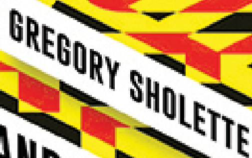

GREGORY SHOLETTE

DELIRIUM AND RESISTANCE

ACTIVIST ART AND THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM

FOREWORD BY LUCY R. LIPPARD

EDITED BY KIM CHARNLEY

7
Art After Gentrification

The practice of repurposing resources that already exist—versus innovating or engineering new ones—is an area of significant overlap between contemporary art and twenty-first-century capitalism. Low-risk and relatively low-cost, the process of creative reuse generates fantastic value-adding possibilities. Or so it seems. Where a defunded inner-city neighborhood previously lay in tatters, a rising spirit of self-repair and hope now emerges, and where once the overlooked working class was forced to

Figure 22 Assemble collective's Yardhouse studios for London creatives under construction

(Courtesy Assemble)

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devise survival tactics along the edges of formal capitalist markets, they are now part of the urban "place-making" paradigm, if not in the flesh, then at least evoked in post-industrial, upcycled decor. At the same time, "change agents" orchestrate redundant populations (viewed from capital's perspective), and discarded assets (unrealized profits) into art projects that symbolically resolve decades of racial and class-based maltreatment by police and abandonment by city planners in post-industrial regions such as Toxteth, Pittsburgh and Chicago. Just as real estate speculators and city planners discovered the value of culture for upgrading urban infrastructures, so too have a growing number of contemporary artists learned to mimic and perhaps intentionally mistranslate neoliberal enterprise culture into a repertoire of ex-onomic tools and "art+realty" hybrids that game the system against itself. Complex mutual strategies of imitation and mimicry between art and neoliberalism rediscover, in strange new forms, the contradictions that underlie this phase of capitalist development. As social regenerative art projects mobilize underutilized workers, for example, labor conflicts that were once identified with the economic sphere emerge within art. Real workers, even when their labor results in art, have a tendency to resist and push back in search of their own interests and security, sometimes even seeking recognition for their own creativity, as we shall see. One aim of this chapter, therefore, is to explore the place of gentrification in a bare art world. The mainstream embrace of socially regenerative art practices may, sometimes, turn the system against itself, but it is by no means immune from discord; especially because the logic of economic crisis permeates everywhere, even the boundary between art and life.

> *Young creative professionals who operate in these collective spaces are blurring the lines between commercial and non-commercial work, shifting from one to the other, depending upon the project.*[1]

> *The ability of art to "accumulate" all social phenomena as instances of itself comes to resemble what capital does, in its self-expanding movement as the automatic subject.*[2]

Assemble

Sixteen cosmopolitan hipsters lean against, squat atop or straddle across the skeletal wood frame of a three-story building in early construction stage. Wearing subdued street garb rather than sensible work clothing, one passes a square point shovel to another who dangles overhead, three engage

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in conversation, still another is steadying a ladder though no one seems to be on it, and high above on a roof joist sits a lone figure gazing into her mobile. None engage in actual work (why is a tool used for shoveling gravel and soil handed up?), instead they mimic acts of physical labor. The measured spacing between each of the 16 also implies a mode of loose collectivism particular to our time, as if those present were a flash mob responding to a text message: 'meet at such and such location, pick up a tool and/or find a place to sit, pose and wait for the photographer to arrive.'[3] Note the remnants of a damaged brick wall visible in the distance? This is definitely not a community barn-raising in some wind-swept prairie, but a redevelopment project located in a neglected inner city. Though it could be set in numerous inner-city regions or forgotten neighborhoods abandoned to ultra-free-market neglect the photo was taken in a former industrial area in London known as Sugar Hill Lane, now undergoing "regeneration." And the image is popular. As of this writing some 5,000 websites host digital copies of the image, which makes it "viral" by art world standards.[4] Its popularity is simple. We are looking at the London-based collective Assemble, a self-described cadre of designers, builders, artists and organizers who in December, 2015 were awarded Tate's prestigious Turner Prize for contemporary art.[5] For some, including members of Assemble, this art world recognition came as a surprise. For others, including those who wish to fortify a link between urban regeneration and social practice art, it was all but inevitable.

Assemble's Turner award primarily honored another inner-city regeneration project involving residents of Granby Four Streets, an ethnically mixed area of Toxteth, Liverpool. For decades, inhabitants organized themselves into DIY work committees and guerrilla gardening teams to repair damage left over from a racially charged, anti-police rebellion some 30 years earlier.[6] "After the riots an invisible red line was drawn around the area," explained a resident of Granby of 40 years, before describing an "unspoken policy of no maintenance and no investment."[7] Successive neoliberal governments, nominally right- and left-wing, continued the policy and refused to address Granby's plight, actively disinvesting in the neighborhood for decades. As the recently released papers of a former Thatcherite minister admitted with regard to the government's official practice of inner-city abandonment, Toxteth represented a "tactical retreat, a combination of economic erosion and encouraged evacuation."[8] Locals fought back with the "weapons of the weak," blocking bulldozers and planting vegetables in the rubble, though not always entirely successfully. Some residents gave up and left, but a resistant core remained to establish

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a Community Land Trust (CLT) in 2011, giving Granby greater control over municipal funds and guidelines. Two years later, social investment company Steinbeck Studio Limited commissioned Assemble to develop a social regeneration project with the Granby Four Streets CLT, restoring to date a ten-unit section of building stock with plans for a winter garden and local artisanal cooperatives in the development stage.

Comparable stories can be identified across Europe and North America, where disinvestment in former working-class areas has been a key consequence of neoliberal reforms. Deserted by policy makers, the residents of marginalized zones develop their own micro-political agency pivoting on a DIY skillset of salvaging, recycling, grassroots entrepreneurship and forms of direct resistance that sometimes target both conservative and liberal policies (especially given that for many years neoliberal agendas have dominated both the UK Labour Party and the US Democratic Party, although battles within these parties, involving Corbyn and Sanders respectively, represent challenges to this alleged *fait accompli*). Granby Four Streets is one of many examples that include neighborhood improvement projects, homespun cultural programs, and cooperative food/urban gardening projects, as well as tactics for evading eviction. Though each of them is defined by its particular context, comparable examples can be identified across the world, including the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network; the Focus E15 Mums in Newham, East London; Radical Housing Network in Tower Hamlets, London; Experimental Station and Reuse Center on Chicago's South Side; the Brooklyn Anti-gentrification Network; Baltimore Development Cooperative; or the Kaptaruny Art Village where sculptor Artur Klinau is transforming an abandoned town in rural Belarus into a literal "Straw Village" for himself and his artist friends.

While some of this activity involves artists or finds support from internationally based non-governmental organizations and even occasionally from enlightened municipal governments, in large part these grassroots rejuvenation and resistance projects are carried out through the pooled labor of local residents. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that one obvious solution to governmental neglect is found at the heart of the very same regions that capitalism withdrew from as it sought to stabilize itself following the economic collapse and racial and class-based rebellions of the 1970s and early 1980s. This socioeconomic self-repair prototype appears to be voluntary, but it is in fact virtually obligatory, forming the coercive rationale for twenty-first-century, top-down forms of "creative" urban redevelopment such as "Place-making," a quasi-privatized initiative popular with cultural foundations and municipal agencies, as well as real estate developers.[9] The

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social practice art template fits here perfectly, and seems to be a win-win for all concerned. City managers leverage low-cost cultural and community assets to solve seemingly intractable infrastructure problems; blighted neighborhoods are made livable again; and artists get an opportunity to apply their talents to real-world problems outside the solitude of their studios. Typical of the enthusiasm for "arts-initiated revitalization," a 2010 National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) White Paper described job creation and the reuse of "vacant and underutilized land, buildings, and infrastructure."[10] And while it raises the issue of gentrification and displacement of long-term residents, the solution offered aimed to retain affordable spaces for members of the creative class, without a single proposal for shielding minority and low-income residents from permanent expulsion.

