The Exhibition: Histories, Practices, Policies

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View of Graciela Carnevale's 1968 action *Encierro* (Confinement), Rosario, Argentina. Courtesy of the artist.

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abbreviations

CEAA Centro de Estudos Arnaldo Araújo **CHAIA** Centro de História de Arte e Investigação Científica **CICANT** Centro de Investigação em Comunicação Aplicada, Cultura e Novas Tecnologias **CIDEHUS** Centro Interdisciplinar de História, Culturas e Sociedades **CIMO** Centro de Investigação de Montanha **ESAP** Escola Superior Artística do Porto **FBAUP** Faculdade de Belas-Artes, Universidade do Porto **FLUL** Faculdade de Letras, Universidade de Lisboa **FWO** Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek - Vlaanderen **ICNOVA** Instituto de Comunicação da Universidade Nova de Lisboa **IHA** Instituto de História da Arte **IPB** Instituto Politécnico de Bragança **IST** Instituto Superior Técnico **NOVA/FCSH** Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa **UCP** Universidade Católica Portuguesa **UE** Universidade de Évora **UL** Universidade de Lisboa **ULHT** Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologia **UNICAMP** Universidade Estadual de Campinas •

Contents

Editorial

Exhibitions have become, at least since the 1990s, particularly attractive case studies to museologists, art historians and cultural researchers. As the centrality of the two main figures of contemporary art – the artist and the curator – started to be questioned in various fields related to art and museums, the focus has significantly shifted towards the exhibition, a notion widely understood as both a physical space of display and a conceptual ground for reflection.

The growing interest in the history and theory of exhibitions has not only increased our knowledge of specific past shows; it has also stimulated a relevant national and international discussion, fruitfully crossing academic, artistic and museological contexts. Within the frame of museum studies, the specific field of exhibition histories is still expanding, and also challenging and reshaping important art historical frontiers and methodologies. At the same time, museums are critically re-evaluating their exhibitionary legacies in an unprecedented way, launching, amongst others, projects such as multimedia archives, catalogues raisonnés of exhibitions (Pompidou, MoMA, Gulbenkian, etc.), or virtual and physical restagings of exhibitions (a well-known example being the remake of Harald Szeemann's *Live in your Head. When Attitudes Become Form*: Bern 1969/Venice 2013). Acknowledging the move from the past to the present, these different initiatives have been promoting refreshing forms of disseminating, documenting and recovering the histories and the memories of meaningful exhibition events. Moreover, they configure perfect opportunities to update and rewrite institutional narratives and, at the same time, rescue an unstable and often forgotten heritage from oblivion. This ample movement of "remembering exhibitions", to use Reesa Greenberg's words, attests thus to the growing importance of the exhibition, as a rich and dynamic object of study, where different forces and agents converge.

The publication of *The Exhibition: Histories, Practices, Policies*, issue n. 14 of Revista de História da Arte, aims to bring the "exhibition" to the fore in yet another way, addressing it not just as an object of study, but mainly as a prolific problem. The term exhibition usually involves the idea of communicating and holding something out to the world. However, while the public dimension of the exhibition is an essential one, it is equally important to get hold of its invisible lines, exploring the tension between what is openly shared and what is meant to remain quietly unseen, even if crucially present. The different contributions here gathered do deal with this duality, also demonstrating how the exhibition is a broad and flexible notion, and how its impact largely exceeds the circumstances of a specific, time-limited event. This publication focuses, thus, on "the" exhibition as much as it focuses on exhibitions. Furthermore, it resorts to the exhibition as a springboard to think about several other questions revolving around the exhibitionary phenomena. In this sense, the theme of the exhibition is here covered through various lenses, including exhibition theory, diplomacy, materiality of exhibitions and influence of its printed and photographic productions, national identities, memory, international transfers, exhibition as a form of resistance, historiographic impact of exhibitions, or conservation-restoration. These different perspectives underline how the exhibition is a vital topic to many interdisciplinary and interrelated research fields focusing on museums, art, and culture.

In their multiple forms – from biennials to art fairs, from creative interventions in public spaces to online revisiting of past exhibitions – , exhibitions also incorporate the complex experience of contemporaneity. This publication opens precisely with the interview with art historian Terry Smith, conducted by Carlos Garrido Castellano, in which the notion of contemporaneity or "the contemporary" is debated and stretched to include differentiated forms of "being in time". Acknowledging that these forms may be variously shaped (by western modernism, colonialism, post-colonialism and today's divisive issues like climate change, rise of authoritarianism, neo-liberal capitalism, etc.), Smith's proposal of a "visual arts exhibitionary complex" articulates both the normative and the more dynamic, disruptive forces that constitute contemporaneity, and can be situated either in the concrete museum spaces or in more experimental venues like kunsthallen. The focus on curatorial activity that frames Smith's books *Thinking Contemporary Curating* and *Talking Contemporary Curating* underlines how exhibitions have been instrumental in making visible dissenting discourses, configuring new visions of contemporaneity. The interview launches the discussion to an extended territory of artistic and curatorial practices that surpasses a European and North-American framework, underlining how interventive exhibition forms that respond to specific concerns may provide more tangible definitions of the global.

In the following essay, Reesa Greenberg also stresses the exhibitions' potential to produce new knowledge in different temporalities, and to retrieve less visible narratives, often neglected by a (white-masculine) historiographical canon. Analysing two exhibitions organised by the Centre Georges Pompidou – a 1997 show about artworks recovered after the Second World War and *Elles*, an exhibition put forward in 2009 by recreating art history from the perspective of women artists and feminism –

Greenberg offers an insightful examination on the impact of the digital upon the field of exhibition histories. Microsites providing extensive information accompanied both exhibitions, and were later included in the online catalogue raisonné of Pompidou's exhibitions. By critically comparing the two formats – the microsite and the catalogue raisonné of exhibitions – , she highlights the limitations of thinking digital media with an analogue mind. Considering that exhibition histories importantly overlap with institutional history, Greenberg also shows how actions of classification and categorization can decisively influence and shape the politics of remembering.

In turn, Rémi Parcollet uses the same Pompidou's catalogue raisonné project to discuss another topic strongly connected with the remembering of exhibitions: exhibition view photographs or installation shots. Parcollet analyses the relevance of these sources in the formation of a canon in the history of exhibitions and curatorial practices. Emphasising how installation shots may define a specific photographic category, he further argues that the existence of "an exhibition as an image" plays an instrumental role in the process of asserting modern and contemporary art as heritage. Moreover, the author remarks that installation shots reproduce the exhibition from a particular point of view, that of the photographer. For this reason, he claims that instead of merely assuming them as objective documents, exhibition views should be examined according to their artistic, technical and cultural contexts, and this information, too, should be taken into consideration when developing a catalogue raisonné of exhibitions.

These three invited contributions not only introduce some of the topics that will be further developed in the themed dossier. They also make clear how, from a historiographic, methodological and theoretical point of view, the exhibition is still an unsettled object that opens to multiple directions of research. In his article, Felix Vogel argues that a theory of exhibitions is still to be made, and that it has been often undermined by "the curatorial", a notion which, despite the significant amount of literature dedicated to it, remains rather vague. According to Vogel, "the curatorial" regulates discourse and validates current creative practices (presenting "the curatorial" as an artistic form in its own right). It also legitimises the academic proliferation of curatorial study programmes, instead of defining exhibitions as a specific object of research and advancing strong methodological approaches.

Catalina Imizcoz discusses the possibilities of conveying a history of exhibitions in the printed surface and of overcoming the linear reading that the publication format usually presupposes. She defies the apparent neutrality of publications when evoking past exhibitions by confronting two models: one that is contingent to that linearity, conveying an evolutive and more established perspective, and another, illustrated by the example of *Mousse* magazine, which presents a non-hierarchical, polyphonic and rhizomatic structure, resulting from the centrality awarded to photographic installation shots, from several origins. Through a fine analysis of exhibitions' printed matters, the author argues that publications, in their varied morphologies, are key elements in the shaping of exhibition histories.

The unfolding of the exhibition into the printed page is also the focus of Kathryn M. Floyd's article. Analysing the hundreds of images published in *Mousse* magazine issue

"Exhibition Views 1985-1995", she offers a comprehensive assessment of different types of photographic exhibition views, in a period that preceded the online promotion and documentation of exhibitions. Defining exhibition photography as a specific genre, Floyd demonstrates how these images are deeply articulated with institutions, curators, artistic practice, processes of documentation and mediation and, finally, with the exhibition itself. Moreover, she suggests that photography and exhibitions somehow double and mirror each other, not only in the way that exhibitions become images but also, conversely, in the way images become exhibitions in the pages of the publications devoted to them.
The reflection on the theorisation, historiography, documentation and mediation of exhibitions has inevitably to consider the traditional and globally expanding format of the biennial, as a system where decentralised and hegemonic discourses tend to converge. The contribution of Maria de Fátima Morethy Couto follows the history of the Biennial of São Paulo in the 1960s and 1970s through the eyes of two influential art critics, historians and curators – the Brazilian Mário Pedrosa and the French Pierre Restany – , confronting their views on Latin America and on the connection to European artistic models. In her discussion, biennials, their structure and expected impact, are seen from a perspective conditioned by the places of origin of Pedrosa and Restany, who joined a critical, revisionist movement that ultimately pointed to the collapse of the "Venetian formula".
In the following article, Ana Bilbao analyses different case studies that eloquently express the exhaustion of the exhibitionary form by assuming a specific format: that of a literally closed exhibition. Emphasising function and necessity as key-factors that explain the pertinence of exhibitions in today's context, Bilbao resorts to "closed exhibitions" to signal other relevant issues such as: the overproduction of exhibitions, the marginalisation of creative work and its association with leisure, the non-conformity with neoliberal notions of productivity, the growing relevance of fundraising and bureaucratic tasks over creativity and research work, and the debilitating working conditions in art institutions that increasingly invest in the mass production of exhibitions to "increase revenue".
The growing parallelism between the art world and the financial and industrial universes suggests the capitalist logic of productivity that art institutions have been following, apparent also in the transference of vocabulary, labour conditions and work organisation. Katherine Jackson's work examines an experimental exhibitionary operation that borrowed elements directly from the industrial corporative apparatus. Organised in the early 1970s, a particular period in recent British history, the *Inn7o: Art and Economic Exhibition*, promoted by the Artist Placement Group, exposed the incapacity of language to integrate different sectors of society. It also created a general agreement between the political, corporative and cultural areas, while proposing new terminology and making visible the negative social impacts that corporative discourse often covered up.
While exhibitions may, politically, extend institutional critique to different sectors of society, they may also be the instrument of commercial endeavours, diplomatic interactions, national promotion and cultural colonisation. Laurens Dhaenens brings forward a different understanding of the role exhibitions can play in international relations by analysing strategic displays organised by the Belgian state in the United States and

Argentina. In his contribution, Dhaenens investigates these previously unaddressed government projects, uncovering unexplored narratives related to exhibitions, and revealing important cultural and diplomatic routes outside mainstream locations.

Turning to art history and its permanent reformulation, Sandro Debono examines a landmark exhibition organised in Florence in 1922 that revised the Italian Baroque and established Caravaggio as its most prominent figure. Assessing its impact on artistic historiography in the first half of the 20th century, Debono sets his perspective against the political background of the time, already marked by nationalism and the emergence of dictatorships in Europe, namely in Italy. Underlying the debate about Italian Baroque prompted by this exhibition was, therefore, an international conflict to establish cultural and creative hegemonic narratives in European artistic tradition.

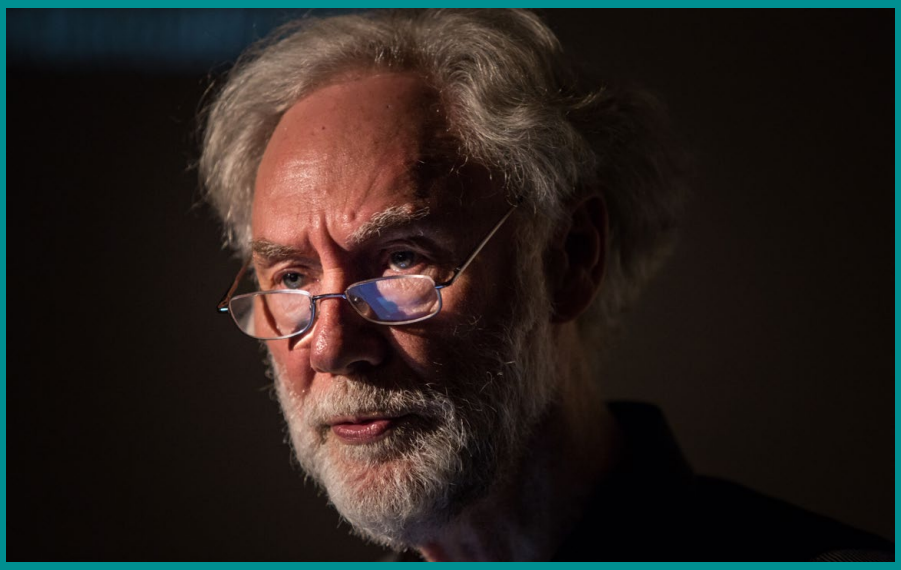
Finally, the article by Joana Silva, Joana Lia Ferreira, Maria de Jesus Ávila and Ana Maria Ramos shows how exhibition histories can engage in interdisciplinarity. In order to restage a slide-based artwork from the late 1970s in future exhibitions, the authors highlight the importance of knowing how the work has been displayed in previous exhibitions, including those in which the artist intervened directly. The focus on a single work accentuates the role and influence played by curators and conservators in the public presentation of artworks, especially when the artist is no longer alive. Emphasising the display specificities of time-based media, this article also claims that archival research to understand the (sometimes variable) way in which the artist has decided to present his/her artwork is of utmost importance.

By critically exploring the subject of "the exhibition" according to a wide range of methodologies, chronologies, geographies and approaches, we believe the articles collected in this issue provide a thorough and multifaceted investigation and will contribute to expanding and enriching the ever-growing debate on museums and exhibitions.

We are most grateful for the enthusiasm and the new insights so generously offered by all the contributing authors in this volume. We are also thankful to the referees who kindly devoted their time and expertise in the peer-reviewing of the manuscripts, and to the authors who importantly contributed for the book reviews and news sections.

Opening a promising new chapter in the life and future of Revista de História da Arte, and contributing to reinforcing its levels of internationalisation and access, we are also proud to announce that *The Exhibition: Histories, Practices, Policies* is the first issue of Revista de História da Arte to be published entirely in English. We want to thank the Institute of Art History, for the continuing help in all stages of this process. A special word of thanks also goes to the IHA research group MuSt-Museum Studies, for providing the fertile intellectual ground where both ideas and friendship have flourished. We are indebted to all the colleagues, junior and senior, who have been crucial pillars of support for us along the years. Thank you.

