be framed as subjects who are 'living history' rather than people living in the present who have lived through history and have a stake in the future. Although the framing of older people through reminiscence can offer some older people a comfortable position from which they can narrate their pasts, this can quickly become formulaic as national history merges with personal narrative. One of the participants in Barby Asante's workshops expressed her resistance to familiar nostalgic versions of the Second World War. When other members of the group began to become nostalgic she stated, *I don't want to talk about the war years. It was really depressing and hard. Things are so much better now.*

Memory and memory loss was central to the two projects that worked with older people in care homes: Westmead in Westminster and Wellesley Road, Camden. Here, the effects of memory loss and dementia presented a challenging, and generative, situation with regard to the future. Beatrice Gibson's work in Camden responded and sensitively communicated to this experience of memory loss and time. Rather than see memory loss and confusion as an obstacle to active participation, at group sessions discussions revolved around short films and clips that were shown by Beatrice and George and discussed by the group. These sessions prompted a consideration of ideas of possible futures that were held by older people in the past, seen from the vantage point of the present. The choice of screenings—such as the moon landing and an episode of the Twilight Zone— were themselves future oriented. At the time when they were produced they asked questions of what the future might look like.

It takes … courage. The man who was walking on the moon. 1969. The best thing to come out of that was the frying pan. The non-sticky frying pan. You put your eggs in. You put your, your, er lard whatever it may be and it never stuck to the pan. It never stuck to the pan. They invented that from the moon. They, got it from the stones of the moon'.

James

Unrealistic it seemed. It was almost like a vision in a dream, I felt, that I couldn't quite make it reality, it took me some time to do so, when it was talked on the radio and on television, when they enlarged on it, then I was able to grasp, step by step what went on because the landing itself and ... people like myself didn't know what to make of it and how they got there'.

Anne

The script, made up of nine simultaneous and sometimes overlapping monologues. Between long pauses and brief lucid moments which fade away, memories of trips to the cinema, family arguments and political activism are recalled. Significantly this emphasis on the future created spaces where connections developed between the participants and the terms that were discussed. This was particularly significant when, in care home settings, where many older people are
suffering memory loss, older people can become isolated in in the past (in spite of the ostensibly social situations they find themselves in). In the process of taking part in Beatrice Gibson's project connections developed between residents who would be re-housed together in a purpose built estate. As discussed by Sally Mercer, the Homes for Older People Project Worker, Camden Council:

> …by the end people were talking to each other and making connections with each other and I think that that was a really fundamental part of the project that I had always thought and hoped would happen. But I was very pleased it happened, and people remembered each other's names, they greeted each other and although the move is still a long way off, I mean I guess it's related to other questions as well, while the move had been directly mentioned and I think the themes of the group indirectly were talking about the future and change, I hope that we can continue to do work across the care homes so that people can continue with the links they have made through the project because I think they are really important.

> Sally Mercer,
> Homes for Older People Project Worker,
> London Borough of Camden.

Recommendations

❑ The orientation of the past towards the future is the basis for strong-intergenerational connections.

❑ Don't work on memory for the sake of it or to render 'in the past' issues — like gentrification — that are still very much alive in the present. Rather, put them
to work to discuss possible forms of intervention for the future.

❑ The orientation of the past to learn lessons about how we'd like to live now and in the future is a good meeting point for different generations.

❑ Allow for the movement between the future and the past to take the form that is comfortable for all involved in a conversation, even if this is harder to understand for more linear thinkers.

EXCHANGES OF EMPATHY

All of the Skills Exchange projects relied on the capacity for empathy and imagination and the ability for participants to narrate and account for their experiences. Empathy also meant being challenged, as in this case, in which the assumptions of Marcus Coates, in regard to the souvenirs he might bring back from his trip, were countered by the practical considerations of Alex as he prepared to die:

> **Marcus:** *Is there anything that you'd want me to bring back, apart from my experiences? Do you collect anything?*

> **Alex:** *If you're talking to people with a terminal illness, why say 'collect'? What do material things do for you? What's the point of it? Are you going to look down or upon it later on?*

> **Marcus:** *The idea of a souvenir is totally redundant?*

> **Alex:** *In my opinion. My policy now is to get rid of clutter!*

> Conversation between Marcus and Alex prior to the trip

In the case of the collaboration between Marcus and Alex, empathy was developed by a willingness to put oneself in the shoes of the other:

> **Alex:** *Sometimes in that type of environment, did you ever feel totally insignificant?*

> **Marcus:** *Yes, I felt totally insignificant!*

> **Alex:** *Well that's good, because I definitely would have.*

> Conversation between Marcus and Alex after to the trip

In conversation Alex told Marcus that

he felt that he had a new memory, a new place in his mind where he can go. Rather than draw on older people's memories, this work created empathetic memories. This empathy was the basis for collaboration. Alex asked *How was your trip? Or should I say our trip?* and Marcus immediately met with Alex to describe his experience in
detail. It was important that this empathy not be confused with sympathy or a tendency to help.

Empathy was also seen as the basis for new learning for practitioners at the Hospice:

> **Alison:** *Have you learnt anything in this process, has it led you to reflect on what you do?*

> **Andrew:** *I am interested in the 're-lational' in terms of national dignity in the care campaign, people get really disassociated from what the experience of dignity is for the patient, and one of the main ways of reconnecting is the relational: of actually spending time with people, understanding, getting a grasp of what their real situation is, what it means for them individually. So what has been interesting has been the relationship that developed in the creative process. Marcus's distinct identity, developing the relationship, with an idea and a creative process and coming out of that with something quite unique. And his skilfulness in negotiation and being able to make work that is really creative but beneficial and nourishing, nurturing.*

> Andrew Gallini,
> Director of Clinical Services,
> St John's Hospice

The ability for gallery workers to empathise, through an experience beyond watching, or tending to the care home residents was addressed through coming to terms with their own fears about aging in the project at Westmead. This

was a means to alter patronising or utilitarian attitudes towards residents that often occur when schedules are busy. Care workers suggested that they are often encouraged to 'not get too attached'. The process of being aged assisted them to imagine the experience and being engaged directly changed attitudes towards residents. Creative workers — often considered to be on the side of the young — were able to empathise with their older collaborators through processes of imagining the aging process. Equally, the script developed in Camden was a true reflection of this empathetic gesture, in which the acceptance of the language of participants on its own terms was valorised and presented rather than scripted or narrated over, as is often the case with older people's words. It was important for many of the projects that this empathy be extended to the

presentations of work. The film *The Trip* attempted to give the viewer the same visual experience as that experienced by Marcus and Alex, and to give them the same opportunity to imagine the encounter in the Amazon based on their conversation. This was also the case in the enactment of the script by actors in Gibson's *The Future's Getting Old Like the Rest of Us* in which the actors that spoke the words of older people also considered their own relationship to the time to come. This was extended into the experience of viewing the film.

Recommendations

❑ Where many of those working in care suggested that in their training they had been told 'not to get attached', there is an incredible importance of empathy on both sides of relationships of care. Empathy should be a priority;

❑ Devise modes of exchange that allow for identities to shift and people to imagine their place in society otherwise. This can help younger people to deal with the fears of aging that often keep them away from older people;

❑ Move away from a sympathy or 'helping' mindset to an empathetic one in which exchange on both sides are taken seriously makes a move from a symbolic approach to combating discrimination to one that concretely changes the people and spaces involved.

In Summary

Skills Exchange has brought together highly relevant and aesthetically sophisticated projects, in which artists and participating organisations have explored the themes of collaboration, social action, care and aging through participative and socially engaged practice. As discussed throughout this report, there is a significant emerging body of research which systematically captures the impact of participatory art on older people. The impacts that are discussed and identified in this body of evaluative research are clearly in evidence in the Skills Exchange project. Through an embedded approach to research, which had synergy with the ethos of the project itself, this report demonstrates an approach to research and evaluation which is generative and integral to the creative process itself.

This report has set out the significance and value of the project and the complex series of exchanges and encounters that have taken place. These have been simultaneously inter-sectoral, interdisciplinary and intergenerational. People from different backgrounds, specialisations and generations have worked together, taking risks, building trust and generating stimulating exchanges that have intervened in unique ways into dominant definitions of people, services and the nature of social inter-connection itself.

Artists have worked in participation and collaboration with older people from a wide variety of ethnic and class backgrounds and who are at different stages in the aging process. Participants have brought their skills and expertise, their opinions, experiences and critical perspectives, memories and hopes. Some of the older participants have been very active and mobile, while others have been struggling with physical and mental capabilities. In each of the five Skills Exchange projects the artists have worked with dedication and humility to create a

space which responds to the situations older people have found themselves in.

The findings in this report are organised through the concept of modality: a concept which is concerned with expressions of how the world might be and should be. This includes expressions of necessity, permissibility and probability, and negations of these. The modalities of exchange set out in this report have challenged stereotypes of older people, and their capacity for interaction, the kinds of art they like, and the audiences for this kind of work. The resultant powerful evocations and artistic responses often exceeded the expectations of the institutions involved. Moreover, the framing of older people and the reified roles and well-rehearsed relations that get ossified in the service delivery model were challenged. Here, more experimental processes of creative exchange generated a multitude of encounters, debates, discussions, journeys, parties and conversations.

Skills Exchange therefore speaks to a range of issues around the conduct and commissioning of artistic practice. It demonstrates the potential of socially engaged and participatory practice with older people. The project went beyond a service delivery model of providing arts participation for older people to develop a model of embedded exchange. Our findings indicate that the greatest benefit of these exchanges can only be realised through the durations required to develop ethical relationships truly interrogative of power, isolation and discrimination. Key to the future of an ethical relation between art and care is the adequate resourcing of time for all those involved. There must therefore be adequate time for groups to decide upon the frameworks, goals and outcomes, and to reflect upon their processes collectively. There must be time for conflict and for co—learning to occur from within these activities.

35 See the Woodberry Down Memories Group,
  Woodberry Down Memories: the History of an
  LCC Housing Estate, ILEA Education Resource
  Unit for Older People, 1989 – a model of
  participative local history

36 Interview with Phyllis Etukudo

37 Florida, R. Cities and the Creative Class (2005),

38 For further discussion see Never Too Late for
  Living. Inquiry into Services for Older People.
  The All Party Parliamentary Governmental
  Group (2008) See the discussion in ttps://
  member.lgiu.org.uk/whatwedo/Publications/
  Documents/APPG Never too Late for Living.pdf

39 Jeunism is the discrimination against older
  people in favour of younger ones. This includes
  political candidacies, jobs, and cultural settings
  where the supposed greater vitality and/or
  physical beauty of youth is more appreciated
  than the supposed greater moral and/or
  intellectual rigor of adulthood. Age UK-funded
  research shows that people aged over 70 are
  persistently seen as incapable and pitiable when
  compared to other groups. The assumption
  that they do not have the same aspirations
  as younger people too often translates into
  the rationing of opportunities to participate
  in processes of urban change, economic and
  community life. Age UK's research found that
  54% of people over 65 in the UK believe that age
  discrimination exists in older people's everyday
  lives.

40 Agenda for Later Life, Our five-year
  ambition for public policy. Age UK 2010.

41 Brook Lyndhurst Ltd. Sustainable cities and
  the ageing society: the role of older people
  in an urban renaissance – final report (New
  Horizons). Available
  Online: www.communities.gov.uk/documents/
  corporate/pdf/142763.pdf

42 Huber, J. and Skidmore, P. (2003) The New Old,
  Why baby boomers won't
  be pensioned off, Demos, pg42.

43 Bourdieu, P . (1984). Distinction.
  Routledge, London.

44 This may be due to the use of online
  consultation tools in these early stages,
  technologies which often exclude older people
  and reproduce the 'digital divide' however
  inadvertently (see Online Participation:
  The Woodberry Down Experiment by Andy
  Hudson-Smith et al (2002) Working paper 60.
  2002. Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis,
  University College London,

45 ONS research shows that older households
  are significantly less likely to have an Internet
  connection. In fact they are only half as likely.
  Among one-person households below the state
  pension age, 79 per cent have Internet access.
  Among one-person households above the state
  pension, only 37 per cent do so. (See Randall,
  C (2010) e-Society, Social Trends 41, Office for
  National Statistics. Se also Berry, R. (2011) Older
  people and the Internet. Towards a Map of
  Digital Exclusion. The International Longevity
  Centre - UK (ILC-UK)

PROJECTS

THE TRIP

Marcus Coates, Alex H & St. John's Hospice

In 2009, Marcus Coates began working with outpatients at St. John's hospice asking the question, 'what can an artist do for you?' Those who responded suggested ways that vicarious action could enrich their experiences. Suggestions ranged from the creation of an exhibition of photography, to a parachute free-fall, to a trip to the Amazon. The last of these requests, made by the late Alex H., was realised by the artist in 2010. Coates was given precise instructions for the trip. He was asked to travel to an isolated village in the Amazon jungle and to people there a set of prearranged questions. A dialogue between the two preceded and followed Coates' journey detailing the kinds of exchange that are possible at this moment in life. Recordings of these conversations were screened at the Serpentine Gallery in 2010.

MARCUS COATES

—

THE TRIP

Serpentine Gallery | Koenig Books

The Proposition

M *Earlier, we talked about ways to say goodbye to the world, and how this could perhaps be a performance, or a journey, or perhaps the resolution of an outstanding issue or an unfulfilled fantasy. Because of your condition we talked about how I could perhaps do this on your behalf.*

A Yes.

M *Have you had any thoughts about that?*

A Quite a few, as most people in my condition would have. And I ended up thinking, first and foremost, that I had no regrets, because I think that if you do, it can be a stumbling block for taking things a stage further. I obviously offended a number of people over time, but I usually did so unintentionally, so I can forgive myself for that. Although, I do perhaps have one regret – that my travelling has been curtailed – because travelling was an essential part of my life. The great thing is, I have had the experience of being to various places, done various things, maybe they were slightly off the beaten track occasionally, but at least, sitting back, I've got my memories. What I haven't got are the

memories of the places that I wanted to go to, but never made it to.

M *So those are unfulfilled memories?*

A Yes.

M *Do you think that you could sum up why travel has been important to you, in your relationship to the world?*

A It has been a bit of a quest for knowledge. I don't feel that you can judge people or a country to any extent or any degree, unless you have been there. It helps you develop a more sympathetic understanding of other peoples' plight.

M *And have you thought about a place that you would like to go to on this last journey?*

A Yes, a trip along the Amazon River, which is something that I've always wanted to do. When I was younger, I couldn't afford it and didn't have the time. Then you get older, and can afford it, and find the time, but you are restricted not only by health, but occasionally by age as well. And that is something that, if you like, bugs me; something

that I should never be able to do, regardless of any miraculous cure or anything like that.

M *What is it about the Amazon that intrigues you?*

A The unknown.

M *OK, so it would be an experience of travelling by water, upstream, rather than in the air?*

A Yes, and not in a very modern boat.

M *If I am to do this I need to know what to bring back to you.*

A The challenge. It's very important.

M *I think this is something very important. Not just the physical trip, but the attempt to bring that journey back to you – that's really my challenge. Do you think that this trip would have challenged you?*

A I couldn't do it now, because of my health.

M *But even if you were healthy, do you think it would have challenged you?*

A Oh yes. It isn't so much about overcoming fears, it's trying to prove to yourself whether you could cope or not. It's about trying to find out something about yourself or your personality; how far you can push yourself. If you did this trip – you would have to overcome some of your own basic fears.

M *I don't think I have any particular fears. Rather, I have more basic, human fears about getting ill, and the unknown.*

A Don't we all – where do you think I'm going! I think we all need a bit of a challenge in life, and when you know it's not going to be that long, maybe even more of a challenge.

M *Yes, I do think I want to be challenged by it. For me, it's just as much about giving you the opportunity, as it is, for me, about having the opportunity to go and do this. That's quite important: the privilege to be able to explore your imagination, and enrich it.*

A To do it with someone else's eyes and mind.

M *That's the slight fear for me: to go and do all this, and risk that what I tell you might be inadequate for your imagination.*

A I can't think it will be disappointing, because it's something that I want to know about.

M *At the moment, I'm planning to soak in the entire atmosphere – are there cultural things that you'd like me to experience?*

A Yes, with the indigenous people you meet, as long as you have a guide who can speak the language. Not to go in hustle-bustle with the community; rather to stand at a distance and absorb it, making yourself as inconspicuous as possible. That to me is exactly what I like to do anyway.

M *Is there any form of contact at all that you would like to engage in?*

A Yes, I want to find out what makes certain people tick, and whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with their lot, or their mental situation. Whether they have a quest to know things or acquire things outside of their immediate area or circle.

M *Are those the questions that you'd ask?*

A Yes. Only if I knew the people I was speaking with, to a degree.

M *Is there anything that you'd want me to bring back, apart from my experiences? Do you collect anything?*

A If you're talking to people with a terminal illness, why say 'collect'? What do material things do for you? What's the point of it? Are you going to look down or upon it later on?

M *The idea of a souvenir is totally redundant.*

A In my opinion it is. My policy now is to get rid of clutter!

M *If this journey goes ahead, it will have to be planned relatively soon. I think we need to be honest with each other about the time scale for this.*

A I have no idea of my time span.

M *Hopefully I'll be able to do the journey and get back to you relatively quickly.*

A I'm not planning anything, but I'm not in complete control!

M *Can you imagine that this journey, if I did this for you, would be helpful or beneficial or somehow worthwhile for you?*

A That's a hard question. I think it would, but in a very selfish way. It would be important that someone had put themselves out to do it on my behalf. That I could re-live for a few seconds or half an hour, whatever it is, something I've wanted to do. But then I don't know if it matters one iota if I'm going anyway, to have that extra experience or a second-hand experience. It's not going to alter the whole finality of my life.

M *It's just another experience?*

A I don't know, and I don't think anyone can tell you what experience you carry on with you, providing you carry on in some aspect or another.

M *Thank you, that was very interesting.*

A I bet you will edit this conversation down and think 'What a load of crap!' [*Laughs*]. Anyway, one can only try to be as honest as possible. It'll be a challenge to you as well, which I quite like the idea of! [*Laughs*].

M *So if you managed to make respectful contact, with the help of an interpreter, with an indigenous culture in the Amazon rainforest – what questions would you ask them?*

A 'Have you noticed that when foreigners arrive, you're more susceptible to picking up their diseases?'

M *You would like to know if they're aware of the problem?*

A Rather, whether they ever have had that problem. And if they had, did they resent it?

M *So in a way, you would like to know what they feel about us?*

A Yes of course, don't you want to know what other people feel about you?

M *It's an interesting situation. It's a paradox, or a dilemma, because you're standing back and observing, absorbing. At the same time you really want to know how they feel about you and where you've come from?*

A Why it matters to me I don't know.

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M *It's almost like a comparison, a way of relating and saying, how similar am I to you, ultimately?*

A I would agree there.

M *Are beliefs and religion important to you?*

A I would like to understand them. It may prove to me that everyone needs something outside of themselves. Usually it's a god to look up to. Is that any more than a young child in a pram holding its favourite cuddly toy?

M *Are you a non-believer, or reluctant to believe in anything beyond yourself?*

A I have never come across any tribe or any people throughout history who have never had something to worship outside of themselves. Everybody seems to need it.