Like the US, the UK Arts Council has promoted the Creative Industries approach since the end of the Cold War in the 1990s but, as Josephine B. Slater and Anthony Iles also point out in their critique of regeneration art projects, "state-led regeneration proper developed in the wake of the inner city riots which erupted across Britain's cities in 1981, in London (Brixton), Liverpool (Toxteth), Birmingham (Handsworth) and Leeds (Chapeltown)."[11] The regeneration efforts that were made, of course, need to be understood in the context of a widespread post-industrial decline, especially in the north of England, which is widely credited as a key factor in the outcome of the Brexit vote to leave the European Union. Whether state-led regeneration, or creative place-making, has ever been anything more than a token gesture is a moot point. Similar observations could be made about the South Bronx, Detroit, Baltimore and parts of Los Angeles where creative place-making is being tested out or is already under-way in communities dominated by people of color. Irrespective of the effectiveness of these interventions when set against the structural tendencies that exist within capitalism, however, the 2015 Turner Prize Jury should be understood as a tribute to the Granby citizens themselves, including their bottom-up form of self-governance, which managed to salvage a story of hope from the maelstrom of neglect and disinvestment. This story is easily lost in the arguments about the extent to which Assemble's work is art: the decision to award of the prize to Assemble certainly highlighted differences of opinion among artists, and shows that the contemporary art world's so-called social turn—as Claire Bishop pronounced it a decade ago—has arrived on the doorstep of the mainstream art establishment.[12]

Social practice art confronts us with a disarming sincerity that is refreshingly at odds with the typically contrived affect of the contemporary art world. As Turner Prize jury member Alistair Hudson explains his

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decision to award the prize to Assemble, the collective is "not in the hierarchical structure of the art world [and] not about making art forms but about changing the way the world works, making the world a better place, making life more artful."[13] The power of this William Morris-like aesthetic affirmation radiates back into the collective. In a profound moment of de-alienation, one member of Assemble states about her experience in Toxteth that, "the sense of community is much stronger than anywhere I've ever experienced in my whole life."[14] This same unassuming euphoria can also be seen in Assemble's group portrait in which their neatly choreographed bodies feign blue-collar toil while playfully making allusion to nineteenth-century forms of communal work. This curious, even jocular, detachment from "labor," underscores the group's blithe relationship to the complex political stakes involved in what they do. After all, theirs is not an image mocking work itself, but neither is it a classic depiction of nineteenth- or early twentieth-century emancipated socialist labor either. The group's ironic workerism is more likely a form of collectivism after modernism, as Blake Stimson and I termed this phenomenon, which is to say, it is communalism grounded in plasticity, unity founded on difference.[15] One might even describe it as "whatever" collectivism in so far as social solidarity is staged via a networked aesthetic, more than it is through physical togetherness or the immediate relationship to work.

Still, there is no satisfactory escape from the contradictions bound up with contemporary high culture, especially under present conditions of "bare art," as discussed in Part I of this volume. This is a post-avant-garde situation robbed of deep historical resources, and devoid of future utopias, with only the cunning technology of reuse available. Not surprisingly, one of its primary competencies is superimposing a certain spontaneous naïveté onto clever cosmopolitanism, precisely what we see manifest in Assemble's mass-selfie. Whatever real gains it may achieve, social regeneration art is tailor-made for a non-revolutionary now-time, covering up the effects of crisis with the infinite return of the same.

Gates

Perhaps no artist embodies this curious blend of urban sophistication and uninhibited enthusiasm better than the virtuosic Theaster Gates. Like Assemble, Gates ducks the label "artist" (or at least he does some of the time), and yet like Assemble he is the recipient of a distinguished art world prize, the Artes Mundi. Known for leveraging sizable sums of public and private capital, Gates purchases and renovates vacant real estate on

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Chicago's fiscally depressed and primarily Black South Side. Gates casually and somewhat credulously sets aside the label artist in order to describe his work as "practising things—practising life, practising creation."[16] His reputation is embellished with a delirious combination of real and fictional monikers such as designer, architect, social worker, archivist, and urban planner, with the last of these listed on his actual curriculum vitae along with ceramicist.[17] An African American originally from the Near West Side of Chicago, Gates has rehabilitated some 32 abandoned South Side homes in what he calls the Dorchester Project. Most of this work is carried out under the auspices of his non-profit umbrella organization the Rebuild Foundation. With 2014 assets of about half a million dollars, Rebuild is the quintessential embodiment of a sustainable, artist-driven regeneration enterprise. Its mission statement promises to reactivate "underutilized properties," invest in "creative entrepreneurs" and empower "neighborhood transformation" through artist-driven "Intentional Aesthetics," the latter term a possible tweak on the expression "intentional community."[18] Yet, while this represents Gates's community advocacy, it is a different side of his practice that most distinguishes him from Assemble.

Gates departs from his British counterparts in two fundamental ways. First, his connection to the University of Chicago, where he was appointed Director of the Arts + Public Life initiative in 2011, and, second, via his skillful capitalization of art world prestige and his own ethnic identification, resources mobilized not only for the South Side rejuvenation projects, but also for his individual art practice. By actively repurposing building and industrial materials such as lumber, wooden doors, tar, tires, roofing tiles, furniture, and even decommissioned fire hoses into works of art, Gates is able to sell these mixed-media assemblages for considerable sums of money at the top tier of the global art market while concurrently making reference to African American culture. While Assemble also retails what they call "upcycled" furniture made from urban detritus, so far these pieces have not rocketed to blue chip status; perhaps because not even the Turner Prize can overpower an art collector's preference to possess an individually authored art object. Notwithstanding the recent embrace of socially engaged art, when it comes to commercial investments by wealthy patrons, the art world remains a fundamentally conservative economic system, one that can, however, be repurposed. To whatever degree gambling with art as a financial investment strategy has always been present, playing itself out behind the closed doors of the art world, today there is no concealment needed: intervening within the system is an unabashed hallmark of *bare art*, just as financial scheming is of capitalism in general.

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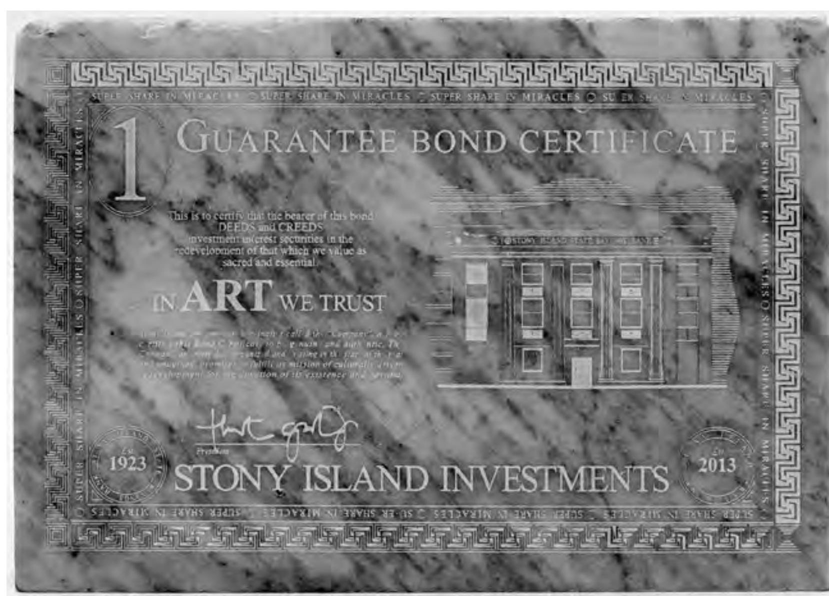

