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Repurposing the Black Arts Movement on the South Side of Chicago

Abstract: This chapter explores an instance of how the arts and culture led urban rebranding projects so central to the new urban economy play out in African American communities. Under the direction of the University of Chicago in collaboration with Theaster Gates, an African American artist, educator, entrepreneur and Chicago's South Side native who has carved out a powerful position as a creative-pacemaker and arts impresario at the university a number of such projects are unfolding around the university and in the neighboring impoverished Black communities. I place these developments in the context the history of racial segregation in Chicago, the ongoing role of the university as a major growth coalition partner and debates regarding creative development strategies in the neoliberal city. Perhaps most importantly, this chapter attempts to understand how and to what ends the highly political art of the Black Arts Movement is being resignified in the new era of market fundamentalism which, interestingly, owes its ideological underpinnings to the Chicago School of economics. By contrasting the urban context in which the Chicago Black Arts Movement emerged and its deployment today I hope to shed light on, in particular, the racialized dimensions of creative city processes.

Keywords: Creative Placemaking, Black Arts Movement, Chicago, university industrial complex, neoliberal urbanism, growth coalition, segregation, gentrification, Theaster Gates

Back when jazz was king on the south side of Chicago
I still can hear those silver trumpets blowin' in little places filled with people glowin'
New Orleans was groovy Memphis light and gay
And who could put down New York's Broadway
But there was everything on the south side of Chicago
I still can hear those...
Yes there was everything on the south side of Chicago
Ray Price, 1960's

Put your left foot in front of your right foot and walk wit me
Through the city of chi where Vultures be
Have you heard that the city cried
Sociologists be tellin' me the city died
From all the murderin', gang bangin' and drug dealin'
Every 30 hours they find another body with some slugs in 'em
And ain't blood in it…
Don't underestimate the south side
Come in actin' like you hard they'll leave your mouth wide

And on the east there's no peace
Catch one in the head and end up dead in the streets
And don't attempt to try the west side
They'll kill you just to show ya that they the best side
This is the city where the vultures be
So put your left foot in front of your right foot and walk wit me
DA Smart "Walk Wit Me," 1994

1. Introduction

As reluctance to invest in undervalued Black and Brown neighborhoods fades and Black professionals return to neighborhoods from which their parents fled decades ago (Patillo, 2010, Prince, 2017), stakeholders deploy culturally specific forms of arts-investment and promotion in upscaling and revitalization projects. Neighborhoods like Harlem in New York and Bronzeville in Chicago derive symbolic capital from their musical, literary and visual urban histories (Chronopoulis, 2016, Goldstein, 2017). Efforts to highlight the history of Black art and culture help educate the public about these important American cultural movements and provide space for intellectuals, artists and other community members to discuss current issues around race and culture. They also help lure Black professionals to purchase homes and invest in undervalued Black communities. Inevitably, however, as the examples of Harlem, Bedford Stuyvesant, Fort Greene, Bronzeville, and elsewhere demonstrate (Chronopoulis, 2016) this investment also increases land value and the accompanying displacement of poor and working-class Black residents. Thus, the ambivalent tendencies inherent in arts-driven revitalization projects[1] take on specific characteristics in the context of African American communities, whose

[1] In the context of neoliberal urban development, the impact of public and private arts-driven investment is always ambivalent. Investment in the arts provides opportunities for artists and their publics to create and disseminate their work. At the same time, enhanced opportunities to consume art and culture attracts tourists, developers, professionals and members of the creative class who are able to pay more for housing and other services, thus driving up rents and displacing artists, small businesses and other lower-income residents from their communities (Lloyde, 2010, Mele, 2000).

members have a long history of exclusion from urban resources and have been the victims of state and civil violence. Along the way, these communities have nurtured art forms that represent a creative response to adverse conditions. In the wake of the Civil Rights era, race has become less relevant than class, at least in terms of access to housing and other urban amenities. In this context, the specific dilemmas raised by arts-led development are further complicated by tension between intra-race class conflict and ideals of racial cohesion and community which were, to a degree, reinforced by segregation (Boyde, 2008).

Questions about how arts and culture led urban rebranding projects so central to the new urban economy play out in African American communities remain underexplored in the literature on creative placemaking, gentrification and neoliberal urbanism. I investigate one such instance of this phenomenon occurring on the South Side of Chicago, under the direction of the University of Chicago, a key stakeholder on the South Side, in collaboration with Theaster Gates, an African American artist, educator, entrepreneur and South Side native who has carved out a powerful position as a creative place-maker at the university and its surrounding communities. While Gates has an impressive career as an artist in his own right and while his and the university's activities harness a variety of types of art practice, I focus primarily on the influence of the art of the Chicago arm of the Black Arts Movement (BAM) - which emerged in the late 1960's in the United States as a cultural expression of the aims of the Black Power Movement (BPM) - in these placemaking projects.

The emergence of BAM coincided with the period in which the US Welfare State, under the direction of the Johnson administration, crafted policy to address the problems of urban rebellion through federally funded community engagement initiatives. I address the question of how and to what purpose

this art has been resuscitated after the decline of the Welfare State and the rise of what scholars beginning in the late 1970's call the "entrepreneurial city" (Harvey, 1989, Logan and Molotch, 1987, Mollenkopf, 1988). By contrasting the urban context in which the Chicago BAM took hold with its current role in urban restructuring I hope to shed light on the racialized dimensions of creative city processes.

2. Culture and Community Development in Hyde Park/Kenwood

Gun violence, poverty and other symptoms of urban blight dominate popular representations of Chicago's South side. Less is known about its significance as a hotbed of Black Power activism and the Black Arts Movement in the 1960's and 1970's. Manifestations of the BAM in Chicago include the Association of for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), the visual arts group AfriCOBRA (African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists), OBAC (Organization of Black American Culture) and the Chicago mural movement. Earlier, Chicago's Black Renaissance, closely identified with figures such as Gwendolyn Brooks, Richard Wright, Margaret Burroughs and Archibald Motley (Bone, et. al., 2011) paralleled the rise of Black owned Johnson Publishing company, which, through its history from the 1940s through the first decades of the 21st century published the world-renowned Black lifestyle magazines Ebony and Jet, was one of the nation's largest and most prestigious Black owned businesses (Green, 2009).

I grew up in the 1960's and 1970s' on the South Side of Chicago in a neighborhood called Hyde Park/Kenwood (hereafter referred to as "Hyde Park"). Before it developed a national reputation as the home turf of President Barak Obama – who lived, taught and organized there - Hyde Park was most

often associated with the prestigious University of Chicago, an institution which dominates the community economically and culturally.

Staid, well-tended and elegant close to the university, Hyde Park became a little seedy around the edges, where the homes of prosperous university professors and administrators gave way to student apartments, SROs, delis, barber shops, liquor stores and beauty salons. The streets closest to the campus were well lit and patrolled by the university's extensive private security force. As the neighborhood fanned out, closer to the mostly Black and low-income communities to the North, West and South, pedestrians were more careful. These streets were disproportionally represented in the crime reports listed in the neighborhood newspapers. Further afield, outside of the boundaries of the neighborhood proper, lay some of the most impoverished and segregated neighborhoods in Chicago. These communities were like another world to middle-class Hyde Park residents, Black and White alike, and forays there endeavored with extreme caution if not downright fear.