M *What's yours?*

A I'm willing to be convinced. It comes down to personal choice, and maybe the complex nature of one's own personality. None of us like to think that we're simple human beings, we want to feel unique, I suppose that's the word.

M *I think that's good, just as much as you need challenges in your life, I think you need to challenge other people.*

A Yes, I think that's a truism.

M *Great, I think I've got my brief and my mission, thank you very much Alex.*

A Not at all.

The Trip

A How was your trip, or should I say, *our* trip?

M *I don't really know how to start explaining, it was –*

A Different?

M *Well, it was wonderful.*

A I can believe it!

M *I think that we should probably start with the trip itself. Our conversations were all about travelling into the Amazon rainforest, and meeting the indigenous people.*

A Yes, exactly. But what was the bi-plane that you took like? I have never been on anything so small!

M *Yes, it was like a toy! Maybe I should start from Quito, in Ecuador. I had a seven-hour bus ride through the Avenue of the Volcanoes, and then arrived at a village called 'Shell', which was obviously founded by the oil company, Shell. There is lots of oil exploitation there.*

A Still?

M *Still, yes, it's a big issue, which I'll talk to you about later. When I first sat in the plane, with the luggage, it felt like being inside a Morris Minor convertible! The windows were flapping open!*

A What about your close proximity to land or water? They fly quite low. You must have felt every tremor?

M *Yes, everything was shaking.*

A Except you of course!

M *Yes, and it felt very flimsy. It was very exciting. When we went up in the clouds, all the moisture penetrated the plane, so we got quite wet.*

A Yes, I've heard that. They're not terribly robust planes.

M *But it was incredible, seeing all that green, seeing that canopy stretch for as far as you could see. The rainforest is so immense.*

A I should think that it's quite awe-inspiring.

M *It just makes you feel very, very small. Then you start picking up details when you look down, you see rivers, small tributaries, and occasionally you see a huge, white tree.*

A White?

M *Almost like it is dead; a huge, white tree. I learnt later it's the Kapok tree, a very important tree for the tribe I was going to see. We landed after about half an hour. We started descending, nearly to the canopy – it felt like we were touching the trees – and then the plane just dropped onto this grassy landing strip, and the wheels were skidding, and we were going all over the place, until it finally stopped. That was all quite dramatic. When I got out of the plane it took off again immediately. I looked around and could just see green – just green everywhere! Everything around me was new to me, and so exciting. I thought to myself, I could spend a day talking to Alex just about this. You don't know where to look, you don't know what to focus on – it's just a green mass, and then suddenly a huge dragonfly that's about ten inches long would zip by and that would take all of your focus, and then you'd move on to another thing. To start with, I couldn't really see any details because the atmosphere was*

just so pervasive. What really hit me was this green – the intensity of it, and the sounds – of the insects, even in the middle of the day, and of birds all around us. They were really, really present. The insects were very loud, buzzing and chirping around me. If you imagine the sound of different types of cicadas all around us, but intensified, that's what it felt like.

A Did they attack you?

M *No. I imagined that I'd be bitten as soon as I got off the plane, but as it happens, no. It felt like a friendly place – quite benign.*

A Sometimes in that type of environment, did you ever feel totally insignificant?

M *Absolutely. I felt totally insignificant!*

A That's good, because I definitely would have.

M *Then the guide turned up, and introduced us formally to a man from the Huaorani tribe called Huemi – that was his Spanish name; he has a Huaorani name as well. Then we walked about one hundred metres down to the very muddy bank towards his canoe. The river was small, really.*

side of the bank, the trees just stretched up – a cathedral of trees, overhanging the river. You'd get small grasses and palms at the bottom, then really tall thin trees, palms, and Kapok trees and Balsa trees – all sorts. The guide then started talking about all the different types of wood we saw, the variety was just enormous. There were vines hanging down into the water – thick vines and thin, string-like vines. All the time, there were birds flying around us. Kingfishers were flying alongside us, and swallows. All the time you could hear birds singing on both sides.

A And in the meantime you've got the movement of the canoe of course?

M *Well, the canoe was quite stable, but you do have its constant movement from one side of the bank to the other. And the river did really bend around, drawing S-shapes. So much so that quite often they form Oxbow lakes, so you find lagoons on either side of the river. These are often inhabited by small Caiman crocodiles, and amazing peacock-like birds called 'Hoatzins', which are quite smelly! [Laughs] There is a really interesting mixture of habitats, but I think I just really wanted to get across this lushness, and the snaking of the river which flows back on itself with hair-*

probably only about twenty metres wide, and reddish-brown, the same colour as the mud.

A What was the altitude at that point?

M *We were only about three hundred metres above sea level, so not very high at all. But the landscape is undulating; it's not flat. Then we got into the canoe, which was quite long – maybe about six metres or more, cut out of a single trunk – a beautiful object, with very basic wooden seats cut out for us. Huemi was at the back and his son was at the front; they had poles, so they were punting the canoe. I asked the guide, 'Why don't they use paddles?', and he replied that they don't use paddles, they've never used paddles – they only use poles. So both of them were punting, putting all their force onto the poles and just pushing us along.*

A So the river is not that deep?

M *It's not deep at all, no. We punted down for about an hour along this river, and the river is just strewn with debris of trees and branches. Huemi and his son navigated all of this so skilfully with this very long canoe; it was quite impressive. I'd imagined that the river would be very wide and open, but it was quite enclosed. On either*

pins bends. It seems that the Huaorani measure distance along the river by the amount of bends. If you ask them how long there is to go, they will answer in the number of bends. We travelled for maybe an hour or so, until we reached the place where we were going to stay – a series of huts that the Huaorani built beyond their village, where foreigners are put up. It only sleeps ten people in total. The Huaorani territory is vast, made up of a number of villages. Probably about three thousand people live in these. But the Huaorani are relatively nomadic and move between the villages quite often.

A Is the accommodation quite basic?

M *Yes, it is fairly basic. The idea is that a small number of tourists can visit with minimal cultural and ecological impact, and the Huaorani can get an income from this that, to an extent, helps to preserve aspects of their traditional way of life. The leader of the Huaorani, Moi Enomenga, set this scheme up, so that the tribe's people were not compelled to work for the oil companies. The Huaorani have been very active in their struggles to protect the rainforest from exploitation by oil companies. Moi Enomenga is a high-level campaigner and the leader of an association of*
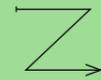
communities in the area. He travels the world – he's got pictures of himself with Bush and Blair. The place I was staying in was a basic hut, with a mesh side – a wooden platform on stilts, with a palm-leaf pitched roof, and an insect net. I had a bag that I hung up with water for showering. My hut didn't have electricity; the solar power was down so I just had candles, which I quite liked.

A If you had candles, did that attract any of the insects?

M *I had quite a few large moths, flying against the mesh, and lots of ants, and quite a large mouse as well. But I felt comfortable with all that going on around me. I thought I'd be a little intimidated by all the sounds, and especially when alone at night. It was very loud…*

A Yes, I know from previous experiences. At night, especially if you're under canvas, sounds intrude, and sometimes dominate. And if you suddenly wake up, it can be very disturbing.

M *It really felt like there was nothing between me and the jungle. It wasn't just the constant sound of insects, sometimes you could hear animals grunting – your imagination just went wild.*

A Did you feel like an intruder?

M *No, I felt like a very small presence, very small. Quite insignificant, really. I felt like the jungle was just going about its business, and I was just –*

A An observer?

M *Yes, an observer. I talked to some of the Huaorani about how they spend the nights, and they often sleep with a machete next to them, because they are aware of snakes and jaguars. The jaguar is the animal that they're most aware of, as it is the most dangerous. The jaguar is also a very important animal to them; they believe that their ancestors become jaguars after death. It's the only animal that they don't ever hunt.*

A Is that still part of the tradition?

M *Yes, they still firmly believe that. The nights were quite interesting, and the mornings were even more interesting, because you had a dawn chorus of birdsong, which was really intense and other-worldly. Maybe I should describe walking from there, through the jungle to the Huaorani village. Huemi was constantly pointing out different plants that they use for medicinal purposes;*

M *They do eat a lot of meat, what they hunt, monkeys, birds – mainly toucans and fish, but also chicken, and lots of rice, which they've started importing. And yuca, maize, bananas and sweet potato.*

A Were chicken introduced recently into their diet, or is there a local type of chicken?

M *They do rear domestic chickens, the type that we're familiar with – but there is also a specific breed of rainforest chicken, which looks quite odd. The Huaorani also grow a lot of yuca – a plant with a nutritious, starchy root. They do eat this, but they also chew it and spit it out into a communal bowl, shared by a number of people to make a fermented beverage called chicha, which is like a thick white beer.*

A Did you taste it?

M *Yes, I did have some – it was quite pleasant! Quite pulpy; a bit like a runny porridge. When we arrived at the village we went to see Moi Enomenga. He was sitting in his hammock, and his wife was laying in her hammock, breast-feeding their little child. We were in a large, dark room – probably ten by ten metres. In the corner*

they had an area for a fire, which was lit. It's important for the Huaorani to keep the fire going all the time, so it's constantly stoked up. I'm not sure why that is, it may be of social or spiritual significance. Moi and his wife had a few fish, smoking on the fire. Above the fire there was a collection of smoke-blackened remains from animals: a toucan's beak, some feathers, a large skull, which looked like it might have belonged to a dog perhaps. It had huge canines – maybe a large cat, or a puma. There were also some pipes. All these things were hanging over the fire, blackening. And their kids were running around, incredibly friendly. Everyone seemed quite joyful, laughing a lot.

A Were they very outgoing?

M *I think so. I only had four days with them, but my experience was that they like to sit and talk and have a joke. The humour seems quite slapstick, but maybe that was the only level that I could access.*

A Did you feel that they have a daily routine?

M *The guide said they did things when they needed to, and that there was no structured time in the day.*

A It all seems very relaxed.

they use leaves from the palms, twisting and combining them to make a thread that they weave, to make baskets, rope and clothes. There are different medicinal plants for fever, for upset stomachs; spiky plants for punishing children with: all sorts of plants for different purposes, as well as hallucinogenic – they use this one plant called Ayahuasca to make a liquid-based drug that the shaman uses.

A Do they use Ayahuasca for initiation ceremonies as well?

M *It seems that only the shaman really uses the Ayahuasca, and at this time, this particular village doesn't have a shaman. They don't seem too concerned by that, I think their shaman died, and they can go to another village if they need one. There's no one at present or no children who seem like they're ready to be the next shaman. They said that the shaman really needs to be very ill at some stage in their life, usually as a child, and then cured by their traditions – from that experience they can be trained and become a shaman. They really need to have a near-death experience.*

A So they kind of bring back outside influences with them, something like that?

M *In terms of shamanic traditions around the world, I think it's important that there's something significantly different about the person who becomes the shaman. It's either inherited or it is bestowed upon somebody.*

A Does this mean that they've passed a test, as it were?

M *I think that having been through that experience proves their powers. That particular person has gone somewhere that other people can only imagine. They have passed their own test, in a way.*

A Do they become a chief or a 'consultant', so to speak?

M *They don't become the leader, but a problem-solver and a healer. Indeed, like a consultant; So we carried on going through the jungle, and it was quite difficult to keep up with my guide – apparently that's quite a well-known characteristic of the Huaorani, that they have this amazing pace.*

[…]

A What's the Huaorani diet?

M *It's incredibly relaxed! I think it may have something to do with the abundance of food. There's fruit everywhere – all sorts of different fruits I've never heard of. The forest is like a constant larder.*

A You said earlier that the Huaorani had nomadic lifestyles. If there's an abundance of food, what's the reason for moving around?

M *I think it is partly because of social conventions and for the purposes of trade. In recent history warfare has also kept them moving around. Often they travel for days and across large distances to hunt, especially to capture bigger animals like monkeys and peccaries. The hunting techniques used are amazing.*

A What do they use?

M *Mainly blowpipes. In Moi's house, he had a collection of pipes and spears. He picked up one of these pipes to show it to me. It was about 10-foot long, perhaps longer than that. I picked it up, it was really heavy hard wood, and was bound all around with a leaf or vine strapping. Moi demonstrated its use, by holding it horizontally up to his mouth, and blowing air into one end. When he*

passed it to me I could barely hold it up horizontally, even for a few seconds, it was so heavy. They then make darts, without flights, from a palm stalk or palm bark and they dip the end in a poison made from a vine. It's a black liquid that they smoke and dry over the fire.

A Does this kill instantly or does it have a slowing-down effect?

M *I think it only reacts with you when it's in your bloodstream. If you lick it, it's not harmful, but if it goes into a monkey's bloodstream, it takes only a few seconds to kill it. I read somewhere that it's one of the most toxic poisons known to man. They carry a piranha jaw, with razor-sharp teeth, which they use to serrate a groove around the tip of a dart so that when it goes into the monkey, and the monkey tries to pull it out, the tip snaps off staying inside the monkey, and the poison can take effect. To give the dart a powerful force they roll Kapok fibre around the back of the dart to form an airtight plug, so that when you blow in the pipe your breath has maximum power. They carry spears as well – a long piece of hard palm wood which they whittle to a point at both ends.*

A Is that mainly for fish?

M *It's mainly for larger animals. The blowpipe is used for monkeys and birds, while the spear is used for large land animals, like tapirs, or if they come across a jaguar and it attacks them.*

A What about fish?

M *For fish, there are very small spears, which are used like harpoons, as well as woven nets and traps from plant fibres and vines.*

A Is the river's water clear?

M *I was told it was occasionally clear, but I didn't see this. Huemi took me up into the forest and demonstrated these weapons. He carried the blowpipe on his shoulder, as well as his spear. He also took a tube full of the blowdarts, and an egg-like, seed-like container for the fluffy Kapok, which they use for the seal. We went quite high up, on a ridge, and we stopped. Firstly he broke off some vines that were coming down the tree, and made a loop out of them, twisting them around each other. Then, he looped this around his feet and shuffled up to a tree shaped like a pole – with probably a foot-wide diameter, and nearly perfectly round, with no branches at all, about thirty metres high – a very tall tree with some leaves only*

at the very top. He hugged the tree, and held the blow-pipe in his hands around the back of the tree and put a dart between his teeth. He then started shimmying up this tree, with this huge blowpipe – and went about twenty feet up. With only the loop of vines providing friction for his feet against the trunk, he just sat there – held this blowpipe out, pointed it upwards and loaded it with the dart, and said: 'the first monkey going past, we leave that, the second monkey going past, we leave that, we get the third, the fourth, and the fifth monkey.' Apparently, if the first monkey is hit then the whole group that are travelling high up through the trees will turn and flee, so by avoiding the first few monkeys, they can hit more. Once he hits a monkey, he demonstrated how to create panic among them by imitating their distress calls, because if the dart hits a monkey and it freezes, it will die but might latch on to a branch and won't fall out of the tree. So he has to make the animals keep moving, so that they fall to the ground if hit. Often a big cat like a jaguar will follow the hunters, knowing that there might be some meat, so it is safest to leave the meat for a while, and return to it later.

A Obviously this is from years of experience?

M *Yes.*

A Well, they're developing their sense of what to do, and what to avoid, and how to snare!

M *Yes, this play was very functional: the boy was just developing his skills, and copying his elders.*

A That must have been fascinating to watch.

M *It was amazing. And I realised that all these ambush games, like hide and seek, that we played when young, are about just this. One time I was walking along – and it was like the ground rose up in front of me. This boy had partially buried himself under soil and leaves and covered himself in mud. It was only when I saw his eyes coming out of the ground, that I knew it was him. He scared me to death! So this is all part of their education – such an important education, because it's about their survival. There is a real bravado about it; the boy was always showing off his skills. Once I was really worried about him because he climbed up a very tall tree, further than his father had climbed up before. He was so high up that I had to strain my neck to see him. Then suddenly, he just dropped out of the tree. And he fell in a crumpled heap on the floor by my feet. My heart just sank, you know, I thought the worst had happened. And then he looked up, and started*

giggling – he was laughing his head off! Then he went to another tree and climbed up that! But he didn't fall out of that one, he slid down it. It gave him burns all the way up his arms, but he just pointed at them and laughed! It was just this performance from a six-year-old.

A Well, it must be an instinct.

M *Well, I think it's how any kid shows off! He was just very, very proud of what he can do. Then he was doing cartwheels on the trail, which was a high ridge – on either side of this volcanic ridge the ground just dropped down vertically, and he was doing cartwheels along it! While I was very gingerly treading along, trying not to slip.*

A Did you get a sense of 'I can do this, and you can't?'

M *Yes.*

A So, he wasn't necessarily egging you on to do it, but was saying, 'I am superior to you!'

M *Yes, he was definitely doing that. At one point, I asked him through the interpreter, 'Would you take me hunting with you?' and he answered, 'No, because you'll cry.' The guide told me he had*

[…]

M *Mostly I felt very safe, in the forest, but occasionally the guide would say: 'Don't lean on a tree when we stop. When we're walking along, don't hold a branch or a leaf to balance yourself. Because there might be a spider under it, ants or snakes, and lots of plants have serious spines.' So you have to be quite self-contained when you're walking around. Yet I felt really clumsy, and ungainly. I couldn't really see where I was going, because I was avoiding obstacles like tree roots, climbing over trunks, and avoiding giant armadillo holes that were all over the place. It helped that Huemi was constantly pointing these things out, to watch out for. He was also pointing out other things all the time, like: 'Oh, this is a leaf we use for so and so…'*

A So you were absorbing this information as well?

M *I was trying to. I really noticed his familiarity with the jungle. Once, when we were walking along at night, I was walking in front with a torch, and he was behind me and couldn't really see anything. Suddenly he told me to stop. He grabbed my torch, and we looked to the side and we saw this amazing snake. It was probably about*

ten feet away from the path, in total darkness. He grabbed it, and passed it to me to hold. It was a very thin, string-like snake, about 3-foot long. It wasn't poisonous, it didn't make any sound at all, but he had heard just its movement on a leaf! It was that awareness that just astonished me. He would pick up the tiniest nuance. Suddenly, he'd just halt, turn around and listen. He'd make a [whistles], you know, he'd copy birdsong. Huemi was constantly doing imitations of birds and other animals, to encourage them to come, or call to locate them – especially toucans. Another time I was walking along with his son, and another child. The child was probably about six years old, and it just struck me that this child was incredibly confident in this environment. He was barefoot, running along – he kept having to stop and wait for me. I'd follow the path as best I could, worried that he'd left me and then he'd jump out at me in playful ambush.

A So it was hide and seek?

M *It was hide and seek, but also an ambush. I realised that, all the time, while the children are playing, they're practicing hunting skills.*

himself asked that question once, and got the same answer. There was also a great sense of mimicry; I think you find that with all kids – that copying game. At one point he made a really strange sound – like [makes grunting sound]. I said: 'What's that?' and he said: 'A Jaguar'. Everyone makes this sound quite a lot, as well as a blowing sound – like a bad whistle – which is the sound of a tapir. They do an amazing variety and array of imitations. It's like another language. I was fascinated by that.

A Is there any kind of formal education?

M *It's interesting – there are schools. Some of these were set up by missionaries. But recently there has been huge pressure from oil companies like Texaco to set more up.*

A As an incentive to what?