Figure 23 Theaster Gates, *Bank Bond*, limited edition artwork, 2013, marble, 6 1/8 × 8 5/8 × 13/16 in. (15.5 × 21.9 × 2.1 cm) © Theaster Gates. Photo © White Cube (Photo: Ben Westoby)

In 2012 Gates purchased the abandoned Stony Island Savings & Loan bank building from the city of Chicago for $1, repurposing a portion of its marble interior, including material from the water closet, into a limited edition of 100 "Bank Bonds," or more accurately, "Art Bonds." Acid-etched into each sardonic collectable is the motto "In Art We Trust." (Some of the marble came from the bank's urinals, thus reinscribing the Duchampian readymade not only with acid but also a dose of Nietzschean *ressentiment*?)[19] The following year at the Basel Art Fair in Switzerland Gates's White Cube gallery offered the satirical securities for $5,000 a piece: "I found myself with a failed bank, and here I was being invited to Basel, the land where banking never failed. So what did I do? I asked bankers to help me save my bank. That felt poetic."[20]

Gates exhibits a witty, even facetious, disposition towards money, including the question of how it is acquired and what it can do. The capacity to toggle back and forth between a market-based art practice and not-for-profit social entrepreneurship provides Gates with several advantages, including managing multiple taxable income streams and expenses such as his studio of assistants. This same financial *RealARTpolitik* carries over into virtually all of the artist's practices, sometimes appearing in a mischievous form

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as in the Duchampian "Art Bond" gambit, but at other times taking on a more indignant expression, almost as though one finally catches a glimpse behind the Gates phenomenon of a vexed class and racial frustration at work: "It's unreasonable to think that only collectors should have the luxury to be conscious of that [investment value of the art object], and that if an artist ever became conscious of the economics associated with the art world then they would no longer be pure. That's bullshit."[21]

Much of the power and moral authority of Gates's work derives from its engagement with race: "For as long as I can remember the everyday things of black people have had deep resonance for me … It's from this place of thankfulness and reverence that I start a more critical examination of how the world sees blackness and, by extension, how the world sees me."[22] The relationship between appearance and identity, especially in the visual art world, is too complex to tackle meaningfully in this chapter except to say that perhaps more than any other frequently cited socially engaged artist Gates's "unapologetically black" (his phrase) practice has singularly rebooted the color spectrum emitted by art as social intervention, permanently altering what African Canadian artist Deanna Bowen calls "optical politics."

What is curious here is that Gates is not the first artist of color to work in the medium of direct social engagement; that distinction typically goes to African American artist Rick Lowe's *Project Row Houses* (1993) that transform abandoned real-estate into art installation, and which is clearly a strong influence on Gates, but also Asian American Mel Chin's *Operation Paydirt* (2006–ongoing), if we stick with the social practice genealogies developed by Tom Finkelpearl, Shannon Jackson, Nato Thompson and Grant Kester, among others, and if we hold to Claire Bishop's 2006 historical bracket for the start of the "social turn."[23] Other precedents also exist in this regard, including Tania Bruguera's *Behavior Art School* (*Cátedra Arte de Conducta*, Havana, Cuba: 2002–2009); Coco Fusco's anti-Guantanamo Prison performance *Bare Life Study* (2005); William Pope.L's interactive cross-state vehicle *Black Factory* (2004); Daniel J. Martinez and VinZula Kara's West Side Chicago protest parade *Consequences of a Gesture* (1993); and also perhaps David Hammons infamous snowball vending action *Bliz-aard Ball Sale* (1983), or Adrian Piper's *Funk Lessons* (1983–1985, though Kester considers the latter more pedagogical than socially participatory). However, none of these social medium works by artists of color have made "blackness" a topic of discussion for social practice artists to the same degree, and in just a few short years, even before the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag went viral in 2013. Perhaps this is because, in a social practice field primarily populated by non-commercial careers, Gates has not shied

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away from an individual studio practice or from the market, thus bringing him into more eyeball-to-eyeball contact with the dominantly white art world pecking order. Or maybe it is because he has consistently asserted his *otherness* within this supposedly neutral, color-blind framework, as he did in a statement from a 2013 live-blog interview, "I don't have to perform blacker, but that I become blacker in the presence of all you white people."[24] And with regard to the artworks he produces for a largely white art world, "Black art is art that can triple code."[25]

Further complicating the riddle of Gates's meteoric career is that he was almost certainly introduced to the possibilities of material salvaging and creative reuse by fellow South Side (white) artist Dan Peterman. A long-time proponent of recycling who is better known in Europe than in the US, Peterman is also the co-founder of Experimental Station (ES), a mixed-use cultural center or "border institution," as Peterman describes it, where Gates has shared a small studio for the past decade along with a bicycle refurbishing shop, a local farmer's market, a vegan delicatessen and a documentary production studio known as Invisible Institute that was instrumental in forcing the city to release the sequestered dash-cam video of the 2014 police murder of black teenager Laquan McDonald.[26] Peterman owes his own association with the art of recycling to Chicagoan Ken Dunn, a waste reuse maestro who founded the Chicago Resource Center in 1973. Dunn began experimenting with urban sustainability by employing jobless South Side residents picking up discarded cans and bottles. First of its kind in the city, the Center now has over two dozen employees and hosts the Creative Reuse Warehouse where artists, among other reusers, pay modest fees to locate and release the possibilities latent within what Chicago had simply forsaken.[27] Peterman likens the idea of reuse to "a medieval economy or someplace where everything is still in the loop, where everything is being reworked, everything has the potential to be viewed with a new perspective."[28] However, the notion of keeping it small and keeping it local is simply not part of the "bare art" equation, or of an art world intent on unbounded expansion. By contrast, Peterman's recycling loop almost resembles an autonomous gray zone economy: "We can actually seriously build an economy for the city of Chicago based on what are conventionally conceived of as liabilities: all the vacant lots and vacant land, the food waste and yard waste can be turned into valuable compost and turned into farms that can provide materials."[29]

While Peterman and Dunn emphasize sustainable community-oriented economies that attempt to gain some degree of political autonomy, their approach to material reuse differs from Gates in so far as the latter

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extends his recycling strategies not only into the mainstream art market, using a more or less Duchampian strategy to attract the surplus value of art collectors, but also expands the paradigm into such highly ambitious regeneration undertakings as Dorchester Projects or the Stony Island Savings & Loan library.

Peterman's "recoverable liabilities" include for Gates not only housing stock, but also undervalued and underutilized human capital, thus his direct artistic intervention into the social as a material in its own right. In addition, with some 60 people now in his employ, and the prominent rejuvenation projects as proof, the artist has delivered a significant, though still largely symbolic retort to capital's problem of waste and surplus, material and labor. And, by gaming the autonomy of high art (real or not, artistic autonomy still has cachet in the market), Gates gradually expands his practice beyond its initial locality. While he cut his teeth on Chicago's South Side, the artist now insists his real challenge is "the same as it is in Liverpool, or wherever, it is: what do working people do now the industry has gone?"[30] As a lecturer and policy adviser in the ravaged Mid-West cities of Detroit and Gary, but also the austerity-choked nation of Greece and the racially and class divided city of Bristol, UK, Gates will likely be disseminating his Dorchester Project model far beyond Chicago.