Joana Baião
Leonor de Oliveira
Susana S. Martins



TERRY SMITH at the Garage Museum of Art, Moscow, 2015. Photo: Denis Sinyakov. Courtesy of Terry Smith.

TERRY SMITH, FAHA, CIHA, is Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Contemporary Art History and Theory in the Department of the History of Art and Architecture at the University of Pittsburgh, and Professor in the Division of Philosophy, Art, and Critical Thought at the European Graduate School. He is also Lecturer at Large in the Curatorial Program of the School of Visual Arts, New York. In 2010 he was named the Australia Council Visual Arts Laureate, and won the Mather Award for art criticism conferred by the College Art Association (USA). During 2001-2002 he was a Getty Scholar at the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, in 2007-2008 the GlaxoSmithKlein Senior Fellow at the National Humanities Research Centre, Raleigh-Durham, and in 2014 Clark Fellow at the Clark Institute, Williamstown. From 1994-2001 he was Power Professor of Contemporary Art and Director of the Power Institute, Foundation for Art and Visual Culture, University of Sydney. In the 1970s he was a member of the Art & Language group (New York) and a founder of Union Media Services (Sydney). He is the author of a number of books, notably *Making the Modern: Industry, Art and Design in America* (University of Chicago Press, 1993); *Transformations in Australian Art* (Craftsman House, Sydney, 2002); *The Architecture of Aftermath* (University of Chicago Press, 2006), *What is Contemporary Art?* (University of Chicago Press, 2009), *Contemporary Art: World Currents* (Laurence King and Pearson/Prentice-Hall, 2011), *Thinking Contemporary Curating* (Independent Curators International, New York, 2012), *Talking Contemporary Curating* (New York: Independent Curators International, 2015), *The Contemporary Composition* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016), *One And Five Ideas: On Conceptual Art and Conceptualism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), and *Art to Come: Histories of Contemporary Art* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019). He is editor of many others including *Antinomies of Art and Culture: Modernity, postmodernity and contemporaneity* (with Nancy Condee and Okwui Enwezor, Duke University Press, 2008). A foundation Board member of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, he is currently a Board member of the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, and of the Biennial Foundation, New York. See www.terryesmith.net/web/.

Interview

WITH TERRY SMITH

CONDUCTED BY CARLOS GARRIDO CASTELLANO

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?: CONTEMPORARY CURRENTS, THE EXHIBITIONARY COMPLEX, AND ACTIVIST CURATING

CGC – I would like to discuss some of your ideas that have become prominent recently. The first is the concept of contemporaneity as a world description of the present, like modernity and postmodernity, but somehow seeming to replace them, or at least trouble them. Then there is your picture of three currents operating within contemporary thinking, geopolitics, and art: remodernisms of various kinds, transnational transitionality, and a third current, which you say cannot be named. I am particularly interested in connections between these currents, in their operations of inclusion and exclusion. How do you see them working within art practice, and in curatorial practice, about which you have also written a lot? Your concept of the visual arts exhibitionary complex comes into play here, I think. Yet it seems like a theory of art institutions, so how do curators working in the anti-institutions, or fragile quasi-institutions, in which I am especially interested, find room to move within this complex?
Let's start with the concept of contemporaneity. What do you mean to achieve by emphasizing it so strongly?

TS – Contemporaneity is not just about whatever happens to be happening right now, wherever we happen to be, in the artworld today, or in the world at large. I am deliberately taking up the most immediate, most unthought, but also the most ubiquitous term in contemporary art discourse and trying to flip it, to turn it into its opposite. You will have noticed how often people use the words "the contem-

porary" when they want to evoke the larger world in which we are living, or name the current state of affairs, or point to what art today is about. This makes me mad, because when you use such a phrase – an adjective without a noun – this means that you are precisely *not* naming what is shaping the world, *not* saying what art is about today.

So, I start from the fact that if you really focus on what it is to be contemporary – to be "with time" – you instantly find yourself face to face with what it has always been like to be contemporary: something is happening now, and it's happening at the same time as something else, which we call simultaneity. Furthermore, it's happening to more than one person, or thing, at that same time – that is, it's coincidental, but it's also shared by everybody in that situation and, in principle, by everybody living at that time. This adds a fourth dimension, that of being a contemporary person, someone living in these times, in the world today, in one's time, or "our times." Once you start listing these kinds of relationship, you realize that everyone experiences them differently, sometimes only slightly, others greatly. In our globalized world, otherness is more evident to everyone, and is more various, especially as cultures contend with each other in more volatile ways, and identification with stereotypes increases. At the same time, we can sometimes, or often, feel other to those around us, and to ourselves, and alienated from "our times" for all sorts of reasons, as Nietzsche famously warned, years ago, in his *Untimely Meditations*. [1] What a fantastically rich layering of samenesses and differences this is! So, I think that we should not dismiss the sense of being contemporary, but instead unpack its many meanings to highlight the complexity of being "with time" today...

CGC – But presumably these many ways of being contemporary have always been the case, ever since there was more than one person in the world?

TS – Of course, so the real question is: what makes our experience of contemporaneity today distinct from that of earlier times? I believe that we have to face up to the fact that, unlike every earlier period, no larger framework, no inevitable world historical orientation, and no commanding narrative, remains strong enough in its actual unfolding in the world to save us from having to find, with increasing urgency, our futures entirely within a reimagined aggregation of our differences. The postmodernists, especially Jean-François Lyotard, were right about this; to me, they were the prophets of our contemporaneity. Our time, to which we necessarily belong, and which we share like it or not, is no longer a time *for* us. We are, you might say, naked to the present, so we are obliged to understand our situation without illusion. Maybe this is, as well, an echo of the existentialism that attracted me when I was young: "existence before essence" was the slogan then, but today "essence" has evaporated.

CGC – In the book *Antinomies of Art and Culture: Modernity, Postmodernity, Contemporaneity*, you describe the situation in these words:
…contemporaneity consists precisely in the acceleration, ubiquity, and constancy of radical disjunctures of perception, of mismatching ways of seeing and valuing the same world, in the actual coincidence of asynchronous temporalities, in the jostling contingency of various cultural and social multiplicities, all thrown together in ways that highlight the fast-growing inequalities within and between them. [2]
Is this what you mean by implying that today, we have only our existence as our raw material, yet must somehow find a worldly communality without expecting it to have a human essence?

TS – You are putting the challenge in its most bleak form, but, yes, that is what it is. The notion of the contemporaneity of differences makes starkly visible the gaps and clashes *between* the many factors usually adduced as predominant explanations of what shapes the contemporary world: modernity, globalization, neoliberalism, decolonization, fundamentalism, terrorism, network culture, and climate change, among many others less prominent but just as profound, such as indigenization. Each of these terms cluster a particular set of world-changing forces into a configuration that, its discursive chorus claims, encompasses the others – in fact, in principle, or in the future. Yet none have succeeded in doing so, nor seem likely to do so. Nor can any of them, singly or together, account for every aspect of contemporary life as it is experienced today. Nevertheless, their contention creates the divisive differentiations that define our contemporaneity – precisely those qualities of multeity, adventitiousness, and inequity in the description you just quoted – but it also generates counter-responses, the most important of which are an insistence on the value of place, the search for constructive world pictures, and the reach for coeval connectivity in all dimensions of our relationships with each other. All of these are continuous, on-going processes, feeding a historical condition that is in constant, contentious, unpredictable evolution.
So, just to prefigure what we will doubtless talk about later, it seems to me that the *work* of contemporary art in these circumstances is not only to picture the experience of these divisive differences but also to counter their destructive effects by helping to build coeval connectivity. In a parallel way, tracking how artists are taking on the paradoxical challenges of our shared but divided contemporaneity is what is required of the historian of contemporary art, and showing how artists are doing this is the job of the contemporary curator. For historians of the art of the past, this obligation invites them to study that art from the same perspectives. Exactly *not* by applying current concerns to past art, looking for prefigurations, and treating these as the most interesting things about that art. On the contrary, the obligation is to go back to the originary

scenario, and try to discern how artists worked with and against the multiple temporalities in play within their moment, to try to see *their* contemporary contemporaneity.

CGC – Staying with our contemporary contemporaneity for the moment, where does your theory of the three currents become relevant?

TS-It is an effort to find the shapes, the structures at work within the apparent disarray of change in the present. The world is not descending into chaos, even though it might often seem that way. I argue that there are three currents in contemporary art making, just as there are three currents in contemporary thought, and in contemporary geopolitics. No more, but no less. And they are of the same kind in each domain, or on each plane, as I prefer to say. You can find this argument in most of my recent books: I suppose the introduction to *Contemporary Art: World Currents* would be the best place to start if you want a short summary. [3] First, there are continuing modernities, echoes of EuroAmerican dominance, such as globalization in geopolitics, neoliberalism in economics, remodernisms in art, and spectacle in architecture. The second current, which I call transnational transitionality, was generated by independence struggles, by postcolonial critique, and Indigenous demands for rights and recognition in countries outside Europe and the United States during the Postwar period. It is now prominent everywhere, driving many international organizational forms, notably the United Nations, even though the Security Council constrains everything according to the interests of the victors in World War II – back to 1945, everyone! For art, biennials are the great drivers of internationalization, I do not say globalization, because that is mainly a Global North enterprise, and is now faltering. In fact, the energy of transnational transitionality is the main manifestation of how the Global South now pervades the Global North. The third current is not of the same kind, nor is it the result of a dialectical struggle between the first two currents. It´s actually trying to generate a third way of being in a world that is extremely divided, subject to tremendous forces of hyperindividuation, dominated by commercial interests, authoritarian government and surveillance states, but also, given challenges such as global warming, desperately in need of a certain kind of open, unitary thinking. I see this aspiration in many political movements, especially those led by your generation, and in all sorts of interstitial activities, which are trying to imagine what coeval commonality, or a coeval commons, might be like in such a world. I also see this spirit in activism of all kinds and in infrastructural curating.
So, stepping back for a moment, we can see these currents operating contemporaneously, moving through the present, distinct from each other in specific ways but also constantly connecting, shaping our contemporary condition as they unfold. Obviously, in past periods, different currents were in play, shaping cotemporalities into different configurations, and so it will be in the future.

Terry Smith at the symposium 'What Do Museums Collect?' Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul, December 1, 2018. Courtesy of Terry Smith.

CGC – How does contemporaneity compare to other large-scale, all-encompassing concepts that have aimed at characterizing the present?

TS – Most of the other very large scale, world-picturing concepts that are out there are, I believe, residual, receding into modern and even pre-modern pasts. Yet we must also face the recent eruption of reactionary resurgences, such as religious fundamentalisms in the Middle East and in the heartlands of the United States, and the rise of rightwing parties in Europe. They are fighting, often violently, for contemporary relevance, to be our contemporaries, and refuse to become the anachronisms that they in fact are. Indeed, most of them are driven by fantasies of arriving at, or returning to, some kind of eternal temporality, here on Earth. So they prioritize waiting for that as their future, which is their right. But they often also insist on that future for everyone else, which is not their call.

Postmodernism was short-lived as a style in architecture – mercifully – and was for a while the wrong name for poststructuralist and deconstructive thinking, but is rarely used in that sense any more. But we are not talking about the passing parade of intellectual fashions. We should acknowledge that there were some brilliant, prefigurative insights amidst the flashy, superficial ones. These insights were, I like to think, early signs that contemporaneity was being thought about in a different, more far-reaching way. For example, Lyotard, in *The Postmodern Condition*, painted a prescient picture of the impact of computational thinking on universities and on knowledge formation more generally. [4] He alerted us to the importance of game theory, and strongly promoted the value of small-scale stories and vernacular languages in the wake of the delegitimization of the *grands récits*. Pamela Lee has written about this in an interesting way in her book *New Games: Postmodernism After Contemporary Art*. [5] She, too, is reacting against the witless presentism exemplified by people who use the

phrase "the contemporary." She reminds us that, in the visual arts, what Hal Foster called "resistant postmodernism" – you know, the Pictures Generation, Act Up, and feminist art of the 1970s and 1980s, as distinct from the complicit postmodernism of Koons, Schnabel, and the Young British Artists – has been pivotal to whatever is interesting about contemporary art since then. She accepts that the postmodern moment has passed, but does not develop any overall ideas about contemporary art in its wake. She is more interested in finding strategies for operating within the contemporary context by deriving them from games theory of the 1950s and 1960s.
Thinking more globally, it becomes obvious that postmodernist ideas and strategies were relevant to the "becoming contemporary" of art in many parts of the world during the 1980s and 1990s. In the USSR, and China, as they became postsocialist, and even in Cuba, techniques such as parody, mimicry, and misquotation were really important to artists seeking a new vocabulary as Socialist Realism grew increasingly vacuous. So, too, were conceptualisms of various kinds, as we argued in the *Global Conceptualism* exhibition of 1999. [6] To my mind, conceptualism precedes and has been a more resonant tendency in contemporary art than any kind of postmodernism, the resistant side of which was, in fact, critically "post-conceptual." [7]
The broader concept of postmodernity has had a longer life as a name for what, after Lyotard, many people began calling our "condition." Fredric Jameson wrote a tough foreword to the English edition of *The Postmodern Condition*, but that was high-jacked by Lyotard's quite silly appendix, "Answering the Question: What is Postmodernism?" in which he turns it into a question about avant-garde art, and postmodernism becomes a modernist recursion that keeps repeating itself. Jameson's famous intervention, *Post-modernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, is a Marxist answer to Lyotard's post-Marxist picture. [8] Who can forget his evocation of the deliberately disorienting interior spaces of the Bonaventura Hotel in Los Angeles, and his call for a critical "cognitive mapping" of such experiences as a form of resistance to the alienation affects of what he calls, following Ernst Mandel, late capitalism? We had to wait a few years, however, for a comprehensive Marxist theory of the relationships at play in postmodernity. This was, of course, the great achievement of David Harvey, in his *The Condition of Postmodernity,* especially his account of the origins and affects of what he called "space-time compression." [9] This concept was crucial to my ideas about contemporaneity, although I have to confess that I found superficial or complicit postmodernism so repugnant that it took ten years for me to separate out these more fecund ideas. Harvey is an amazing, consistently critical historian of social and cultural geographies, and has updated these ideas and made them specific to the forms of capitalism that have evolved since then. [10]

CGC – Isn't it the case that Marxist theories, even though they may be theories of post-modernity, remain essentially modern theories?

TS – Yes. This must be so, because these theories were from the beginning anti-capitalist, and thus are counter-modern, locked in tandem with it, by definition. I totally

agree with Marshall Berman when he says that Marx and Engels provided the best analysis by far of capitalist dynamics, logics, and effects, at least in its mid- and late-nineteenth century forms. Marxism has obviously been deflated by the historical disaster of Stalinism, and the totalitarian tendencies of most other societies that tried "actually existing socialism." Postmodern critique itself emerges from disappointment with this European experience, if you think of Lyotard's earlier work with the group *Socialisme ou barbarie*, for example. But at the same time, there was also the sense that Marxism will not simply disappear because its progressivist predictions about the inevitability of communism as the coming world condition turned out to be wrong. Jacques Derrida saw this, and explores it with great subtlety in his *Specters of Marxism*. [11] If you want my view, modern Marxism was one of the grand narratives that lost its legitimacy as the twentieth century unfolded, but a certain spirit of communality as an ideal for social organization is going to be essential if our species is to negotiate its way through global warming.