M *Well, as an incentive to use their land maybe… But the Huaorani are quite savvy about this now.*

A And are they represented by any outside authorities, or do they stand up to these pressures?

M *There are NGOs which work in the area, but in some ways, what impressed me about this group*

of people is the way in which they very strongly represent themselves, especially through Moi.

A He sounds like a very exceptional person.

M *He is an amazing man, deeply embedded in his own culture, and someone who represents the value of that culture to the outside world. He realised quite quickly that the preservation of culture is the Huaorani people's gold, rather than the short-term wealth acquired from selling land to loggers, or to oil prospectors. They are very wary, because they have seen the horrendous consequences of the missionaries' arrival. Moi has seen what's happened to other people who've sold their land to loggers. Once the missionaries come in, that's a door that just opens – loggers arrive and say, 'Can we buy this bit of land, that bit of land?', and then they strip it back; then oil companies say, 'Can we prospect here?', and the government says, 'No, you can't, because it's pristine forest', to which they reply: 'Well, the loggers have cut it all down – there's nothing there any more', so the government doesn't stop the oil companies, who go in and start drilling, and poisoning the rivers and so on. Once that first move happens, it's just an endless stampede of horrible exploitation.*

A Well, yes, it certainly isn't progress to the local people…

M *No, it's an absolute disaster for them.*

A It would seem such a shame that their way of life, which seems to be absolutely self-sufficient, should be spoilt and wrecked.

M *After I met the leader and his family, we went into a communal house, which just had a ground level, with a mud floor and a roof. The roof went all the way to the floor; it was a bit like a community hall.*

A So that means that they didn't sleep there, if it was ground level?

M *Exactly, yes. It was open at both sides. There were lots of families there just sitting and chatting, with a fire going in the corner. There I was introduced to Moi's mother, she's in her eighties, and she only speaks Wao, the Huaorani language. So I asked her your question. This was translated for me into Spanish by my Ecuadorian guide, who then asked a Huaorani man in Spanish, and he translated that into Wao for the woman. So there were four of us in this chain of questions!*

A I hope it wasn't like that party game, where one ends up asking the wrong question!

M *That was my worry, really, that my question would end up a bit diluted and changed – but I don't think that was the problem. Not that there was a problem – but I do think that there was just a different sense of things, so some of the questions were quite difficult to get across. The first question that you had asked me to ask them was about what makes them tick. I really wanted to ask her, and not someone like Moi who had travelled, someone who could remember what it was like in the early-20th century.*

A Yes, quite.

M *I wanted to ask her what made her tick, but thought that might be a problem – translating 'tick'. So I asked her what made her happy, and that was translated into Spanish, and then into Wao. And she said – I've written notes here just so I remember – that what makes her happy is when everybody is alive and together, and that when someone dies, many, many people feel very sad. But when they are alive and in good health, she is happy. And also, when people come and visit her, and visit the Huaorani, this makes her happy.*

Then I asked her how she felt about the rest of the world – she talked for probably about half an hour, without a break.

A Really?

M *Yes, often a story can go on for an hour or so, and the translator will keep saying to me: 'there's nothing to say yet, nothing's happened yet in the story' – they talk about very minute details, sometimes with no obvious point to the story.*

A Presumably this is because they have all their requirements to hand, they can go out to hunt, but don't have problems in that respect, therefore they've got time to string things out, rather than feel that they've got to condense it into thirty seconds?

M *Well, it's very interesting that you say that, because the Huaorani's notion of time and punctuality are very different from ours.*

A As denoted by necessity?

M *Yes, I think so. So she talked for a while and this was translated to me as her speaking about people from the surrounding villages.*

A Ah, yes, neighbours, as it were.

M *And all her grandchildren. And I said, 'No, I mean the "outside" world' and she started talking about the same thing again. And I said to the guide, 'Does she understand what I mean by the "outside", the rest of the world?' The guide explained to me that she had no sense of this.*

A It sounds like her life is full enough without being interested in, or needing, the 'outside world' anyway.

M *Well. The guide interpreted her answer and idea of the outside as things like planes or cars.*

A How would she have seen cars?

M *She would have gone down the river to where it meets the road.*

A So there is a road going there?

M *It's about two days canoeing to get to the road, or ten days to two weeks' walk, to the nearest town. So that's what represents the 'outside' to her. And when she thinks of those things, she has formed an association between outside things and bad things.*

A Outlandish and a threat, maybe?

M *Yes, so when something bad happens she associates it with an aeroplane or a car. She also talked about how she was making a big effort to pass down her knowledge and her experience to the children; her culture. She talked about how she was teaching them the songs, and how to dance, and it was really important to her that the Huaorani traditions – the food and the handicrafts – were all kept alive. She could obviously see them disappearing, so this was a really important endeavour for her, to keep all that going. Then she started to sing, a song with a very specific rhythm, of just four notes, repeated constantly, with different words and phrases. Almost no melody [sings], like this, over and over again. Apparently this is the same structure for all the Huaorani songs – obviously to sing about different things, but this is the only tune they use, and the only rhythm. Previously, when we were walking through the village and the forest, the guide had stopped at a Kapok tree, and talked about the Harpy Eagle living in that tree, about the story of how life began. All life comes originally from the relationship between the Harpy Eagle and the Kapok tree. He told us this very long story about how they trapped and killed*

the Eagle, and the tree fell down and formed other trees, and the branches formed the rivers…

A This is the origin of life.

M *Yes, it is a fascinating story. And he said, 'When I talk about the Kapok tree, I have to sing the song of the Kapok tree.' He sung this beautiful song, in exactly the same rhythm, and the same tune. And it was pretty much about the same length. At the end of the song, he made a noise that always marks the end of a song, like: [sings]. It was really amazing that there is so much music, you know, the music of the insects, the exotic birdcalls, and that the Huaorani's music was limited to this one simple melody that they use to fit everything.*

A It sounds slightly monotonous.

M *It is very monotonous, but almost like a drumbeat, like a chant, perhaps. She then demonstrated the dance that they do, which is basically a series of steps forwards and back – a very simple movement. I then asked her the other question which you gave me: how had she been affected by disease from the outside. She replied that since the fifties, with the arrival of the missionaries, she has*

had the flu on various occasions, and she has had coughs, and her bones ache sometimes. She has been very upset by this, because many, many people died in this community. Then she pointed to a man who was in a wheelchair, probably in his sixties, maybe seventies. He had contracted Polio when he was a child in the 'fifties.

A …which would be before the outside influence?

M *No, this was when the missionaries brought Polio in. Many people died from this disease, and it was one of the biggest devastations for them. He was an amazing character, this guy in the wheelchair, and very keen to know about us, very curious and wanting to talk. He was interested in my watch, so I lent it to him and he examined it for about half an hour. He makes his way through the jungle using this wheelchair, which is quite formidable. It just about fits in a canoe, so he can travel.*

A How do the Huaorani define their sense of time, do you know? If they were so fascinated by your watch.

M *First of all, I asked Huemi how old his children were. He didn't know specifically. I think he knew, but not specifically in years. Their sense*

of distance is measured in time: how far is how many days' walk?

A Or bends in the river!

M *Yes.*

A And what happens at night? Is it suddenly dark without any twilight or warning, rather like other areas, where darkness falls suddenly like a shutter coming down?

M *I think it is even more so there, because of the canopy of trees. Once it's dark, it's so dark. My hut was quite a long way from the other huts and I had to walk through the forest. You couldn't see your hand at all in front of your face. With a torch, you could see that there were bats flying in front of you – you'd feel your face go through spider webs, you'd hear all sorts of things going on. If you were a paranoid person, it would be really frightening, but I kind of enjoyed it.*

A Could you put your head down and sleep?

M *I did have some strange dreams about people from a long time ago. I think that happened because everything was so unfamiliar.*

A Isolated as well, I suppose?

M *Exactly, so your mind probably grasps at something that is very familiar to you, or your certainties.*

A Like clutching to a teddy bear!

M *Yes, something like this. So, this old lady I met was just amazing. I thought that those were the three main questions I should ask. I did ask other people what made them happy. Most of the sense that I got from people was that doing what they traditionally do makes them happy, so a lot of the men and boys talked about hunting. For the women, lots of them showed me things that they had made. But maybe the idea of happiness didn't really translate, I couldn't be sure.*

A Did you find out at all if they have any written language?

M *There are teachers coming in sometimes for the schools, but that's pretty sporadic.*

A So was the Huaorani language ever written down?

M *No, so they don't have anything passed on to them in written form. Everything is passed down*
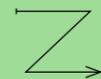
in terms of stories. However, there are elements of their language being written, but through Spanish. So, the Huaorani name, for example, is spelt in different ways because there is not an official way of spelling anything. The kids now are being taught Spanish in school. Their main education seems to come through how they lived. The amount of information and knowledge they have about their environment is absolutely enormous. I keep thinking about this, thinking about all the useless things that I know, and all the life-saving, important things that they know.

A Well, because their life depends on it, out of necessity, and from tradition.

M *Yes, and from the wonderful stories told by their elders.*

A And from the experience of being self-sufficient.

M *Although, there is a real sense of the outside world coming in – I talked to the guide a little bit about this, and he said that he has to be really careful about what he introduces to them, and what he says. He brought his laptop computer in from Quito once and was watching a Disney cartoon, 'The Little Mermaid'. Some of the*

Huaorani villagers joined him, and started asking him about mermaids: half-women, half-fish. They were asking him how they swim – do they live in the river, why they'd never seen one. At first he joked with them, pretending that they were real. But then he said that he instantly regretted doing that.

A Quite.

M *Ever since then, he has been trying to explain that they are not real, and they just won't believe him.*

A Well, once they've got it fixed in their minds, and he confirmed it, it must be very difficult because it is unknown to them.

M *He'd been trying to persuade them that mermaids are not real. But later they had a group of visitors from Denmark, who were showing them pictures of Copenhagen, and…*

A The mermaid, of course!

M *And they said, 'This is real!' It confirmed everything for them. The guide just had his head in his hands. That was just confirmation for them that mermaids exist, and it's*

[…]

A Do you think that when they are on their own, they have time to contemplate things?

M *It's so hard to know, isn't it; it's so hard to ask about those things. I don't even know how you could translate that. But just spending a little time with them in those non-functional periods, like sitting around after eating, I could tell that storytelling is really important. At the end of a walk, or even in the middle of a walk, they would just stop and say: 'Oh this was where…', and they would start telling a story about someone who had ended up here in the middle of the night, or how the insects had brought him here, and why the insects brought him there, and then the otter came and took this man to his house. They have quite fantastical stories about the animals that surround them. They would tell it as history, not as a fictional story, rather as the truth. Rather like the story of the mermaid.*

A Yes, I was going to ask how they could absorb the story of the mermaid, and take it as fact.

M *Totally as fact. That was fascinating.*

A It also illustrates how much harm you can easily do without any intention.

M *One of the villages that we went to along the river, closer to the road, had a satellite dish. It's inevitable that they will get the Internet soon.*

A And then I presume there's every possibility that, as it happens everywhere, they will want to move out of their immediate circle, maybe they will lose most of their younger people?

M *I think it's inevitable. I felt a desperate pang to want to protect them, almost in a parental way. I didn't want them to see the Internet; I didn't want them to see porn on the Internet.*

A But was that feeling for them or for yourself?

M *Definitely for me. Somehow I want them to be innocent; I want them to fulfil this romantic vision that I have of them. But as the guide pointed out, it's their human right to have access to this information, although, one can still talk about an element of environmental protection from influences such as oil companies and loggers, but that, too, is mostly self-driven by the community.*

A As you only had a few days, did you find that you had time to acclimatise to their way of conducting things? Was it easy or very difficult?

M *I don't think I ever really entered into it. I was always aware of my difference.*

A You didn't get absorbed.

M *I think I got absorbed, in a relative way, into the natural environment. I had a sense of following the Huaorani through the forest, a sense of their familiarity and relationship to things. But I don't think I could ever see the world through their eyes.*

A Have you ever wondered whether you got more out of that experience, or whether they did? Or do you think that from their point of view it doesn't work that way?

M *I felt like…*

A A visitor or an intruder?

M *To start with, I felt like I was intruding. I wasn't even sure whether they wanted me there or not. And then we started to share moments of, perhaps, unconscious behaviour, like laughing, or*

A You're saying you almost want to see them frozen in time.

M *Yes. And I think they are slightly aware that the tourists want to see them like that as well. That's why the tourists come. So that was my worry about my influence on them. Theirs is a traditional way of life, but after a while will they just become part of a living museum? Even just as an observer, as you requested me to be, I think one would have this influence too. Their culture risks losing its function, and becoming a form of entertainment.*

A It loses its identity.

M *I loved that the songs they were singing had a function. When my guide talked about that tree he just had to sing that song. The equipment that they make, that's all for hunting. So it's all still in the realms of necessity and relevance.*

A It must have been fascinating.

M *It was just so different from anything that I've experienced before.*

a physical joke. At that time, I felt that there was an exchange. Once we started exchanging in that way it felt like the encounter became of mutual benefit.

A So you were breaking down barriers?

M *I think so, yes. But in terms of the information, knowledge and experience gained, I think it was pretty one-sided. I learned an overwhelming amount of information, even just on an hour's walk, just the information on one trail.*

A It sounds fantastic.

M *It was a full onslaught of the senses. I mean, the sounds, the visions. Visually, the green becomes quite oppressive. Apparently, people who aren't used to it can't handle it after a few weeks.*

A Really?

M *Yes, there's so much detail, but yet, to my eyes, there's nothing of particular interest, just loads and loads of palms and leaves and grasses. To them, each particular palm, or leaf, or grass, or insect, has a name and has a value, a use for something. For me it's just leaves, and it's just trees, and it's*

just green. So starting to enter that world of particularity, this started to open up what you see. I started recognising things that they told me about.

A You could identify things.

M Yes, and once I could start naming things, the forest started to take on a particular identity.

A As it were, it lost its sense of a mass, and became understandable, or you could give an interpretation to it.

M They're a very friendly people, but I think they do have another side to them, a warrior-like side, which is obviously used in hunting.

A It's obviously the survival of the fittest.

M In terms of survival, it seems that warfare was a really important part of their culture. There are very few elderly people there now, maybe a couple of men in their eighties. The guide used to know one of them quite well, and he said that he talked very enthusiastically about how they used to walk a very long way with six spears each. And this was very exciting for them, to walk beyond the furthest river, to go and see these other people. And they would

kill one person with each spear. So they killed six people each, and then they would come back.

A Good lord.

M Not too long ago, there was a group of Huaorani who split off from the main community, and this group was later named the Tagaeri group, led by the warrior Taga. They left the village in 1968, after intense inter-clan warring. Some of the Huaorani showed me the path they took: a whole group of them left and never came back, and no one has ever seen them since. They moved into what is now part of the Yasuni National Park. There are three groups in that area, and they are called 'uncontacted tribes'. They refuse contact. If they meet anyone of a different culture, they kill them.

A So you didn't go chasing after them?

M No! [laughs] We did come quite close to where they had been. Although I don't think they have been seen — I think there have been bodies left. So I think that's how they know that they are still living there. One Huaorani man told me that they know it's the Tagaeri because of how deep the short dagger-like spears went in the bodies of their

plane, I felt wet. I thought I was sweating, but I wasn't, it was just this dense moisture in the air. That's something I had to get used to, that I hadn't experienced before.

A Did you sleep with coverings at night?

M I just had a thin sheet, it wasn't cold at night. I had it more to keep creatures off me. I imagine the dampness would get to you after a while. My clothes got wet every day and they never dried out. I had to bring them back in the plane, in a big wet bag. The sun came out briefly, on a couple of days, but if the sun didn't come out, nothing dried.

A You didn't have any problems with illness?

M I was fine. I thought I might struggle with asthma, because of the dampness, but it was fine. I normally have very dry eczema, but my skin felt great there.

A Was there a tremendous density in the forest?

M I was in what they call 'terra firma', so an area of the forest that never gets flooded – higher up from the river. But yes, it was incredibly dense. The idea of walking through the forest without a trail

just seemed totally impossible. Yet the Huaorani people have only recently cut these trails.

A For what reason?

M Well, the only positive thing that the missionaries seem to have brought with them was the idea that they don't have to be at war. I was told that before the missionaries, half of all deaths in the Huaorani were homicide, from warfare and family vendettas, even within the villages.

A Gosh.

M It sounded like a very stressful society. So once they stopped warring, and being warriors, there was no need to conceal themselves. The reason why they didn't have trails was that no raiding warrior would find their way to the village. But even now, when they're on their own and they are travelling, they don't necessarily use the trails — often they just walk straight through the forest. How they navigate it I have no idea, it was a total mystery to me. When I asked the Huaorani, they say that sometimes they break a leaf to recognise a path, but how they find a broken leaf in a jungle in my mind seems impossible. Yet for them, there is a whole language of physical signs and navigation

victims; he demonstrated the counting of notches or barbs on the end of his spear to show this.

A Gosh.

M So that felt quite scary, to know that they were relatively close to where we were.

A Particularly at night-time, I would have thought.

M But I thought that as a group that is trying to survive and to keep its own culture intact, and keep away from disease, the killing of outsiders might be the only possible recourse to having that safety. Apparently on first contact with non-indigenous people, a tribe can suffer fifty-percent mortality, through disease.

A It wouldn't be the only part of the world where there has been this kind of self-protection.

M Well, I came away feeling really, truly privileged from have been able to meet them.

A Exhilarated or not?

M Totally exhilarated. I was sad that I had to leave, actually. Very sad to leave. Even though I had

ant bites on me and infected wounds on my hands. I did feel very energised and really clear-headed.

A There was an enormous amount to absorb in just a few days though.

M And I think a lot of that reluctance to leave was the total desire to be able to absorb more information. Almost like being a child in a sweet shop, seeing all these things that I wanted to learn about and understand more. And experience. I was desperate to become more intimate with their way of life, to understand that more. But I felt that they were quite considered about the time that they put aside for meeting people from the outside, and then the time that they got on with things for themselves, the things that they would and wouldn't share. I thought that that was quite good.

A It does sound absolutely fascinating.

M It was wonderful. I don't think it's to everyone's taste. Some people might find it quite difficult. Especially the rain. When the rain came down, it really came down. Torrential rain, it was amazing. And this wasn't even the wet season. But there's also the humidity. When I stepped out of the

skills. Sometimes they walk for seven hours through the night, non-stop, and if they need to stop they will just make a shelter out of some palm leaves. They are amazing navigators and travellers. They are also semi-nomadic farmers. They have small arable areas in specific places around the jungle, some of them quite far away.

A In clearings?

M Yes, very small clearings. And they did this so that if they were invaded or attacked, they could flee very quickly, move into the jungle, and they would know that they would have a constant food supply there. Also, I was told that every so often they used to just burn down their own village. They would do this because of an infestation of insects or parasites, or because there was a contagious sickness, for example. They would move on to another site and build another village relatively quickly.

A So it was done as a cleansing process?

M Yes. Their fear of attack was one of the reasons why they didn't cut trails, and why their villages are usually some distance away from the main rivers, but usually quite close to small rivers, so that they have a fresh water supply.

A What was it like coming out of there?