In this broader context, the significance of the 2008 real estate bubble implosion for Gates's practice is impossible to overlook. The artist's first property was purchased with a sub-prime mortgage loan, and when the housing collapse hit Chicago he leveraged additional properties.[31] Simultaneously, post-crash quantitative easing by the US Federal Reserve helped to boost the upper tier of the art market, as historically low interest rates pushed capital towards stocks, but also art, whose notoriously opaque and unregulated market was flooded with cash. This was certainly a key reason why the art market did not collapse along with other high-income investment instruments, and one of the reasons why Gates's individual art practice could operate so effectively: there was stimulus money, guaranteed by the state, surging into the art market.[32] And if all of this peels back a layer or two to Gates's renown it is also important to note that hidden genealogies and economic stimuli are common to the under-theorized, and under-historicized, field of socially engaged art. Neither should this diminish the artist's effort to establish through his own creative reuse activities a Black art consciousness, though it does situate this ambition within a long history of such practices on Chicago's troubled South Side. Because, along with alternative economic experimentation and regeneration projects, this regeneration paradigm also collides with a decades-old, complex history

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of racial tension between the University of Chicago and the surrounding African-American community: the former consisting of a traditionally white and privileged enclave that for years virtually blockaded its campus from residents of the surrounding low-income African American South Side community. However, as sociologist Julia Rothenberg writes, with the hiring of Gates the university now suddenly appears as "a magnificently generous benefactor and font of support for Black cultural life in the community." Such is *RealARTpolitik* in the creative city.[33] And it is also possible that Gates, as well as other social practice artists such as Conflict Kitchen that I now turn to, really did began their projects by slyly mocking the creative city model itself, only to discover over time that they had become essentially indistinguishable from it.

Conflict Kitchen

An art project that poses as a successful fast-food restaurant in a post-industrial American city may seem like an odd inclusion in this chapter on regenerative social practices, but the creative city must be fed, figuratively, as well as literally, and the consumption of food is, after all, our primary embodied relationship to the abstract forces of social production (Gates has also recently opened up a coffee shop on Chicago's South Side he calls the Currency Exchange Café). Contemporary artists have approached commodification in their work for decades, primarily focusing on issues of fetishization in relation to the work of art itself. Approaching group consumption itself as a site of potential intervention is less typical, though precedents reach back to Rirkrit Tiravanija's gallery-framed curry dinners, or further to the artist-run FOOD restaurant in New York's SoHo art districted between 1971 and 1974,[34] but neither Tiravaniga nor FOOD was organized as an entrepreneurial social art project, especially one that could effectively be franchised to other regenerative city settings. In 2010 artists Jon Rubin and Dawn Weleski opened Conflict Kitchen (CK) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, "a take-out eatery that only serves food from countries with which the United States is in conflict."[35] Sometimes described as a "Trojan horse" by founder Rubin, CK specializes in a rotating menu of cuisine from Iran, Venezuela, Cuba, Afghanistan, North Korea, Palestine and, as of this writing, the indigenous nation's alliance of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy: all countries that are in political and/or military conflict with the United States.[36]

According to the project's website, CK operates seven days a week using "the social relations of food and economic exchange to engage the general

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public in discussions about countries, cultures, and people that they might know little about outside of the polarizing rhetoric of governmental politics and the narrow lens of media headlines." Fulfilling such a solemn mission involves cooking authentically prepared ethnic dishes and serving them in graphically designed informational wrappers that focus on the culture, people and politics of a given adversarial nation. Though CK offers diners a flavorful and inexpensive meal, it also compels patrons into an intimate encounter with their alleged enemies. In other words, there is a mischievous, even ironic dimension to the project's stated ambitions that reminds us that CK is also a work of contemporary art. Location also matters. Twice selected for an All American City Award (by contrast, New York City has never won), Pittsburgh is a small northeastern service-oriented city that nevertheless represents itself as a beer drinking, blue-collar sports town.[37] Pittsburgh is moderate in size and politically liberal in outlook, and CK has naturally attracted a great deal of local media attention. When CK began serving Iranian food in 2010, not only did they discover Pittsburgh's previously cloistered Persian community, which began to flock to their restaurant, but their project's regional media focus went national and then international.

With bright blue and gold colors alluding to ancient Persia, the "Kubideh" Kitchen wrapper included short paragraphs about such topics as the 1979 revolution, conflict with Israel, the US perception of Iran, and nuclear power, as well as such less charged subjects as tea, bread, film and fashion. But when, in the Fall of 2014, the kitchen staff began turning out traditional Palestinian meals, including Shawarma roasted chicken, falafel and baba ganoush, things got ugly. The new menu was wrapped up in a packaging design citing a range of topics raised by Palestinians living in Pittsburgh, but also from interviews conducted during a ten-day visit to Palestine in May, 2014 by CK director Rubin, and co-directors Weleski and chef Robert Sayer. One wrapper reads in part, "Israeli soldiers shot our friend Bassim [with a tear gas canister] it made a big hole in his chest and killed him. The canister was made in Western Pennsylvania." Still other short texts focus on marriage, dating and olive trees, and all of this was printed on CK food wrappers.[38]

Almost immediately after CK began to serve Palestinian food, the project received a death threat, forcing Rubin and Weleski to shut down operations for several days as authorities investigated. Previous to the threat, pressure from conservative Jewish organizations forced one of the project's sponsors, the University of Pittsburgh's Honors College, to withdraw their funding. CK later reopened under police protection but with heightened media attention from global news agencies including the *Washington Post*, *Al Jazeera*, the

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BBC and *El Mundo*. Media attention has grown steadily over the years with even *Tonight Show* humorist Jay Leno once referring to the art project in one of his stand-up routines. But this comedic connection is less baffling when one learns the importance of humor to Rubin's aesthetic tactics:

> Humor is the thing the visual arts have that gets you in the gut … I'm doing a project with my friend who lives in Iran to have a sitcom in Los Angeles and Tehran. The family will be stuck in two realities at the same time. The kid knows what's happening and the others don't. Conflict and miscommunication is the core of comedy.[39]

Rubin concludes by rhetorically asking if it is possible to "create an innocuous environment to bring up political issues without censorship?" The "Trojan horse" recipe he and Weleski operate from is clear. Smuggle politics in through the back door of a familiar setting, in this case a fast-food restaurant. This artistic subterfuge built upon CK's previous iteration as the Waffle Shop, a late night Pittsburgh eatery where customers could order vegan waffles and take part in a live television broadcast involving "the storytelling vernacular of a talk show."[40]

The Waffle Shop developed out of an undergraduate art seminar Rubin taught at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) between 2009 and 2012. Before long it evolved from a social art experiment into a full-fledged enterprise in which a series of rotating hosts conversed with patrons in the type of empty patter typical of televised talk show programming. Supported in part by the Center for the Arts in Society at CMU, though mostly funded by its own sales, the Waffle Shop was located in the East Liberty section of the city. According to a 2009 article in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* the once economically blighted neighborhood was "on a rocket's trajectory," with upscale food stores, hotels, a Home Depot and more than a dozen developers actively transforming its bankrupt infrastructure into an attractive target for capital investment.[41] As in so many similar rejuvenation scenarios, East Liberty's mostly black, low-income residents were systematically edged out of the neighborhood in order to make way for middle- and upper-income residents, who are also predominantly white.[42] Much of this renewal was taking place via public–private partnerships. In this regard, the Waffle Shop was both similar and different. Rubin managed to get a reduced rent from the landlord and that cost was picked up by CMU. At the same time the Waffle Shop soon managed to generate its own revenue from sales, reportedly employing some 450 students over the course of its business life.[43] Rubin's student-run art project operated between the

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hours of 10 p.m. and 3 a.m.; giving it the air of a nightclub for insomniacs. The Waffle Shop's curious mix of food enterprise plus a side of reality TV seemed made-to-measure for the so-called creative class: knowledge-based professionals whose flexible, adrenaline-charged work schedules favored a place with cheap coffee and sugary confections for knocking out that website design, concert deal or press release on a tight, redeye deadline.