Today, the more interesting challenge arises from the fact that certain clearly modern ideas, aspirations, technologies and organizational forms keep being used, and thus recur as a kind of default generalization about our contemporary condition for those unwilling to face up to its radical difference from modernity and postmodernity. I suppose it is because many countries around the world, such as China or India, seem to have as their model a society that, to feed its millions, should modernize in the general manner of the European countries during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: that is to say, support entrepreneurial elites, enslave worker drones, use unrenewable resources to produce industrial bases for their economies, foster high consumption middle classes, and generate culture, high culture, out of that. But these countries are, in fact, choosing elements of the Western representative democracy/open market model, not adopting it wholly. Instead, they are actually creating a different kind of arrangement between the state and the market. The Chinese example is very clear: a very restrictive central party is trying to control every aspect of everyday life, including the operations of all markets, within the country, while also negotiating a new relationship with global capital, which in fact is orchestrated by the companies, and governments, in the still (but shakily) dominant capitalist countries, and the international organizations that they still (but shakily) control, such as the IMF and the World Bank. At the same time, China is pursuing what it calls the "Belt and Road Initiative," an overland road and rail system that stretches from parts of China, through the Middle East and into Europe along the old Silk Road routes. A maritime version goes from the South China Sea to Europe and Africa. It is also building infrastructure throughout Africa, and making trade pacts elsewhere. This is clearly a worldwide infrastructural network intended to secure the future of China's particular mix of total local governance by an authoritarian party and international relations conducted in free market modes but shaped according to the priorities of state capitalism. In India, the BJP (Bharatiya Janata, or Indian People's Party) is expanding its political control in order to follow a similar path, at least within the subcontinent.

You can call these changes a kind of modernity, if you like, or we can talk about how modernity keeps reappearing in all contexts, yet this situation changes in one sense but not another, and therefore it has to do with a kind of postmodernity. To me, however, all of these developments are better described under the concept of contemporaneity, precisely because they manifest the multiplicity of ways of being in time, at the same time, with others, and no tendency, quality or character is to be found as shared between them. Instead, you have multiple temporalities coexisting and interacting with each other, many, many different kinds of cultures doing that, with different ways of thinking, being, addressing, at every level of thought, behavior, at every level of commonality, in every kind of social organization. At most, you could say, paradoxically, that difference itself has become a kind of manifest or apparent universal. Peter Osborne calls this a kind of operative fiction, an implied totality that is, of course, logically impossible. [12]
Well, yes, that's how it does work in the world, pragmatically. But there is something dissatisfying about letting things lie there. I don't think we can just say, in such situations, "It's a paradox," and throw up our hands in a gesture of exasperated resignation – what else can we expect given the current state of corrupted capitalism! – as Žižek, for example, is prone to do. Contemporary differentiation does not have inherent direction; it is not stirred by recurrence; and capitalism is not its "last instance." If, like the aporia of "the contemporary," you keep appealing to postmodernity or returning modernities, you leave everything happening energetically, but in a state of suspension, with some parts suddenly moving in small random spurts, like insects across the surface of a pond, or automata that suddenly jerk into action according to an invisible, unknowable program. People who use metaphors such as these are waiting for another grand narrative to arrive to push everything in an overall direction. Good luck with that…this is why I have pointed out the existence of the three currents, and their disjunctive cotemporality, as the organizing principle of the present.

CGC – I am concerned about the relations among those clusters, and about how can we associate some of them with specific contexts. You mention that the relation between the continuing modernities and transnational transitionality is conflictive in some kind of way.

TS – Well, on my model, the relationships between the first and second currents, between the continuing modernities we have been discussing and the massive transformation precipitated on local levels and worldwide by decolonization, is not just conflictive in some general sense. Most Western accounts see it as a North-South, First World versus Second and Third World, master-slave type of confrontation, that is, a battle between those who are already modern and those who aspire to become modern. More perceptive analyses – such as those of Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, Paul Gilroy, Achille Mbembe, just to

cite a few – would reverse these terms. They remind us that modernity was always, from its beginnings, a colonialist enterprise, and became more obviously so as the nineteenth century progressed. I don't have to underline this, here in Lisbon. Forgive me for not knowing the names of those who spoke from the Portuguese colonial experience, but I imagine that there were many such voices.

But the authors I just mentioned identify something that has been really important to my thinking about contemporaneity, especially about the relationships between these currents. They certainly understand decolonization to be driven by the independence struggles of the colonized against the colonizer, with these struggles constituting an antithesis to the thesis, that is, to the imperialism of the colonizer. And certainly, some of them – Fanon, for example, who died during the Algerian war of independence – expressed the fervent hope that their efforts would help bring about a post-racist, post-colonial, genuinely Human world, inside Europe and in all of its rapidly diminishing empires. Were that to happen, the dialectic would resolve into a beautiful synthesis.

On the ground, in reality, these dreams can seem fanciful in the extreme, as even Hegel, author of the master-slave dialectic, knew, according to Susan Buck-Morss's amazing study of Hegel and Haiti. [13] And, obviously, this is not how things have worked out in the over sixty years since decolonization really started to change the world. But a few decades is such a short time frame in which to expect global change at this level. You cannot, in a generation or two, dismantle a structure that took centuries to build.

Especially not when doing so generates fierce resistance, now that the colonized people of Africa, the Middle East and South America seek to escape civil war and economic disaster in some of the ex-colonies, and seek to enter the comfort zones that the colonizers built, using their resources, their labor, and at their expense. The Global North, for all of its democratic rhetoric, fears that immigration means that it will soon become a province of the Global South. So it is making itself into exactly that, by building walls along its borders – in Palestine, Hungary and Mexico, for example – and in the process it incarcerates itself, creates this delusory zone of unfreedom.

These are some of the reasons why the dialectical operations that structure everything to do with modernity can no longer generate the syntheses it needs to remain dynamic. Instead, modernity has become recursive, reactionary, trying to renew itself from within by repeating the successes of its earlier stages: plutocratic governance, more coal plants, larger cars, bigger middle classes, spectacular architecture, big scale art, blockbuster exhibitions… The result is that the dialectic becomes occluded, and the currents become antinomies that operate in parallel with each other, contemporaneously, with no hope, or even interest, in merging into a happy synthesis.

CGC – I am currently thinking about the trajectories of the practices you group under the concept of transnational transition. In many cases, I think that the postcolonial turn has somehow been reduced

or primarily associated with exhibition-making in the West, whereas there is another whole set of practices within postcolonial societies that actually challenge institutional power there. This second set of practices has somehow been forgotten or relegated to second place within the exhibitionary complex that you have theorized. To what extent do you see your idea of coeval commons working as a genealogy (not only as a current possibility, but also a genealogy) of the experiences you include within the transnational transition?

TS – Well, the idea of an exhibitionary complex comes from the English sociologist Tony Bennett, who now teaches in the far western suburbs of Sydney. He argued that the museums of various kinds, as well as recurrent events such as world's fairs, even the central cities in European countries and the US, when they emerged in the bourgeois era, were platforms to convince millions of people that the growth of industrialization and market societies was a natural social evolution, just like the stories of the evolution of mankind from barbarity to civilization that Natural History Museums and world's fairs used to feature. [14] Since then, of course, there has been a narrowing towards specialization in each of the art and science disciplines, alongside their exponential growth in number, and the huge increases in the numbers of those active within them. "The artworld" is our common term for the section in which we work, or, at least, it has been since the 1960s. But to me this "artworld" has massively expanded, become much more complex, and globally distributed. My recent thinking about curating as a discursive practice, and about its history, has led me to identify a structure that we might call the contemporary visual arts exhibitionary complex (VAEC). [15]

Everyone involved in it knows that it exists, as does everyone in the cultural, social and political fields within which it sits. But few people think of it as a whole, as a system. We can't avoid doing so when we simply list its components, which comes as a shock to most people. Let me show it to you:

Private collection museums/galleries; Cabinets of Curiosities; Period museums, national collections, geopolitical area or civilization, museums, city museums; Universal history of art museums; Museums of modern art, museums of contemporary art; University galleries, art school galleries, exhibition spaces in curatorial programs; Single artist museums, one-medium museums, and spaces dedicated to large-scale commissioned installations; Kunsthallen; Not-for-profit, alternative spaces; Artists' associations and artist-operated initiatives; Satellite spaces; Exhibition venues of art foundations (some of which have collections); Institutes of various kinds that include exhibitions as one part of their research, publication, and educational activities; Residency-related exhibitions; Interventions, temporary events, Pop ups; Publications designed as exhibitionary spaces; Biennials; Art Fairs; Commercial or dealer galleries; Auction houses; Public art; Open Studios; Amateur art shows; Art in non-art venues, including other kinds of museum (historical, science, ethnographic, children's, war, ethnicities, medicine, historic houses, etc.), in archives and libraries, in hotels,

shopping malls, real estate ventures, public parks; Recurrent public events (celebrations, festivals, etc.) that regularly include art exhibitions or installations; Poster, reproduction, print and framing shops; Internet online sites, including Google Art, but also Second Life, Oculus; Art and art-like images circulating within social media. You can scan this as a historical mapping, from the fifteenth century to the present, of exhibitionary platforms, which moves, as you see, from private places to display objects to globally-accessible sites to show images. These platforms accumulate, they don't simply appear at one historical moment and then evaporate when a new format appears. Instead, they institutionalize themselves. Each of these components emerged for a reason, persists and grows because that reason (or set of reasons) seemed compelling to enough people and to other institutions. As each platform grows, it diversifies and institutionalizes. Each one strives to stay distinct from the others, while also busily absorbing ideas, energy and personnel from one or more of the others. But this is not a neutral system: it is also a profile of top-down cultural power and bottom up resistance.

VAECs operate most visibly at the level of cities, where a variety of platforms act as the nodes of local artworlds. At the same time, the regional then international connections between the various components of local VAECs add up to a global visual arts exhibitionary complex. In some cities, notably in the West, the contemporary VAEC has become an infrastructure so expansive that those working within it may take its outer reaches for granted. This is the universalizing effect of being at a center, the misconception that being there means counting everywhere. Elsewhere, only some of these components may be present, leading to a concern that the "critical mass" that is imagined to be necessary for local art to flourish is lacking, and must be built, fast. In yet other places, there is suspicion that this model may turn out to be as oppressive as it is liberating, so activists focus on building other kinds of infrastructure. This is the concern underlying your question, I believe. To me, what drives the whole system is the tension between the tendency towards historical stasis on the part of the collecting institutions and the openness to future art, to de-institutionalization, to provisionality, on the part of the experimental spaces, from kunsthallen to biennials.

Art historical thinking, to say nothing of research and publication, is way behind in recognizing just how important these alternative spaces have been as a source of innovative energy. Really, it is the scholarship around institutional critique, and interest in the history of radical curating, that has made us aware of this blindspot. With star curators such as Hans Ulrich Obrist celebrating predecessors such as Harald Szeemann, and mythical exhibitions such as *When Attitudes Become Form*, we find that, suddenly, urgent attention must be paid. I have tried to take a slightly more measured approach, to outline, in *Thinking Contemporary Curating*, the discursive structure of the field, and, in *Talking Contemporary Curating*, to capture the key ideas circulating in the discourse itself by discussing them with curators such as Hans Ulrich, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Okwui Enwezor, Zdenka Badovinac, and Mari-Carmen Ramírez. [16] In the *Thinking* book, I highlighted "infrastructural

activism" as the most urgent kind of action for contemporary curating. Everyone I spoke to in the *Talking* book was, or has been, a game-changing exhibition-maker but also an institution builder – Zdenka, for example, shaped the main gallery of a newly formed state, Slovenia, in her late twenties, and went on to found the national museum of contemporary art, the Metelkova, according to NSK principles. Maria Lind directs the Tensta Konsthall in Stockholm and is a great organizer of international collaborations between off-center and peripheral spaces. Zoe Butt worked at Long March Space, Beijing, before becoming the director of Sàn Art in Ho Chi Minh City, then the only contemporary art space. She has just moved to The Factory, a bigger, better resourced, space for contemporary art in that city.
I was recently asked to speak at a conference in Bern, and was amazed to find out how little systematic research had been done into the history of *kunsthallen*. I mean, they have been vital players in Germany, Austria and Switzerland since the 1890s, yet this conference was the first to take them seriously. My basic hypothesis to help guide this research is roughly that kunsthallen may be considered as once modern, and now contemporary, art exhibitionary venues that have evolved through three phases. First, from the later nineteenth century through to the mid-twentieth they seem to have been, in the major cities of Europe and its cultural colonies, important galleries and meeting places for groups of artists, often affiliated into informal societies, that sought varying degrees of independence from the major local academies and from the official art styles of the day. Second, during the 1960s, they were among the first exhibitionary venues to be profoundly impacted by the transformations of late modern art and curating, as they began to become contemporary, something that occurred not only in Europe, or only in the West, but also in places throughout the world. Since then, kunsthallen have become one among the multiplicity of platforms that present Contemporary Art within the vast visual arts exhibitionary complex that emerged during the modern period and is, as I just described, now a distinctive aspect of the culture of our globalized contemporaneity. [17]
These kinds of spaces have distinctive features depending on their local contexts. The German-style kunsthalle does not work in other regions. The Kunsthalle Lissabon, for example, strikes me as a parody of the German style, but is of course a serious space for exploring contemporary art in this city. In China, against years of governmental suspicion about informal, not-for-profit spaces, a plethora of such spaces are being created in many cities throughout the country. The suspicion is still there, but there is now a growing realization that it is in such spaces that art's most inventive energies are to be found, and that the viability of a larger art system depends on this kind of energy. So they are being left alone, unless they break one of the taboos – mention Tiananmen 1989, Tibet, official corruption – or mock the Party or Xi Jinping.

CGC – My problem with some of the recent approaches to institutional critique, new institutionalism or instituent practices is that they just

set up a genealogy where we have institutional power as something very well located, concentrated into a narrow conceptualization of space. Take, for instance, Fred Wilson in Baltimore doing *Mining the Museum*, Cildo Meireles criticizing transnational biennials from Documenta, the Berlin Biennale dedicated to activism in 2012...Do you think that those engagements have anything of the provisional? Aren´t they depending on very permanent structures? Aren´t they locating institutional power within the same spaces where it was identified in the 1970s as problematic? To what extent can we frame the emergent modes of institutional power within an equally new geo-referential framework? To what extent is provisionality not just hiding precariousness and latent power divisions?