M We canoed down the river for six hours and then we camped, the next day we got a motorised canoe beyond their territory. We went down the river for quite a few hours, the equivalent of punting for a day at least. Then we arrived in a place where an oil company has established itself, and has set up a shop which sells alcohol. There were lots of indigenous people there, buying beer. The village that I was staying in is a self-enforced dry village, they don't allow alcohol in. It was the missionaries who introduced addictive things that they could use for bargaining and acquiring power over the indigenous people.

A Do they smoke in any form?

M They weren't smoking, no. I don't know if they smoke anything. All I saw in terms of stimulants was the chicha, in the village. But once we got to the village of the oil company, everyone was spending their money on beer. From there onwards, the road was a two-hour drive to the main town. The oil company's wells and pipes lined the road and you could see considerable leakage and pollution. All the tributaries around there are polluted and therefore poisonous. I saw a horrific amount of damage.

A That will kill a lot of the fish.

M *It's pretty much already killed everything that's around it. It's already contaminated the people – there are high instances of cancer because of these contaminations. The social implications for all the people along this road, working for the oil companies, is that they have very low pay, and the oil companies just set things up for them so long as they are needed to work, and when they move on to drill somewhere else, these people are left with no money at all. So the instances of crime and prostitution are rising, it's all pretty grim. When we got into the town, I couldn't believe how many people there were. Seeing so many people again was a shock! And seeing all these cars and fumes, just stuff everywhere, and a different sort of noise, coming out of that natural rainforest noise.*

A Did you have any kind of personal reaction, seeing what the oil companies were doing, and how it's going to encroach upon the whole of life for the people living there?

M *Yes, I felt incredibly angry about the logging and oil exploitation. I talked to the guide, and I said that if I was part of the Huaorani people, I'd be angry enough to kill.*

M *Yes, it seemed that time really wasn't wasted. It was either spent on activities for survival, or playing, or talking, communicating and bonding. There didn't seem anything that was surplus to their requirements, that distracted them.*

A What kind of 'bonding'?

M *I suppose I mean sitting around and talking, chatting and communicating. Sharing information, sharing stories. Something else that was really interesting happened, which I think is a tradition of the Huaorani. Any visitor who comes is given a Huaorani name. They bestow this name upon you, not in a ceremonial way, rather in a very friendly way. But they offer it to you almost as a gift, really. They gave me a name, and this was a strange moment because I kind of felt like they were giving you the name, through me. Anyway, they gave me or you the name, Nyami.*

A Translated means what?

M *Well, I asked them to translate it, and they were a little stuck with what it actually meant. But the nearest translation I got seemed to be a clear sky, or a sunrise. When I thought about that, it felt quite apt, because when I think about you,*

A Yes, but you can't judge it through their eyes – you've got an entirely different background; entirely different kind of Eurocentric observation. Maybe you could do more on behalf of me, than you could on behalf of a local indigenous tribe member. But I'd have been angry too. I'd have been furious. It seems like such, such a shame.

M *Apart from the anger, one of the strongest reactions I had immediately after I left was an instant longing to be back there. I think it was an instant nostalgia. Things seemed very simple there, very clear. Even very serious things like life and death – they seemed very clear and obvious. I felt like I'd re-entered a very confused reality.*

A Did you get any sense of the absence of our mundane attitudes, daily sophistication, and all that kind of thing?

M *I think there is still probably some boredom, probably mundane moments. It's hard to tell, but what was different was that the purpose of everything seemed obvious in the business of the Huaorani.*

A I'm sure to them, anything else would be a waste of time.

I do think about your breathing difficulties, and how that hinders you. That sense of the clarity, and the clear sky – new beginnings and that sharpness, that openness, that light – that really felt appropriate.

A I can understand that. Did you find that doing this on my behalf, sometimes *you* wanted to dominate and take over? I don't think one could have resisted it, and I can't imagine that you are that self-controlled. I could be wrong.

M *Yes, I kept thinking, 'Is this something that Alex would be interested in, should I focus on this, or this over here? I'm getting really interested in this, but would Alex get interested in it?' In the end I had to just go with what I would do, in a way, and just imagine that whatever sparked my imagination, those would have to be the bits that I brought back to you in the end, because those are the bits that are most lived through, and the things that are the most vibrant for me. I just assumed that I would be able to talk to you in a way that transmitted that vibrancy and that life. I thought that, because I couldn't help living it for myself, this would be the best way to live it for you, and that hopefully it would inform your own imagination, and you going up this river into the unknown.*

A The unknown for some people is way out in the distance, and for other people it's a little nearer. One is always going into the unknown. You don't have to have an illness to know that. With your interpretation, I've been able to experience something, not completely as if I was doing it myself – you can't expect that – but it's got very near it.

M *That's great. Shall I play you some sounds now?*

A Yes, please.

M *I don't know if you remember, I told you about the Kapok tree. Well, the Harpy Eagle nests in it. Their story of the origins of life comes from the relationship between this huge tree and this impressive bird. When Huemi showed me a Kapok tree he told me this story, and when the Huaorani speak of this tree they have to sing this song. So this is him, telling his tale, and then singing the song.*

[Plays recording of song]

A Thank you.

M *Thank you, Alex.*

THE FUTURE'S GETTING OLD LIKE THE REST OF US

Beatrice Gibson with George Clarke and
Camden Homes for Older People

In 2009 and 2010 artist Beatrice Gibson worked with writer and critic George Clarke and residents of Camden Homes for Older People to instigate and document a series of group conversations. While many projects with older people start from the past, these conversations surrounded possible futures. A script produced from transcripts these conversations and underwrote The *Future's Getting Old Like The Rest Of Us*, a 16mm film conceived in the format of a television play and set in a care home. Taking the 1971 experimental novel House Mother Normal by B.S. Johnson as its starting point and employing the structural logic of a musical score, the script takes a vertical structure, in which eight voices occur simultaneously. The film was show at the Serpentine Gallery in 2010. Excerpts of the script appear in the following pages.

The Future's Getting Old Like The Rest Of Us

by

Beatrice Gibson and George Clark

(shooting script)

Scene Four

with words from the residents of Wellesley Road, Ingestre Road, St Margaret's and Branch Hill
and structure from B.S. Johnson

The Future's Getting Old Like The Rest Of Us,
2010 (45 mins)
Skills Exchange
24 July – 19 September 2010
Screened on the hour
Sackler Centre of Arts Education

Park Nights Premiere
23 July 2010 8:30pm
with *Paradigm*, 1969 (8 mins)
directed by B.S. Johnson
Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2010
designed by Jean Nouvel

In 2009, the Serpentine Gallery and Camden Homes for Older People commissioned a major new work by London-based artist Beatrice Gibson. The film is one of five commissions that have taken place as part of the Serpentine Gallery's *Skills Exchange* project in which artists, designers and architects work in collaboration with older people to develop ideas for social and architectural change. *The Future's Getting Old Like The Rest Of Us* is a 16mm film conceived in the format of a TV play and set in an older people's care home. Part documentary, part fiction, the script for the film is the result of a collaboration with writer and critic George Clark, and was constructed from verbatim transcripts of a discussion group held with the residents of four of Camden's care homes. Taking B.S. Johnson's 1971 experimental novel *House Mother Normal* as its formal departure point and employing the structural logic of a score, the script is edited into a vertical structure, in which eight voices or eight monologues occur simultaneously.

The script for *The Future's Getting Old Like The Rest Of Us*—excerpts of which are included in these programme notes—, was developed from a series of conversations, held over a five-month period. The conversations were highly structured, concerning topics such as time, memory, film and the future. Participants were shown images of the moon landing, alongside fragments of experimental and avant-garde films. Prompted by discussions about the future of care, a political and at times absurdist film evolved. A cast of acclaimed actors, with credits ranging from *Desmonds* to the Scratch Orchestra and the Royal Shakespeare Company, play the role of care home residents.

This work convenes a number of histories. Its marriage of social content and aesthetic concerns references experimental film-making practices of the 1960s and '70s, which suggested that new forms were necessary to represent the complexities and dignities of life for those (care home residents, supply teachers and so forth) largely under-represented by the mainstream media. Within this, B.S. Johnson was a pivotal and often forgotten figure, whose literary work engaged in social commentary on the status of the poor, the elderly and the overlooked. At the same

time, Johnson also pushed at representational forms, making books assembled by the reader, creating complex narrative structures and evoking provocative visual language. With this film, Beatrice Gibson also references the social realist dramas of the 1960s *Play for Today* series on the BBC, and the politics of the graphic score, as they were developed by activist and composer Cornelius Cardew and his contemporaries.

Like Cardew, Gibson conceives of the eight-part score that forms the basis for the film as a 'model of action' challenging hierarchies between the writer, director, actors, residents and care workers involved in its production. The film also challenges the marginal spaces to which these eight voices are often relegated in the broader social and political realm.

Gibson's reflection on issues of participation, hierarchy and the place of collaboration occurs at a moment in which the participation of various social groups is much discussed, but often without reference to historical projects that married social critique with experimental forms of art-making and collective agency. As in much of her work, in this film Gibson produces her own model for action, bringing these histories to bear on the present.

This project was co-commissioned by the Serpentine Gallery and Camden Homes for Older People. In addition to the film, stills and scripts will be installed in the new care home, due to be completed in 2012 at Maitland Park.

The Future's Getting Old Like The Rest Of Us

Beatrice Gibson

Script by Beatrice Gibson and George Clark, with words from conversations with the residents of London Borough of Camden's four care homes and structure from B.S. Johnson's *House Mother Normal* (1971). Part of *Skills Exchange*.

Serpentine Gallery

Biographies

Beatrice Gibson is an artist based in London. Working in diverse mediums from text to performance and film, her practice is largely site-specific, research-based and often participatory in nature. Referencing experimental music and film, recent pieces have explored sound, models of collective production and the problems of representation. These include *if the route: the great learning of london* [A Taxi Opera] (2007), developed in collaboration with musician and composer Jamie McCarthy and *A Necessary Music* (2008) developed in collaboration with composer Alex Waterman. Gibson was a studio artist in residence at the Whitney Museum of American Art Independent Study Program, during 2008, and since 2006 has been a PhD student in the department of Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths, University of London. In 2009 she won the Tiger Award for best short film at the Rotterdam Film Festival.

George Clark is a curator, writer and artist based in London and Los Angeles. He recently curated *Infermental* for Focal Point Gallery (17 July–4 September 2010) with Dan Kidner and James Richards, which is the first UK survey of this 'international magazine on videocassettes,' initiated by Hungarian filmmaker, Gábor Bódy in 1981. He was the Artists' Moving Image Development Officer at the Independent Cinema Office (2006–08) and has initiated a number of independent curatorial projects. His writings have been published in *Afterall; Art Monthly; AP Engine; Senses of Cinema; Sight & Sound* and *Vertigo*.

B.S. Johnson (Bryan Stanley) (1933–73) was an English experimental novelist, poet, literary critic, producer of television programmes and film-maker. Born into a working class family, Johnson left school at sixteen. He went to night school and in the early 1960s became a novelist writing books such as *Travelling People* (1963) and *Albert Angelo* (1964), the latter of which is about the work of an exhausted supply teacher and includes cut-through pages to enable the reader to skip forward. His work became progressively more experimental. *The Unfortunates* (1969) was published in a box with no binding. Readers could assemble the book any way they liked. *House Mother Normal* (1971), upon which Gibson's *The Future's Getting Old Like The Rest Of Us* is based, was about the residents of a care home in which each character narrates their experiences, beginning and ending at the same point in the day. Johnson also made numerous experimental films, including *You're Human Like The Rest Of Them* (1967) and *Up Yours Too, Guillaume Apollinaire* (1968) in addition to publishing poetry, writing reviews, short stories and plays. For many years he was the poetry editor of *Transatlantic Review*.

The Cast

Roger Booth (b. 1933) has appeared in the English Shakespeare Company production of William Shakespeare's play, *The Wars of the Roses*, at the Old Vic Theatre in London, directed by Michael Bogdanov. Film credits include *Kidnapped* and *Barry Lyndon*. He has also appeared extensively on television, his credits including, *Z cars, Play for Today, Armchair Theatre, BBC2 Theatre, Inspector Morse, The Bill, Eastenders, Miss Marple* and *The Barchester Chronicles*.

Corinne Skinner Carter (b. 1931) has been a feature of black British film and television for over forty years. In 1970 she starred in Britain's first black feature, Horace Ové's *Pressure*. She also starred in *Burning an Illusion* (d. Menelik Shabazz, 1981) and *Elphida* (d. Tunde Ikoli, 1987) in the 1980s; *Gold Digger*, (d. Sally Potter) *Hallelujah Anyhow* (d. Matthew Jacobs, 1991) and *Babymother* (d. Julien Henriques, 1998) in the 1990s. She has also worked extensively in theatre, working with theatre companies including Carib Theatre, Talawa, and the Black Theatre Cooperative. Her television credits include *Love Thy Neighbour, Empire Road* and more recently *The Bill, Casualty* and *A Touch of Frost*.

Annie Firbank (b. 1933) is a Shakespearean actor of long standing with theatre companies including the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Royal National Theatre. She has also appeared on television in programmes such as *Thirty Minute Theatre, ITV Playhouse, Armchair Theatre, Out of the Unknown* and more recently *Eastenders, Kavanagh QC, Poirot, Hotel du Lac* and in films including *A Passage to India, Sunday Bloody Sunday* and *Anna and the King*.

Janet Henfrey has had a varied career in the theatre and on film and television. She has worked in theatres all over the UK, including the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Oxford Playhouse and recently *The Black Rider*, which played at the Barbican. Television appearances include, *The Wednesday Play, Doctor Who*, and more recently, *Lovejoy, Casualty* and *As Time Goes By*. Film credits include Peter Greenaway's *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* and *Mrs Dalloway*.

Ram John Holder (b. 1934) began his performing career as a folk singer in New York, coming to London in 1962 to work with Pearl Connor's Negro Theatre Workshop, initially as a musician and later as an actor. Theatre appearances include the National Theatre, the Donmar Warehouse and Bristol Old Vic. His film credits include *Leo the Last*, a comedy feature film about race relations set in a Notting Hill slum in West London, two of Horace Ové's films, *Pressure* (1975) and *Playing Away* (1987), *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985) and Sankofa Film and Video's debut feature *The Passion of Remembrance* (1986). His numerous television credits include *ITV Playhouse, Play for Today, Parkpie, Desmond's* and more recently *The Bill, Eastenders, Casualty* and *Holby City*.

William Hoyland was a close friend and collaborator of the late B.S. Johnson, starring in two of his films from the 1960s: *You're Human Like The Rest Of Us* and *Paradigm*. He has also appeared in numerous television programmes, including *Play for Today, ITV Sunday Night Theatre*, and more recently *Casualty, Holby City, Our Friends in the North* and *Edward & Mrs Simpson*. Hoyland's films include *Star Wars Episode IV – Return of the Jedi* and *Gandhi*.

John Tilbury (b. 1936) is a British pianist. He is considered one of the foremost interpreters of Morton Feldman's music, and since 1980 has been a member of the free improvisation group AMM. During the 1960s, Tilbury was closely associated with the composer Cornelius Cardew, whose music he has interpreted and recorded. He was also a member of the Scratch Orchestra. His biography of Cardew, *Cornelius Cardew – A Life Unfinished* was published in 2008. Tilbury has also recorded the works of Howard Skempton and John White, among many others, and has also performed adaptations of the radio plays of Samuel Beckett.

Jane Wood (b. 1943) is an actor and scriptwriter. On stage she has appeared in plays including *A Laughing Matter* by April de Angelis at the Royal National Theatre and the Lyttelton Theatre. Her television credits include *ITV Playhouse, ITV Sunday Night Theatre, Play for Today, The Monocled Mutineer, The House of Eliott, Silent Witness* and most recently *The Take*.

Events

Further Reading

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Robert Ashley, *Perfect Lives: An Opera*, ed. Melody Sumner Carnahan (Burning Books, 1991).

John Cage, Score for *Concert for Piano and Orchestra* (Editions Peters, 1960).

Voice A	Voice B	Voice C	Voice D	Voice E	Voice F	Voice G	Voice H	Voice I (Added post shoot)
Voice Characteristics: Low, Shifting volumes, from loud to mumbling. Fast but fumbling. Bursts of certainty, becoming mechanical, distracted, fragmented. Fluctating coherence while articulating a point. Thick delivery obscures intelligibility. Starts arguments that loose direction. Impassioned yet machinic.	Voice Characteristics: Shifting tones, from shrill to base. Consistent pace and tone in monolgue sections. Hearing impaired. At times isolated, articulated as if a solo, independent, at times oblivious to other voices. Anxiety expressed matter of factly.	Voice Characteristics: Fast paced, as if compensating for gaps in memory. Stuttering, spluttering, magnified in relation to inability to recollect detail. Struggles with ariculation, and volume. Speech caught at the intersecton of throat and mouth. Erratic when words are not forthcoming. Actively addresses the other voices.	Voice Characteristics: Slow, spacey, light, echo like. Quiet, comfortable. Distracted, adrift, sparse. (This voice repeats and echoes fragments and words belonging to the other voices. These repetitons are to be decided by the actor.)	Voice Characteristics: Monotone, dull, trite. Conscious of its own feminity Coquettish. Unfounded positivity. Unconscious repetition. Impatience with other voice's imcomprehensibility (their accent and devliery). Superficial. (Attachment to voice H)	Voice Characteristics: Slow, stuttering, stammering. Shifting volumes. Repetition of beginnings. Delicate, timed, committed, humble. Sensitive. At times unguarded.	Voice Characteristics: Deep, deliberate, polite, careful not to interupt. Pensive, dreamy, attentive to other voices. Stoic.	Voice Characteristics: Slurry. Gurggly. Loses ends of words. Fast. Colloquial, chumy, cheeky. Consistent volume and tone irrespective of content. Unaffected. Unbothered. Hollow. (Bouts of affection / annoyance with Voice E)	Voice Characteristics: (Narration)
Physical Characteristics: Walking stick	Physical Characteristics: Very impaired hearing Frame	Physical Characteristics: Walking stick	Physical Characteristics: Frame	Physical Characteristics: Hearing impaired. Effective hearing aid.	Physical Characteristics: Walking stick	Physical Characteristics: Smoker	Physical Characteristics: Frame	
Names: Son 1 = Neville Son 2 = Norman Grandson = Michael	Names: Husband = Ron / Ronald						Names: Voice H = Charlie Wife = Ivy	
Actor: Rab/John Holder	Actor: Caroline Skinner-Carter	Actor: William Hoyland	Actor: Anne Frinck	Actor: Jane Wood	Actor: John Tilbury	Actor: Janet Henfrey	Actor: Roger Booth	Actor: (TBC)

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Voice A	Voice B	Voice C	Voice D	Voice E	Voice F	Voice G	Voice H	Voice I (Added post shoot)

Scene Five, Old Age

Oh, it's a long long while
from May to December,
And the days grow short
when you reach Septem-
ber.

When the autumn weather
turns the leaves to flame,
And you haven't got time
for the waiting game.

And the days turn to gold as
September, November.

And these few golden days
I'll spend with you,
Those golden days I'll spend
with you.

(LOUD SNORING)

(Snoring)

Voice B — Scene Five, Old Age

I don't sleep at night, I have too many catnaps during the day, so that anytime I nod off you should wake me up. I need to be alive in the situation, otherwise I nod off during the day and then I can't sleep at night

Without being disrespectful to old people I prefer to be with young people myself, I think older people have a got a lot to offer, but in the main to younger people and I'm happier when I'm in the company of people half my age.