Hyde Park also stands out as one of the most racially integrated communities (Jakobi, 2013) in a city known for extreme levels of racial segregation (Williams, 2019). Indeed, despite the university's influence, there remained a strong presence of African American culture in the neighborhood. This was felt during my childhood, when the cultural nationalism of post-civil rights Black politics continued to have an impact on the African American community in Hyde Park, and the Black Panthers were active in the neighborhoods of Hyde Park's surrounding "Black belt."

These communities, referred to as "hyper-ghettos" by the sociologist Loïc Wacquant (2007), were hit hard by several decades of depopulation, retrenchment, unemployment, disinvestment, gang and police violence and the 2008 economic crisis (Semuels, 2018, Weber, 2015). The conditions with which their residents struggle were exacerbated by one of the most ruthless neoliberal urban regimes in the US, led by Mayor Rahm Emanuel (from 2011-2019), Obama's former White House chief of staff, who enjoys close ties with both the university and with Gates. Under Emanuel, dubbed "the mayor of the 1%," Chicago residents saw mayoral cover-ups of police violence, the largest number of public-school closings in history, the shuttering of half of the mental health clinics, most of them in poor, African American neighborhoods and the gutting of public housing (Joravsky, 2019). Like mayors throughout the US, he has given huge tax breaks to mega corporations, including $2 billion to Amazon to attract the company's new headquarters (Bennett, et. al. 2017).

Hyde Park was a neighborhood that avoided change. The book stores, student restaurants, one or two low-key student bars, a handful of bars and restaurants catering to a primarily Black clientele remained as I remembered them year after year. And then, rapidly, things began to change. While the hotels, expensive restaurants and hip coffee shops that began to populate the neighborhood's commercial districts were jarring to me, what interested me most was the cultural activity and arts investment that had taken hold, much of which was devoted to highlighting African American artists and movements past and present. Almost overnight, it seemed, Hyde Park residents could choose from an array of cultural offerings, many of which were free of charge, almost every day of the week. These offerings were spilling out past the boundaries between Hyde Park and the neighboring Black communities, with a dotting of galleries and film and performance venues amidst the derelict spaces of the depopulating neighborhoods to the South and West.

I soon learned these new offerings were part of a coordinated program on the part of the University of Chicago, in collaboration with Gates, to bolster the university and the surrounding neighborhoods' appeal to students, faculty and potential South Side visitors. These spaces have contributed to a resurgence of cultural opportunities for Black artists and Black and White professionals. More complicated is Gates' (and to a degree the university's) claim that this cultural development will ultimately benefit the poor and working-class black residents who have been relegated to under-resourced neighborhoods through a history of racial covenants, redlining, slum clearance and other structural and individual acts of exclusion and violence (Massey and Denton, 1993). The development strategies deployed by the University of Chicago in concert with Theaster Gates exemplify the fairly recent phenomenon in which Black arts and culture are enlisted in creative city style development and therefore deserve close attention as a case study.

3. Who is Theaster Gates?

> *Artists don't gentrify places; we bring life through our energy. Cities, development companies, legislation, real estate agents, and profit-seeking fund managers see a place that has potential and their chief concern is maximizing profits. The period from blight to gentrification encompasses intense urban mechanisms that are too broad, expensive and complex to blame on artists. The arts bring light. The work that has to happen now requires a commitment to equity, opportunity and balance. These values have to be loaded into our fierce commitment to wealth creation*. Theaster Gates (2019)

As a global art star, public speaker, entrepreneur, urban visionary, non-profit director and head of several prestigious institutes and initiatives at the University of Chicago, Gates wears a number of interrelated and powerful hats. Gates' art works, about which I will not go into detail, employ Social

Practice principles (Gates, 2018) (of which he considers his real estate activities to be a part[2]), repurposed and found materials and more traditional media and engage themes of racism, African American culture and the Black experience in America.

In a short period of time, Gates has garnered power, accolades and recognition (Leduc, 2019) due in large part to his activities on the South Side of Chicago. He has won numerous prizes and prestigious grants for his art and his urban development projects (e.g. Sweeny, 2018) are the subject of feature length articles in art-world gatekeeping journals. He is currently exhibiting his work several high-profile venues (including the Palace de Tokyo in Paris).[3] Recently, Gates was commissioned by the City of Chicago to provide a permanent art installation for a Chicago Transit Authority's newly rehabbed South Side station. There, Gates stood next to Mayor Emmanuel in mid-April of 2019 as they introduced the refurbished transit hub, which cost the city $280 million, including the price tag for Gate's instillation "america america," made from two massive fabrications of decommissioned firehose and red paint and "An Extended Song of Our People (AESOP)," a deejay booth which will provide commuters with soundtracks of house music, jazz and other samples of popular music primarily associated with African

[2] He has been called "the poster child of socially engaged art" (Moore, 2019).

[3] After accusations of racism against the fashion house, Prada, Gates, along with the filmmaker Ava DuVernay, was named co-chair of their rapidly formed Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council. He is also the curator of "The Black Image Corporation, a project by Theaster Gates" at the Fondazione Prada Osservatorio in Milan where he brings together works by Black fashion photographers Moneta Sleet Jr. and Isaac Sutton, culled from the archives the Johnson Publishing Company, which launched Ebony magazine in 1945 and the now defunct Jet magazine in 1951. ("Prada Needed Help Dodging Racial Missteps. It Called in Theaster Gates.," Crain's Chicago Business, February 13, 2019, https://www.chicagobusiness.com/retail/prada-needed-help-dodging-racial-missteps-it-called-theaster-gates).

American cultural interventions ("Mayor Emanuel, CTA and World-Renowned Artist Theaster Gates Unveil Two Works of Art at the New 95th Street Red Line Terminal," CTA, accessed June 3, 2019).

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Gates has a long personal and professional relationship with Chicago's South Side, where he grew up in a working-class family in the 1970's and 1980's. In 2006, after receiving advanced degrees in ceramics and urban planning, Gates was hired by the University of Chicago to help coordinate its arts programing. In 2008 Gates, using funds from burgeoning art market sales, purchased the first of several properties for $18,000 in the blighted African American community of Woodlawn/Grand Crossing, close to where he was raised, just South of the University of Chicago's pristine, neo-Gothic campus and future neighbor to the Obama Presidential Library. Using repurposed materials, he converted these buildings into studio space, a Black cinema house and an archive and listening space for vinyl albums featuring African American music and quickly won acclaim and arts foundation funding for his creative place-making and community revitalization projects.

Gates received funding for these projects with the familiar argument that the arts anchor development, which he articulated in series of speaking engagements, including a TED talk and a speech at the World Economic Forum. Here, he explained how his development ventures grew out of his practice as an artist, familiarizing his audience with his notion of activating blighted or abandoned urban spaces with culture, beauty, meaning and history (Gates, 2019). Neighborhood residents, he argued would benefit from his newly created "nodes of cultural activity," which he envisioned as Habermasian public spheres where African American art and culture could be produced, circulated and evaluated and community bonds could be forged and strengthened. Within these reactivated spaces, the community could explore "challenging content" relating to their identities and the "complexities of race and class." Through cultural involvement, residents of blighted communities would become "more invested in their place."

In a utopian vein, Gates also maintains that "beauty is a basic service" and once people have a taste of it in their neglected communities they will make "a poetic demand, and the political demands that are necessary to wake up our cities…" (Gates in Adams, 2015).