In practice, however, most regular waffle eaters came from the Shadow Lounge, a late-night hip-hop music club located next door. That did not prevent Pittsburgh policy shapers from seeing the Waffle Shop as a creative cities type venture, useful for anchoring broader urban changes. Assistant city planning director for development and design cited the project when she stated "art can stimulate development. For example, the Waffle Shop became an East Liberty destination that contributed to the neighborhood's development buzz, officials said."[44]

Whether or not grabbing a midnight snack plus a side of *realitytainment* led to the kind of buzz that transformed the East Liberty neighborhood into one of the city's hottest rental locations is unclear but, as cuisine, the Waffle Shop ranked fair to good on Yelp.com.[45]

As television, it was no less trite than most broadcast fare. But as art, the Waffle Shop, just like Conflict Kitchen, put forth an imposing organizational model that Rubin insists, "hybridized many social identities as it simultaneously functioned as a restaurant, talk show, business venture, public artwork, and classroom."[46] What presumably keeps it ontologically grounded as contemporary art is CK's dialogically aesthetic ambition. For art historian Grant Kester, dialogical art draws indirectly on the ideas of Russian Formalist Viktor Shklovsky and German playwright Bertolt Brecht. At the start of the Russian Revolution in 1917, Shklovsky's technique of *ostranenie* (остранение) or defamiliarization sought to make what is familiar strange, thus freeing it from cultural ossification. Notably, his estrangement process contrasts with the aesthetic approach of artists Tatlin, Popova and Rodchenko, whose concept of Constructivism sought to replace existing cultural forms with a completely new society merging art and life. It was Brecht who blended aspects of both avant-garde tendencies in his own estrangement effect, by instructing actors to alienate their performance from traditional bourgeois theater's illusionary *mise-en-scène.* Ideally, once the fourth wall separating audience from stage was lifted, a real time-space remained behind in which candid and improvised reflections on art and politics and revolutionary change could unfold.

Sensing that the late twentieth-century neo-avant-garde had stripped these practices of their social and political context, Kester takes issue with

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the resulting tendency to serve up cultural alienation for its own sake, without the secondary process of critique, reflection and reassessment provided for in earlier avant-garde theories. Pointing to the paradox of "liberating" a subjugated population by cruelly negating the comfort of representational conventions and clichés, Kester proposes that the next step after shocking the viewer is engaging in participatory conversation about the shortcomings of existing social conditions. The resulting dialogical aesthetic aims to reimagine art and society as a more democratic collaborative project.[47] Curiously, CK splices Kester's dialogical aesthetic directly into the context of a carefully staged world of deception in which patrons' expectations are reprocessed through an intimate encounter with their alleged geopolitical enemies. That there is humor in this confrontational platform there is no doubt. Whether or not diners leave the kitchen more enlightened is difficult to assess, though perhaps Rubin and Weleski will make outcome evaluation part of their project going forward. Still, it is probably more accurate to suggest that both the Waffle Shop and CK's version of audience estrangement is not an attempt to resurrect pre-war avant-garde techniques, but instead derives from secondary or even tertiary pop-cultural sources, including *The Daily Show* and *Saturday Night Live*, whose reality television parodies and mock-news broadcasts borrow indirectly from early twentieth-century art innovators, including Brecht.[48]

Notably, Conflict Kitchen's name and mission closely resemble another food-related art project entitled Enemy Kitchen (EK) developed six years earlier by Iraqi-American artist Michael Rakowitz. While neither Rubin nor Weleski have officially commented on the similarities of the two projects, Rakowitz amiably grants that, "there is room in the world for both projects to exist." EK's origins are also in the classroom where, beginning in 2003, concurrent with the US invasion of Iraq, the artist taught middle-school students how to make his Iraqi-Jewish mother's chewy Kubba dumpling dish. The classroom became a space for "dispersing cooking technique and a space for conversation making as an act of resistance." EK later evolved into a Chicago food truck that employed US veterans of the Iraq War as sous-chefs/servers taking orders from Iraqi refugee chefs. The ensuing conversation between truck operators and residents is the heart of Rakowitz's project that he believes inverts power relations between military personnel and refugees so that "friction and discomfort is made visible."[49] Rakowitz, trained as a sculptor, explains that "instead of the kind of didactic approach Conflict Kitchen take with their wrappers, I am interested in having people in relation to the object": the paper plates on which EK's food is served are replicas of Saddam Hussein's hospitality dinnerware, and

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EK's kitchen knife was forged for Rakowitz by Hussein's personal sword maker. And while Rubin and Weleski have not sought to expand the range of what constitutes actual "conflict" to include their own city, one could easily imagine a curated African American cuisine phase, complete with wrappers exploring issues of displacement in a gentrifying creative city like Pittsburgh.[50]

Bare Art/Real Estate

Up to a point, Assemble, Gates's Dorchester Projects, the Waffle Shop and Conflict Kitchen all pivot on a similarly anomalous logic, in which participants' reality frame is undermined and sustained at one and the same time. On one hand this brings the laws of capital, as well as state and municipal regulators, directly into art's ontological frame. Whether post-Fordist capitalism now resembles art or vice versa, virtually everything we thought we knew about "serious" culture has been peeled away with astonishing force, leaving behind a raw, and in some ways vulnerable thing: a bare art world, fully congruent with the political and economic emergency that marks our contemporaneous present. On the other hand, in a society dominated by entrepreneurship and risk, such "real-world" practices as regenerative social art inevitably serve to map the tactics of a certain artistic vanguard directly onto the raw and unmediated capitalist reality of the twenty-first century.[51] Without contesting the dialogical value of these practices at a local level, as Marina Vishmidt warns, the transfer of art from the sphere of culture into the realm of real estate, contract law and business, permits:

> art to stop *being art*, or to stop being *only* art, and allows it to start playing a much more direct role as a channel of empowerment, governance, and even accumulation—if only of "social capital"—for specific communities and in specific contexts … we thus seem to be living through a moment of semantically frictionless yet socially devastating fusion between the social and capital.[52]

I would go a step further, but also one step back, by suggesting this slippery transition from art to life is more real than a mere semantic integration, one that is therefore free of neither class conflict nor racial and gender discord. Since contemporary art no longer has any meaningful contextual or formal limits, it is also no longer possible for any art practice to radically exceed or subvert the field's existing boundaries or discursive

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framing. This *bare art* condition is a state of cultural overexposure in which the horizon of art's future possibilities is also its infinite conventionality made visible as an exhausted canonical finitude, and it is not always clear that empowerment can be the result. *Bare art* has merged with life, while life is permeated by capital. What was once capital's crisis is now also that of art, institutionally as well as epistemologically and ontologically. What is overlooked by Vishmidt's understandable pessimism, therefore, is that this change of status forces art into an encounter with social frictions operating within capitalist forces of production. This is especially evident when socio-economic art practitioners mobilize the undervalued labor power of other artists for their own projects. Probably, almost certainly, it always was this way, though now, under the stark conditions of bare art, there is no reliable means of concealing this fact. The truth will out, leading to conflicts of a decidedly real-world nature once perceived as largely external to art.

In a 2009 University of Chicago public forum, Theaster Gates confessed to listeners that his temporary staff wanted "healthcare benefits … they want their family members to fly free to Documenta … they made me rich …what do I do?"[53] Musing on this situation, but also on divisions of labor within the contemporary art world in general, John Preus, a former Gates studio manager and fabricator, rhetorically asks:

> how is it that the image of labor is still so compelling? From the early yearnings to turn lead into gold, to the fountain of youth, we have returned to the blue collar transformations of hands and material as a sort of spiritual placeholder, reifying the Laborer as the inarticulate alchemist, the one whose knowledge of the material world is true and pure … Is this simply another instance of the poet falling in love with the shipbuilder, ostensibly amplifying the plight of the common man against the supposed frivolity of the upper classes and academics? Could we call this phenomenon Bluewashing? And how far can such populism stretch, as the celebrity of the artist increases?[54]

These days Gates produces his studio based art by himself, while assistants are deployed to fabricate projects related to the Rebuild Foundation side of the artist's career. Nevertheless, whenever "intentional aesthetic" practices tap into actual legal, economic and social production frameworks labor-related conflict inevitably arises. In August, 2015, staff members of Conflict Kitchen decided to form a union: "Inspired by food service workers across the country fighting for fifteen dollars an hour, we the workers of Conflict Kitchen have decided to come together to organize