Voice C — Scene Five, Old Age

For it's a long long time from
A to Z, er September,
And the leaves they grow
short
When you reach September,
And the Autumn weather
Turns the leaves gold,

It was a man.... called..... Walter Huston. He sang that, believe me, the American, you know the great. . . the great Huston family. You were talking about John Huston, er.... no... John Ford.... but actually it became. In the German. In... Bertolt, Bertolt, Bertolt Brecht, one of Bertolt, Bertolt Brecht's um German um thing. And I thought it was beautiful,. ...

She's she's.... I'm 83, I was born on the 4th of July. Yanky doodle dandy. I think that's were a lot of American films. . . came from. I'm 83. In july. Last July and um ....I used to go to the er.... I used to come down to the Heath, there was the old cinema there, the Everyman, they would bring round tea in the interval, . . . ladies, a tea and a chat.

And I go to.... well low and behold, am um, I'm finished now... finished I'll make another contribution later on.

Voice D — Scene Five, Old Age

Oh, it's a long long while
from May to December,
And the days grow short
when you reach Septem-
ber.

When the autumn weather
turns the leaves to flame,
And you haven't got time
for the waiting game.

And the days turn to gold as
they grow few,
September, November.

And these few golden days
I'll spend with you,
Those golden days I'll spend
with you.

Voice E — Scene Five, Old Age

Oh, it's a long long while
from May to December,
And the days grow short
when you reach Septem-
ber.

When the autumn weather
turns the leaves to flame,
And you haven't got time
for the waiting game.

And the days turn to gold as
they grow few,
September, November.

And these few golden days
I'll spend with you,
Those golden days I'll spend
with you.

I can agree with that because I used to cycle everyday to work and when I finished, retired from work, I put my bicycle in the garage and thought don't worry I'll be back and I was and I still like to cycle.

It's absolutely wonderful here . . .
. . . but the only thing I don't like is the feeling that they don't trust you to go out and come back. At home I always do what I wanted to do, go shopping, ride back home...

You'll never change people I mean as I said, my father, he had 21 in his family. You can't imagine, 21 kids, and when that time came for him to retire, he wouldn't retire because he told my mother .... I'm not retiring because if I retire I become a vegetable.

Voice F — Scene Five, Old Age

Oh, it's a long long while
from May to December,
And the days grow short
when you reach Septem-
ber.

When the autumn weather
turns the leaves to flame,
And you haven't got time
for the waiting game.

And the days turn to gold as
they grow few,
September, November.

And these few golden days
I'll spend with you,
Those golden days I'll spend
with you.

You wonder what it's all for, you know what I mean... what was I going to say...

Voice G — Scene Five, Old Age

Oh, it's a long long while
from May to December,
And the days grow short
when you reach Septem-
ber.

When the autumn weather
turns the leaves to flame,
And you haven't got time
for the waiting game.

And the days turn to gold as
they grow few,
September, November.

And these few golden days
I'll spend with you,
Those golden days I'll spend
with you.

Yes it was St. Margarets and it was a large mansion, very lavish, wonderful views, somewhere up in Hampstead somewhere, and you see the country, I found it to be ... I.. I..I wasn't happy there, before... before...

My husband is there, I'd cook him a cup of tea or whatever he wanted, but here, you loose your independence, which I think is a little bit sad.

Voice H — Scene Five, Old Age

Oh, it's a long long while
from May to December,
And the days grow short
when you reach Septem-
ber.

When the autumn weather
turns the leaves to flame,
And you haven't got time
for the waiting game.

And the days turn to gold as
they grow few,
September, November.

And these few golden days
I'll spend with you,
Those golden days I'll spend
with you.

The only thing that changed me, (cough) was I had a near accident. Not my fault, I know everybody says that but this is true and er ... I was ... going on for 70 ... then ... and I.. sss ... when I got into the garage I parked the bus up, tore me licence up and said that's it because I knew miself that I wasn't as good as I thought I was and I..I...

You see you get films that agree with that and then further down the line, you get, oh you're too old now, and sort of kick you out. You're too old, leave you with a blanket bit of grub and leave ya. You know

You're just left. .. You take it this way with me, my case, I know there's hundreds like it, but my wife suffers from dementia and she was taken and put into St. Magarets and I was put into Wellesley Road and I said, why me, I've got all day now to look after her, the only time we got err, chain her down, or get somebody in to look after her is nighttime, they said no, no, no no you want a break...

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Voice A	Voice B	Voice C	Voice D	Voice E	Voice F	Voice G	Voice H	Voice I (Added post shoot)

(Snoring)

. . . I .. I . . I had a cousin she used to work here, her light skin. . . tall and stout . . She come and see me when I was in the hospital, . . is she here?

... I'm not going to nod off am I, I've got stay awake

I can't hear . .

A Frenchman wasn't there, actually he was an extreme… well what I would term an extremist. . . in the period you're talking about… Grosvenor Square…was…. what did…. did Fletcher go? oh yes, 68, Paris… in Paris, … Yes it started with the Paris group. Later on the were also people like Bertie Russell. . . I mean he was, he was an old timer then wasn't he, and this chap whose….Ben….there's something about it even again tonight, the older people…. lord Ben, pillars of the establishment…. and in those days even Bennie with his pipe, *Tony Benn, thank you yes* … I think, … something, … I think something…. somebody must haven given… cockles …..must be given those, when she was on a demo march, there was that young…

I know this much I was very pleased to have met somebody like Charlie here, because when I came here I felt very frightened. . . what have I… what is it going to be like that sort of thing.

When you're in a place like this you don't talk very much. I'm not saying, its not… I think they're wonderful, they're wonderful to us old people.

We're not interested in politics at our age, why?

I don't think old people are interested in politics.

36 years, he was in the coal mines as 12 year old and I was down at 14, you had no choice, otherwise the company would have become obsolete, that's the name, yes yes, a tough job, there's nothing easy about it, you've a lot to contend with, put it that way, you're blacked out, gas, white gas, all the gas under the sun, until the inventor one day invented the Glen lamp, it was lamp that shone, you know the light inside, we used to have birds you know, canaries, sparrows, canaries, down the coal mine, to let them know when the gas was coming, but this glen lamp saved all that, it saved the birds.

It weren't an easy world at that time… you can't change people. . . only God can do that himself, so you know what I mean, people when they can't stand each other it will be a better world to live in it … it's a problem . . it's always a problem.

When you become an older person yourself and you want all the attention that you don't get then you sort of think. Why aren't I getting it done better than this?

What's better than helping the one you've spent your life with, my wife and I have been married 55 years, they separated us. Just to say you can't do it sort of thing, alright I've got a frame, I can't walk as far as I could and they give me that to help me breeze along, take your time, but it's not vital for me to walk, first thing in the morning it helps with me balance but after that I'm alright.

For my wife, it's a joke, because she gets out and their away looking for her and she says I want a taxi this time, not a police car and they treat her like, the coppers are very good with her very good, come on Ivy come on, they're not open yet, come one you know, they're really reall…

Oh yes they are.

I can remember the strikes, the worst one was the last paper strikes because it affected me, my friendship with a friend. I'm transporting general workers, he was national union of this or something, and he said you're mob never 'elped us when we were out on strike and I said no, because Margaret Thatcher was clever she changed all the laws regarding picketing before she even started on the miners.

What is it you saying about Margaret Thatcher?

What, Magaret Thatcher change? What Thatcher change. Things worse for you all, we all in this country. . . Ahh that is what you say, because, I'm telling you if Magaret Thatchter did not abolish hanging in this country…. all these people they kill in America they would never do it because they know they could get killed. . . How a man 200 hundred and something people. . . and you, you, you, you, you let off the man, say he can go in his own country because he have cancer. When you kill you kill, you kill somebody, you kill 6, you know you have to… all these people they would not do all this killing…

I belonged to the book club first, where we used to have the books. Bookmarx. The Communist book club and then the communist party and then generally just from being active within the family. I used to have meetings in my own home, we had meetings in our flat twice a week. Well I always took part in anything that was going on, I mean even now, I don't miss out on anything. Usually if anything is going on in the home, they come to me and say do you want to go and I'm there, I want to be there, I don't want to miss out on anything that's going on.

It's a bit dull isn't it. It's dark, it's not very bright. You go out looking for the bright bits.

You can't make things better can you. . . we've explained it all, at that time there was a great communist chap called Gallagher, you know, in the mines, you know, you had Trafalgar square. Where do we go from there, but you've got to believe in something, you can't leave Gods earth, you're just a lump of fresh air, you're just a Human being.

Well, it's not so important to me now as its used to be, but I'm still interested in what's going on. I read all the local papers and national papers and I get most of my news from papers and from the television.

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Voice A	Voice B	Voice C	Voice D	Voice E	Voice F	Voice G	Voice H	Voice I (Added post shoot)

Young people, they going to school with knife and they kill this, they kill that, they kill this, they kill that, and they have to pay people to feed them in the prison, pay people to cook food for them.... say that when you kill somebody they kill you.... when you go in prison, you walk in, people see directly......you done something for what you done, they would not have... Worse thing is, here in England... even though.... I don't go in America.......You have children 9, 10, 9, 8 years, they have...... they sending them to school and they are beating the teacher, they are beating the teacher, wait let me finish, late at night and a girl come to school and the teacher tell her about something and she pick up something and she hit the the teacher one thrash in the head and blood . . ambulance have to come . . . why this kind of thing have to happen.

(Voice B)

My father was in this play and he gets malaria, he dies in it. *Whose that young actor, what's that young one? I can't get his name, you need to remind me.*

My husband . . .

That was my father

(Voice D)

Where is my frame. . . I need my frame, if I had my frame I could go to the toilet.

. . . I've got a pad on, I can hold it I suppose. . .

(Voice C)

Whatever happened to her, a chuu... er the er..e.e.. existential leader......um oh he's the err... he ahh blimey, *Satre, thank you darling, yes,* Jean Paul Satre. Let's face it before I ... before I ... he ughg. . .

(Voice E)

I can't understand a word he's saying.

(Voice F)

I could be wrong, you can correct me if I am wrong, correct me if I'm wrong.

Esperanto, Esperanto, it would have to come back in again. . . Esperanto, it would have to, it's Spanish . . it wants to come back again. It would take us back, it's, well, stabilized. There's an old saying where there's life theres hope.... . . . .   *hahahahahah*

(Voice H)

Those politicians, people who held a bit of power, they were so fed up after that long drag, we all know what I'm talking about, 1939-45 ... that they wanted ... and they did, they created the NHS and who ruined it? we did ourselves, the working class, you can get 6 pair of glasses down the road for nothing, teeth for nothing, they were down the doctors queuing up, I cut my finger, I just suck it, you know, it was all to fast, it all come in too quick.

(Voice I)

Well, I tell you one thing, I'm now in my, nearly 85 and it's the first time that I've found that I've enjoyed reading the paper. I've got time now to read the paper and I've quite enjoyed doing it. But its not politics I'm looking for, I'm looking for ....erm...everything.

(Clip of Beckett's 'Krapp's Last Tape' plays) *(A)*

(Clip of Beckett's 'Krapp's Last Tape' plays) *(B)*

(Clip of Beckett's 'Krapp's Last Tape' plays) *(C)*

(Clip of Beckett's 'Krapp's Last Tape' plays) *(D)*

(Clip of Beckett's 'Krapp's Last Tape' plays) *(E)*

(Clip of Beckett's 'Krapp's Last Tape' plays) *(F)*

(Clip of Beckett's 'Krapp's Last Tape' plays) *(G)*

(Clip of Beckett's 'Krapp's Last Tape' plays) *(H)*

Voice A

What is that. I can't see. A play. Are they criticizing him because of something? I can't see. . . An older gentlemen? ... That's not him. Is that him? I can't hear what he's saying, that's why we need teletext underneath.

           He seems very docile to me.

I can't hear what he's saying

He's grumbling? We can all do that can't we, and we do I suppose, on and off.

Voice C

I've heard of the tape yes and the better known one is Waiting for Godot. Quite so. Yes thank you darling.

Voice E

I'm a bit worried about your birthday, when is it?

Oh don't be like that. I want to, I'm sitting here worrying about it now.

    ... is it Saturday?

           You're teasing me now, he hehe he

           So it is Saturday. Heh ehehe

That man looks like me, sounds like me . . .

. . . . No, no.

Voice G

Can you see?

Voice H

What are you talking about birthdays for, its around now,

It don't make no difference. I ... ain't going to tell you because I don't want you spending your money.

Of course I am.

Its not Saturday heheheheh

Don't worry about it

Voice A	Voice B	Voice C	Voice D	Voice E	Voice F	Voice G	Voice H	Voice I (Added post shoot)

Voice A *(Clip ends)*

You've got that sound recorder on the table, so you can put that up and we can say I never did that surely. You know.

I like kitchen sink dramas, they're the films I used to like seeing.

Voice B *(Clip ends)*

Not a bit like us is he? Well actually, what should happen really then, is you should film us, when we're not even really aware that you're doing it, so take us from life and then put us on the screen and say this is what you were doing and then we can look at it and . . and and say my God I never did that did I, you know. There you are.., you see I should be a film director. You see if we didn't know it was happening, you're taking it all the time aren't you? It would be more natural wouldn't it? Or you think that we should know we are being filmed and therefore put on our best behaviour?
. . . .So actors you'd have actors and actresses doing it instead of real people? Well that's not much help is it. Because if you know that they are actors and actresses we're not going to take them seriously are we? We would take them seriously if we thought they were real people like us . You could take any little bit at any time. And what have you. And various renaissance... There's something .. no matter how much...You can be too scholarly..... The masterpieces that have been shown here . . . or rather the excerpts. It's the usual practice isn't it. . . Vertigo and yes, and um,... the Gielgud business, hahaha I...

... Oh yes, drama yes ... I, Gielgud and the other British actor. I was very judgemental and said that both of them.. were homosexual, and um... I I I I don't know that Sir John, ...classic roles and all that sort of thing. ...And Bogarde, very yes.. Scarlet Pimpernel and things like that.... Could I just, I'll try and make it, ...a final word... The title of the film was A Man For All Seasons, ... and it was in colour of course. ... The cast was Robert Shaw and um ... Moore himself was played by um.. um err ......

Voice C *(Clip ends)*

Last night. A programme came on. Doctors. And there were subtitles, there were subtitles..... They were gifted people..... A British film I had to...., there was um, I... I'm . . .

I'm trying to, er pick up on these long medical terms. . . you see . . by the time..... people passing by in the corridor... there's um... a a girl, a woman, er... doesn't matter. But she was in.. she was um... in some sort of extreme. I don't know what is was actually. But I had to keep reminding myself, these people... actors... no matter how gifted, its not reality, because I only had to look around . . .like so . . and see this girl... some sort of bother. Distess ss. She was in it. . and again, although I couldn't hear, their voices, were, so. So convincing. They made you think it was real life, and there it is, something you ......There is real life going on around you all the time... I think...it made me think... I used to try and grasp art you know. And the French Impressionists.

Johnny Viceman made lots of films . . . the gentleman with the monkey . .

Voice D *(Clip ends)*

It was wonderful, the images moving, not just a photograph...

Voice E *(Clip ends)*

I know what I want to get you.
. . .Take me out shopping

Voice F *(Clip ends)*

That's that's that right yeah ...

It's not that simple, it's not that simple, if you go you got to come back.

Drama, yes, I prefer drama

Voice G *(Clip ends)*

A nicer building? Gardens... My days are over with gardens, garden, used to have...

I liked the home when I first came because I was learning from it. But I must say.. they have not ... come up to my expectations.

Voice H *(Clip ends)*

Well, as I can see, I watched good actors, I watched good actors, nobody playing himself or playing a role that they have made their own, he's this he's that, it's a good film... Everybody knows what he is, what difference does it make, he's doing, what we want to do make a film that we can watch. Yo..you know Dirk Bogarde made the doctor films which were brilliant he also made that one where he's executed er.. er.. in France, the revolution,

Voice A

Yes I think it's a good idea

I don't know why, I don't know why, I met him. . . opening my door. . .I met him and when I stand up, stand up, he saying, I saying, I say what you turning out the light for, why you turning out, no clothes on him... you know, just little white underpants, no shoes, no vest nothing. Did you saw him? Did you saw him already? Aarrh .. . ..
(fall off chair)

(General laughter)

It's not me who fell, it's the chair. I need the toilet

Voice B

An actress play me? I don't want somebody playing me, there wouldn't be as good as me. I'm unique you see. . . nobody could play me and get away with it. I don't need somebody being me. I'm already an actress myself.

I've don't that haven't I... on holiday if I went to my house in France for instance and I've been with people that I know, um and *I forgot what the question was now,* but anyway...... I don't think that I will ever loose my ...... I don't think that I will ever loose my independence. I don't intend to.... I get a lot of independence in my home, but I do have , I have make it happen. I'm the one whose in power in my home.

(General laughter)

I'm deaf, I'm deaf ...
    I don't know where my frames gone.

Voice C

Fey is the word, fey is the word, and I wonder. I wonder. .... People like. People like... . I think the interesting people are the fey people, they are the outer..... the remoter parts of England . . the Hebrides, the Outer Hebrides... they had to... you know... . ..The Wickerman . ,

Peter Cushing. ..
What about a horror.
I could be a..
    Boris Karloff . . Count
Dracula . . .Count Dracula

errr..

(General laughter)

A revolutionary on the guillotine, was it Leslie Howard?

The Scarlet Pimpernel

One last shout across the bowls. Today it's a secular. They're all secular types. And it it sort of waters things downs . . I'm committed . . I'm a roman cath, catholic.... thats good enough... and I think .... we're being distracted by the humanists and so on.

Voice D

It's, good. . . yeah . . .
    It's good because . . . it's this time, you're doing time, you're doing it now. . .
    It'll be informative,

Dancing, dancing from different parts and places.

hahahahahahahahah

(General laughter)

...a film...

Voice E

It must be very interesting to make a film. What is the film actually about again?

You want to get your film on television, so people can turn it on when they want to.

(General laughter)

It must be very interesting to make a film.

Voice F

I was thinking about ... Audrey Hepburn, Dame ... Bogart, well, it varied, Wallace Beary, a famous ... he played the piano...

(General laughter)

Voice G

hahahahahahahahah

(General laughter)

In the film?

Voice H

The words, the words , it's a good idea....
    .. .it could be informative,

Might be might be, but ... I was in a film before ... I don't know what the film was all about. You didn't see me but I was ... I went down there about 5 or 6 times ...

I forget what is was called. but that was another good film he made, he made so many and err.. err.. h.h.iii hiis.. his sex life had nothing to do with the film and he had nothing to do with sex on the film, I just, he was a good character actor . . .

hahahahahahahahah

(General laughter)

No no it was Bogarde played in the film and it was Leslie Howard who played the scarlet . . .