TS – In a sense, you have the privilege of being concerned about this after nearly sixty years of people working hard to build alternative, on-going yet always critical infrastructure at the same time that this colossal exhibitionary complex was arising around them. It is precisely this huge institutional weight that critique was trying to resist. But you are right to highlight the inequities between formerly colonized countries and those of the former colonizers – I say "former" in an ironic tone, because colonization still colors decolonization in major ways, and seems to be reviving itself these days.

The second and last edition of the Johannesburg Biennial, curated by Okwui Enwezor, was in 1997, a long time ago, but remains vivid in the minds of those of us interested in the history of critical curating. So it is relevant that, in Johannesburg a few years back, in 2010 I believe, curator Gabi Ngcobo and artist Sohrab Mohebbi created a Center for Historical Reenactments. Their aim was to grapple with current issues through their historical legacies, so they organized discussions, staged exhibitions of work by local artists, and some theme shows. But they concentrated on reflexive curating, including a faux reimagining of the defunct Johannesburg biennale, its possible third edition. Signaling the provisionality of such a project, they were not afraid to stage what they call their "institutional suicide," which they did in 2012. [18] Most alternative spaces, even though nearly all of them were founded in a spirit of short-term intervention and the temporary occupation of their site, find it hard to close themselves down after the initial impulse runs out of creative energy, or transforms into something else.

The examples of Institutional Critique that you list in your question: all of them were actually forms of *artistic* practice located inside or in relation to a museum, not initiatives by curators. Lead by conceptual artists, what came to be known as Institutional Critique art was a post-conceptual effect, *after* the 1960s-1970s moment when museums were regarded as the enemy of contemporary art, which most of them were, at the time (the opposite seems true now, which is another kind of problem, for art especially). Turning the critical spotlight onto museums was a logical next step, and it was a necessary one. It was entirely predictable that, as

Andrea Fraser pointed out, the critique of institutions would quickly become the institutionalization of critique. One good reason why that happened was that a new generation of curators entered museums from their early experiences in experimental art spaces, they welcomed this critique, and worked out ways of building it into the procedures of their institutions. This is the complex acting like a complex, as if it were a network system mixing and matching, or an organism breathing in and out. Fred Wilson is a lovely man. Trained as an artist, he was working as a museum education officer when he staged *Mining the Museum*, although he had earlier made installation pieces, *Rooms with a View*, about racist ideologies in museums. Since then he has produced individual artworks that echo some of the work he did during that period. You can find them at art fairs, such as Frieze New York, as individual objects for sale in a booth. They are one aspect of what is a wide-ranging practice, which is not atypical for artists of his generation, except that he has continued to focus on social justice and the degradations of racism as the major content of his art.
So, no, I don't think that everything fades when it is absorbed into institutions, because, you know, some things have to be held for history, ready for their second act, particularly when anti-historical forces are prominent, as they are at present. Nor do I think that the market is entirely a monster waiting for every artist, curator and critic to take up the Faustian bargain it constantly offers. Some gallerists act like alternative spaces should be acting, when that is the need in their locality. We keep seeing small-scale, not-for-profit experimental spaces that avoid institutionalizing themselves, that have maintained their commitment to provisionality, although of course that gets harder the longer that you keep going…
There are all sorts of transformations going on here, and it can get confusing because, as I said, each current is moving through the present with a distinct orientation and at different speeds, as are the components of the exhibitionary complex both within and between the currents. This is contemporaneity at work: it is cotemporal, dispersive, and multifarious – in a word, complex.

CGC – Related to that, you mention the idea of coeval commonality as a future, as the point towards which things are going. To what extent is this commonality being curated, being subsumed into curatorial activity and thought? What might that imply?

TS – As I explained earlier about contemporaneity, coevality is not just about things happening at the same time, it is, more importantly, the quality of acting in a cotemporal way, of genuinely sharing one's different ways of being in time, and doing so in direct, one-to-one exchange. The concept comes from postcolonial anthropology, and was best theorized by Johannes Fabian. [19] So, it does imply a different ethics, an ethics of openness to each other's difference, a kind of community based primarily on the respectful exchange of difference, not the sharing of sameness. That's the basic condition, the simple sense of presumed equity between all persons, things and worlds. The biggest challenge, now, is that this spirit must

also find a way to work at the largest scale, at the level of thinking about how we deal with global warming, how humans develop a different kind of contract with animals, all living things, the Earth, and the planetary system. Coeval commonality is the core of this, at places closest to us, and furthest away.
I have no illusions about how difficult this struggle will be. Neoliberalist capitalism and the politicians who support it will continue to prioritize making money from anything that moves in the world, and will do so until the last moment. This is like dancing on the deck of the Titanic, to use a metaphor from the last century, and they'll keep doing it, as long as they can make money out of it. The only rational explanation for the attitudes and actions of those commanding the major extractive and communication companies, and the reactionary politicians who support them, is that they know that global catastrophe is inevitable yet somehow believe that their wealth and power will protect them in their citadels and gated communities when it comes. This is as insane as the retro-futures imagined by fundamentalists.

CGC – I am struck when people explain global revolution by pointing at the specific action of groups of artists located in New York, for example. For me, that is limiting and provincializing a global phenomenon that has many things to do with art, but also, on the other hand, cannot be restricted to art…I´m thinking here of many cases, among them the Berlin Biennale, the Guangzhou Biennale organizing carnival, Tate Gallery including Nothing Hill parade, exhibitions like *Living as Form*… To what extent can curating be also a burden for that communality or for activism? And also, turning the question the other way around, in what ways can activism appropriate anything from curating in a positive sense?

TS – Well, a short answer would be that the occupation of Union Square then Zuccotti Park in 2011 was actually precipitated by a group of anarchists in New York, who were quite experienced political activists. It was not, as was widely believed, a totally spontaneous uprising, which would have caused serious panic on Wall Street. Nevertheless, as things evolved, all sorts of dissatisfied people joined in, and it demonstrated the potentialities (and limits) of such actions. So, in sum, it was a really important moment: in the United States, protest is frequent but insurrection is rare. I think that there will be many more of such responses to the political and economic problems that are mounting in the United States as elsewhere. Of course, Occupy! was a small scale thing compared to the other "squares" around the world that were occupied by hundreds of thousands of protesters – Tahrir, Maidan, Syntagma, Taksim, among others – and were, sooner or later, brutally repressed. So I agree that the EuroAmerican experience should not be thought to have triggered, or in any sense be thought of as more significant than, the actually far more revolutionary movements in the Middle East and elsewhere during those years. None of them, however, amount to the "global revolution" that you mention.

Political struggle in the West has to continue, in the streets as well as in the exhibitionary complex, as it should do everywhere else in the world. In this context, *Living as Form* was an important show, because it brought together activist art from many places, not to display "social practice art" for the sake of it, but in order to show how transformatory work was being done in this or that context, and to share ideas that could be adapted to local conditions, including the US. Nato Thompson chose to present it in the Essex Street Market on the Lower East Side, one stall next to the other, so that each activist group had its own shop front. In this sense it was like an art fair, but with radicalism on show, not expensive things for sale.
So, *Living as Form* would be an example of curating communality that you asked about earlier. Technically, not so innovative, in terms of its display logic, but content-wise it did do what I called for in my *Thinking Contemporary Curating* book, that is, for people to curate our contemporaneity, and do so critically. Your mention of Occupy reminds me of another way in which contemporaneity can be very effectively curated: open the gallery spaces to the streets. This is what the Gallatin Gallery at New York University did during the months that Zuccotti Park was occupied. They showed the posters, artworks as they were being made, used their monitors to show other occupations going on around the world in real time, hosted meetings to plan action and explain things to visitors, some of which I attended. The director, Keith Miller, basically let Occupy occupy the gallery, and curate itself. This was exceptional for New York, but it is actually quite common during revolutionary times elsewhere around the world.

CGC – Through my work in the Caribbean I have had the experience that the most difficult things for such critical art spaces are place-making, sustainability, persistence. Experiences are temporary, audiences are limited, but on the other hand I have experienced how the struggle for engaging within a broader arena and connecting with more varied agencies has been a common feature. How do you see this in the future? What have been our achievements in that sense, when seen within a bigger picture?

TS – With this question, you link my three ideas of the importance of place-making, world picturing and connectivity to contemporary life and to contemporary art. As you say, maintaining the actuality of place is the hardest thing to do, particularly in situations where there are very few resources, or there is state repression, and in countries dominated by others, such as in Puerto Rico, where people struggle to survive. This struggle is reaching truly desperate proportions in north Africa and the Middle East, in Syria especially, throwing millions of people into conditions of transitionality that, many fear, might become permanent, as it has been for those in the Palestinian refugee camps for so long.
It is a wonderful thing that artists and curators continue to work in such situations. I keep thinking of the gallerist in the rebel-held suburb of Gouta in Damascus, who

makes exhibitions by photographing works by artists who are still active, projects them on the makeshift gallery's wall, and then everyone rushes away, because they know the building is about to be bombed by the government or the Russian air force. This is placemaking as a kind of fundamental persistence, of selfhood as neighborhood. It is a kind of location that refuses dislocation. And it stands in stark contrast to parochialism, nativist thinking, isolation…all of those corrupted concepts of place, when it is defined above all as private property, or designated as a place by those with the power to do so, and the power to withdraw it, not made by the relatively powerless, with the materials to hand.

On the other side of this contemporary coin is world-picturing. Making the effort to world-picture is clearly something that more and more of us are going to have to do. We have yet to develop a shared picture of what it would be for all of us to exist in concert with the planet, in ways that are mutually productive, instead of exploitative and destructive. We can see patches of this picture: some scientists, farmers, environmentalists, engineers, politicians, curators and some artists can picture parts of it, but no one can see it whole, at the moment. So, there is a huge human effort needed to really picture a world in which we share a reality in common with the planet. We are lucky to have had some glimpses of it, exactly in some of the mega-exhibitions by star curators that artworlders love to complain about: Documenta 11 in 2002, the Triennale in Paris in 2012 with its theme of "Terrible Proximity," the Venice Biennale in 2015, "All the World's Futures," just to mention some of Okwui Enwezor's world-picturing shows. The lineaments of world governance, of at least the desire for it, can be found in many parts of the contemporary exhibitionary complex, including in some of these survey exhibitions.

In my seminar at the European Graduate School we look at the statement from the Convention on Climate Change, the Paris declaration of December 2015. It was produced following input from every member state in the United Nations, all 195 of them, and has to be ratified by the governments of most of these countries to become valid. Even then, it is voluntary, because there is no world force capable of enforcing it. As we speak, a few months later, it is heading towards achieving ratification by the 55 parties necessary to make it valid for every country. Except, of course, for those who refuse to sign it. National sovereignty still overrides the global good, as we see every day. To me, the hopeful aspect of this process is that this was the first ever statement about the world by the world, or, at least, by the geopolitical world's national representatives, elected or otherwise.

Of course, every document issued by the United Nations speaks in the name of humanity, but with the caveat that it does not constitute a world government, and relies on member states to carry out its work, or at least not obstruct its agents. We know that this is problematic on the ground, in many situations, as it was in Rwanda, for example, but there is a long game being played here. The Paris Convention is a move in such a game: it is a statement about the actual state of the world, signed by representatives from every nation in the world (insofar as nations are representative of the peoples within their borders). So, in a certain way, it´s the world´s voice

articulating itself, asking: what kind of contract with the planet Earth do we humans actually want? If you read it from this point of view, its spirit is deeply moving and encouraging, but it must be said that its language is disappointing. It confronts geopolitical realities such as the different levels of responsibility for "developed" and "developing" countries, and is specific about the reduction of carbon emissions as the key to containing global warming within survivable limits (even as the actual commitments of the member states, added up, will not as yet do that job). And then, as every UN document must do, it insists over and over that everything must be done in a way that respects a parcel of human rights, but the problem is that there are now so many of these, and they are so mutually contradictory, that they might seem themselves to be an obstacle to the realization of its greater goals. Human rights is the international language of the decolonized, of, in my terms, transnational transitionality itself: it is the language that the formerly colonized are obliged to speak to the (post)colonizers who still control the main concentrations of economic and political power – including, as I said before, by exercising their veto votes on the Security Council. So, it is no surprise that we see in this document a clash between the languages of the first and second currents: it is, after all, trying to remedy the disastrous impacts of Western industrialization, and the continuing catastrophe caused by countries of the Global South who pursue similar models of growth. It is trying to bring first and second current actors on to the same page, to act in their own interests and those of the world at large. This is third current work, to find the language that will help us move from divisive difference to coeval communality.

The long game I refer to is to become capable of speaking with one, multi-differential voice, precisely in order to be able to encompass such contradictions, to grasp them not as a resolved synthesis but as enabling antinomies that are on-going. This would be the language world of the coeval commons. We are working towards it through rethinking these questions, and the frames within which they are being asked, but also through actions, through infrastructure building, through artworks, and through curating of the kind we have been discussing. We keep on trying to answer the eternal question: "What is to be done?"

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Essays

Abstract

In this essay, I discuss two online manifestations of exhibition reprises as memory devices: the microsite and the online catalogue raisonné. For the most part, as currently conceived, these two online forms of remembering exhibitions embody two very different mentalities. Microsites habitually are generated at the time of an exhibition and are born digital; catalogue raisonnés are generated much later and often rely on analogue precedents for design. In addition to promoting the digitally conceived catalogue raisonné, I urge the dual strategy of maintaining active links to historic microsites and the retroactive creation of new ones as vehicles for rewriting the exhibition history canon. My primary examples are drawn from the Centre Georges Pompidou. ●

keywords

EXHIBITION MICROSITES
CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ
ELLES@CENTREPOMPIDOU
RESTITUTION

Resumo

Neste ensaio, é apresentada uma reflexão em torno de duas manifestações *online* de evocação de exposições, concebidas como dispositivos de memória: o *microsite* e o catálogo raisonné *online*. De um modo geral, estas duas formas de recordar exposições têm naturezas muito diferentes: os *microsites* são habitualmente gerados durante o processo de organização e abertura da exposição ao público, e são desde logo concebidos numa forma digital; os catálogos raisonnés são gerados muito mais tarde, e muitas vezes dependem de precedentes analógicos na sua conceção e organização. Recorrendo a exemplos relacionados com a atividade expositiva do Centro Georges Pompidou, este artigo argumenta a favor da criação de catálogos raisonnés de exposições em formato digital, e defende que quer a manutenção de *links* ativos para *microsites* de exposições, quer a criação retroativa de novos *links*, são instrumentos essenciais para se reescrever o cânone da História das Exposições. ●

palavras-chave

MICROSITES DE EXPOSIÇÕES
CATÁLOGO RAISONNÉ
ELLES@CENTREPOMPIDOU
RESTITUIÇÃO

REMEMBERING EXHIBITIONS ONLINE

MICROSITES AND CATALOGUES RAISONNÉS

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This essay discusses two online manifestations of exhibition reprises as memory devices: the microsite and the online catalogue raisonné (Greenberg, 2009, 1 & 6). With the first, I want to extend past discussions of exhibition microsites to include their historic value as exhibition and digital artifacts as well as the implications of their increasingly precarious fate. The second phenomenon entails the more recent appearance of online catalogue raisonné projects that record the exhibition history of a given institution or museum. For the most part, as currently conceived, these two online devices for remembering exhibitions embody two very different mentalities, resulting in distorted exhibition histories. My primary examples are drawn from the Centre Georges Pompidou.