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for living wages, fair benefits, and recognition of the key role we play in the [art] project."[55] The project's business success has required a staff including a full-time chef, a couple of management personnel and project researchers, as well as over a dozen kitchen employees, who voted to join Local 23 of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union in an effort to improve working conditions at CK. As one employee explains: "I've had eight jobs in Pittsburgh since I moved here ten months ago. Like Conflict Kitchen, not getting paid enough is the baseline for all of these jobs."[56] Another staff member, however, focuses on the aesthetic dimension of the job, reporting that, along with better wages:

> about half the staff wanted to be more involved in researching and programming. All of us are interested in harnessing our skills and interest and applying them to a project in a small way, and making more money and having the benefits we deserve will give us the power and confidence to make small changes and programing ideas that might change the direction of Conflict Kitchen.[57]

CK's employees have come to realize that they not merely artistic representations of food preparation workers who perform their tasks as if on display in some historical village re-enactment, but are instead actual food service employees on the payroll of a socially engaged art project known as Conflict Kitchen. No doubt Brecht would approve of this double estrangement procedure in which an allegedly non-alienated artistic labor force undertakes its own self-alienation in order to generate a more "real" mode of collective solidarity that demands recognition for the value it adds to a work of contemporary art, which also happens to be a profitable commodity. It is important to add that the CK labor conflict is directed less at Rubin and Weleski, or at the art project, than it is towards Carnage Mellon University (CMU) which contracts the kitchen's workers. Nevertheless, it is clear that a socially engaged artwork such as CK that is virtually interchangeable with reality also inevitably thrusts all of its participants into a day-to-day struggle with the legal, inter-social, and economic minutiae of contemporary life operating beyond the sphere of autonomous art's safety zone. That same up-scaling of an art work to fully synchronize with life, in fact to become interchangeable with the everyday world, would once upon a time been celebrated as a triumph for the avant-garde but, under current circumstances, this shift reflects conditions particular to the crisis of capitalism, as well as art's own response to the impoverished status of the bare art world.

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Social Practice/Social Labor

The ethos of socially engaged art makes managing worker-oriented concerns an especially knotty affair. Which is to say, in a bare art world, contemporary artists, especially social practice "regenerative" artists, find many of the conflicts and dilemmas inherent to autonomous bourgeois art not only remain in effect, but have now been raised up to a higher level of concreteness. While Rubin and Weleski allowed the CK unionization to take place, and Gates has publicly struggled with such issues, there is a broader transformation under way as contemporary art and labor disputes spread.

Since the 2008 economic crisis we find art fabricators, cultural interns, studio managers and so forth collectively growing more assertive about their right to better working conditions and higher pay. In early summer of 2016, art world megastar Jeff Koons is alleged to have abruptly "laid off" 14 of his painting staff in response to an attempt at unionization. Whether or not this proves accurate is perhaps less important that the fact it seems perfectly plausible because enterprise culture has made such day-to-day conflicts just another facet of the bare art world phenomenon. To these

Figure 24 Fight for 15 (dollars per hour wages) take-away cup o' noodles with statements and portraits of pro-union Conflict Kitchen workers on each lid (pictured is former CK employee Mr. Trevor Jenkins). A project by Madalyn Hochendoner and Clara Gamalzki.

(Courtesy the artists)

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labor-related tensions we can add the activism of WAGE (Working Artists for the Greater Economy), Arts & Labor, Gulf Labor, GULF (Global Ultra Luxury Faction), Debtfair, and BFAMFAPhD.org discussed in the Introduction to Part I, "Welcome to Our Art World," but also the recently formed UK Artists' Union England, the art as social factory research of the Slow/Free University of Warsaw, the investigation of divisions of artistic labor by the European think-tank Former West and, even as I write this, the Guerrilla Girls are organizing a joint action with the Precarious Workers Brigade in London focusing on unpaid art world internships, and WAGE is preparing to roll-out a new coalition program called *WAGENCY* that seeks to go beyond issues of fair pay to tap into the developing political potential of artistic labor in general, while in in the Basque region of Spain the educational staff of the Guggenheim Bilbao are protesting in the streets to denounce the "McDonaldization" of major museums by arguing, "We live a moment without precedents in museum history, which has lost respect for the cultural worker, turned into staff throwaway."[58]

This is not a comprehensive list. What it evinces, however, is the fact that we are experiencing a phase of long-overdue reflection, advocacy and action focused on the working conditions of artists and cultural workers. This reaction is spurred on by the chronically unmanageable repercussions of the financial collapse. But if cultural labor's response is to rise above the important, though limited, need to improve the distribution of art world benefits by addressing deeper structural and political concerns, it may depend on our ability to link present conditions of bare art to the crisis and delirium of capital. As capitalism's long-term contradictions deepen, in the form of an ever-weirder symptomatology of bizarre negative interest rates, persistent underemployment and excess populations, an oversupply of artists and an ever-accelerating series of Ponzi-like schemes involving bubble-and-burst debt and investment cycles, fundamental questions arise about the role of art. Art now speaks the grammar of finance, doing so with such aptitude that no accent is evident (though one is frequently affected), but labor disputes and signs of class struggle arise within it. At the same time, the sincere and sprightly good will of socially committed artists and urban rejuvenators stretches out far beyond the province of high culture in a desperate search for a solution to the failures of neoliberal capitalism, and mainstream art prizes are awarded to them. Even though the art world is insulated from the economic effects of crisis, it becomes disorganized by it. One newly advertised project in NYC pretty much sums up the situation with uncanny precision (and note the reference to "Intentional Community"): "Art Condo is a professional real estate project and an

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'Intentional Community' based in the social sculpture ideas of Joseph Beuys [and] a community-drive real estate enterprise that helps creative individuals purchase and develop buildings, collectively, in partnership with neighborhood residents."[59]

Expect more, not less, of these hybridized art and business enterprises as the crisis drags on. More Beuys-inspired condos, pop-up cultural ventures, university-funded art eateries and public–private creative place-making initiatives. However, if cultural entrepreneurship and creative reuse represent art's gift to capital, the gift is not free of a contaminating animus, or even a degree of venom. On the one hand, we find low-income residents and communities of color raising charges of "art-washing" and heightened gentrification when such projects are brought into discussion. On the other hand, social regeneration art illustrates a means of temporarily reappropriating and distorting mainstream market enclosures, adding local value to people and spaces abandoned by capital. In the crisis management portfolio, social regenerative practices are one tool among others, and probably the preferred mechanism for taming, or at least seeming to, a system spinning out of control: small in scale but high in visibility, such projects keep at arm's length difficult ideological questions about the role that state and municipal agencies might play in moderating the deleterious effects of capitalism.

In order to save itself, capital goes to extraordinary lengths, absorbing alien modes of production into its repertoire of perseverance, including experimental modalities of avant-garde art, even if these are assimilated only superficially, at a formal level. And yet the more capital subsumes what was once "other" to it, including labor as Negri and others pointed out decades ago, or the reproductive systems of biopower as Federici and other feminists have insisted, or dark matter creativity for that matter, the more capital returns to itself the destructured society it has created, sometimes with a vengeance.

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liberated some of the most expensive real estate in the world and turned a privatized square into a magnetic public space and catalyst for protest." Mike Davis, "No More Bubble Gum," *Los Angeles Review of Books*, October 21, 2011. Available at, http://tumblr.lareviewofbooks.org/post/11725867619/no-more-bubble-gum.