The Scarlet Pimpernel

Voice I (Added post shoot)

(General laughter)

BIOGRAPHIES

Beatrice Gibson is an artist based in London. Manifest largely as film, performance and text, her practice explores ideas around sound, sociality, collective production and the problems of representation. Her last film made in collaboration with Alex Waterman, *A Necessary Music*, won the Tiger Award for best short at the Rotterdam Film Festival in 2009. Recent screenings, exhibitions and performances include: *A Necessary Music* and *An Evening with Robert Ashley*, The Showroom, London (2009); *Talk Show*, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2009); the 10th Baltic Triennial, CAC, Vilnius (2009); and *Volatile Dispersal: Festival of Art Writing*, Whitechapel Gallery, London (2009). Gibson was a studio artist in residence at the Whitney Museum of American Art's ISP, during 2008, and since 2006 has been a PhD student in the department of Visual Cultures, Goldsmiths. Gibson's Films are distributed by LUX.

George Clark is a curator, writer and artist based in London and Los Angeles. He recently curated *Infermental* for Focal Point Gallery (17 July–4 September 2010) with Dan Kidner and James Richards, which is the first UK survey of this 'international magazine on videocassettes,' initiated by Hungarian filmmaker, Gábor Bódy in 1981. He was the Artists' Moving Image Development Officer at the Independent Cinema Office (2006–08) and has initiated a number of independent curatorial projects. His writings have been published in *Afterall*; *Art Monthly*; *AP Engine*; *Senses of Cinema*; *Sight & Sound* and *Vertigo*.

B.S. Johnson (Bryan Stanley) (1933–73) was an English experimental novelist, poet, literary critic, producer of television programmes and film-maker. Born into a working class family, Johnson left school at sixteen. He went to night school and in the early 1960s became a novelist writing books such as *Travelling People* (1963) and *Albert Angelo* (1964), the latter of which is about the work of an exhausted supply teacher and includes cut-through pages to enable the reader to skip forward. His work became progressively more experimental. *The Unfortunates* (1969) was published in a box with no binding. Readers could assemble the book any way they liked. *House Mother Normal* (1971), upon which Gibson's *The Future's Getting Old Like The Rest Of Us* is based, was about the residents of an old people's home in which each character narrates their experiences, beginning and ending at the same point in the day. Johnson also made numerous experimental films, including *You're Human Like The Rest Of Us* (1967), *Up Yours Too, Guillaume Apollinaire* (1968) in addition to publishing poetry, writing reviews, short stories and plays. For many years he was the poetry editor of *Transatlantic Review*.

THE CAST

Roger Booth (b. 1933) has appeared in the English Shakespeare Company production of William Shakespeare's play, *The Wars of the Roses*, at the Old Vic Theatre in London, directed by Michael Bogdanov. Film credits include *Kidnapped* and *Barry Lyndon*. He has also appeared extensively on television, his credits including, *Z cars*, *Play for Today*, *Armchair Theatre*, *BBC2 Theatre*, *Inspector Morse*, *The Bill*, *Eastenders*, *Miss Marple* and *The Barchester Chronicles*.

Corinne Skinner Carter (b. 1931) has been a feature of black British film and television for over forty years. In 1970 she starred in Britain's first black feature, Horace Ove's *Pressure*. She also starred in *Burning an Illusion* (d. Menelik Shabazz, 1981) and *Elphida* (d. Tunde Ikole, 1987) in the 1980s; *Gold Digger*, (d. Sally Potter) *Hallelujah Anyhow* (d. Matthew Jacobs, 1991) and *Babymother* (d. Julien Henriques, 1998) in the 1990s. She has also worked extensively in theatre, working with theatre companies including Carib Theatre, Talawa, and the Black Theatre Cooperative. Her television credits include *Love Thy Neighbour*, *Empire Road* and more recently *The Bill*, *Casualty* and *A Touch of Frost*.

Annie Firbank (b. 1933) is a Shakespearean actor of long standing with theatre companies including the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Royal National Theatre. She has also appeared on television in programmes such as *Thirty Minute Theatre*, *ITV Playhouse*, *Armchair Theatre*, *Out of the Unknown* and more recently *Eastenders*, *Kavanagh QC*, *Poirot*, *Hotel du Lac* and in films including *A Passage to India*, *Sunday Bloody Sunday* and *Anna and the King*.

Janet Henfrey has had a varied career in the theatre and on film and television. She has worked in theatres all over the UK, including the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Oxford Playhouse and recently *The Black Rider*, which played at the Barbican. Television appearances include, *The Wednesday Play*, *Doctor Who*, and more recently, *Lovejoy*, *Casualty* and *As Time Goes By*. Film Credits include Peter Greenaway's *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* and *Mrs Dalloway*.

Ram John Holder (b. 1934) began his performing career as a folk singer in New York, coming to London in 1962 to work with Pearl Connor's Negro Theatre Workshop, initially as a musician and later as an actor. Theatre appearances include the National Theatre, the Donmar Warehouse and Bristol Old Vic. His film credits include Leo the Last, a comedy feature film about race relations set in a Notting Hill slum in West London, two of Horace Ove's films, *Pressure* (1975) and *Playing Away* (1987), *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985) and Sankofa Film and Video's debut feature *The Passion of Remembrance* (1986). His numerous television credits include *ITV Playhouse*, *Play for Today*, *Porkpie*, *Desmond's* and more recently *The Bill*, *Eastenders*, *Casualty* and *Holby City*.

William Hoyland was a close friend and collaborator of the Late B.S. Johnson, starring in two of his films from the 1960's: *You're Human Like The Rest Of Us* and *Paradigm*. He has also appeared in numerous television programmes, including *Play for Today*, *ITV Sunday Night Theatre*, and more recently *Casualty*, *Holby City*, *Our Friends in the North* and *Edward & Mrs Simpson*. Hoyland's films include *Star Wars Episode IV – Return of the Jedi* and *Gandhi*.

John Tilbury (b. 1936) is a British pianist. He is considered one of the foremost interpreters of Morton Feldman's music, and since 1980 has been a member of the free improvisation group AMM. During the 1960s, Tilbury was closely associated with the composer Cornelius Cardew, whose music he has interpreted and recorded. He was also a member of the Scratch Orchestra. His biography of Cardew, *Cornelius Cardew – A Life Unfinished* was published in 2008. Tilbury has also recorded the works of Howard Skempton and John White, among many others, and has also performed adaptations of the radio plays of Samuel Beckett.

Jane Wood (b. 1943) is an actor and scriptwriter. On stage she has appeared in plays including *A Laughing Matter* by April de Angelis at the Royal National Theatre and the Lyttelton Theatre. Her television credits include *ITV Playhouse*, *ITV Sunday Night Theatre*, *Play for Today*, *The Monocled Mutineer*, *The House of Eliott*, *Silent Witness* and most recently *The Take*.

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The Sound of Home – Physical necessities of communication

Markus Miessen with Westmead Elderly Resource Centre

1:1

A space in which SmartSlab technology is being used to produce an entire wall that can be used as a 1:1-scale Skype-interface in which the elderly can talk to their families without having to deal with any interfaces (such as screen, mouse, keyboard etc).

In 2006, the Serpentine Gallery invited Architect Markus Miessen to advise on the project *Skills Exchange. He* led discussions at Westmead Care Home in Westminster with staff and residents, to think about the ways to improve their lives and work against the risk of isolation. He made a number of propositions, including signage systems and other means of communication, in a short text entitled *Sound of Home: A Manual for Action*. The following is an email exchange regarding his initial perceptions of Westmead.
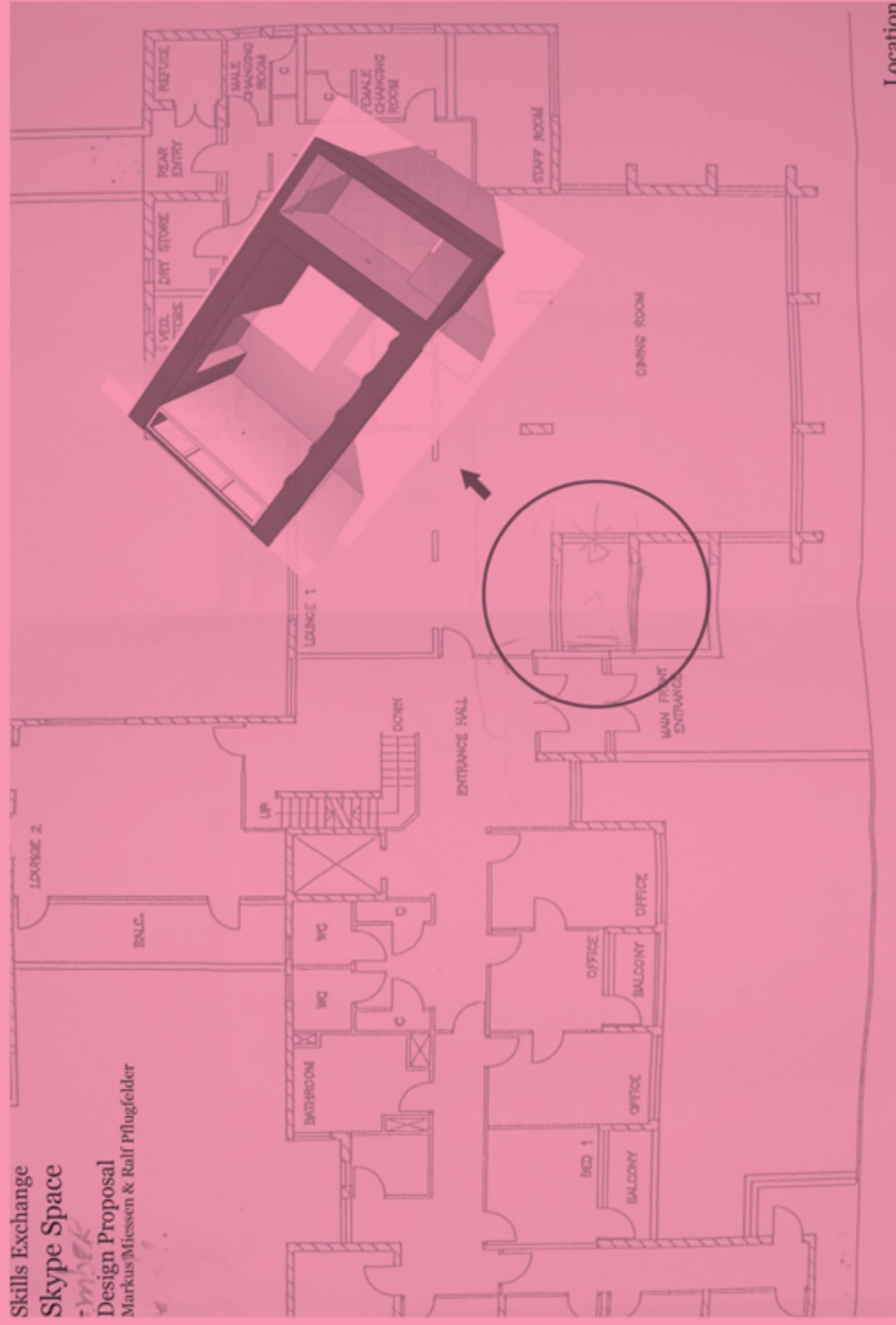
Skills Exchange
Skype Space
-
Design Proposal
Markus Miessen & Ralf Pflugfelder

Skills Exchange
Skype Space
–
Design Proposal
Markus Miessen & Ralf Pflugfelder

Skills Exchange
Skype Space
Design Proposal
Markus Miessen & Ralf Pflugfelder

Familiar living-room furniture, i.e. a Chesterfield Sofa to be sourced

Space for a wheelchair

Wheelchair to be parked next to it

ChesterChair

Black Board to be sign up

Meet Your Family

Signage to be designed by Abake

Cut-up Chesterfield

IT / Nursing staff

Signage to be designed by Abake

Desk for Skype laptop / PC to be operated by IT / nursing staff

Skype Space 'Box' in comforting & reassuring colour

Entire Wall as screen out of SmartSlabs

1:1 Skype Space

Skype laptop / PC connected to / controlling SmartSlab wall screen

'Peephole'

The 1:1-scale Skype-interface

Service Cupboard with SmartSlab Server to be accessed from entrance hall

Curtain in front of existing window

'Old school' telephone if favoured / for reassurance

Skills Exchange
Skype Space

Design Proposal
Markus Miessen & Ralf Pflugfelder

Webcam hidden in screen

- Hidden Technology -

Speakers and microphone hidden behind sreen

Hey Sally and Louise,

Sorry for the delay. I have been travelling to Mexico, US, and Switzerland for a couple of projects recently and have therefore been off the radar for a bit. I have had another meeting last week with the people at Westmead and did some research on the actual spaces there (beyond public/communal spaces).

We have reached a certain point now with the project. Workload wise I am really happy that you are offering support. Things are getting rather complex now to be simply handled by myself, especially in regard to the overall ambitions of the project that you have set up, which I think is amazing. It is time to invite some more people to this, both in terms of the overall team of architects/artists/researchers, but also in terms of people that can assist me and do research, as Louise suggested in our last meeting at Westmead.

What are the ambitions? In order to be clear about the approach and aims of the project, we should now decide as to what are we working towards? As the blurry setting up phase of the project seems to be done now, the interest and ambition (my one) has shifted quite a lot from the start. This is partly due to being able to get a closer understanding of the spaces and institutions that I am dealing with than the partly naïve reading I had in the beginning. The urban has become less and less important in this context. This is due to the realisation that within these archipelagos of sadness the physical 1:1 scale is actually much more important and evident than the repercussions of their urban equivalents, i.e. institutional networks, roaming in the city, small scale movement between them etc. I think that I can probably say now (for all of us) that physically it is very different from what we all expected.

What can be more interesting than looking at it in urban terms is to actually assess the qualities of certain projects (actual models such as Westmead and others). As I already laid out earlier, Westmead is, from my point of view, a typology that seems to work very well for many reasons. There is an intriguing quality of this place. It is difficult to put it in words for those who haven't been there. This is also why visual documentation of the physical realities has become so important.

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There is a shocking divide, which is between the public areas and the private areas of this place. Something, that especially after my last visit I have become aware about. I would like to investigate Westmead as an example of how architecture is actually still really important (something that I dismissed in the beginning of the project). It seems to be important to find ways to juxtapose this with the hospital-like sterile structures that exist as well (some of which we have visited).

Funnily, there seems to be a lot of dependency on seemingly banal issues such as Interior Design. Even the doggiest development can seriously raise its profile and quality through a set of clever decisions as to use the space in terms of its interior. This also holds true to small-scale interventions I believe (these can be physical or non-physical in nature, such as the event that we just visited at Westmead, where most of the residents participated in a music workshop that showed amazing results in terms of the place's social structure as well as medical/health related issues as Julia confirmed).

How can one adapt existing places and propose policy issues at the same time? Simple adaptations can change the use of those spaces. There will be so many projects built over the next decades. The important aspect is that one should come up with two strategies simultaneously: one the one hand a strategy of adaptation, one the other hand models for new building projects that take on some of the issues discovered and learn from the case studies that will be delivered. *Skills Exchange* in this context can be understood as an idea to joining people back in as knowledge partner, to pose questions, investigating the same questions in different settings.

One of the issues that seems to have become key by now (for me) is the question of communication, both internally in terms of the institution, but also in terms of the patients and their communication with the outside world, either through people visiting them, calling people on the telephone, or being invited for the sporadic 'day out' experience for those who are usually (physically) not able to do this by themselves. In the light of the 'technology revolution', this is a really interesting issue. In this context I would like to explore the following

(1) My idea for a virtual but physicalised communication space at Westmead (as case study), the site which has already been identified together with Julia Patton (the small space next to the entrance). In this context I would like to explore the idea of a space that is powered by Skype (maybe also a potential sponsor), but essentially a physical, 'everyday' space, as experienced by the Elderly. Westmead as case study/ pilot project to showcase how existing institutions can be changed by altering only a small number of strategic settings/parameters (acupuncture rather than complete makeover). What are the boundaries of communication? (This would be done in collaboration with Ralf Pflugfelder)

(2) Identity Space (physical and non-physical): To develop a set of criteria such as entrance situation, signage (institutional and personal), that allow patients to customise their environment. (This would be done in collaboration with Åbäke)

(3) A study as to the technology possibilities that there are today (MIT media lab, but also the different possibilities that are already laid out in the showroom in the West End).

(4) Study of existing typologies: different forms of services from independent living, clubs, extra care centres to residential care.

(5) Study as to how spatial realities seem to deteriorate form the public to the private (in those institutions). It would therefore be good if the 'researchers' (that help me out) could set up a framework to investigate those issues in other contexts as well.

(6) Non-physical components that need to be designed (manual of communication, for other places)

(7) What are the potentials of new typologies, which are based on the idea of growing old rather than being moved when one cannot live by oneself any longer (i.e. new typologies for homes where one moves in at the age of say 50 rather than 75 and therefore building up a totally different set of social relationships).

(8) Atlas of Choice: for those living in London (central and more peripheric) what are the actual choices of Elderly Residences (different typologies). This should be researched

as a set of templates that can be filled easily, with same or recurring criteria that will be investigate for each of those places (i.e. volume to patient ratio, staff to patient ratio, services to patient ratio, overall condition of the place, number and quality of communal spaces, quality of communication, possibilities for communication (physical and non physical), general physical condition of the place, basic facts etc).

(9) A series of conversations/documentations: An archive of recorded conversations, conversations about the issue/feeling of 'home'; conversations about the notion of identity and space; 'village voices': is there such thing as community when you grow old? Throwaway cameras to be given to selection of Elderly to document their 'home' (to photograph for one week what they think constitutes their 'home', things that make them feel 'at home'). The chosen individuals at Westmead have been selected according to variables of maximum diversity, such as place of birth, age, time spent in institution (or care), existing family contact, and gender.

It would be great if the Serpentine could start to organise a research team to work alongside myself in order to help deliver my personal aspect of the overall project. The research brief will then be used by my team to work with some of those individuals and places as well as a more general research as to the places in London that are available. I really believe that the hard facts are good to have. Especially with politicians this is something that we must have in order to be able to make a convincing case.

General Research Questions

(01) What makes the chosen places special?
(02) What defines their spatial quality?
(03) How can those particular components/attributes be abstracted?
(04) What would they like to see organised/on offer, what would they like to self-organise?
(05) What about the connection to their 'old'/'real' home?
(06) How do they communicate with their relatives?
(07) As older people are quite territorial, how does that effect the way in which they use transport infrastructure? What are the alternatives?
(08) What, if what old people in those institutions do not need architects to create the building they live in, but a curator who arranges the things that they, individually, bring in to create a particular, customized environment?
(09) How can one develop a spatial framework for people in the institution to communicate with those who live far away?
(10) How can one produce a rupture in the homogeneity of the environment they are experiencing every day? i.e. Time-management, sequences to produce heterogeneous space
(11) How can they be taught to use technology such as the Internet without it becoming a typical failure like computer-classes in new elderly residence developments?
(12) How can a potential piece of 'architecture' generate a new community/public? (cross-generational stage?)