To administer these projects and apply for grants, Gates founded the non-profit Rebuild Foundation. Rebuild's projects include the studios, events and archives housed on Gates' South Side properties, a mixed-income art and housing collaboration close to these properties and the preservation and rehabilitation of Stony Island Trust & Savings Bank (which he purchased from the city for $1), turning this historic South Side building slated for demolition into a gallery and performance space. Events at Stony Island Bank include regular performances by the current musician in residence (who was, until recently, Ernest Dawkins, the director of the AACM, a jazz institution that played a key role in Chicago's BAM), a series of films and music events and an exhibition and discussion series in honor of the Black Panther movement. The bank also houses the Johnson Archives, which contain thousands of important documents from the history of Ebony magazine.

4. Gates and the University

Gate's art world power parallels and fuels his influence at the University of Chicago. Long central to local economies, universities have emerged as key players in urban growth coalitions as anchor institution for job creation, urban branding and property development (Baldwin, 2015, Fernández-Esquinas and Pinto, 2014). In 2011, Gates was appointed director of the University's Arts + Public Life programing to "build creative connections on Chicago's South Side and to administer the University of Chicago's resource-rich art and public programing initiative." (https://arts.uchicago.edu/artsandpubliclife). One year later, the university cut the ribbons on its impressive new Logan facility which received seed funding of $35 million from Reva and David Logan

in response to a 2001 report that strongly suggested elevating the arts at the University and creating a multidisciplinary center for the arts on campus (https://arts.uchicago.edu/logan-center/about-logan-center). The Logan Center, with its myriad facilities, serves as the main site of the university's Arts and Public Life programing. Aside from weekly jazz and blues performances, the center has hosted exhibitions on AfriCOBRA and other exhibitions and performances highlighting Black Arts in Chicago.

In 2013, Gates helped to open the University of Chicago Arts Incubator, which renovated University owned property in the Garfield Park neighborhood just West of Hyde Park, as a gallery and "creativity hub," hosting artist residencies and community-based activities like knitting and yoga, as well as exhibitions, performances and talks. The programing at the incubator and at the Stony Island Bank also includes events aimed at promoting and supporting Black arts entrepreneurship (https://rebuild-foundation.org/event/the-artisan-entrepreneur/). The ArtPlace Foundation—a joint project funded by a charitable foundations and corporate banks—supported the Arts Incubator with $400,000, administered by the University of Chicago.

More recently, on property leased from the university's holdings, Gates turned several neighboring storefronts next to the Arts Incubator into a café, an art bookstore and literary venue, transforming a portion of this shabby block in a blighted African American community into a slim "cultural corridor" or "arts block." The university then announced plans to expand the cultural corridor with a new arts center, the ArtsSpace, a 2,500-square-foot space adjacent to the University's Arts Incubator. In spring 2014 the Knight Foundation awarded the University of Chicago a $3.5 million grant for "The Place Project," to "build on pioneering work by Theaster Gates" to "expand and test a community development model that supports arts and culture to help transform communities and promote local growth and vibrancy" (https://knightfoundation.org/press/releases/place-project-theaster-gates/.

The Arts Space opened in 2018 along with a new 6,600 square foot theatre and performance venue, designed in collaboration with Theaster Gates, on the Garfield arts block ("U. of C. Holds Grand Opening for Keller Center," *Hpherald.Com* (blog), May 8, 2019, https://hpherald.com/2019/05/08/u-of-c-holds-grand-opening-for-keller-center/.U.).

Some members of the university community now drive through the stately Washington Park that has long marked a firm border between Hyde Park and the almost exclusively African American community on the other side for arts events. Outside of this small "arts block," the neighborhood remains scary and foreign to most Hyde Park residents accustomed to elegant well-lit streets diligently patrolled by the university security force. Meanwhile, back in Woodlawn's Jackson Park, blocks away from the Stoney Island Arts Bank, Dorchester Projects and other Rebuild Foundation holdings, plans are unfolding for the Obama Presidential Library. There is no explicit connection between Gates' projects in Woodlawn and the library. However, when the University of Chicago made a video as part of the pitch to the Obama Foundation for locating the library on the South Side, the Black cultural life of Chicago's south side led by Gates played a key role in their marketing campaign.

In addition, there is a new $10.25 million funding initiative, a collaboration among Theaster Gates' Rebuild Foundation, the University of Chicago's Place Lab and the City of Chicago to invest in the neighborhood around the Stony Island Arts Bank and Obama Library site. Neighborhood "assets," such as a shuttered elementary school and vacant lots owned by the city, "will be transformed into vibrant civic spaces for public use."(Leslie, "Foundation Gets $1.6M to Redevelop Vacant School in Greater Grand Crossing | Gary/Chicago Crusader," accessed May 11, 2019 https://chicagocrusader.com/foundation-gets-1-6m-to-redevelop-vacant-school-in-greater-grand-crossing/). Mere blocks away from the future home of the Obama Presidential

Center, then, the University of Chicago will be involved in this large-scale remaking of an entire urban neighborhood, and Gates' Stony Island Arts Bank is considered the "flagship" of this project.

5. Race, Class and the University of Chicago

Gates' projects on the South Side are inextricably tied to his position and influence at the University of Chicago. Without knowing something about the history of the university's role in South Side development and racial segregation, the university, with Gates as its new face of cultural development, appears as a munificent benefactor and font of support for Black cultural life in the community. But, a longer view reveals that while Gates needs the university, the university depends on Gate's vision and cultural legitimacy to carry out its mission to close the "rent gap" on Chicago's South Side and to attract students, faculty and increasingly, tourist dollars.

Since its founding in 1892 (Boyer, 1999) the university has intervened in the real estate market and public policy to maintain property values in the Hyde Park-Kenwood community and importantly, to reinforce the boundaries separating this community from the Black enclaves to the West and North that were first established during the great migration in the 1920's when African Americans started leaving the South in droves to find work in Northern cities. Early on, the university achieved this goal through financial and legal support of restrictive covenants and through expansion of its own land holdings in the neighborhood (Hirsch, 1998).

After WWII the swelling Black population on Chicago's South Side could no longer be contained within the boundaries of Bronzeville, the area just north and West of Hyde Park and a center of Black cultural, economic and social life in the 1920's. Throughout the 1940's and 1950's communities South and West

of Hyde Park succumbed to succession as White ethnics fled to the suburbs. Fearful of further "darkening" of Hyde Park itself, the university became a key player in forging national urban policy by helping to craft the Urban Community Conservation Act of 1953 in which "slum prevention" became a valid reason for eminent domain and urban renewal. Previous urban renewal policy allowed for the use of eminent domain for slum *clearance* (Hirsch, 1998), but this act went further in that properties in areas deemed in danger of *becoming* slums could be confiscated by the city and sold to other agencies or developers as part of an urban renewal plan. This allowed the university to seize control of property in the zone of the encroaching Black belt, along with businesses and housing in Hyde Park itself, and transform it into higher priced faculty housing and university laboratories, classrooms and administration buildings (Baldwin, 2015). These strategies contained the encroachment of nearby ghettos into Hyde Park and also served to displace lower income Black (and White) residents of Hyde Park.