4. According to a 2014 report by Coalition for the Homeless, the number of homeless families soared after Mayor Bloomberg took office. See Sate of the Homeless 2013: http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/state-of-the-homeless-2014/. Since that time conditions have continued to worsen in NYC.
5. *Village of the Damned* was based on the novel *The Midwich Cuckoos* by John Wyndham, and was first made into a film in 1960, directed by Wolf Rilla, followed by a 1963 sequel entitled *Children of the Damned* by Anton Leader, and a 1995 remake of the original by John Carpenter.
6. The librarians are quoted in "Destruction of Occupy Wall Street 'People's Library' Draws Ire," *Guardian*, November 23, 2011, www.guardian.co.uk/world/blog/2011/nov/23/occupy-wall-street-peoples-library.
7. For more on my concept of cultural dark matter see Sholette, *Dark Matter: Art and Politics in the Age of Enterprise Culture*, Pluto Press, 2011, as well as chapter 9 in this volume, page 00.
8. "We Are Free People," editorial *Occupied Wall Street Journal*, November 20, 2011, http://occupiedmedia.us/2011/11/we-are-free-people/.
9. "After Conversations with Occupy Wall Street Organizers, Shepard Fairey Releases Revised 'Occupy Hope' Design," November 21, 2011, https://obeygiant.com/occupy-hope-v2/.
10. From two e-mails to the author dated August 6 and August 7, 2011.
11. Jason Adams, "Occupy Time," *Critical Inquiry*, November 16, 2011, http://critinq.wordpress.com/2011/11/16/occupy-time/#more-191.
12. "Occupied Berkeley, 'The Necrosocial'," November 18, 2009, http://anticapitalprojects.wordpress.com/2009/11/19/the-necrosocial/.

7 *Art after Gentrification*

1. *Creative New York*, Center for an Urban Future report, June 2015, https://nycfuture.org/research/creative-new-york-2015, 23.
2. Kerstin Stakemeier and Marina Vishmidt, *Reproducing Autonomy: Work, Money, Crisis and Contemporary Art*, Mute Books, May 2016, 42.
3. A "flash mob" is an assembly of individuals gathered via networking technology to carry out what appears to be a spontaneous short-lived, though typically absurd activity such as dancing or singing in a predetermined public space and just as quickly dispersing again.
4. Google Image search, August 12, 2016.
5. Assemble website: http://assemblestudio.co.uk/?page_id=1030.
6. The 1981 riots are often considered the result of a surge in unemployment amongst Toxteth's largely black community that was already suffering as a result of Margaret Thatcher's monetarist economic policies. Alan Travis, "Thatcher Government Toyed with Evacuating Liverpool after 1981 Riots," *Guardian*, December 29, 2011, www.theguardian.com/uk/2011/dec/30/thatcher-government-liverpool-riots-1981.
7. Eleanor Lee, interviewed by Oliver Wainwright for "The Street that Might Win the Turner Prize: How Assemble are Transforming Toxteth," *Guardian*, May 15, 2015.

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8. On the British government's abandonment of the region see Travis, "Thatcher Government Toyed with Evacuating Liverpool after 1981 Riots."
9. According to www.arscapediy.org "Creative Placemaking is an evolving field of practice that intentionally leverages the power of the arts, culture and creativity to serve a community's interest while driving a broader agenda for change, growth and transformation in a way that also builds character and quality of place." See http://www.artscapediy.org/Creative-Placemaking/Approaches-to-Creative-Placemaking.aspx.
10. California's Hollywood Boulevard implemented an Arts Retention Program to "preserve arts and cultural renovations," which amounted to preserving two theaters. This is celebrated by the NEA as a means of "Avoiding Displacement and Gentrification," from Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa, *Creative Placemaking*, NEA, 2010, 17, https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/CreativePlacemaking-Paper.pdf.
11. Josephine B. Slater and Anthony Iles, "No Room to Move: Radical Art and the Regenerate City," *MUTE* Journal, November 24, 2009, www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/no-room-to-move-radical-art-and-regenerate-city.
12. Claire Bishop "The Social Turn: Collaboration and Its Discontents," *Artforum,* February, 2006, 179–185.
13. Keiligh Baker, "A Spruced-up Council Estate …," *Daily Mail*, May 12, 2015: www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3078395/Spruced-council-estate-one-year-s- Turner-Prize-hopefuls.html. That said, it is also fair to say that Assemble has built their practice upon models developed by such collectives and individuals as Park Fiction, www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/parkfiction/; Rick Lowe's *Project Row Houses*, http://projectrowhouses.org/; Dan Peterman's Experimental Station, http://experimental station.org; and the Baltimore Development Cooperative, http://miscprojects.com/tag/baltimore-development- cooperative/
14. From a Bloomberg Tate Museum short documentary about Assemble at, www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tramway/exhibition/turner-prize-2015/turner-prize-2015-artists-assemble.
15. Blake Stimson and Gregory Sholette (eds.) *Collectivism after Modernism: Art and Social Imagination after 1945*, University of Minnesota Press, 2006.
16. Gary Younge, "Theaster Gates, the Artist Whose Latest Project is Regenerating Chicago," *Guardian*, October 6, 2014, www.theguardian.com/society/2014/oct/06/theaster-gates-artist-latest-project-is-regenerating-chicago-artes-mundi.
17. White Cube gallery, http://whitecube.com/artists/theaster_gates/information/theaster_gates_cv/
18. The Rebuild Foundation is at, https://rebuild-foundation.org/. The concept of "intentional community" is discussed in the chapter 11 in this volume, page 00.
19. Without expressly saying so, Gates's *Art Bonds* appear to reference Duchamp's 1919 *Tzanck Check*, a hand-drawn $115 check drawn on the artist's fictitious institution "The Teeth Loan & Trust Company Consolidated of New York."
20. Cited in Andrew M. Goldstein, "Theaster Gates on Using Art (and the Art World) to Remake Chicago's South Side," *Artspace*, September 24, 2015, www.artspace.com/magazine/interviews_features/qa/theaster-gates-interview-53126.
21. Ibid.
22. Enrico, "Theaster Gates: Black Archive/Kunsthaus Bregenz," VernissageTV, April 25, 2016, http://vernissage.tv/2016/04/25/theaster-gates-black-archive-kunsthaus-bregenz/.
23. Bishop, "The Social Turn."

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24. Live blog—Walid Raad and Theaster Gates in Conversation, with Mohsen Mostafavi, "On Art and Cities," http://archinect.com/lian/live-blog-walid-raad-and-theaster-gates-in-conversation-with-mohsen-mostafavi-on-art-and-cities.
25. Cited from email to the author from Theaster Gates on November 3, 2016: 6:13 a.m.
26. Laquan McDonald was shot 16 times by a white officer on Chicago's South Side who was subsequently charged with first degree murder. See Invisible Institute's *Citizens Police Data Project*, https://cpdb.co/data/L5Kg6A/citizens-police-data-project; on Peterman and Gates see Rachel Cromidas, "In Grand Crossing, a House Becomes a Home for Art," *New York Times*, April 7, 2011, www.nytimes.com/2011/04/08/us/08cncculture.html?_r=0.
27. The Chicago Creative Reuse Center is at http://resourcecenterchicago.org/.
28. Peterman and Dunn interviewed by A. Laurie Palmer in *Immersive Life Practices*, Daniel Tucker (ed.) *The Chicago Social Practice History Series*, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 2014, 186.
29. Ibid., 186.
30. Cited in Tim Adams, "Chicago Artist Theaster Gates: 'I'm Hoping Swiss Bankers Will Bail Out My Flooded South Side Bank in the Name of Art,'" *Guardian*, May 3, 2015, www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/may/03/theaster-gates-artist-chicago-dorchester-projects.
31. John Colapinto, "The Real-Estate Artist," *New Yorker Magazine*, January 20, 2014, www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/01/20/the-real-estate-artist; see also Kim Charnley, "Theaster Gates's Dorchester Projects and the Craft Paradigm," Plymouth College of Art website, http://makingfutures.plymouthart.ac.uk/accepted-abstracts/theaster-gates-s-dorchester-projects-and-the-craft-paradigm/.
32. Ivan Lindsay, "An Unintended Consequence of QE: An Art Market Boom," September 10, 2013, http://stremmelgallery.com/art-word-an-unintended-consequence-of-quantitative-easing-an-art-market-boom/.
33. Julia Rothenberg, cited from an unpublished presentation "Theaster Gates: Chicago's Entrepreneurial Artist," Presented at International Sociological Association meeting in Vienna, Austria, July 12, 2017.
34. Rirkrit Tiravanija's first *pad thai* art work/dinner took place in the Paula Allen Gallery in NYC in 1990 and was celebrated soon after as a form of "relational aesthetics" by critic and curator Nicolas Bourriaud. The cooperative restaurant known as FOOD was founded by Gordon Matta-Clark, Carol Goodden and Tina Girouard in 1971 and closed three years later. It was located on the corner of Prince and Wooster Streets in downtown Manhattan at a time when the New York artists' community was both local and relatively small. FOOD literally helped lay an affective foundation for the city's art world apart from commercial interests. The cooperative was celebrated in 2013 not by a scholarly museum exhibition, or even with a relational aesthetic art project, but by a curated restaurant by Cecilia Alemani installed at the Frieze Art Fair.
35. Conflict Kitchen website: http://conflictkitchen.org/.
36. Trojan horse comments made by Rubin and Weleski during a presentation to ASJWG (Art & Social Justice Working Group) at the Brooklyn home of Paul Ramirez Jonas, February 19, 2015.
37. Pittsburgh was once the anchor of US steel production; today the majority of job occupations there are not working class, but service and administrative related, including office support (16.8%), sales (10.5%), food preparation (8.9%), health