Technology/Material Research

-Frequencies for cancelling sound
-Producing sound-scape
-Skype technology
-Video projectors
-Projective surfaces
-Signage systems
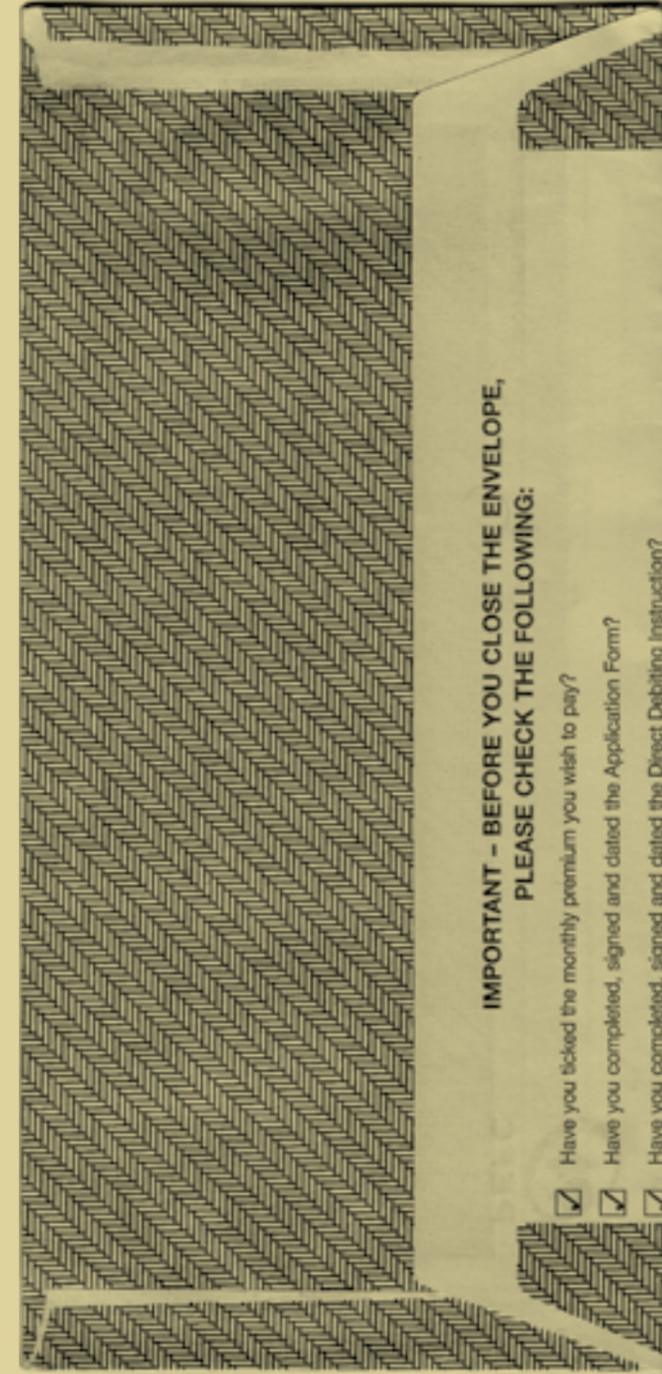
Barter with
your future self

Åbäke with Westmead Elderly
Resource Centre

In 2009, design collective Åbäke worked to interpret and develop Miessen's proposal with Westmead staff and residents. Taking the title of *Skills Exchange quite* literally, Åbäke spent time with Westmead staff and residents discussing their interests and vocational skills. With the combined age of the residents totalling 3,500 years, they reasoned staff and residents offered a tremendous learning resource to each other and to the outside world. Åbake instigated a series of exchanges between the Serpentine Gallery and Westmead, swapping furniture and artwork as well as interests and expertise. This process of exchange was a starting point for discussion of future possibilities at Westmead.

Markus Miessen
*The Sound of Home
– Physical necessities
of communication*

Åbäke
*Barter with the
Future Self*

Serpentine Gallery,
Kensington Gardens,
London W2

Sally Tallant Serpentine Programmes
director (years)
(year photo taken)

**Markus Miessen,
architect**

Skype conversation between older people at Westmead
and secondary students visiting the Westmead 'care home'
installation at Serpentine Gallery

**A relay between
Markus and Åbäke**
(autumn 2010?)

Westmead care home accommodates
42 residents in 42 single rooms. It is
purpose built, and was registered in
2003. The majority of people at
Westmead have dementia.

Janna Graham (Serpentine Gal-
lery Projects Curator), Kees De
Klein, Kajsa Ståhl (åbäke)
Cath Hawes (Serpentine Gallery
Projects Assistant)

A MANUAL FOR ACTION
Instructions by Markus Miessen

knowledege exchange

42

42 is the meaning of life according to
Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy

Number of
Westmead residents:
42

x average age: **70**

Total: **3360** years

**Skills Workshop
(pilot)**

To de-segregate knowledge
between care and art sectors
a number of 'skill' workshops
were developed for staff at
both organisations and resi-
dents to work together

Workshop in cake making and
decorating for Serpentine
Gallery and Westmead staff
with Claire Ptak at Leila's Café,
London

xxx

xxx

xxx

xxx

Art swap

Westmeade prints; contempo-
rary art from early 20th century
(The Goldfish, 1912, Henri
Matisse)

Serpentine prints;contemporary
art from early 21st century
(House of Dreams, 2005 Ilya and
Emilia Kabakov)

Westmead prints at Serpentine

Sepentine's print series
discussed by (staff??) with
residents at Westmead
top image = House of Dreams
bottom image Jeff Koons

Journey from Westmead Care Home (A)
to (E) Serpentine Gallery via the longest
route possible in the time allowed.

2050

Discussions with families
about where and how they saw
themselves in the far future with
åbäke and design researcher
Yanki Lee

Family members and Yanki
were aged at a point where
the children might start to be
responsible for the parents.

In 2006, the Serpentine Gallery's Skills
Exchange brought together an architect
and a design collective to work with the
residents of a care home.

Architect Markus Miessen led the
discussions at Westmead Care Home in
Westminster with staff and residents,
thinking of ways to improve their lives and
to guard against the risk of isolation.

He made a number of propositions,
including signage systems and other
means of communication, in a short text
entitled *Sound of Home: A Manual for Action*.
He handed these ideas over to design
collective Åbäke to interpret and develop
with Westmead participants.

Taking the title of *Skills Exchange* literally,
Åbäke spent time with Westmead staff and
residents discussing their interests and

vocational skills. With the combined age of
the residents totalling 3,500 years,
they reasoned staff and residents offered
a tremendous learning resource to each
other and to the outside world.

The Serpentine Gallery and Westmead
Care Home embarked on a more ambitious
exchange via an installation at the Gal-
lery's Serpentine Sackler Centre for Arts
Education (21 January—7 February 2010),

swapping furniture and artwork as well
as interests & expertise.

The Gallery's staff toured Westmead's
limited editions print collection while
residents and staff shared their
experiences of the past century and of
living and working in residential care.
To help illuminate the realities of old
age and to help the younger participants
imagine their futures, portraits of the

project organisers were taken and aged
40 years by photographer Kees de Klein
and Åbäke. This process of exchange
was a starting point for discussion of
future possibilities at Westmead.

Other events have taken place as part
of this exchange: a bus trip and birthday
celebrations in honour of a 93-year-old
resident of Westmead; cake and decora-
tion workshops with staff,

school students and community
members; and a series of Skype
exchanges between residents and
visitors to Serpentine Gallery. The
aged portraits provided context for a
Serpentine Gallery Family Day in which
people of all ages visualised and
imagined their futures in discussion
with Yan-Ki Lee, Research Fellow with
the Helen Hamlyn Centre at the Royal
College of Art.

IMPORTANT – BEFORE YOU CLOSE THE ENVELOPE,
PLEASE CHECK THE FOLLOWING:

☑ Have you ticked the monthly premium you wish to pay?

☑ Have you completed, signed and dated the Application Form?

☑ Have you completed, signed and dated the Direct Debiting Instruction?

A Palace for Us

Tom Hunter and residents from the Woodberry
Down Estate and Age UK

Over three years, artist Tom Hunter worked with residents of the Woodberry Down Estate. Participants at a weekly tea and coffee group on the Estate discussed the transition of Woodberry Down from its inception in 1949, when it was referred to as 'a palace', to the present, in which de-funding and the stigmatisation of social housing have ushered in a large scale redevelopment project. Working against negative perceptions of social housing, Hunter and residents produced narratives that traced the history of the Estate. These were developed into the film A Palace for Us in which actors, including young people from the area, played the roles of older residents. Screened in Hackney and at the Serpentine Gallery, the film was widely reviewed and has circulated in a number of social housing spaces in London. Original texts appear in the pages that follow.

A Palace for Us

Testimony from James Campbell, Kit Heatley and Erica Dobbs from the Woodberry Down Estate

Jim

My name is Jim Campbell. I've been living in Cheltenham House for 25 years. I was born in Stoke Newington.

I was living there when the war started and my mother decided to get us evacuated. We went to a lovely little village and when we came back the blitz had stopped. And so mum was happy about it, coming back. And then, I think it was about a fortnight later, they had a mini-blitz. And unfortunately, I think we were one of the first houses to be bombed.

The actual bombing itself was strange because I heard two or three bombs coming down. I heard them screaming. I didn't hear any explosions. It was just scream after scream, I think there were four in a row. But everything lit up, and everything came down in absolute, slow motion. I could see it coming down and it actually seemed to take hours. I couldn't move much. I managed to get out part of the way. And then I tried to get my brother out and he was shouting at me to stop it because I was making all this stuff come down on him.

My younger brother who I jumped on top of so that I could to save him, the only brave thing I ever did in my life... but I remember now that made me panic.

And that was because the German planes had dropped flares. And all I could see was flickering through the ruins. And I thought the house was on fire. I really thought we were going to burn to death.

I really tucked that away. And it's come back now, talking about it.

The next thing I remember is shouting at dad and this disembodied voice coming from nowhere saying: 'I'm alright' Eric shouted out, my sister was away at the time.

Then I can remember them getting us all out, and taking us out to a van which was driven by a girl who couldn't have been more than seventeen and she said: 'do you usually come out with your girlfriends dressed like that?' She took off with her overcoat to give to me and that's the first time I realized I hadn't got a stitch on...my pyjamas...everything had gone.

We were taken to a school in Church Street, it was used as a home centre for people who'd been bombed. We slept in double bunks, iron bunks. This was our home for some weeks, a couple of months even. I fell asleep there and I woke up and there was this old lady looking at me. I suddenly realized it was just my mum. And she had aged years. And that was the first time, probably the only time I cried.

But she had received this message while she was on duty but she couldn't leave the Marlborough Place because she was in charge. And she just got the message 70 to 74 Abbey Road which meant there had to be a direct hit on 72 which was us, and she had to wait and wait and wait. It must have been hell.

We had a rabbit in a hut, and it was a pure white, with a black moustache. We called it Adolph for obvious reasons. And the next day, we were sorting things out and they brought Adolph out. He was fine. There was not a mark on him. Two, three hours afterwards, he suddenly pricked up his ears, fell backwards and he was dead of shock. So Adolph was in way, responsible for the demise of Adolph. (laughter)

Kit

After the war, people were not able to have a house easily because there was so much bombing. And there had to be a lot of rebuilding done. Initially, when we first got married we went to live with my husband's mum. They had a spare bedroom and she said : 'You can share the bedroom and you can live in with us as a family', which I did.

But then when I had two children, she said to me, 'if you put your name down, for the county council, if you've got more than one child, they will re-house you and you won't have such a long time to wait'.

When we came up here to Woodberry Down, we realized how lucky we were because we had central heating, we got a lovely bath with hot and cold water, and it was like a palace to us!

Friends used to come up to me and say 'can we come and visit tonight?' and while we were up here they'd say 'can we use your bathroom?' because in those days, people didn't have a bath, they used to go to the public baths.

....

When I left school, I went with a friend of mine to a youth club. We used to play records, and we would have a dance. So you'd see people that you knew and you'd have a dance with them. Then one evening when I went there, there were a couple of fellas that came in and I said to Margaret :'Oh look at that one over there. He looks rather nice doesn't he? I've not seen him before...' And we danced with our friends and suddenly I said to her :'Oh! he can dance! Look. I hope he's gonna come up and ask me to dance.'

And he did.

While we were dancing -we weren't just dancing, we were singing, talking...it was getting closer, cheek to cheek, which was one of the songs of the moment :'when am out together, dancing cheek to cheek', he sang it as we were dancing, not loudly. Just in my ear ... and I was in seventh heaven!

So he said to me, 'could I see you home this evening?' and I said 'yes, that 'd be nice.'

We did actually go home dancing in the streets. Not loudly. Just sort of going over the songs that we'd heard. He saw me home and then he was saying :'I hope we see you next week', and in my mind I was thinking: 'yeah, I hope I do'.

When I went to bed that night again, I kept trying to think about him, and his eyes... I just kept thinking about his eyes all the time. I've never really seen eyes that were as good as that.

And when I told him about it he said: 'I've only got eyes like this when I'm looking at you. I'm not like this normally'

...

One day he said to me: 'Shall we go down to Southend for the day? It's really nice weather in the summer.' So I said yes, 'let's do that.' So we went all the way to south end and then we got up to walk along the promenade, and we could hear music, and there was a little crowd of people, ten (people)... and we could hear somebody singing, and everybody joining in after they've finished. We said: 'What's going on here?', and they said, 'Well there's someone inside here, who is making records. So if you can sing, you can go in and actually make a record'.

So he said, ' Uh yeah I'll do that'
When that person came out of this tent he went up and said, 'Could I make a record?'
They said 'yes, come in...' People outside could hear him singing.
And he could really sing! And I was saying 'Oh yes! I'm with him!'
He really did sing very well.

...

We took it (the record) home and his mum was absolutely delighted with it, because we had a gramophone there in the house. And she played it, and they used to go to a club in the evenings, on Sunday evening. So she took this record up there and played it for all her friends to hear. And obviously they all thought it was really good.

...

He asked me, should we get engaged? (Which we did)
And his friend, who he had come to the youth club with originally said to me: 'do you know what? The first night that we came down there, your husband said 'I'm gonna marry that girl because she's got feelings''
So it was all rather romantic.
And we really had a very good marriage together. Right till the end.
We came to live up here at Woodberry Down. We had a son and a daughter.

It was probably the early fifties...and people would come up, to see how we've done after the war. Before the war people didn't have central heating and things like that. They would come in groups to see the estate sometimes. They'd come just to have a look around.

There were steps from one landing to the next. And there was a lady living opposite me. We were told by our landlord that he wouldn't clean the steps for us. It was up to each one of us to do it. When he used to come and collect the rent on Mondays he would come and knock on the door. He would come in and say: 'I've come to collect the rent and inspect the stairs; I see you are keeping yours nice and clean'. So I said, 'Well, we take in turns. I do it one week she does it the next. And if you do it regularly, they stay clean.'

Children used to run up and down those stairs.

'"'

Erica

There was loads of kids, yeah!
We used to get together in a little gang and go around, so it was quite fun.

I lived here all of me life.
Originally my mum was from Hoxton, in Haggerston Road and they got the flat up here in 1956.

I was born in September, so from a baby I was brought at Woodberry Down. For others it was a move to go there but for me obviously, I never knew anything other than here.
It was decanted three years ago, because they needed to knock the blocks down. Now I settled in Pickering House, which is still a part of the estate but I will have to de-cant again at the end of this because obviously they'll get around to knocking these down too...

Our flat was a five bedroom flat. There was thirteen of us, my mum and thirteen children...
So it was fun, but it was also really annoying because you never really had a room for yourself because there were so many of us, we used to all be put together.
And we used to do meals in the kitchen. It was quite strange, a massive flat and a very small kitchen. So my mom used to do it in sections, obviously the younger ones first and then as the others came in, because the old ones would be working, they used to come in and have their meals.

I remember sitting on that old, wooden sink. You used to sit on there and they used to play music and enjoy what they were doing.

In the whole of that side of the estate it was five bedrooms, so it was all big families. We used to all get together. We used to go scrumping, over the fence. If we couldn't get over the fence, there was a big massive generator. We used to get up there over the generator and get over into the school. But it was quite funny because we used to sit up in the tree and laugh, and the care-taker would get the dog after us but the dog got so friendly with us he didn't do anything anyway! He would just stand there and bark. But he never used to catch us...

But in the end, I can remember, we virtually had shed full of apples. I don't quite know what we thought we was gonna do with them! But yeah we had masses of them.

It was fun because we knew when the ice-cream was coming around. So you used to see all the kids running indoors: 'I want an ice-cream!' and they'd just be getting the money and queuing up and getting ice-cream.

But we used to play a lot around the court-yard

Knocking down someone's letter box, you know what I mean?
We used to go hop-scotching or skipping.

The grounds around the back of Sherwood used to be full of massive roses. And in the summer we used to pick the roses and make perfume.

Although we knew we shouldn't be kicking the football we still used to do it. We had this little log bit, and that courtyard was the main area where we knew we could go and just do what we wanted to do.

We had to be in between half past six in the winter and half seven, in the summer, and I could remember looking out and seeing the others playing and I'd say to my mum : 'Mum I wanna be out there'

Each side of this estate had their own porters. We knew who he was, he knew every kid. If something went wrong in your house like, someone left a tap open and it was leaking through, he'd obviously go. Because he got his own flat.

But if I was ever to be laying out sunbathing on the grass, that was it. The porter would just come. We used know we used to wait until he wasn't around.

As I say, you knew who everyone was. So you even knew who the local beat copper was, he knew you, he knew everybody.

The community in this estate, you knew everybody at one time.

Now, it's only a handful of people you really know. A lot of changes have happened in here.

Jackie, me niece, she lives over in Delamere with her two children. I've got a brother over at Annendale, that's the next block over. He's got two girls. Me sister lives with me here. So it's like we are still all together.

The rest, they've moved on.
But there's still a few of us around

...

Trading Spaces: An Investigation into The Future of London Street Markets

Barby Asante with Cristina Garrido Sánchez and the InSpire Reminiscences Group

In 2009 artist Barby Asante worked with women from Southwark's InSpire Reminiscence group investigated the East Street Market in South LondonAs part of Southwark Council's major regeneration scheme of the Elephant and Castle area, the Market was being tendered to private management. For residents and shop owners this marked a period of extreme uncertainty. Extending beyond those in the group, Asante, joined by researcher Cristina Garrido Sanchez from Goldsmiths Centre for Urban and Community Research, organised The Sarsaparilla Summits. Named after the drink historically sold at East Street Market, the summits were created as a forum to bring together market traders, campaigners, historians, activists and other people with concerns for the future of London street markets. The following poster and map were created for distribution across London markets, the profits of which are to support local market campaigns.

SAVE LONDON MARKETS

1 USE IT

2 CAMPAIGN

3 NETWORK

4 REVIVE, DON'T GENTRIFY

5 BOYCOTT

A RECIPE FOR ACTION

1. Shop there! Discover its history, meet the traders & understand what is happening with it.

2. Start or get involved with a campaign to increase community involvement in the future of your market. People coming together equals a powerful voice.

3. Good campaigns involve traders, local organisations, shoppers, the community, landlords / management companies and the local Council. Markets are complex places get to know everyone. Connect, debate and and swap strategies with community groups, market campaign groups, traders and users of markets in and beyond—London.

4. The issue of gentrification is about private versus community control! Envisaging the future should come out of a community dialogue and reflect the diversity, desires and needs of the community. Everyone should be involved in the process. Don't forget the environment and its sustainability.

5. Stop shopping in supermarkets.

This recipe was developed in the Sarsparilla Summits by Barby Asante & Cristina Garrido Sanchez in which market traders, campaigners, historians and activists came together to swap recipes for local food and ideas for how to save London Markets.