Also, and this is crucial for understanding the evolution of the community's cultural life, what locals call the university's "Negro Removal Projects" routed out not only residents deemed "undesirable," but the businesses and cultural venues central to Black cultural life on the South Side, including the jazz and blues clubs for which the South Side was famous (Baldwin, 2004). In the ensuing decades, Hyde Park developed a reputation as a staid and unglamorous academic outpost, surrounded by impoverished and isolated Black ghettos.

Fast forward to Chicago's push to enter the 21st Century as a globally competitive and relevant city (Bentacur, 2011, Wilson, 2015) and a leading model of postindustrial neoliberal development (Doussard et. al. 2009, Bennett, et. al., 2017). As with postindustrial cities everywhere, forced to find new sources of income in the wake of deindustrialization and federal retrenchment, Chicago's growth coalitions embraced strategies of rapid and glamorous renewal

of the city's downtown, pro-development policies for gentrifying historically working-class, industrial or artists neighborhoods with easy access to the city's center and generous city spending on creative city formula cultural resources (Lloyde, 2010, Wilson, 2015). In less than a decade, derelict areas just south of downtown were developed. Finally, as part of a plan to spread revitalization further south, including the areas within the segregated and stigmatized Black ghettos of the South Side, investment in the historic "Black Metropolis," Bronzeville, was underway. (Anderson and Sternberg, 2013, Bentacur, 2011). This plan (like revitalization in Harlem) (Hyra, 2006) would draw on the rich Black cultural legacy of the South Side, enticing Black professionals to invest in a community, which, despite problems of segregation, crime, poverty, divested schools and crumbling infrastructure, resonated deeply with a real and imagined legacy of Black community cohesion and cultural pride (Boyde, 2018, Patillo, 2010). With revitalization so close to home and the election of Barack Obama, the country's first African American president, who has deep and longstanding political and personal ties to the South Side and to Hyde Park in particular (https://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/11/us/politics/11chicago.html), the time was ripe for the university, along with the political elite and developers, to capitalize on its enhanced potential. Hyde Park could become not just a racially-integrated university neighborhood unfortunately surrounded by untamed urban ghetto, but a desirable tourist destination and residential community. To this end, the university beefed up its cultural offerings, orchestrated by the charismatic and increasingly famous Gates. Gradually, tourists and upper middle-class home-buyers from outside of the university community have become attracted to Hyde Park, overcoming the "fear factor" that has in the past kept them at bay. As just one indicator of neighborhood trends, condos in Hyde Park have seen a 25% increase in value since 2016

(https://www.realgroupre.com/blog/402-current-market-conditions-hyde-park-chicago.html), with a similar jump in rental prices (https://www.rent.com/blog/chicago-neighborhoods-rent-prices-increasing/). Thus, while the cultural attractions benefit the new residents, tourists and long-term homeowners in Hyde Park,

lower-income renters and prospective residents have been priced out of the offerings ("Hyde Park Rental Prices Reach New High," *Hpherald.Com* (blog), June 30, 2016, https://hpherald.com/2016/06/30/hyde-park-rental-prices-reach-new/).

Outposts like the arts block on Garfield have yet to fully overcome the stigma associated with these neighborhoods and really see the larger-scale impact of gentrification, but it seems likely that as the university pushes through its cultural regeneration projects this will change (Institute for Housing Studies-DePaul University, "Analyzing Neighborhoods with Intensifying and Emerging Housing Affordability Pressure," Institute for Housing Studies - DePaul University, accessed June 4, 2019, https://www.housingstudies.org/releases/Analyzing-neighborhood-displacement-pressure-2018/.). Given what we already know about gentrification patterns (Chronopoulos, 2016), if community revitalization occurs, it is likely that the poorest, most disenfranchised members of these communities will be forced to relocate.

Activists in Woodlawn, the community likely to be most affected by development because by 2021 it will house the Obama Presidential Library, are already concerned about the impact of the library on property values (Robinson, 2018). While Obama has reassured the community that gentrification there is unlikely, the real-estate website Redfin picked Woodlawn as the city's second-hottest neighborhood for 2017, reporting a 23.3 percent increase in home values in the first six months of that year ("Woodlawn Projected To Be Redfin's Hottest Market of 2017 – Steele Consulting," accessed June 4, 2019, http://whatasteele.com/news/woodlawn-redfins-hottest-chicago-neighborhood/). This trend continues

despite the fact that 30 percent of households there live below the poverty rate, and the rate of violent crime is double the city of Chicago as a whole ("Chicago Poverty and Crime | City of Chicago | Data Portal," Chicago, accessed June 4, 2019, https://data.cityofchicago.org/Health-Human-Services/Chicago-poverty-and-crime/fwns-pcmk.).

6. Black Arts, Black Power

Themes from the Black Arts movements of the 1960's and 1970's are central to new cultural development projects in and around Hyde Park. These movements were outgrowths of radical, urban-based Black Power politics, which grew in the wake of failures of the Civil Rights movement to dismantle persistent institutional racism, the impact of toxic urban renewal policies and racialized violence in the United States (Taylor, 2016). The Black Power movement also emerged from the anti-war movement and increasingly salient connections between United States' imperialist violence against people of color abroad and the ghettoization, neglect, police brutality and economic impoverishment of African Americans at home (Marabel, 2000). While there were cleavages within the Black Power movement regarding the degree to which Black liberation could be achieved within the framework of capitalism, the most radical wing, which included most members of the Black Panther Party, called for upending imperialism, White supremacy and capitalism itself (see Charmicheal, et. al. 1992).

While the Panther agenda superficially integrated elements of Black capitalism by promoting an ethos of economic self-sufficiency within the Black community, its ends were far more radical than the Black Capitalism advanced by President Richard Nixon's programs (Weems and Randolph, 2001) or the economic self -sufficiency arguments spanning from Booker T Washington to Malcom X. And, although the Panthers saw community activism as a key element of their struggle, providing free

breakfast, health clinics and other services within the Black community (Hilliard, 2008), as Panther leader Bobby Seale explained

> [these programs] were part of a revolutionary policy…. This is the people's revolutionary program which educates the people that they have to be in opposition and oppose the power structure. That is the great revolutionary character of our program ("Interview with Bobby Seale," accessed June 4, 2019, http://digital.wustl.edu/e/eii/eiiweb/sea5427.0172.147bobbyseale.html.).

While Black Power ideology drew from Marxism, it was also marked by a Black Nationalism (Van Deburg, 1992). This nationalism has a strong cultural and psycho-social dimension, stressing a collective pan-African sensibility and history growing from traditions and philosophy of Africa. It also rejects the internalized racism and oppression through which colonial subjects internalized the colonizer's denigrating gaze. From this perspective, liberation is not only economic and political, but must also be psychological and aesthetic (Hooks, 2015). This current of Black Power manifested in the work of the BAM but also in the attention paid to self-presentation, spectacle and sartorial practices of Black Power activists, their followers, and eventually as popular fashion within the Black community as Afro hairstyles, African dashikis, and even paramilitary ensembles worn by Black Panthers were embraced. In this regard, the Black Panthers had a keen awareness of the power of aesthetics, visual symbolism and media savvy in coalescing support for social movements in the televisual age (Ongiri, 2010).