Microsites and the catalogue raisonné

Exhibition microsites are digitally born, designed to be easily accessible and multi-purpose. They usually appear contemporaneously with an exhibition, often as a stand-alone web feature. Microsites contain a variety of information related to an exhibition's theme, contents, artists, layout, design, curatorial and installation processes, or programming. Microsites are a vehicle to bring this information, increasingly in various media, together and, at the same time, reach wider and different audiences, both during and after an exhibition run. While not usually conceived as a memory device, the microsite, if preserved, becomes one.

By contrast, catalogues raisonnés are retrospective, archival endeavors, constructed after the event for consultation by significantly fewer users. A catalogue raisonné of exhibitions comprises information about a series of exhibitions rather than just a single one and is as much about institutional history as exhibition history.

Online catalogues raisonnés are a recent development but almost as soon as museums launched websites a wide range of information about the institution and its exhibitions was put online. The exhibition tab on the home page of many museums often consists of three temporal sub-categories: current, future, and past. At its most basic, the past exhibitions section lists exhibitions by title and date. Some are more elaborate and include a description with a few images of the exhibition's contents or installation photos. 'Past exhibitions' listings serve as precursors and, at best, prototypes for online exhibition catalogues raisonnés.

The online exhibition catalogue raisonné is a fuller reprise than the briefer listing, replete with as much information as possible. Ideally, for each entry, the catalogue raisonné reproduces all documents associated with an exhibition, including those with sound and movement, features impossible to incorporate except by notation in an analogue version. Unlike microsites which generate new material, the primary activity of any catalogue raisonné is to collate existing data.

Because the catalogue raisonné emerged long before the digital era, there is a tendency to use analogue principles of construction, interface, storage, and dissemination, even when the platform is digital. Unless carefully rethought from the moment of its inception, the online catalogue raisonné risks minimizing the extraordinary potential that digital technologies offer for revisioning what an archive might be and how it can be used. Far into the future, the online exhibition catalogue raisonné will determine the ways past exhibitions are remembered.

A number of theorists point to the dangers of repeating past approaches to archival material when using newer media. In her book, *Encounters in the Virtual Feminist Museum: Time, Space and the Archive*, art historian Griselda Pollock states: "Archives matter. What is included shapes forever what we think we were and hence what we might become" (Pollock 2007, 13). New media theorist Lev Manovich worries that "…digital [art] repositories may be amplifying the already exist[ing] biases and filters of modern cultural canons" (Manovich 2017, 742). He goes on to say: "The question humanists have been asking is about canon, and how to make canons in their field more representative" (ibid., 760). Visual technologies expert and media historian Sean Cubitt reminds us that archives are an ethical category, "…that the ethical obligation to archive – is itself a political one" (Cubitt 2017, 489).

To summarize: the instruments and ideologies of past and present manifestations of online exhibition presence are key determinants to what is remembered. How, then, do our premises and practices for online exhibition documentation impact exhibition studies, exhibition histories, institutional histories, and national and global histories? And how can we develop approaches that result in fuller, more equitable exhibition histories, forms and formats that allow us to remember exhibitions and their histories differently?

The 1990's: the emergence of curatorial studies and online exhibition documentation

Let me begin by establishing some historical context for the current interest in online catalogues raisonnés of exhibitions and the problems this format can pose. By the 1990s, two seemingly unrelated developments emerged that directed the future course of what is now known as exhibition studies. The first was the development of graduate curatorial programmes: the second was the invention of the internet. Unlike museum studies that preceded them, curatorial programmes, are focused on exhibitions rather than collections and oriented to the curation of contemporary art. The shift away from preparing curators to manage museum collections paralleled the growing dominance of exhibitions in the art world and the advent of event culture generally.

Despite the emphasis within curatorial programmes on making exhibitions, there was the realization that very little was known about the exhibition histories that explicitly or implicitly informed contemporary exhibition practices. An ever-growing number of research publications emerged to fill the gap. It is not until the advent of online exhibition catalogue raisonné projects that the disciplines of art history and curatorial studies collaborate on joint research projects.

At the same time as a greater interest in past exhibitions was developing so too were developments in the forward-looking digital realm. Both the possibilities of digitalizing exhibition materials and documents, and disseminating them altered dramatically with the invention of the World Wide Web by Tim Berners-Lee in 1989. Lee's revolutionary approaches to programming – bottom-up and accessibility-free – resulted in a range of digital producers and products that have transformed societies world-wide. Yet, despite the importance and ubiquity of increasingly user-friendly software programmes and the increased use of the web in multiple areas of the art world, the full application of digital technologies in exhibition history is the exception rather than the rule. None of the major exhibition history texts is available in e-book form. The situation for academic journals is marginally better. Print publishers' resistance to expanding into the digital realm can be explained by the learning curve, the resources required, and possible copyright infringement. In the museum world, resistance to the digital takes the form of museums creating online features, including catalogue raisonnés, with an analogue mentality.

Microsites: an early example

That said, a few museums did embrace the digital early on. Some of the earliest and most innovative digital museum ventures are exhibition microsites. The Centre

Georges Pompidou's 1997 exhibition*, Présentation des oeuvres récupérées après la Seconde Guerre mondiale confiées à la charge du Musée national d'art moderne* [A Presentation of Artworks Recovered After the Second World War in the Care of the Musée d'art moderne], is an early, paradigmatic example of a microsite documenting an exhibition (http://www.cnac-gp.fr/musee/mnr/index.htm) (Fig. 1). Technically, the thirty-eight artworks included were owned by the Musées Nationaux de Récuperation (MNR) but, as the exhibition title suggests, were in the care of the Pompidou. As I argued in 2008 (Greenberg 2008, 160-162), Didier Schulmann, then curator of collections at the Pompidou, used the exhibition as an opportunity to pursue research on the unclaimed works as well as to rethink the presentation mode of restitution exhibitions, both in the museum and, rather unprecedently, on the web. The online presentation of the artworks in the exhibition and related research findings allowed viewers and possible claimants the opportunity to access the contents long after the exhibition closed. I return to a detailed discussion of this microsite because of its early sophistication, its establishment of site architecture and navigation features still in use for remembering exhibitions online, and its fate with regard to remembering exhibitions when institutions create a catalogue raisonné.

The elaborate website for the MNR exhibition included sections on the individual works, relevant texts, a chronology, press reviews and a full set of installation photographs. There are a number of notable elements to such comprehensive coverage. In 1997, at the time of the exhibition, the web itself was relatively new and most art museums, even the Pompidou despite its embrace of contemporaneity, were hesitant to allocate such extensive resources to online presentations and research. Schulmann's project was complex, effectively tack-

Fig. 1 – Webpage from *Présentation des oeuvres récupérées après la Seconde Guerre mondiale et confiées et confiées à la charge du musée d'art moderne*, (http://www.cnac-gp.fr/musee/mnr/index.htm, no longer accessible).

ling the tensions between documenting artworks, tracing provenance, updating research, and recording exhibitions simultaneously.

As such, the MNR exhibition microsite is an early and, at the time, rare example of both recording the appearance of an entire temporary exhibition online and programming hyper-links to images of and detailed information about an artwork. In 1997, accessible installation images were an anomaly, both within the Centre Pompidou online archives and those of other museums. As mentioned earlier, the standard methodology was to document exhibitions with descriptive text material and/or images of included artworks and/or occasional installation images. On the MNR microsite, a separate screen was used for each installation photograph thereby underscoring the importance of each of these images in an era when installation photographs first were becoming accessible to the public. The primary navigation path through the installation photographs gave a sense of the sequential unfolding of the designed spaces of the on-site exhibition. The single, small photographs, each in the centre of its screen with arrows to the right and to the left indicating the link to the next image in the sequence, either forward or back, prompted lingering or directional movement. The result was a clear sense of the various spaces of the exhibition, especially the atypical curved walls in the painting sections. The feel of visitor determined movement in the on-site exhibition is captured by the hyper-links controlled by the pace of the user.

The 1997 installation photographs were black and white. At the time, this was the house style of the Centre Pompidou when documenting exhibitions. The black and white palette also echoed installation photos of art looted by the Nazis displayed at the Jeu de Paume in 1942, (thereby) cuing viewers to the time frame of the crime. The use of the 1942 photograph of what is known as the "salle des Martyrs", the room at the Jeu de Paume where "degenerate" art stolen in France by the Nazis was displayed, both on the exhibition catalogue cover and as the key image on the MNR web site, demonstrated the difference between Nazi denigration and post-war French reverential presentations of modernist, avant-garde art, particularly as Fernand Léger's *Femme en rouge et vert*, 1914, figured in both displays.

The inclusion of the 1942 photograph in analogue and digital documentation of the 1997 exhibition is both a didactic device and an early example of a remembering exhibition mentality. The installation photographs past and present on the microsite also conveyed an understanding that the exhibition was primarily a research exhibition rather than the standard museum exhibition privileging the aesthetic qualities of the art work on display. Photographs of the backs of the paintings with markings related to provenance and extended labels were evident in the installation photographs.

The second navigation pathway, clicking on individual paintings in the installation shots, resulted in the appearance of a large, coloured image of the art work accompanied by standard catalogue information and, when known, extensive

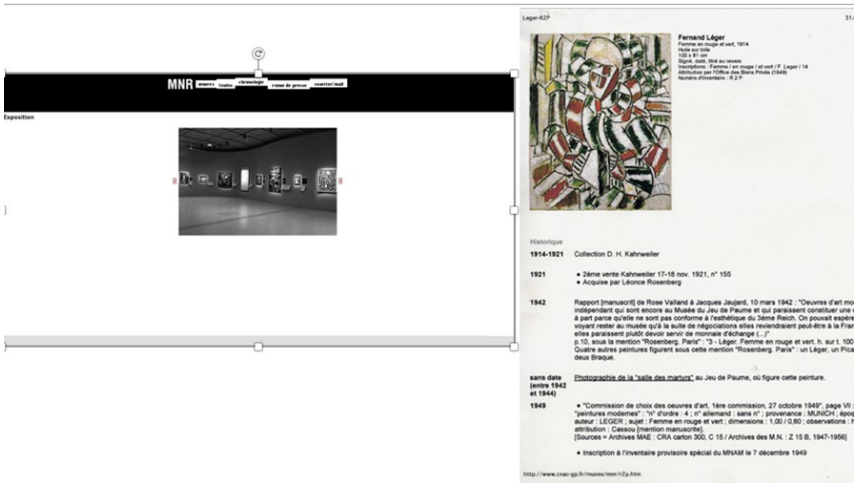

Fig. 2 – Left : webpage showing black and white installation view of *Présentation des oeuvres récupérées après la Seconde Guerre mondiale et confiées et confiées à la charge du musée d'art moderne* with Fernand Léger's *Femme en rouge et vert*, 1914 ; Right : webpage with coloured image of and research data on the Léger painting.

notations on provenance which could be updated (Fig. 2). Restitutions of individual works – the goal of the exhibition – were noted as they occurred. Four works were restituted during the exhibition, others years after. The open-ended, pre-Wiki microsite to update research differs from those at the time and serves as an example of how such sites continue to function to advance research long after an exhibition terminates (ibid. 160-162).

Unfortunately, given its historic importance for the history of online exhibition documentation generally and its position as the first major example of second wave restitution exhibitions specifically (Greenberg 2010, 106) the MNR microsite has disappeared from easy access on the web. Initially, and for years after the exhibition, the microsite was housed on the MNR website and accessible through the Pompidou site (www.centrepompidou.fr/musee/mnr/index.htm). Today, the microsite in its entirety has disappeared from both the MNR and Pompidou sites. To complicate matters, as of 2017, there is no tab for past exhibitions on the Pompidou site. A Google search by exhibition title, however, does turn up a link to the digitalized, quite comprehensive press dossier (https://www.centrepompidou.fr/media/document/16/20/162019290558fd1ac7d3a4cdbbd0dbf2/normal.pdf) but not the installation photos that record the content of the exhibition visually or the navigation system of the microsite, so the inventiveness and relevance of the exhibition's online manifestation is currently lost.

The difficulty accessing the microsite is particularly strange for two reasons. As mentioned above, the microsite under discussion was designed as an open-ended research site, regularly updated when new information about a looted artwork was found or the work was restituted. When last consulted in 2013, more works than not remained unclaimed and, since then, the Government of France pledged to improve its record with regard to restituting art stolen in WWII (Noce 2013).

The second reason for the microsite's absence is equally perplexing. Beginning in 2010, the Centre Pompidou engaged in an online Wiki project remembering all its

exhibitions between 1997 and 2017. The director of the Pompidou online exhibition history catalogue raisonné is Didier Schulmann, since 2011 Chef de service of the Bibliotêque Kandinsky at the Pompidou Centre, and, as noted, curator of the 1997 restitution exhibition and microsite under discussion. When searched in July 2019, the Pompidou online catalogue raisonné was no longer accessible, perhaps for the reasons cited in what follows. The descriptions below were written when the catalogue raisonné was available for consultation.

Catalogues raisonnés and missing microsites

Although the microsite is excluded, the exhibition of MNR works *does* figure in the Pompidou catalogue raisonné. On the difficult to navigate timeline, however, the exhibition's title is so truncated that no one could possibly infer its contents. It appears as *Presentations des oeuvres*, a title so generic that it could refer to the presentation of any kind of work (http://histoiredesexpos.hypotheses.org/presentation/catalogue-raisonne-des-expositions). Nor can the exhibition be easily found through keywords: misleadingly, the exhibition is categorized as an architectural exhibition. An unfortunate result of such misclassification is that the associated links in the entry are irrelevant as they connect to architectural exhibitions.

Not only is the MNR exhibition difficult to find if one does not have the full title and the information about its typology wrong, the entry is incomplete. The catalogue produced for the exhibition, which exists in English and French versions, was not digitalized or even mentioned. As I have stated, the microsite is entirely absent. Jurisdictional issues as a possible reason for the disappearance of the microsite could not have been an issue as accurate forms of linking and site maintenance had been established in the past.

The Pompidou catalogue raisonné, is a Wiki, a collaborative effort between the museum and young researchers at various universities. It is uneven and inaccurate due to the absence of careful oversight by expert editors and an inadequate conceptual framework for what material should be included. Insufficient funds, personnel, and vision render the project less than exemplary with regard to the inclusion of digital material.