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care (7.2%), education (5.7%), business and finance (5.1%), management (4%). By contrast, construction, maintenance, transportation, production, farming and fishing are only 20.5% of total regional employment, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2015, www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/news-release/occupationalemploymentandwages_pittsburgh.htm.

38. See: "New Palestinian Interview Wrappers" online at, http://conflictkitchen.org/2015/04/16/new-palestinian-interview-wrappers/.
39. MIT Comparative Media Studies website, http://cmsw.mit.edu/video-conflict-kitchen-jon-rubin/.
40. Jon Rubin's website, www.jonrubin.net/#/the-waffle-shop-talk-show/.
41. Diana Nelson Jones, "East Liberty Becomes a Vibrant Community," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, June 8, 2009.
42. "The city's housing policies over the past four decades led to 'the forced migration of black people from Pittsburgh to the suburbs,' with the black population declining to 79,789 in 2010 from about 102,000 in 1980, a 22 percent drop," Tom Fontaine, Hill District group: as quoted in "Civic Arena Plan Unfair to Black Residents," *Trib Live*, January 7, 2016, http://triblive.com/news/allegheny/9737974-74/housing-affordable-black.
43. Adrian McCoy, "Waffle Shop to Close in East Liberty in July," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, June 22, 2012, www.post-gazette.com/ae/tv-radio/2012/06/22/Waffle-Shop-to-close-in-East-Liberty-in-July/stories/201206220215.
44. Joe Smydo, "Program Designed to Expand Artwork through Pittsburgh," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, August 13, 2012, www.post-gazette.com/local/neighborhoods/2012/08/13/program-designed-to-expand-artwork-through-pittsburgh/201208130125.
45. Customer reviews from Yelp.com include: "I wouldn't go here for the food alone, but it is a neat little venue with a live talk show, which is something you don't see every day." "Pretty good, actually, but not worth a detour." "The format is irrefutably weird." "Quirky spot. Great for a late night bite." www.yelp.com/biz/waffle-shop-pittsburgh.
46. Artist Jon Rubin's website, www.jonrubin.net/the-waffle-shop-talk-show-1/.
47. Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, University of California Press, 2004.
48. Both programs emerged from Chicago's satirical comedy troupe *The Second City* whose founder, Paul Sills, in turn employed both the improvisational techniques made famous by Viola Spolin, but also the radical cabaret theater of Bertolt Brecht as reported in Stephen E. Kercher, *Revel with a Cause: Liberal Satire in Postwar America*, University of Chicago Press, 2010, 122.
49. All quotes are from a telephone interview with Mike Rakowitz, conducted March 1, 2015.
50. CK has featured a two-day menu created by local African American and Caribbean chefs celebrating "Juneteenth" (June 19–20), which marks the date in 1865 that Texas finally abolished slavery, thus bringing all states into accordance with President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of 1863.
51. Even MoMA has organized an exhibition entitled Tactical Urbanism, with mixed socioeconomic implications, as reviewer Neil Brenner argues in "Is 'Tactical Urbanism' an Alternative to Neoliberal Urbanism?" http://post.at.moma.org/content_items/587-is-tactical-urbanism-an-alternative-to-neoliberal-urbanism.

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52. Marina Vishmidt, "Mimesis of the Hardened and Alienated: Social Practice as Business Model," e-flux, 2013, www.e-flux.com/journal/43/60197/mimesis-of-the-hardened-and-alienated-social-practice-as-business-model/.
53. Cited from an unpublished internet article by Eric Spitznagel on the author's website, www.ericspitznagel.com/unpublished-stories/theaster-gates-inc/.
54. Excerpted from an unpublished memoir by John Preus shared with the author on August 23, 2016, 12:12 p.m.
55. "Conflict Kitchen: Fight for 15", FaceBook page, www.facebook.com/conflict kitchenworkers/?hc_ref=SEARCH.
56. "Edmund" interviewed on "Conflict Kitchen: Fight for 15," ibid.
57. From a telephone interview with Conflict Kitchen employee Clara Gamalski, October 29, 2015.
58. WAGENCY: Artist Certification & Coalition is, according to WAGE, "intended to build economic and political solidarity among artists by uniting them around shared principles of equity"; and on the Guggenheim Bilbao, www.laizquierdadiario.com/Educadores-del-Museo-Guggenheim-de-Bilbao-despedidos-por-hacer-huelga.
59. NYC Art Condo website is at http://artcondo.com.sign-up/.

Introduction III: Critical Praxis/Partisan Art

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2. Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*, Princeton University Press, 2001; Richard Lloyd, *Neo-Bohemia: Art and Commerce in the Neoliberal City*, Routledge, 2010; Neil Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*, Routledge, 1996.
3. David Garcia and Geert Lovink, "The ABC of Tactical Media," 1997, http://subsol.c3.hu/subsol_2/contributors2/garcia-lovinktext.html
4. Federal Reserve Board chair Alan Greenspan described the early 1990s technology bubble as "irrational exuberance" at a meeting of the American Enterprise Institute in 1996, immediately pushing the stock market lower, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irrational_exuberance.
5. Gregory Zuckerman, "Hedged Out: How the Soros Funds Lost Game of Chicken Against Tech Stocks", *Wall Street Journal*, May 22, 2000, www.wsj.com/articles/SB958944195758535588.
6. Lawrence Lessig, *Code and Other Laws of Cyberspace*, Basic Books, 1999, 167.
7. The essay "Collective Silence" also fed directly into the development of the book, Blake Stimson and Gregory Sholette (eds.) *Collectivism after Modernism*: *Art and Social Imagination after 1945*, University of Minnesota Press, 2006.
8. *The Matrix*, directed by Lana and Lilly Wachowski, Warner Bros.,1999.
9. Slavoj Zizek's Lacanian-inspired exposition of the film, "The Matrix, or, the Two Sides of Perversion," appeared online after my essay was completed. See www.lacan.com/zizek-matrix.htm.
10. Antonio Negri, *Marx beyond Marx*, Bergin & Garvey, 1984; Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Labor of Dionysus*, University of Minnesota Press, 1994.
11. Antonio Negri, "Capitalist Domination and Working Class Sabotage," 1979, Red Notes, https://libcom.org/library/capitalist-domination-working-class-sabotage-negri.

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