The BAM was officially established when the poet and playwright Amiri Baraka founded the Black Arts Repertory Theater in Harlem in 1965, but it also had an imposing presence in cities throughout the Unites States including Chicago, Detroit, Newark and San Francisco (Neal, 1968). To varying degrees, these artists allied themselves with the revolutionary programs of the Black Panthers, the most visible arm of the Black Power movement. Indeed, Larry Neal, a key theorist of the Black Arts Movement

argued that “[t]his movement is the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Black Power concept.” And, he continues, it was to the question of a *collective* cultural nationalism that it spoke most directly:

…. [T] the Black artist, in creating his own aesthetic, must be accountable ….to the Black people. Further, he must hasten his own dissolution as an individual (in the Western sense) — painful though the process may be, having been breast-fed the poison of “individual experience” (Neal, 1968).

Movement spokespeople outlined a vision of a specific (and political) Black aesthetic which rejected the mainstream art-world in favor of forms and vocabulary that resonated with the experience of the Black community for the purpose of envisioning and promoting radical social change, while insisting on the relevance of art to revolution. In his 1969 manifesto, “Any Day Now: Black Art and Black Liberation,” Neal explaines: “… a revolution without a culture would destroy the very thing that now unites us; the very thing we are trying to save along with our lives” (Neal, 1969).

BAM artists in Chicago and elsewhere drew on developments in the literary, musical and visual avant-gardes of the period but they were explicit in their focus on Black experience in the United States. They also drew on the expressivity of traditional or popular African and Afroamerican cultural forms and in so doing laid claim to an essential ownership of a particular “Black” aesthetic. Amiri Baraka, writing about the development of jazz and the African American experience argues that “[N]egroes played jazz as they had sung blues or, even earlier, as they had shouted and hollered in those anonymous fields, because it was one of the few areas of human expression available to them” (“An Excerpt from Black Music,” accessed June 4, 2019, http://www.akashicbooks.com/extra/an-excerpt-from-black-music/.)[4]

[4] Somewhat later, the musicologist Norman Lewis explained how the formation of African American improvisational traditions developed as an expression of racialized experience: “Improvisative musical utterance, like any music, may be interpreted with reference to historical and cultural contexts. The history of sanctions, segregation, and slavery, imposed upon African Americans by the dominant white American culture, has undoubtedly influenced the evolution of

Chicago, as the first large urban metropolis on the path of the great migration emerged as an epicenter of Black activism and cultural innovation first during the period of the Black Renaissance of the 1930's and 1940's and then later during the 1960's and 1970's. Jeff Donaldson, one of the founding members of AfricCOBRA in the 1970 manifesto, explains the relevance of migration:

> AfriCOBRA, …cannot be understood without understanding the long arc of migration among Black Chicagoans before and during the 1960's. Chicago was a special place in the sense that it was populated by a unique group of Black individuals whose life experiences, up to the time of their migration up South to Chicago, were formed in a crucible of abject repression and subjugation (Donaldson, 1970).

Indeed, the founding members of the AACM, a non-profit organization begun on the south side of Chicago in 1965, all came from families that had moved to Chicago directly from post slavery south (Lewis, 2014). While open to a variety of musical influences, AACM excluded non-Black members, and viewed the core of their project as afro-centric and interconnected with the Black community, where they met, staged performances and provided free music lessons to neighborhood youth. AACM musicians pushed the boundaries of free jazz and tinnovations of the avant-garde art music movement, while incorporating musical forms and instruments from Africa and the East. The Art Ensemble, a group of AACM musicians, was famous for incorporating costumes derived from African robes, jewelry, and face paint into their stage performances. Despite the bold and audacious performances of AACM musicians, they de-emphasized the "great man" or original genius notion so central to Western art, and had a collective understanding that "the power of one pales in the presence of many." As Donaldson explains "We are a family of image-makers and each member of the family is free to relate to and to express our laws in her/his individual way. Dig the diversity in unity. We can be ourselves and be together, too." (in Zorach, 2011).

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a sociomusical belief system that differs in critical respects from that which has emerged from the dominant culture itself." (Lewis, 1950).

The literary, musical and visual artists of Chicago's BAM were deeply collaborative in their aesthetic goals, their community activities and their organizational structures. AfriCOBRA artists each had their own distinct visual style, but they shared an interest in the work of contemporary African artists and favored highly saturated colors, patterned surfaces and rhythmic linear effects. One of the founding members, Barbara Jones-Hogu outlines their aesthetic in 1973:

> Black, positive, direct statements created in bright, vivid, singing coolade colours of orange, strawberry, cherry, lemon, lime and grape [...] Black positive statements stressing a direction in the image with lettering, lost and found line and shape" (in Zorach, 2011).[5]

Like the Black Panthers, BAM artists felt a profound commitment to the urban communities whose members they hoped to empower and organize. The Wall of Respect, an outdoor mural created on the side of a tavern on Chicago's south side, provides one important example of their use of art in the service of community empowerment. This 30' x 60' mural was created during the summer of 1967 by Jeff Donaldson and other members of OBAC visual arts workshop. The artists decided not to include signatures in order to highlight the collective, community-based nature of the project. These artists first obtained permission from local gang leaders to utilize the wall and collaborated with these leaders and community members to choose the subjects represented in their homage to the cultural and political heroes of the Black community. As Donaldson explained in a 2002 interview: "We knew that if we didn't get the approval, they would mark it up" (in Collins, et. al., 2006). Those represented included

[5] As Zorach (2011) notes, the AfroCOBRA group included many prominent female artists, and various AfroCOBRA artists addressed themes of gender and the family in relation to Black liberation.

Billie Holiday, Muddy Waters and James Brown. The statesmen category included Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, and Marcus Garvey.

During and after its creation the mural became a gathering place for poets, musicians, artists, dancers and other community members and the site of planned and impromptu performances. At one of the many events, Gwendolyn Brooks, Chicago poet and an inspiration for many of the poets of the Black Arts movement, read a poem inspired by the wall which includes these lines:

in African images of brass and flowerswirl,
fist out "Black Power!"--tightens pretty eyes,
leans back on mothercountry and is tract,
is treatise through her perfect and tight teeth. ("The Wall of Respect: The Story of a South Side Mural — and of Black Power - Chicago Tribune," accessed May 15, 2019, https://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/books/ct-books-wall-of-respect-1008-20171003-story.html.").

Abdul Alkalimat, a student of Brooks, recently wrote that the Wall was "a great declaration of Black unity." It was an assertion of Black identity at a key moment in the nation's history when the activism of the Civil Rights Movement was expanding into the expression of Black Power. Indeed, the title of the mural was a direct reference to Aretha Franklin's song, then on the radio, "R-E-S-P-E-C-T" (in Alkalimat et.al., 2017).

By the early 1970's the Panthers were the subject of ongoing harassment through the federal government's counterinsurgency program, COINTELPRO. This, combined with the murder of 50 Panthers and the arrest or injury of another 500, convinced some members to abandon their radical strategies and become involved in local electoral politics. With this move, they might form alliances with the Black middle class and force urban political machines to attend to the needs of the Black

community and help channel resources into underfunded neighborhoods (Mason, 1973). In his book about Hoyte Fuller, Fenderson argues that BAM artists suffered similar forms of harassment, surveillance and pressure from local police and federal agents. This pressure, combined with the "institutional incorporation" of a number of BAM artists into academia altered the focus of the movement artists. Installed in arts departments or Black Studies programs formed in the wake of student protests, they achieved stability and influence in the academy, but sacrificed proximity to activism in the trenches and connection to the larger Black community (Fenderson, 2019).