The loss of the microsite is compounded by the reorganization of the institutional websites of both institutions associated with it. In 2013, the MNR site was redesigned and renamed Site Rose-Valland to honour the role Valland played in saving looted art both during and after WWII (http://www.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/mnr/MnR-liens.htm).

The most recent retooling of the Pompidou site occurred in 2017 to commemorate the museum's fortieth anniversary (https://www.centrepompidou.fr/en). In both revamps, the institutions dropped the link to a previous landmark project in their digital histories. The disappearance of the MNR microsite raises the question of what gets remembered in the longer term and how in the still-young field of exhibition histories and in the even younger category of online exhibition records. Additionally, the loss of the MNR microsite makes it harder to place more recent microsite exhibition history projects, such as the admirable "Primeira Exposição de Artes Plásticas da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1957" documenting the first Gulbenkian Artes Plásticas exhibition, that utilize similar site architecture and navigation features into historical context (http://expo1957.fcsh.unl.pt/FCTProject/faces/Index.xhtml).

Other Pompidou microsites have been better preserved, though, again, not in the online Pompidou catalogue raisonné project. The microsite, developed in conjunction with *Elles*, 2009, the institution's first collective exhibition of work by women artists (over 500 works), may not be included in the catalogue raisonné entry for the exhibition (http://catalogueexpositions.referata.com/wiki/Elles@centrepompidou#Public_et_m.C3.A9diation) but it is accessible through a Google search that leads to another Pompidou web page, an event page for the exhibition (https://www.centrepompidou.fr/cpv/resource/ccBLAM/r7Gk7od).

Unfortunately, on this web page, the presentation of the microsite is skewed. Instead of being one design element, albeit the largest, among many on the original homepage, the short video publicizing the exhibition is featured with a large, screen shot positioned prominently. The far more extensive, interactive microsite appears only as a link, in minuscule type, positioned off to the side where it is misleadingly labeled *fresques* (timeline) (Fig. 3).

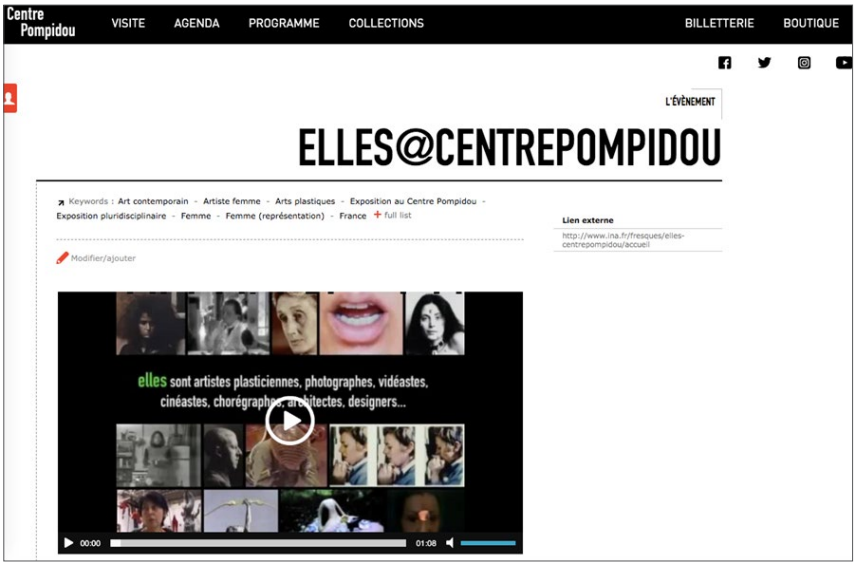

Fig. 3 – *elles@centrepompidou evenement*, original microsite homepage now defunct.

As initially conceived by the curator Camille Morineau, the *elles* microsite functioned as a document of the exhibition, an online catalogue, a history of women's art, and a history of feminism, predominantly in France. A key feature was embedding the publicity video as an element on the home page of the microsite. The single layer that included publicity and research was conceived to entice users to explore the various elements of the exhibition further.

As I wrote in 2015:

> The *elles* site is designed to be […] wide-ranging and to serve as an online searchable archive long after the exhibition. Its organization is multi-partite, resulting in a web-like structure with overlaps and interweavings. These encourage exploration of individual artworks and the seven exhibition themes. In addition to focussed and thematic sections, three additional navigational categories – the interactive plan of the exhibition, the chronological fresco and a blog – provide other forms of exhibition-related information. Aesthetically, the number of elements on the homepage – background colours of sage, mustard, grey and black, as well as black, white and yellow text – echo the variety of the content while helping to distinguish one element from another.
>
> […] Notably, the [Pompidou] collaborated with the National Audiovisual Institute (INA) to produce fifty artist interviews and include archival audiovisual material that appears in all sections of the site. Individual works and artists are documented, both in and of themselves and in relation to other works and artists in the exhibition and the relevant exhibition theme.
>
> The exhibition itself is documented with an interactive colour-coded floorplan […] Clicking on [a colour] brings up thumbnail sheets of images of [artists'] works in each thematic section that, again, can be clicked individually for information about the work and artist and are linked to related works in the [same] thematic section or elsewhere in the exhibition […] the omnipresent linking models the need to consider an artwork in multiple contexts (thematic, media, chronological, etc.) – urging visitors […] not to rely on standard or singular categorization models.
>
> Another major feature of the site is the general multi-media "chronological fresco," or timeline that situates artworks in relation to other feminist events (films, books, [political] demonstrations, legislation, etc.) […], the "chronological fresco" asserts the need to consider art made by women as part of a larger history of women's creativity and political change. The layering of the information permitted by digitization models [both the richness of the subject and] the active process of learning more through further investigation. (Greenberg 2015, 481-482)

After the exhibition ended, INA redesigned the *elles* microsite and it is to this later version that the Google entry *evenement elles@centrepompidou* links (Fig. 4). Most of the features of the first version, including the publicity video, have been included, though reconfigured. Unfortunately, again, the microsite is mislabeled as

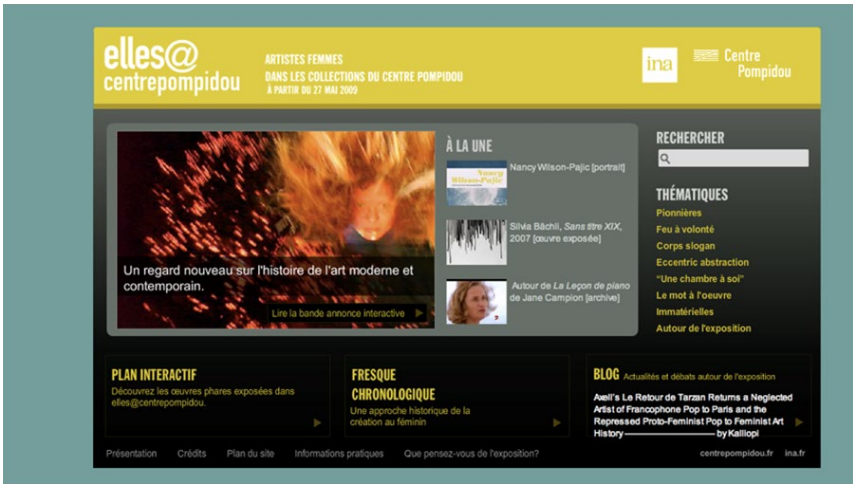

Fig. 4 – *elles@centrepompidou*, new version of homepage.

fresque chronologique (timeline) and it is only by entering the modified microsite that its fullness is apparent. While the Pompidou catalogue raisonné entry contains much valuable information, the absence of the microsite reduces the importance of this pioneering exhibition and its revolutionary use of digital technologies. The result is an erroneous rewriting of art and exhibition histories.

Digital conceptions of the catalogue raisonné

The design of the Pompidou online catalogue raisonné is based on an analogue model, specifically the card catalogue, hence, its inability to incorporate digital manifestations. By contrast, the exhibition catalogue raisonné of the Museum of Modern Art, New York uses a different methodology. With its open space and floating text and images, it looks digital. It is designed to be accessible as it is the last hyperlink under *Exhibitions and Events* on the museum's homepage, not, as with the Pompidou project, hidden away under "research" without a hyperlink. MOMA's catalogue raisonné can be scrolled, hyperlinked and, as stated, continuously updated (https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/history) (Fig. 5).
Wherever possible an exhibition is introduced with an installation photograph as well as text data. Instead of a difficult to navigate, diagrammatic, banner timeline, the exhibitions are visually grouped by year and scrollable. The catalogue raisonné is also searchable by title, type, and curator. When I searched for Connie Butler, an important feminist curator and Chief Curator of Drawings, MOMA, 2006-13, 22 exhibitions with which she was involved appeared.

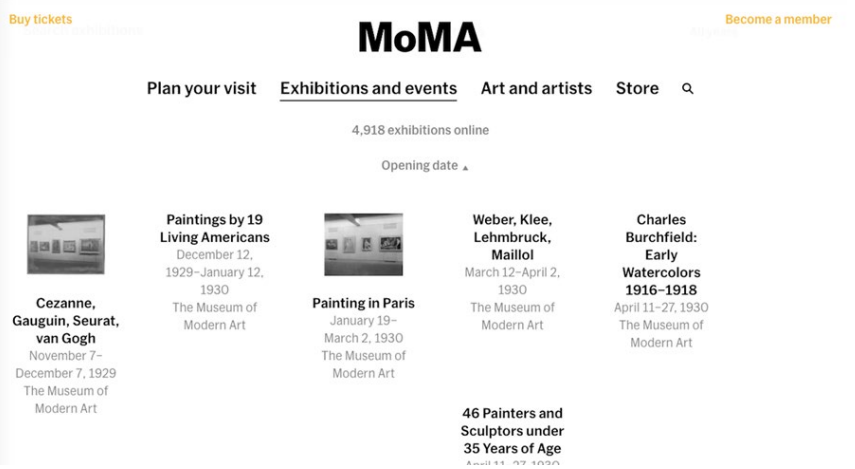

Fig. 5 – MOMA online Exhibition History, https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/history.

Despite the advantages of including events from all of MOMA's departments, the search categories do need massaging. A search for "feminist", turns up a number of exhibitions but also film series and performance programmes. A search for "women" turns up many more entries, some of which could easily have appeared under the feminist section. Surprisingly, neither *Pictures by Women: A History of Modern Photography*, 2011, or *Designing Modern Women 1890-1990*, 2014, are classified as feminist despite the fact that both exhibitions are outgrowths of "Modern Women: Women Artists at the Museum of Modern Art", a cross-departmental project begun in 2010 to increase the visibility of women artists at the museum.

For the photography exhibition, artists are listed and cross-referenced with links to other MOMA exhibitions in which they appear. A full set of coloured installation photographs is posted (https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/1038?locale=en). For *Designing Modern Women*, a video tour of the exhibition and the press release are included (https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/1369?locale=en). Is the material in the entries uneven? Could more, such as press reviews and attendance statistics, be added? Definitely. Wisely, especially for its earlier exhibitions, MOMA has decided to focus on digitalizing its in-house exhibition documents, especially its vast archive of installation photographs, and making them accessible and searchable. When digital material exists, it is incorporated.

Retrospective microsites

As MOMA rarely developed microsites for its landmark exhibitions, preserving them is not an issue. This does not preclude the possibility of MOMA retroactively creating microsites for key exhibitions, especially those related to issues of identity politics. Much in the same way that the Gulbenkian Artes Plásticas microsite draws attention to key exhibitions related to a country's patrimony and to exhibitions

outside main geographic centres, retrospective microsites created in conjunction with catalogues raisonnés can draw attention to important exhibitions outside the canon. In addition to maintaining links to past exhibition microsites, making retroactive ones is a practice all those making online exhibition catalogues raisonnés should consider. Doing so, can be an effective way of rewriting the exhibition canon. But only, if the microsite is easily accessible, widely disseminated and linked to the catalogue raisonné. ●

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Abstract

Most museums produce, over time, a photographic archive. These visual archives tend to dominate the various documents used to reconstruct past exhibitions, and increasingly supply more and more publications, especially publications on the history of the institution. But, even more than this, they play a central role as essential sources for the history of exhibitions. By putting works in perspective with each other and the venue, and by showing the specific nature of a particular display, an exhibition view photograph is the outcome of a viewpoint (the eye of the photographer) and goes well beyond any form of reproduction. Questioning it as such opens up a particularly fruitful avenue of research, restores to the photographers their fundamental contribution to the history of art, and better reveals a creeping effect involving works being rendered heritage by exhibitions, an effect accentuated by photography and its digitization. ●

keywords

EXHIBITIONS HISTORY
EXHIBITION VIEW PHOTOGRAPHY
DISPLAY STUDIES
HERITAGE
DIGITIZATION OF ARCHIVES

Resumo

A maioria dos museus produz, ao longo do tempo, um arquivo fotográfico. Esses arquivos visuais tendem a ser elementos cada vez mais preponderantes para a reconstituição de exposições, e estão cada vez mais presentes em publicações, especialmente publicações sobre a história das instituições. Mas, mais do que isso, eles desempenham um papel central como fontes essenciais para a história das exposições. Colocando em evidência a relação das obras entre si e com o local de exposição, e mostrando a natureza específica de uma montagem particular, uma fotografia de exposição é o resultado de um ponto de vista (o olhar do fotógrafo) e está longe de ser apenas uma forma de reprodução. Questioná-la enquanto tal abre uma via de investigação particularmente produtiva, que reconhece aos fotógrafos o seu contributo fundamental para a produção da história da arte e revela o progressivo efeito de patrimonialização das obras de arte através das exposições, efeito esse acentuado pela fotografia e pela sua digitalização. ●

palavras-chave

HISTÓRIA DAS EXPOSIÇÕES
FOTOGRAFIA DE EXPOSIÇÃO
MONTAGEM
PATRIMÓNIO
DIGITALIZAÇÃO DE ARQUIVOS

EXHIBITION VIEW

THE PRIMARY SOURCES OF EXHIBITION HISTORY: THE EXAMPLE OF THE *CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ* OF THE CENTRE POMPIDOU'S EXHIBITIONS

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Most museums produce, over time, a photographic archive. Commissioned and created in an increasingly systematic and exhaustive way, exhibition view photographs or installation shots are an essential component in drawing up catalogues or websites and feed into wider perspectives historians' analysis. These visual archives tend to dominate the various documents used to reconstruct past exhibitions, and increasingly supply more and more publications, especially publications on the history of the institution. But, even more than this, they play a central role as essential sources of the history of exhibitions. Clearly, this kind of archival photography holds a decisive position. What is the nature of these particular documents? Exhibition view photographs have existed since the invention of photography, but for a long time they have been stowed away for documentary or archival use and have not been acknowledged. They have become gradually inseparable from most contemporary forms of artistic expression.

Exhibition photography appears now to be a unique analytical instrument to question the role of exhibitions in the heritage of contemporary and modern works of art. This kind of archival photography holds an important position in the Centre Pompidou's research programme on the history of its exhibitions. It was in 2010 that the Musée National d'Art Moderne began to digitize its entire collection of exhibition views. This process of inventory is as much the cause as the consequence of production of a *catalogue raisonné* of all its past exhibitions.