Sarsaparilla drink

Smilax regelii is a perennial trailing vine with prickly stems that is native to Central America. Common names include Sarsaparilla, Honduran Sarsaparilla, and Jamaican Sarsaparilla. It is known in Spanish as zarzaparrilla, which is derived from the words zarza meaning shrub, and parrilla, meaning little grape vine.

Thought to have medicinal qualities, Sarsaparilla has been a popular drink on East Street Market for many years. You can buy Sarsaparilla bottled by G. Baldwin & Co, founded by George Baldwin in 1844 and originally based at 77 Walworth Road not far from East Street Market. One of London's oldest and most established Herbalist.

To make your own Sarsaparilla drink you will need:
3 tablespoons sarsaparilla root
1 tablespoon licorice root, sugar, honey, sassafras extract or 3 teaspoon dried stevia leaves (adjust according to your taste)
1 litre of water
2 litres of chilled carbonated water to serve

In a saucepan, mix sarsaparilla and licorice with one quart of water and allow the mixture to simmer for about 45 minutes. It is important to make sure you do not boil the mixture, lest the drink becomes bitter. Add the sugar, honey, sassafras extract or stevia leaves and let the drink simmer for another 15 minutes, but do not let it boil.

Strain the drink and place the pan back onto the stove and let the ingredients simmer on low heat till the liquid is reduced by half. Remove from heat and strain through a cloth to get a concentrate & refrigerate.

To serve use a little of the sarsaparilla concentrate to mix with carbonated water according to your taste.

Trading Spaces: An Investigation into the Future of Street Markets

This Project is part of the Serpentine Gallery's Skills Exchange project. *Skills Exchange: Urban Transformation and the Politics of Care* (2007-2012) is a collaborative project in which artists share skills and develop ideas for social and architectural change with elders, market traders, care workers and young people.

BARBY ASANTE
Artist

CRISTINA GARRIDO SANCHEZ
Researcher, CUCR, Goldsmiths, University of London

JANNA GRAHAM
Serpentine Projects Curator

CATHERINE HAWES
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InSpire Participants

BARBARA AKERS
ROSE CAMPBELL
PAT DAVIES
ELEANOR GEOFFREY
TERESA MCGEE
MARY MEEHAN
EMINA MUSTAFA
EKINS PERCH
MAUREEN PERCH
REV'D SHEILA SAUNDERS

Architecture Crew

JENNIFER ASEIDU
EDUARDO DA COSTA

Sarsaparilla Summit Participants

SEAN ADRIAN
Trader Brixton Market

LES BACK
Professor of Sociology, Goldsmiths, University of London

GRAHAM COOPER
Chair, Southwark Street Traders Association

GERRY DANIELS
Trader, East Street Market

SARA HAQ
Artist

RICHARD REES
Independent Candidate for Southwark Council

DOUGALD HINE
Spacemakers Agency

ILYANNA KERR
Goldsmiths, University of London.

KRISTINA KOTOV
Trader, East Street Market

SASHA LAUREL
Friends of Queens Market

DAWN LYON
Sociology, University of Kent

SAIF OSMANI
Coordinator, Friends of Queens Market

ALEX RHYS TAYLOR
Sociology, Goldsmiths, University of London.

ALISON ROOKE
CUCR, Goldsmiths, University of London.

PAULINE ROWE
Secretary, Friends of Queens Market

BEN TUNSTALL
Friends of Brixton Market

JOHN WALLINGTON
Secretary, Southwark Street Traders Association

ISOBEL WHITELEGG
University of the Arts

Map of East Street Market with handwritten annotations

EAST STREET · ALSO KNOWN AS EAST LANE OR THE LANE

WALWORTH ROAD · CADIZ STREET · PORTLAND STREET · TRAFALGAR STREET · DAWES STREET · LIVERPOOL GROVE · PORTLAND STREET

BRANDON STREET · Market Office

Handwritten annotations include:
- Prince Hena-Loo-Loo with his feather head dress
- Johnnies Salad Stall
- There was a man who sold Plates and crockery who used to juggle with his wares but he never broke a single plate
- Many of the stall holders take Jewish trader names and many changed their names.
- Here was a man who sold ladies dresses who used to get up the dresses excited by ripping up the dresses he sold. Somehow this made the women buy the dresses.
- fish shop
- Jewellery Shops went to the market sought to be repossessed here
- hood Intent Pub Woodsend by its famous boxer
- carpets on Sundays
- Now you can buy frozen mw
- Butchers Shop Its hard to buy a pork chop or Pork Sausages on the market these days
- "Going down the lane." The market ends around here now but in the old days it used to go right down the end of the street and you couldn't move it was so packed! especially at Christmas time
- Sarsaparilla Stall In the winter you could buy it hot and in the Summer it was Iced
- Well known for its Sunday flower market
- fox's Magic Cream
- At Records sold Latch records was a popular spot with young people always busy on Sundays
- Roffe's Ice cream Parlour
- Wednesdays never used to be like this, it was quiet it wasn't a Market day when new communities came the market expanded on Wednesdays. It became known as the "Ethnic Market"
- Nobody walked on this side of the road there were no shops.
- Utility Stall
- Annes Ladies Clothing shop, Anne was the name of the woman who owned the Shop she never left. Mental customer pass without meeting them into her shop.
- Turkey's 3rd generation Stall holder
- KENNEDYS Sold sausages + Pimms Over Xmas Roast + Potatoes for Christmas morning
- Flowers, flower shop anchors Stall on the market these days
- From the Store was Called Wilsons Used to sell beds + furniture
- Stopped to chat and got free bananas
- Asked him if his children wanted to continue the Stall. He said no and would he soon close his stall Probably close the end of the year after 3 generations
- One guy had been on the market 27 years. He commutes to the market on the underground the Elephant Stop which he leaves in the lock ups.
- Records, honey, porn
- Every item £2. YES.
- formerly known as Trafalgar street
- To Westmoreland Road The market was also on this road you could buy fruit and veg here
- Revivals (1960's) When you went you had to
- LACE front wigs are very expensive
- Meat shop where People took their meat on Sundays and they would cook the meat for you
- St Peter's Church InSpire

LALANGI

In one of the workshops at InSpire, we shared recipes of traditional food you could find in the market years ago. Emine, one of the participants, said that when she was still living in Cyprus, she loved a dish called 'rabbit bread'. We talked at her and didn't believe this was so, so she made some for our stall on East Street Market and it went down extremely well with the punters. Lalangi is a delicious recipe from the traditional Turkish Cypriot kitchen. This particular dish can be served either as a main course or as a snack.

INGREDIENTS FOR 6 PEOPLE

Quarter of a wild rabbit
3 glasses of flour
Half a tsp. salt

Pinch of black pepper
Pinch of cumin
Rabbit stock

PREPARATION:

Boil the rabbit well until the meat easily separates from the bone. Once removed from the boiling water shred the rabbit a dough, which you will have prepared previously using the stock from the boiled rabbit.

The dough and the rabbit meat should be well mixed and salt, pepper and cumin added. Now leave the dough to rise. Once risen, take an amount of the dough in your hand and squeeze it from your fist through circle made by your thumb and forefinger. As the dough squirts from your fist scoop it with a soup spoon into balls a little smaller than ping-pong balls and throw them into hot oil to deep fry.

When ready remove from the oil using a perforated ladle and serve either hot or cold.

Trading Spaces

An Investigation into The Future of Street Markets

One of the oldest street markets in London, **East Street Market** is a space of transition, constantly adapting to the needs of an ever-changing community. The nearby Elephant & Castle is the site of a major regeneration scheme, and the market as with other London street markets is currently being tendered to private management. For residents and shop-owners this marks a period of uncertainty.

This map and poster are the result of a collaborative research project initiated by Artist Barby Asante and was developed with researcher Cristina Garrido Sanchez from Goldsmiths Centre for Urban and Community Research.

The project began through conversations with women from InSpire, Reminiscence group in Southwark, whose memories are represented on this map. This investigation of East Street inspired *The Sarsaparilla Summit*, named after the drink historically sold at East Street Market.

The summits brought together market traders, campaigners, historians, activists and other people who are concerned about the future of London Street Markets. Together the group used East Street Market as a case study from which to consider methods for recording the memories of what is being lost in the process of regeneration and strategise about how to maintain community ownership of the unique, diverse and dynamic spaces that markets represent in London neighbourhoods.

Serpentine Gallery

An accompanying audio walk can be heard at www.serpentinegallery.org

Contributors' Biographies

Design studio **Åbäke** (Patrick Lacey, Benjamin Reichen, Kajsa Ståhl and Maki Suzuki) has lived and worked in London since 2000. Åbäke is co-founder of the record and fashion label Kitsuné (2001) www.kitsune.fr; the architectural production Sexymachinery (2000-08) www.sexymachinery.com; the parasite restaurant Trattoria (2003) the publishing structure Dent-De-Leone (2009) www.dentdeleone.co.nz; the museum project Victoria & Albert (2010) and the investigation group Suzuki åffice (2010).

Barby Asante's practice is grounded in participation and engagement with different audiences, particularly encouraging people to use their voices. She has exhibited widely nationally and internationally in conventional as well as unconventional spaces, and her work includes creating an allotment with Ali Zaidi for *Harvest It* in a London Park (2007), *Wig Therapy* (2001- 2005) at various venues in the UK and abroad, *Journey into the East* (2002) at The Showroom Gallery, *Comfort Zones, Futurology, New Art Gallery, Walsall* (2004), *Self, Angel Row* (2004) and *Summer Sunset* Pumphouse Gallery (2005). Her most recent works, *Down at the Bamboo Club*, *Barby's Karaoke* and *The Funk Chorus*, explore music, memory and social relationships that are created around the collective appreciation of popular music.

Franco Berardi (**Bifo)** is a writer, media-theorist, and media-activist. He founded the magazine *A/traverso* (1975–81) and was part of the staff of *Radio Alice*, the first free pirate radio station in Italy (1976–78). Involved in the political movement of Autonomia in Italy during the 1970s, he fled to Paris, where he worked with Félix Guattari in the field of schizoanalysis. Bifo published the books *After the future* (2011), *The Soul at Work* (2010), *Felix* (2001), *Cibernauti* (1994), *Mutazione e Cyberpunk* (1993) and contributed to the magazines Semiotext(e), Chimères, Metropoli, and Musica 80. He is currently teaching Media Aesthetics at the European School for Social Imagination, in San Marino.

Camden Council's Homes for Older People project aims to improve and increase services and accommodation for older people in the borough. A consortium led by Shaw Healthcare Trust will design, build and run a new care home with nursing and an extra care sheltered housing scheme at Maitland Park followed by a second care home with nursing at Wellesley Road. Guest rooms for visitors, bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms in bright, attractive buildings, and landscaped gardens are just some of the things care home residents can now look forward to. The new care homes will enable residents to remain independent for longer.

The **Centre for Urban and Community Research** was established in 1994 as an interdisciplinary research centre within the Sociology Department of Goldsmiths, University of London. Today our research stretches from New Cross to New York, Hong Kong, Mexico City and Ljubljana. With core expertise ranging from visual sociology to digital geo-demography, the CUCR remains central to debates about community, ecology, governance, multiculture, citizenship, arts and media in contemporary cities.

Marcus Coates is well-known for his video works, which record the artist making performances. These events tend to take place in municipal spaces such as offices or council housing buildings, and happen in front of members of the public. The viewer is left unsure as to Coates' convictions, as the work oscillates between comedy and a proposition that art can be restorative. Coates' work has been widely exhibited in the UK and abroad. Selected solo presentations have been at Baltic, Gateshead; the Whitechapel Gallery and Café Gallery Projects, London. His work has been featured in the 2009 Tate Triennial and the touring exhibition British Art Show 6, as well as in group shows at the Hayward, London; Museo Arte Contemporenea, Rome; and Israeli Centre for Digital Art, Holon.

Silvia Federici is a feminist activist, writer, and a teacher. In 1972 she was one of the co-founders of the International Feminist Collective, the organization that launched the international campaign for Wages For Housework (WFH). In the 1990s, after a period of teaching and research in Nigeria, she was active in the anti-globalization movement and the U.S. anti-death penalty movement. She is one of the co-founders of the Committee for Academic Freedom in Africa, an organization dedicated to generating support for the struggles of students and teachers in Africa against the structural adjustment of African economies and educational systems. From 1987 to 2005 she taught international studies, women studies, and political philosophy courses at Hofstra University in Hempstead, NY. All through these years she has written books and essays on philosophy and feminist theory, women's history, education and culture, and more recently the worldwide struggle against capitalist globalization and for a feminist reconstruction of the commons.

Beatrice Gibson is an artist based in London. Working in diverse mediums from text to performance to film, her practice is largely site-specific, research based and often participatory in nature. Referencing experimental music and film, recent pieces have explored sound, sociality,

models of collective production and the problems of representation. Recent pieces include *if the route: the great learning of london [A Taxi Opera]*, (2007) developed in collaboration with musician and composer Jamie McCarthy and *A Necessary Music* (2008) developed in collaboration with composer Alex Waterman. Gibson was a studio artist in residence at the Whitney Museum of American Art ISP, during 2008, and since 2006 has been a PhD student in the department of Visual Cultures, Goldsmiths. Earlier this year she won the Tiger Award for best short at the Rotterdam Film Festival.

Originally trained as a Geographer **Janna Graham** has initiated a number of pedagogical, artistic and research projects in and outside of the arts. Graham is currently Projects Curator at the Serpentine Gallery, where she worked with others to create Skills Exchange: Urban Transformation and the Politics of Care, a five year art and research project about the meaning of care in the context of urban change. She has also worked with artists, writers and designers to create The Centre for Possible Studies, a research space in the Edgware Road neighbourhood of London where artists and local people develop 'studies of the possible' in response to social inequalities in urban space. She has been an educator, researcher and curator at institutions such as the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, the Whitechapel Gallery, London, Vanabbemuseum, Eindehoven, Plymouth Art Centre, Plymouth. Graham is a member of the international sound and political collective Ultra-red and is a Phd candidate and teacher at Goldsmiths University of London.

Born in Dorset, artist **Tom Hunter** moved to Hackney, London in 1986. He graduated from London College of Printing in 1994 and from the Royal College of Art in 1997. In 1998 Hunter received the John Kobal Photographic Portrait Award at the National Portrait Gallery for the work *Woman Reading a Possession Order*. Compositionally based on a Vermeer painting, the photograph reflected the reality of Hunter's life in squatted housing in Hackney, using those around him as models. Amongst other social and political themes, Hunter's work in photography and film has continued to reflect his deep knowledge of east London, drawing from the headlines of the Hackney Gazette, histories of the area and his relationships to the people who live there. His solo exhibitions have included *Life and Death* in Hackney, White Cube, London, 2000; *Living in Hell and Other Stories*, National Gallery, London 2005–2006 (where he was the first artist to have a photography show); *Flashback*, Museum of London, 2009–2010; and, most recently, *Unheralded Stories* at Purdy | Hicks Gallery. His work is included in collections at the National

Gallery, London; Victoria & Albert Museum, London; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; and the Saatchi Collection, London. He is currently a Senior Research Fellow at London College of Communication.

With training in architectural design and research methodology, **Dr Yanki Lee** is a social designer and design researcher based in with her design practice (www.exhibit-goldenlane.com/www.yankilee.com) in London. In 2012, Dr Yanki Lee joined the Hong Kong Design Institute as the Adjunct Professor after a decade researching at the RCA's Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design. She was the co-investigator of the i~design research project, a pioneering design research project in inclusive design held in the UK. In 2011, she was awarded the UK's BIS UK - China Fellowship of Excellence 2011 and Fellow of the RCA for her contribution of design researches.

Markus Miessen is an architect, spatial consultant and writer working in Berlin, London and the Middle East. In 2002, he set up Studio Miessen, a collaborative agency for spatial practice and cultural analysis. He is a founding partner of the Berlin-based architectural practice nOffice, whose site-specific pavilion exhibited at the Lyon Biennial 2007. The practice is currently working on a series of international projects, including a library and cultural centre to house the private collection of the Swiss curator Hans Ulrich Obrist, as well as a mediateque in north-east Brazil. His work has been exhibited widely, including at the Lyon, Venice and Shenzhen Biennials. Through various collaborations, Miessen has published books including *East Coast Europe* (Sternberg, 2008), *The Violence of Participation* (Sternberg, 2007), *With/Without – Spatial Products, Practices and Politics in the Middle East* (Bidoun, 2007).

Mohammed Yousef is an artist based in Westmead Care Home in West London. A former accountant and postman, Mohammed's work responds to the barrage of mail delivered to the home to coerce older people to enter sweepstakes and other promotional schemes by recycling envelops and drawing maps of the world from memory.

St John's Hospice, an independent charity located within the Hospital of St John's and St Elizabeth in St John's Wood, provides specialised palliative care to more than 2,000 terminally-ill patients and their families every year. For the last 29 years, the hospice has been providing high quality hospice care, free of charge, to those living in and around Central and North West London. Their services are underpinned by a respect for human dignity and care for the physical, psychosocial, spiritual and emotional needs of the total person, whatever their age, lifestyle,

culture and spiritual belief. Patients face a range of conditions, including cancer, respiratory disease, heart failure and HIV.

Sally Tallant is the Artistic Director and CEO of the Liverpool Biennial. She was previously the Head of Programmes at the Serpentine Gallery, London where was responsible for the delivery of an integrated programme of Exhibitions, Architecture, Education and Public Programmes. Since 2001 she has been developing an ambitious programme of artist's projects and commissions, conferences, talks and events. She has curated and organised exhibitions in a wide range of contexts including the Hayward Gallery, Milch, Chelsea and Westminster Hospital; lectured on graduate and post-graduate courses at the internationally and is a regular contributor to conferences nationally and internationally. She is a Trustee of the Chisenhale Gallery and Raking Leaves and the external examiner for MA Fine Art at Central St Martins.

Westmead Elderly Resource Centre is a residential care home hosing 42 residents in West London.

Constructed as a response to the wreckage of World War II bombing **Woodberry Down Estate** was built in 1946 and completed in 1962, when it was heralded as an 'estate of the future'. The 57 housing blocks on the estate provided 2,500 homes for people living in impoverished accommodation in the area. It is now the site of a 20 year regeneration programme. Older residents on the estate have played an active role in responding and advocating for low income housing and meet regularly at a **tea and coffee group** developed by older residents in collaboration with Age Concern.

Based at the crypt at St. Peter's near London's Walworth Road and East Street Market, **InSpire** works to build up the community, seek justice for people on the edge and serve those in need in Walworth and beyond. InSpire is home to a regular reminiscences group who, in the face of major re-development plans - work to keep the history of the neighbourhood and its working class character alive.

Thank you

The generosity of supporters is vital to the Gallery's success. The Serpentine offers innovative ways for all ages to engage with modern and contemporary art, architecture, design and education. In 2012–13, the Gallery raised 81% of its total income through donations, corporate sponsorships, trusts, foundations, endowments and other activities. The Serpentine would like to thank the individuals, trusts, foundations and companies whose generosity and foresight enable the Gallery to realise its acclaimed Exhibition, Architecture, Education and Public Programmes.

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