Recently there have been a spate of museum and gallery exhibitions both highlighting and historicizing the work of this movement and other Black artists.[6] As with other art movements, especially those with explicit social and political content, the works take on a different meanings when they are institutionalized. The curation, display and textual accompaniments to BAM work invite the viewer to reflect on the political and social aspirations of the period and the relevance to our own. However, the context in which they are displayed and the social, economic and political landscape in which they are being revived should also shape our reflection.

The artists of the BAM self-identified as the cultural arm of a distinctly urban radical social movement which developed in response to, among other factors, an urban political economy and public policy regime which has experienced rapid restructuring since the period when BAM was active in Chicago

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[6] See: "African American Artists Are More Visible Than Ever. So Why Are Museums Giving Them Short Shrift?," artnet News, September 20, 2018, https://news.artnet.com/market/african-american-research-museums-1350362.
And at the University of Chicago's Smart Museum: "The Time Is Now! Art Worlds of Chicago's South Side, 1960–1980 | Smart Museum of Art," accessed June 5, 2019, https://smartmuseum.uchicago.edu/exhibitions/the-time-is-now-art-worlds-of-chicagos-south-side/.

and elsewhere. This restructuring emerges from larger global processes of neoliberalization which impact urban fortunes in distinct ways. Below, I will contrast the urban context in which this work first emerged and those that surround its "second life" on Chicago's South side today.

7. First Life: Black Arts Movement, Black Power and Welfare State Urban Policy

The BPM and the BAM emerged from the failure of both the Welfare State and the Civil Rights movement to adequately address the structural dimensions of persistent Black urban poverty. In the decades following the Great Migration, which saw swelling African American populations in Northern cities, federal and local urban renewal initiatives decimated Black communities and entrenched tresidential segregation which was the legacy of earlier political regimes (Marcuse, 1997). In 1964, the Johnson administration, acknowledging the persistent problems of poverty (and related social foment) (Levy, 2018) even during the period of postwar economic growth, rolled out a series of "War on Poverty" initiatives. These initiatives, which included jobs training programs, pre-school education, food stamps, and legal services were intended, in the words of Johnson, "not only to relieve the symptom of poverty, but to cure it and, above all, to prevent it." (Roy, et. al., 2015).

Despite new federal initiatives, discontent with police brutality, lack of political representation, unemployment and inadequate housing, acerbated by the assassination of Martin L King, exploded into urban riots in New York, Los Angeles, Newark, Baltimore, Detroit, Chicago and elsewhere (Levy, 2018) rocking the US political establishment. Responding to these events in 1966 President Johnson established a task force to investigate the problem of urban unrest. These investigations concluded that American cities were plagued by "apartheid," a dire "segregation by race and income" that was

generating "civil discontent and potential guerilla warfare" (President's Task Force on the Cities, 1966: 4, i, vii). Community development was to tackle these questions of race and revolution in American cities (Marcuse, 1997) .

Johnson's initial initiatives included the "Economic Opportunities Act" (EOA) which, among other things, authorized the formation of local Community Action Committees, regulated and funded by the federal government, to address problems of poverty from within communities themselves. With the 1966 report, "maximum feasible participation," became central to this new policy approach. The core idea was that "maximum involvement" of poor communities in articulating their needs and administering services would quell unrest by integrating African Americans into the political system. This new policy approach allowed grassroots community groups to apply for federal funding for community improvement, educational, health and even arts-based projects and helped to politicize and empower members (notably, women) and to train a generation of community activists (Orleck and Hazirjian, 2011). The EOA funded more than a thousand Community Action Agencies (CAAs) across the United States with the goal of fostering bottom-up revitalization of the country's poorest areas. In order to receive federal funding, CAAs would have to strive for and demonstrate "the maximum feasible participation" of residents of the areas and groups served.

Despite the African American community's distrust of the federal government's motives, activists mobilized to receive block grants from the state government. These government initiatives served to educate and empower community members and also helped to create challenges to the rule of the state (Orleck and Hazirjian, 2011). Some community activists, caught up in the social and cultural politics of the Black Power movement, became radicalized (Roy, et. al., 2015). Thus, as Benson (2011) argues, there was a direct relationship between the popularization of the Black Power Movement and those War

on Poverty initiatives which prioritized community involvement in poor, Black communities. This is not to say that federal war on poverty initiatives were directly responsible for the rise of Black Power or Black arts. However, BPM, and, by extension the BAM, with its commitment to mobilize the arts in the service of Black community pride and empowerment, were connected at least temporally to federally funded Community Action Programs.

By the late 1960's President Johnson, bending under mounting pressure from mayors who feared that the wrath of White constituency and their own loss of control, backed away from his commitment to community control of federal funding (Orleck and Hazirjian, 2011). This retreat continued through the 1970's, and the seeds for a full-on attack on the Welfare State were in place by the time Ronald Reagan was elected president in 1980. During Reagan's first term he repealed the EOA, in one of the opening moves which dismantled the liberal institutions and ideology of the Great Society. Thus began a downward spiral of conditions affecting the most disadvantaged Americans, including urban African-American poor, who were increasingly demonized and excoriated by the media, the police and large sections of the citizenry (Schram, et. al., 2003).

8. Second Life: Black Arts Movement and Neoliberal Considerations

The BPM and BAM on the South Side of Chicago emerged from and were embedded in a social and political context which included the Great Migration and its impact the social and demographic structure of the city; demands and failures of the Civil Rights Movement; politics of the Black power movement and Welfare State policies. Through the creative place-making projects of the University of Chicago and Gates this work and its legacy is once again playing a symbolic role in framing urban developments on

Chicago's South Side. The context in which this work is deployed and consumed, however, stands in sharp contrast to that of its "first" life.

As mentioned earlier, recent urban policy in Chicago has followed the blue-print of neoliberal urbanism in postindustrial cities throughout the United-States and elsewhere (Bennett, et. al., 2017, Doussard et. al. 2009). This policy stands in sharp contrast to that of the liberal Welfare State during the height of the War on Poverty initiatives of the 1960's. Neoliberalism as an ideology and approach to governance has come to dominate the world stage since it first emerged during the late 1970's and early 1980's as a response to declining rates of profit, rising inflation, rising unemployment and increasing instability in the international monetary system (Harvey, 2007). Rooted in the work of Chicago school scholars like Milton Freidman and Friedrich Hayek, architects of neoliberalism blamed economic stagnation on the Keynesian redistributive and regulatory policies of the Welfare State, which choked the natural growth of the free market (Peck, 2010). Repurposing classical liberalism's *laissez-faire* principles, neoliberalism's advocates argued that unfettered markets benefit not only elites but also the great masses of citizens feeling the impact of recession and unemployment. The role of the state was not to provide a safety net or ameliorate social problems, but rather to insure the free flow of markets and provide profitable conditions for capital accumulation. These were the philosophical underpinnings for the deregulation of the financial sector; free trade agreements which buttressed the off-shoring of manufacturing to low wage labor markets in industrializing countries; undermining workers protections and environmental regulations; increasing privatization and defunding of public institutions and services; the implementation of regressive taxation and a host of other policy shifts leading to widening inequalities between households and between capital and labor in the United-States and elsewhere

("Gilded Age 2.0: U.S. Income Inequality Increases to Pre-Great Depression Levels," Fortune, accessed June 5, 2019, http://fortune.com/2019/02/13/us-income-inequality-bad-great-depression/).