To describe the specific features of these exhibition views, it is useful to present the "becoming images" phenomenon of some historical exhibitions. It is then interesting to observe how the Centre Pompidou has developed a research programme contributing to the history of art through the exhibitions it has presented over forty

years. The potential of the visual archives produced since its origin is therefore very clear. An interesting comparison can be established with the archival project carried out by the MoMA. Examples of publications constituting the first occurrences of *catalogues raisonnés* of exhibitions confirm the determining role played by these images. It is important later to observe the uses of documentary photography not only to write the history of exhibitions, but also by curatorial practices and the consequences, in terms of heritagization and digitization of these visual archives. Exhibitions are one of the vectors of contemporary art as heritage. Photographs of exhibition views are both memory and instrument. Through this photographic practice and its production, diffusion, reception and uses, it is possible to decipher the political dimension of the heritage of contemporary and modern art in the exhibition. Photographic reproductions of museum spaces, depicting the evolution of museographic practices, form a very heterogeneous corpus. As a means of gaining knowledge about exhibitions, it is important, therefore, that it be as "objective" as possible. It must have reliable neutral and descriptive qualities. These concerns can be linked to the concerns of sculpture and architecture photography, which is also determined by a necessary objectivity counterbalanced by a greater or lesser degree of interpretation by the photographer.

A photograph of an exhibition view is not a reproduction; its basic principle is to put the works in perspective with each other and to show the specific features of a display. A photographer must respond objectively to a commission, but the experience of the exhibition is often seen in space and photographing involves choices of points of view, framing, and light. Contrary to the photographic reproduction of an artwork, radically decontextualizing it, a photograph of exhibition view is determined according to time and space. The photographer documents links between artworks and place, the relationship among the artworks, the exchanges between the works and the public. This type of document comes before, during and after the exhibition, both an indicator and a verifier of information. The indications which it supplies establish elements for a critical analysis of an exhibition.

It is useful to bear in mind that the universal fame of several important exhibitions of the 20th century essentially stemmed from the photographs which had moulded their "becoming-image". The distinction between the photographic documentation of exhibitions and the photographic reproduction of artworks became clear quite early on. From the 19th century onwards, during the Salons de Paris, Gustave Le Gray would take overall views, which depicted the ways the paintings were hung rather than the paintings themselves. The latter were actually hard to discern since the issue was, foremost, the exhibition itself: a space rather than a surface and an ambience rather than singled-out objects. In 1851, Le Gray succeeded in capturing light coming in through the glass roof, glorifying the marble of the sculptures, but the sidelong shot chiefly let one see the impressive frames of the paintings rather than the paintings themselves (Fig. 1). The following year, bigger frames and a mastering of depth of field allowed him to photograph the entire perspective of the gallery from floor to ceiling. The image was strikingly composed, balanced

Fig. 1 – One of the rooms of the Salon of 1850-1851, Paris. Photo: Gustave Le Gray.

around an accentuated line of flight. Conversely, by photographing each wall of the Grand Salon of the Palais-Royal head-on, his photographs came to be precious and precise documents for the art historian. On the other hand, shooting pictures in perspective, something he went back to in 1853, brought information mainly on display practices and the spatial organization of the artworks. Such representations of exhibition galleries are far from scarce in the history of painting and engravings. The pictorial genre has, in fact, been practiced in different eras since the 16th century. Those works can be seen as ancestors of the photographic documentation of exhibitions: they dealt with questions regarding the composition and conventions of architectural representation and, most of all, they dealt with the development of the point of view, the place and the role of the viewer-spectator. The picture of the Louvre's *Grande Galerie* in ruins, painted by Hubert Robert in 1796, exemplifies this practice of showing the display of works of art at an exhibition site, which in this case is completely fictional, forming and suggesting a theory on exhibition space. There is the idea of creating a montage, the image of a display sequence, as if the painter were a curator.

A photograph of the hall dedicated to Kazimir Malevich's "Last Futurist Exhibition 0,10" in Saint Petersburg in 1915 is certainly one of the most well-known exhibition photographs in art history books (Fig. 2). Among the thirty-six totally abstract paintings presented by Malevich, his work *Black Square* against white background stood out. Its very specific placement, hanging in the middle of the top of the corner of the room, made the "quadrangle" visually prominent in comparison to the other works. The display was above all symbolic and perhaps even spiritual, as the corner of a room is the place of the icon in the orthodox religion. Malevich's gesture could also be seen as a desire to fill the space with painting. With this photograph, the basic principle of exhibition pictures became clear: to put the works of art into perspective and to describe the preciseness of the display. As the photograph of

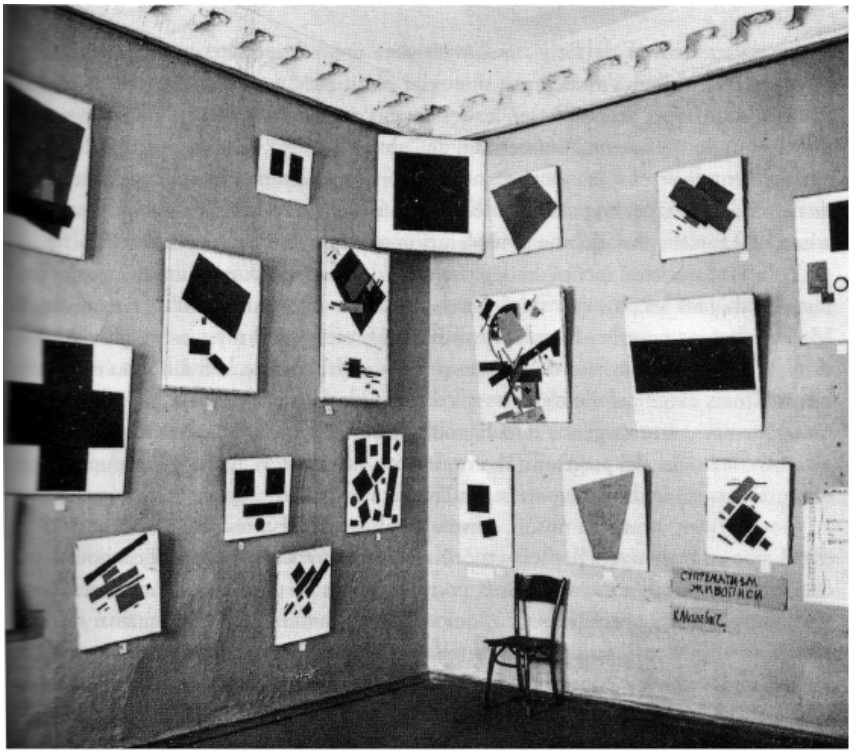

Fig. 2 – View of the Last Futurist Exhibition of Paintings 0,10. Petrograd (Russia), 1915.

the exhibition hall was shot from an angle, most of the works of art hung on the two walls were captured slantwise, in perspective, while the black quadrangle was placed in the centre facing the camera lens. The photograph therefore emphasized what the display itself demonstrated; it placed the acme of Malevich's pictorial research right in the centre.

This photograph mainly confirmed that the artistic avant-gardes of the beginning of the last century were quite concerned with the way their works were exhibited, that painting and sculpture could not be autonomous and that their perception depended upon the hosting site.

The first International Dada-Messe held in Berlin in 1920 highlighted the importance of the photographic documentation of exhibitions as well as its role in potentially securing an artistic event a place in history (Fig. 3). The organizers of the exhibition had hired a professional photographer, Robert Sennecke, whose photographs of the opening made the political and provocative character of the event tangible. The photographs described particularly well the main exhibition hall and the specific layout of the works of art, as well as the unconventional way they were hung. Shot in the main hall during the opening of the show, the exhibition picture was organized around one angle, much like those of the Malevich hall in the "0,10" exhibition in Petrograd.

The photographer constructed the picture by placing the corner of the room in the centre of the composition to create a perspective, which gave depth of field wherein the works of art were displayed according to a homogeneous and regu-

Fig. 3 – Erste Internationale Dada Messe [First International Dada Fair]. Berlin, 1920. Photo: Robert Sennecke.

lar distribution on the surface of the picture. In accordance with the spirit of the exhibition, that ideal point of view placed the visitors in a central position where they were surrounded by the works of art they were contemplating. Just like in the pictures of "0,10", an empty chair, this time in the foreground, invited the viewer to take the time to see the exhibition side by side with the artist Hannah Höch whose head was turned towards the off-frame space. The density of the display filled not only the walls, but also the ceiling (a dummy was hanging over the visitors' heads), which contributed to creating a total setting.

The Spanish Republic's Pavilion at the Paris International Exposition in 1937 provided the framework for a monumental exhibition picture taken by Hugo Herdeg for the *Cahiers de l'art* (the image of the exhibition was thus put immediately in circulation). The chosen point of view linked Calder's *Mercury Fountain* with Picasso's *Guernica* (Fig. 4). The thin bars built the photographical composition by surrounding the three dimensions of the fountain and aligning themselves with the surface of the huge painting. From floor to ceiling, all the architectural elements also participated in putting the exhibition space into perspective. However, the depth of field of the photograph remains a single interpretation that needs to be completed by other points of view. Other photographers also photographed the Pavilion, such as Baranger who stands back from the exhibition and gives a more global picture of it. The photographic documentation of exhibitions affirmed its genetic connection to architectural photography.

The reinstallation of Picasso's work at the Reina Sophia in Madrid was conditioned by Hugo Herdeg's photo. The museum curators wanted to associate *Guernica* with a

Fig. 4 – The Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* at the International Exposition of Art and Technology in Modern Life, Paris, 1937. Photo: Hugo Herdeg.

fountain (a rather smaller one, on a pedestal in a display case) by Calder. The press photographer was confronted with a need to associate the painting with the sculpture and to take up Herdeg's composition. The "becoming-image" of *Guernica*'s first display stipulated the way the work would be exhibited and even the way it would be photographed once more.

The Palais de Tokyo was inaugurated during the international exhibition of 1937 in Paris. The National Museum of Modern Art is installed there but officially opened after the war, in 1947. Thirty years later it moved to the Centre Pompidou.

The Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris has produced over a thousand exhibitions in its forty-year history, making the institution one of the world's largest producers of temporary exhibitions. The museum has, since 2011, undertaken the vast and ambitious project of producing a *catalogue raisonné* of all its exhibitions. It is no longer only a matter of documenting its collections, but also of categorizing and classifying its past exhibitions. Institutions no longer consider the work of art as autonomous object, but rather perceive the work through its different appearance in exhibitions and the relations that it develops with other works in different contexts, in the polysemy it generates through different curatorial acts that together shed light on new and possible interpretations.

The various collections of photographic archives collected at the Centre Pompidou are today dispersed and mainly preserved in three places: the archives centre, the collections department and the Kandinsky library. This archival architecture is symptomatic of a complex institutional system.

The "archives department" of the Centre Pompidou, formerly called "administrative archives", is dependent on the Legal and Financial Department. In these different collections, there are photographs of *vernissages* and events, but in some archives, especially those of curators, one finds mainly exhibition views in the form of prints. Their presence in this type of collection highlights the conservators' use of this particular type of document.

The second entity is the photo library, installed and developed within the collections department. It mainly preserves display views of the museum, more precisely, presentations of the permanent collection. This documentation goes back to the installation of the collections at the Palais de Tokyo. This photography archive is not made up of reproductions of the works but of shots of works in a display situation in the museum rooms. With every modification of the permanent exhibition, the internal photographers took and archived photos. The expression "museographic photography" seems appropriate in this case. Many of these photographs are digitized and disseminated on an intranet database as a tool for conservation.

In the Kandinsky Library there is former documentation of the museum, mainly preserving the exhibition views most concerned with the writing of a history of current exhibitions. Significantly, the photo library has recently been renamed the "photographic collection" of the Kandinsky Library, distinguishing it from the collection's photo library, but certainly bringing it closer to the museum's collection of photographs. The mission of this library, installed since the renovation in 2000 on the 3rd floor of the Centre Pompidou, is to build and maintain a documentary collection reflecting the art and architecture of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. We can distinguish between three sets of photographic collections kept: those that enter as acquisitions, then donations and deposits, and finally those that are commissioned or produced by the institution, often in the form of reportage. Since the beginning, the Centre Pompidou has produced archives itself. The production of photographs to cover all the Centre's exhibitions (including the scenography, works in the exhibition setting, openings, events...) is considered a strong point of the collection. The photographic campaigns of external exhibitions since 1972 were governed by a desire for completeness that is no longer possible today. The most important set consists of reports made by the Centre's photographers at exhibitions since opening in 1977. Approximately 100,000 documents or 23 linear metres of archives. This internal production also concerns the history of the building before and during the works and the reopening in 2000, with reports consisting of architectural photographs.

In general, beyond the archives of the Centre Pompidou, photographs of exhibitions are not as neutral as they may seem. Photographers often take into account the exhibition locations they photograph. Their shots respond to their own eyes. This

raises the question of the objectivity necessary for their documentary status. A careful study of the working methods and personal approaches of the photographers, as well as the cultural context and technical constraints surrounding them, proves to be indispensable and fruitful. From this point of view, the use of photographers by the Centre Pompidou for its "own production" of photographic archives of exhibition photographs is an original feature. Few museum institutions have worked regularly with a team of internal photographers. The MNAM-CCI is one of the institutions that has given themselves the means to build their own documentation.
In 1977, the year the museum opened, Béatrice Hatala documented the first presentation of the permanent collections of the MNAM installed at the Centre Pompidou. It then developed into an open course requiring an extended, almost "panoramic" view to include a large number works — sculptures and paintings — in the same image. The works are juxtaposed, but none overlaps.
At the same time, Jacques Faujour photographed the installation created by Jean Tinguely for the forum of the Centre, the *Crocrodrome* (Fig. 5). The black-and-white report illustrates the renewal of the report work/public initiated by the Paris institution. Visitors stroll through the baroque and chaotic installation that unfolds in the open space of an avant-garde exhibition area, the work is then perceived as a machine in a factory (the *ultra-turbulescent* building was alternately qualified as an oil rig or refinery). Faujour's mission was not to reproduce the collections, but to photograph the exhibitions and again to produce useful reports for designing them. For the *Paris-Moscou* exhibition in 1979, he travelled to Russia with Jean-Claude Planchet: the first phase of the work consisted of going on site to produce documentation that would serve the conservators. Then Faujour photographed the exhibition itself. The structure of the building, with its large plateaux free from posts, creates ambitious scenes. Faujour's colour views testify to the complexity of

Fig. 5 – *Le crocrodrome de Zig et Puce*. Centre George Pompidou, Paris, 1977. Photo: Jacques Faujour.

the display, where the reconstruction of the tower of Vladimir Tatlin, presented as a monumental sculpture in the context of the exhibition *Paris-Moscou*, is surrounded by a system of chair rails and showcases which evoke the systems of monstration imagined by the Russian and Soviet artists of the 1910s and 1920s. The density of works presented in permeable spaces offered the photographer framing solutions to achieve carefully composed images. Faujour is a humanist photographer influenced by Cartier Bresson and Robert Doisneau.