The triumph of neoliberalism has had an especially pronounced impact on urban Black, working class and poor populations (Marcuse, 1997, Wilson, 1987) who, because of racist lending and urban renewal policies of the past, were left stranded in communities reeling from cutbacks in public services, income assistance and loss of manufacturing employment from which their White counterparts had benefited in the post-war period (Goldfield, 1997). After his election 1980, Ronald Reagan ushered in draconian cuts to welfare and social spending. As Taylor (2016) points out, these cuts had an immediate and profound impact on the well-being of Black families, with rising rates of poverty and unemployment[7]. Cut-backs to social services were legitimized by an ideology of personal responsibility which overturned the post-war social contract. Instead, blame for social problems associated with poverty, unemployment and lack of access to opportunity was placed, through political rhetoric reinforced by media, on the victims themselves. Federal attacks on benefits and services culminated in 1996 when Clinton signed Personal Responsibility Work Reconciliation Act (Schram and Fording, 2003).

The devastating impact of public service and welfare rollbacks on impoverished Black communities was buttressed by new crime policies and policing practices which ensured that many unemployed youths would be imprisoned, thus exacerbating problems of Black communities (Alexander, 2016). More recently, in Chicago, African Americans have been impacted by the revanchist policies of Rahm

[7] This included a 17% cut in unemployment insurance, a 13% reduction in food stamps, and a 14% cut to cash benefits through Aid to Dependent Families With Children, raised the rent in public housing by 5% and cut 560 million dollars from the federal school lunch program (Taylor, 2016*)*.

Emanuel, who oversaw significant public-private development projects downtown and in nearby areas and the closure of more than fifty public schools, almost exclusively in Black and Latino neighborhoods (Taylor, 2016). Under Emanuel's reign, the city retained the highest rate of Black unemployment among the nation's most populous cities, and has seen an outmigration of African Americans which has left entire communities abandoned (Bennett et. al., 2017).

Neoliberal ideology and policy have impacted cities in other ways. Perhaps the most significant for our narrative is the degree to which postindustrial cities, in response to both deindustrialization and shrinking state and federal subsidies, have been forced to become, "growth machines" (Logan and Molotch, 2007), competing with one another to attract businesses, elite residents, large-scale real estate development, global investment and tourist dollars.

To this theme of the commodification of urban space under neoliberalism (Smith, 2020), three other shifts in urban dynamics are important. First is the new role for and meaning of community development in the neoliberal city. In an urban regime in which place promotion is presented as necessary for survival, a false unity between citizens regardless of class, gender or race is posited by growth coalitions in the common cause of city or neighborhood boosterism. This place promotion is often initiated o by non-profits, local Economic Development Corporations and other public-private partnership initiatives (many of which were put in place in order to fill the gaps in social services left by retrenchment) which rely on civic engagement. These initiatives, as German geographer Margit Mayer argues, repurpose the institutional critiques and progressive goals of community organizers from the 1960's and 1970's such as "self-management, self-realization and all kinds of unconventional or

insurgent creativity …" turning them into a neoliberal governing techniques aimed toward the commodification of urban space (Mayer, 2013).

Here, the discourse of self-help and community activism that drove such initiatives during the 1960's and 1970's is disaggregated from larger demands for structural change on which such activism was based. Community building initiatives like those that emerged as bi-products of both Johnson era policy and the Black Power movement are replaced by new initiatives that blend nostalgia and market imperative. As Defillipis et. al. explain:

> An emphasis on 'the bottom line', building 'partnerships' with local businesses and corporations, developing 'relationships' and focusing on 'community assets' has narrowed conceptions of community activism…most contemporary models of community building and development focus exclusively on the local internal community, not the economic, political and social decisions, which rest outside the community and create community needs and concerns (2010).

Another key characteristic of neoliberal urban development is the prominent role played by the arts and culture in urban growth strategies (Kirschberg and Kagan, 2013, Strom, 2003). Art and culture have been central to urban branding and development since at least the 1970's when, as Zukin (1989) described, symbolic or "aesthetic" capital that art and artists brought to SoHo's light manufacturing district was harnessed by developers and city government to transform the neighborhood from a manufacturing to a high end residential and retail district. The specific symbolic, or aesthetic capital that artists, galleries, music and performance venues and the cafes and bars frequented by artists bring to neighborhoods has more recently been identified by Richard Florida (2019). Here, he explains that for postindustrial cities to flourish, they need to appeal to the elite workers of the new economy, the creative class. These creative workers, inspired by a commoditized version of the counter-cultural ethos inherited from the baby boomers (Boltanski et. al., 2018), value creativity, personal expression, diversity and novel experiences and gravitate to cities and neighborhoods that provide opportunities to consume these

amenities. Cultural venues and the presence of artists' subcultures are thus integral to the economic health of the city. Florida's mantra has been embraced by city officials everywhere, (although Florida himself (2016) has more recently acknowledged that his "creative city" formula engenders both winners and losers) as growth coalitions plan large and small scale investment in new cultural institutions and promoting the growth of "cultural corridors" and arts districts.

Finally, scholars have begun to assess the role of universities, in partnership with municipal government and private investors, grassroots community groups, and nonprofit organizations as key players driving or anchoring creative city type development by casting themselves as institutions that can parcel and repackage "blighted" areas into "destinations" for a safe and profitable urban experience. Here, institutions like the University of Chicago have expanded their profitable business, tech development, health care and medical research facilities, while at the same time rolling out new arts and cultural initiatives. These serve to attract students and residents to college communities, and, eventually, to gentrify surrounding impoverished neighborhoods (Kelly and Silverman, 2014, Perry and Weiwel, 2015) and, as in the case of the University of Chicago, to attract further high-profile institutions like the Obama Public Library.

As a number of scholars have pointed out, while universities and other non-profits may fill some of the functions of defunded local governments, unlike government they are not formally accountable to the public nor must they employ democratic decision-making processes. In addition, their own institutional interests may be in conflict with those in the communities over which they have power (Patterson and Silverman, 2014).

9. Some Concluding Thoughts (for now)

Creative development projects on Chicago's South Side, and their deployment of the BAM must be assessed within this more general dynamic of neoliberal urbanism. On the one hand, the climate for arts related development on the South Side was already in place with Chicago's goglobal ambitions discussed earlier and the accompanying creative city initiatives characteristic of neoliberal urbanism. And, the University of Chicago, with multiple interests on Chicago's South Side is uniquely situated to act as an "anchor institution" there. A Report on the "Future of UChicago arts – 2020 and 2025" issued by the Arts Steering Committee who is charged with developing an ambitious vision for UChicago Arts was recently released. The report begins with a proud claim from the provost that: "Over the past decade the University of Chicago has gained increasing recognition as a destination for the arts." The report goes on to detail various successes of recent university arts initiatives, which include expansion of arts programing, infrastructure development, faculty acquisitions, professional training opportunities and, significantly, community engagement. The report is transparent about the motivation behind these arts initiatives:

….in conjunction with the new Obama Presidential Center, a vibrant South Side arts scene will enhance the University of Chicago's ability to attract local and international visitors, including internationally recognized artists and art professionals. Events and exhibitions … have already begun to generate this scene. (ReportFutureUChicagoArts20202025.Pdf," accessed June 5, 2019, https://provost.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/documents/reports/ReportFutureUChicagoArts20202025.pdf.).

The report then unfolds plans for a "new arts geography" constituted by the campus surrounded by four "art zones" which include the Garfield Arts Block West of Washington Park and the Midway Arts Complex, which borders on the area to the South. "This South Side arts constellation" the report concludes

with a transportation system ensuring safe and easy circulation, will emerge as the hottest art scene in Chicago…. In conjunction with the building of the Obama Presidential Center, these arts zones will transform the South Side of Chicago into a cultural destination that garners ongoing international attention (ReportFutureUChicagoArts20202025.Pdf).

Despite the report's cheery predictions that the South Side will emerge as a magnet and even epicenter of art and culture, with all the status and revenue this implies, the reality remains that the university has an image problem in the Black communities which are being enlisted in their strategic arts development plans, especially since these plans are likely to raise property values and hence contribute to displacement. Indeed, in 2010 tensions between the university and the surrounding Black communities erupted around the battle to reopen the adult trauma center at the university of Chicago hospital after the death of 18-year old Damian Turner, who was shot just a few blocks from the University of Chicago hospital and had to be transported nine miles to the nearest trauma center for treatment. After more than a year of heated battles between community activists and residents and the university, the university finally agreed to open a new trauma center ("Community Members Discuss Goals for Trauma Center at Town Hall Meeting," accessed June 5, 2019, /article/2016/5/20/community-members-discuss-goals-for-trauma-center-at-town-hall-meeting/.)

In response to renewed politicization in the Black community, the university has tried to foster an image of positive community involvement. University spokesman Derek Douglas, during a recent interview on Chicago's public radio station, WBEZ, remarks that there are bound to be tensions between "a well-resourced" university and surrounding communities that "are facing challenges," but that the university is trying to find things that are "of mutual benefit" to help bridge the chasm ("Why Are There Tensions Between The University Of Chicago And Neighboring Communities? "| WBEZ," accessed June 5, 2019, https://www.wbez.org/shows/curious-city/its-complicated-the-university-of-chicagos-relationship-with-its-neighbors/4882b290-40d8-4730-bb68-2eaea92be0bc.).

Here, Douglas suggests the "flanking" role of non-profits within neoliberal urban governance mentioned by Mayer, DeFillipis and others. The Arts Steering Report also includes present and future plans for "community engagement" and "community outreach," and, without explicitly mentioning race, makes repeated reference to the vitality and creativity of the "local" south side arts community and the importance of providing support and forming alliances with this community. In a subsection on engagement and the South Side the report states that:

…the infrastructural, intellectual, and financial support for art practiced by South Side residents creates a unique bridge between the University and the cultures that surround it. Efforts should be made to augment that support..

Considering the university's history and "image problem" on the South Side, the choice of Theaster Gates, who's own origin story and artwork suggests a strong and authentic connection to the Black communities around Hyde Park, and specifically, the emphasis on the work of African American artists and the legacy of the BAM makes tactical sense. However, what is highlighted in the report is not the structural critique of imperialism and capitalism or even community empowerment in which this work was first embedded. Instead, it functions to frame an identity politics devoid of structural demands or sociological insights. The mission statement of Gates Rebuild Foundation, which receives substantial endowment from the university's Arts and Public Life Initiative, is explicit in its appeal to this depoliticized notion of identity:

Our mission is to demonstrate the impact of innovative, ambitious and entrepreneurial arts and cultural initiatives. Our work is informed by three core values: black people matter, black spaces matter, and black objects matter ("Rebuild Foundation," Rebuild Foundation, accessed June 5, 2019, https://rebuild-foundation.org/.).

The work of Mayer and others discussed above sheds light on this appeal to Blackness as a unifying essence to which African Americans, and their White liberal allies on the South Side can get behind,

regardless of class or professional interests. In highlighting the cultural nationalist elements of Black Arts, which had a particular resonance for African Americans in the early 1960's, the degree to which class fissures within the Black community have deepened over the past decades is obscured.

As E. Franklin Frazier's (1957) rich sociological account of the Black bourgeois documents, class stratification has been an enduring feature of the African American life since at least emancipation. Nonetheless, it was only during and after the Civil Rights era that a substantial Black middle class emerged in this country. While African Americans, even those situated firmly in the upper and middle classes are significantly less wealthy than their White counterparts, growth of the public-sector employment during the Johnson administration as well as anti-discrimination mandates in federal hiring practices gave rise to an expanded Black middle class. This expansion, Taylor explains, has been important in the rise of a Black political class (Taylor, 2016) . At the same time, the cultural nationalist dimensions of the Black Power Movement created an essentialist version of community and race unity through which Black politicians could gain the support not only of the Black elite but of the less privileged African Americans whose interests may not have coincided with this expanded Black middle-class. As Adolph Reed ("Black Politics After 2016," *Nonsite.Org* (blog), February 11, 2018, https://nonsite.org/article/black-politics-after-2016.) explains:

> With the rise of a stratum of black public officials and functionaries enabled by the 1965 Voting Rights Act, changing urban racial demography, and expanded opportunity structures, black politics largely settled … into a routine racial interest-group affair, an ethnic politics, that accommodated to the national retreat from redistributive social wage policy by defining a specifically racial agenda limited to challenging disparities and demanding ultimately symbolic appointments and honorific recognition.

The emphasis on racial disparities in opportunity and outcome that emerged in the wake of Black Power set the course, according to Reed, for the identity politics which characterizes much of the popular discussions around Black empowerment today. It is this appeal to racial identity rather than to social and economic policies that might challenge the accumulation of private wealth at the expense of collective needs to which Gate's mission statement and his deployment of Black Arts points. Even when the Black Power Movement embraced cultural nationalism as a source of empowerment, its intellectual spokespeople attempted to understand the complex relationship between capitalism, empire and racism in its shifting historical context. Today, the divergent fortunes of an educated Black middle-class, whose members occupy some of the highest rungs of academia, entertainment and politics in Chicago and elsewhere, a Black working class whose struggles in the face of neoliberal economic restructuring are shared by their White, Latinx and Asian counterparts, and the legions of poor and dispossessed Black families who have been most deeply affected by neoliberal policies cannot be easily reconciled under the symbolic banner of shared Blackness.

Gates' and the university's strategic deployment of Black arts in his placemaking activities on Chicago's South Side draws together members of the Black professional class, helping to foster spaces of discussion, celebration and cultural display. His projects raise awareness of the legacy of radical Black politics and art during a time which although some use the term post-racial, problems of racism have not gone away. At the same time, this deployment of Black Arts as part of a regeneration policy for blighted neighborhoods implicitly draws on the notion that art and beauty will provide a kind of moral uplift to a politically and economically disenfranchised community. The University of Chicago and other stakeholders in the urban growth machine have much to gain from creative development on the South Side. And, given the university's checkered history in the Black community, as well as the growth

of a Black professional class with capital to spend in the community's gentrifying neighborhoods, a focus on the legacy of the BAM is expedient. On the most general level, this account of arts related development on Chicago's South Side demonstrates the need to embed studies of urban-based arts development within the context of neoliberal urban development practices and policy.

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