It is therefore a characteristic of the Centre Pompidou to have organized, produced and inventoried its own documentation more to create an archive than for communication. The photographic views of exhibitions held at the Centre Pompidou constitute an original and essential element of the documents that enable the analytical work essential to studying the history of exhibitions. Work on these archives is today an opportunity to gather and match materials to better measure the contribution of these different photographers to the memory, documentation and evolution of curatorial practices (see Parcollet 2015).

Like the Centre Pompidou, the MoMA has also worked regularly with the same photographers. In 2004, to mark its 75th anniversary and put a spotlight on the archives and photographs documenting its exhibitions, the MoMA published an atypical book tracing the history of the museum from the inaugural exhibition in 1929 (see Bee and Elligott 2004). Collaboration with a private company, ARTstor, allowed about 16,700 photographs to be digitized. The digitization of these archival photographs had previously been used in a book by Mary Anne Staniszewski,[1] the subject of which was a history of exhibition displays at the MoMA. Her reflection on the setting of exhibition space was therefore essentially based on a collection of documentary photographs. Inventory work, supported by the museum with the assistance of a private partnership, has allowed independent researchers to carry out specific studies on the activities and practices of a museum institution. In 2014, the MoMA expanded the project, with the ambition of fully describing, preserving, and opening MoMA's curatorial and exhibition record files to a broad audience. In 2016, records for exhibitions from 1929 through 1989 became available; the project features over 3,500 exhibitions, illustrated by primary documents such as exhibition view photographs.

This desire to catalogue exhibitions can also be found, in a very different way, in the imposing book on Harald Szeemann, *Harald Szeemann with through because towards despite. Catalogue of all Exhibitions 1957-2005* (2007), edited by two of Szeemann's former colleagues, Tobia Bezzola and Roman Kurzmeyer. The subtitle *Catalogue of all exhibitions 1957-2005* demonstrates a desire for completeness specific to the principle of a *catalogue raisonné*. This exceptional volume contains 962 illustrations, mainly exhibition views, drawn from the archives that the curator had created and added to throughout his career and which served as a real working tool. Bezzola and Kurzmeyer scoured the archives to select this set of exhibition views, the backbone of the project. As with *Art In Our Time*, and MoMA.org, photographs

[1] Staniszewski, Mary Anne. 1998. *The Power of Display: A History of Exhibition Installations at the Museum of Modern Art*. Cambridge, MIT Press.

are presented with other types of documents: press cuttings, correspondence, and also annotated plans.

In the middle of the 20th century, art called for a new photographic protocol, the product of the emergence of space experiments, the autonomy of artworks and their relationship with the environment. During that period, numerous exhibitions owed their fame to their photogenic appeal and revealed the curators' determining role. In 1969, Harry Shunk did a story on Harald Szeemann's exhibition "Live in your head: when attitudes become form".[2] Balthazar Burkhardt, who was the Bern Kunsthalle's official photographer, counter-balanced his point of view: through the two viewpoints, it became possible to reconstitute a processual exhibition by calling its very perception into question. Not long after this exhibition, Szeemann invented the craft of the independent curator by purchasing all the photographs of his curatorial choices for the Swiss institution that Burkhardt had shot. The dialogue between the curator and the photographer was then underway and their interaction would assert itself and signify a common gesture: to bring to light and to bring into view. The curator and the photographer were no longer tied to an institution; their co-dependency really made them authors. The "becoming-image" of the exhibition has resulted in the latter becoming increasingly organized according to the photographic image the photographer should be able to achieve in order to represent it. The curator and the display designer think about the relations among the artworks as well as the context, the site of the display and the points of view available to visitors in advance, according to their photogenic potential. Practice and gradual recognition of the photographic documentation of exhibitions have not only been accompanied by profound evolutions in creative practices towards contemporary art, at times the photographic documentation of exhibitions was actually what made evolutions possible.

These days, exhibition views seem to be an obligatory way of dealing with the relationship between art and photography. More than praxis, it is nothing less than a photographic paradigm. Artists and curators, who are increasingly involved in the way their work is received and visualized, use this documentation as a tool not only for thinking about spatial arrangement, but also for re-thinking the history of the art on display. Access to this rich material connected to the science of archiving is part and parcel of a growing interest in the history of exhibitions, to which it is no stranger.

In 2014, Jens Hoffmann, deputy director of the Jewish Museum in New York, organized a two-part exhibition (*Others 1* and *2*)[3] to revisit another: *Primary Structures*,[4] a decisive moment in the history of art, presented at the same institution nearly 50 years earlier (Fig. 6). Taken from the Jewish Museum archives, enlarged views of the original show covered most of the museum's walls; so the place as history was endlessly duplicated, like a *mise en abyme*. There was a new encounter between the 1:1 representation of the 1966 exhibition in black and white and the new arrangement consisting of other works produced in the same period by different artists. The New York critics were very swift to interpret Jens Hoffmann's curatorial proposal

[2] *Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form* (Works — Concepts — Processes — Situations — Information). Curated by Harald Szeemann. Kunsthalle Bern. 22 March-27 April 1969.

[3] *Others 1*: 14 March-18 May 2014 ; *Others 2*: 25 May-3 August 2014. Curated by Jens Hoffmann. Jewish Museum, New York.

[4] *Primary Structures*. Curated by Kynaston McShine. Jewish Museum, New York, 27 April-12 June 1966.

Fig. 6 – View of the exhibition Others 1. Other Primary Structures. Jewish Museum, New York, 2014. Photo: David Heald.

as "a very hands-on form of study: exhibitions that are themselves re-creations of –or responses to – past exhibitions". The use of the exhibition's visual archives lay at the root of the scientific project. It underwrote the study and analysis of it, with Jens Hoffmann defining his project as an invitation to think about the history of art, these photographs represent the "canons" of art history as well as "a documentation of the experience of the exhibition".[5]

Germano Celant also used these visual archives for his reconstruction of the exhibition *When Attitudes Become Form* at the Prada Foundation in Venice in 2013. The OMA architectural agency was associated with the project for this "remake" at a palace the Venetian exhibition originally designed for a Kunsthalle. Photographs taken by Balthasar Burkhard, the Shunk / Kender duo, Claudio Abate, Dölf Preisig, Sigfried Kuhn and Albert Winkler were used to recreate the works, the architecture of the place and the original exhibition plan. The exceptional richness of the visual archives of the exhibition, and later the 2011 acquisition and digitization of the exhibition views in Harald Szeemann's archives by the Getty Research Institute of Los Angeles, very clearly explain the tendency of these different reconstruction operations. The way that exhibitions became images favoured Szeemann's celebrity and, as a result, his role and place in the history of art. The archives of exhibition curators are often made up of photographs, not only reproductions of works which they have exhibited or wanted to exhibit, but also views of those works in different exhibition situations. The case of Harald Szeemann's archives is especially interesting. Exhibition views are useful both for illustrating the work of the exhibition designer and for devising upcoming displays. Jens Hoffmann is quite clear about this aspect: "About the curator archives, the installation photography for me is the most important part of the archives. I think that the emergence of the independent curator like Szeemann necessitated a different type of documentation".[6]

[5] Remi Parcollet. 2016. "(Re)produire l'exposition, (re)penser l'histoire de l'art. Autour des archives visuelles de *Primary Structures*". *Critique d'art* 46 [online]. Paris, Printemps/Été 2016. Accessed April 2019, http://journals.openedition.org/critiquedart/21190; DOI: 10.4000/critiquedart.21190.

[6] Jens Hoffmann, interviewed by Rémi Parcollet on 22 October 2015 at the Jewish Museum, not published.

By putting works in perspective with each other and the venue, and by showing the specific nature of a particular display, an exhibition view photograph is the outcome of a viewpoint (the eye of the photographer) and goes well beyond any form of reproduction. Questioning it as such opens up a particularly fruitful avenue of research, restores to the photographers their fundamental contribution to the history of art, and better reveals a creeping effect involving works being rendered heritage by exhibitions, an effect accentuated by photography and its digitization. For some years now, we have been witnessing various digitization experiments of archives documenting exhibitions and their history by museum institutions and also by art centres. These are hardly coordinated, and yet their operating methods will very often condition the valorisation, knowledge, diffusion and scientific or communication use of these collections of documents. In addition, the use of photography to document exhibits raises many legal issues, particularly in terms of copyright. No status is clearly defined and the questions are formulated simply: does exhibition view photography generate copyright? For whom, the artist, the photographer, the museum, the commissioner? In general, institutions are divided between a need to control the use of photographs protected by property rights and a mission of broad and democratic dissemination of the collective heritage that they preserve.

The database could emerge as a comparable and contemporary form of the cataloguing principle whose development and uses evolve according to the possibilities offered by the digital world: crossings, dynamic interface, search engines, semantic web... It is certain that digital technology has changed cataloguing techniques. The issues related to the dissemination of sources on the Internet, the legal questions, are numerous. The digitization and construction of an interface often make it possible to rethink the organization of a collection or the connections between different collections. The importance of archiving and documentation exhibitions is growing. For this reason, it seems important to compare the collections kept in the archives of the Centre Pompidou with other collections of archives. The "act of exhibiting" is now an obvious object of study, regularly questioned and constantly evolving.

The relationship between photography and the history of art is often discussed (Heinrich Wölfflin, Erwin Panofsky, Aby Warburg, Walter Benjamin, Andre Malraux ...). Exhibition views are the basis of the history of the exhibitions because they include the specific feature of combining space and time. In the postmodern context, the current recurrence of exhibition reconstructions from these visual archives bears witness to this. But exhibition designers do not take into account the subjectivity of how the photographers of these images see things and once their environment and their conditions of production and reception are traced and examined, they become insidiously critical points of view. Exhibition view photographs can no longer be considered transparent means. In the context of the ephemeral and of the processual, these photographs, often substitutes for memories, are today tools for writing the history of art but also, and especially, the major vectors of creating a living and subjective artistic heritage. ●

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Articles

Abstract

The number of books and PhD dissertations dedicated to the history of exhibitions in art history is constantly growing. Most of these publications originate from curatorial studies, a field that is only loosely connected to the discipline of art history. A striking feature of these texts is that "art works" are almost entirely absent, and more or less the same can be said for "the exhibition". Instead of discussing the exhibition as such, these authors are interested in biographies (most of the time in fact hagiographies) of curators or descriptions of exhibitions, while avoiding theoretical questions about the status of exhibitions. My article deals with what I consider a major problem with these texts, i.e. the absence of a theory of exhibitions and the substitution of such a theory by the vague construct of "the curatorial".
I offer a symptomatic reading that looks at how different actors in the field of exhibition-making establish an understanding and discourse concerning exhibitions. This reading focuses on "the curatorial", which, even though it does not qualify as a theory in the proper sense, nonetheless performs the function of a theory in curatorial discourse. To be sure, the texts (by authors such as Beatrice von Bismarck, Maria Lind, and Jean-Paul Martinon) that I analyse do not constitute a cohesive notion of "the curatorial", but they do exhibit some unifying aspects: the distinction between "curating" and "the curatorial"; the expansion of "the curatorial" to fields other than the exhibition; the claim of autonomy; and the understanding of "the curatorial" as an act of institutional critique. In this article I argue that the concept "the curatorial" functions less as an explanation of a certain practice than as the reproduction of a certain consent and, accordingly, serves to regulate discourse. I analyse both the epistemological impact and interest of the construction of "the curatorial" as well as the context in which texts focusing on this concept are produced (which includes asking what consequences they have for art history proper). ●

keywords

CURATING
"THE CURATORIAL"
THEORY (OF EXHIBITIONS)
CURATORIAL STUDIES
INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE

Resumo

O número de livros e teses de doutoramento em história da arte dedicados à história das exposições tem sido crescente. A maior parte das publicações sobre o tema tem a sua origem nos estudos curatoriais – um campo vagamente ligado à disciplina da história da arte. Um aspeto surpreendente dos textos publicados é o facto de as "obras de arte" estarem praticamente ausentes, e quase o mesmo poder ser dito em relação à "exposição". Em vez de discutirem a exposição enquanto tal, os autores destes textos estão interessados em biografias (na verdade, na maior parte das vezes, em hagiografias) de curadores ou em descrições de exposições, evitando questões teóricas acerca do estatuto das exposições. O meu artigo aborda o que considero um problema grave nestes textos, isto é, a ausência de uma teoria de exposições e a substituição dessa teoria por um conceito mais vago: o de "curatorial". Proponho uma leitura sobre o modo como diferentes atores no campo da realização de exposições têm definido um certo entendimento e um certo discurso sobre a ideia de exposição. Essa leitura desenvolve-se em torno do termo "curatorial", que, embora não se qualifique enquanto teoria em sentido próprio, funciona como teoria no discurso da curadoria. Na verdade, os textos que analiso (de autores como Beatrice von Bismarck, Maria Lind e Jean-Paul Martinon) não constituem uma noção coesa do "curatorial", mas exibem alguns aspetos unificadores: a distinção entre "curadoria" e "curatorial"; a expansão do "curatorial" a outros campos para além da exposição; a defesa da sua autonomia, e o reconhecimento do "curatorial" como um ato de crítica institucional. Argumentarei que a função de um conceito como "curatorial" não é tanto a explicação de uma prática específica, mas antes a reiteração de uma certa validação e, consequentemente, a regulação do discurso. Analisarei o impacto epistemológico e o interesse do conceito de "curatorial", bem como o contexto em que textos sobre este tema são produzidos (o que significa também interrogar as suas consequências na história da arte propriamente dita). ●

palavras-chave

CURADORIA
"O CURATORIAL"
TEORIA (DE EXPOSIÇÕES)
ESTUDOS CURATORIAIS
CRÍTICA INSTITUCIONAL

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RESISTANCE TO THEORY

THE IDEOLOGY OF "THE CURATORIAL" AND THE HISTORY OF EXHIBITIONS

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I. Curatorial discourse

Roughly twenty years ago, Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Nairne argued in the introduction to their influential anthology *Thinking about Exhibitions* that, "despite the growing importance of exhibitions, their histories, their structures and their socio-political implications are only now beginning to be written about and theorized." (Greenberg et al. 1996, 2). A decade later, Florence Derieux claimed that "the art history of the second half of the twentieth century is no longer a history of artworks, but a history of exhibitions" – however, one that "still largely remains to be written" (Derieux 2007, 8). Since then, the number of publications on the history of exhibitions has been constantly growing, while the largest portion of these originates from curatorial studies and thus from a field that is only loosely connected to the discipline of art history.[1]

A striking feature of these texts is, to quote Julian Myers (2011, 27), a "phobia of artworks", which is visible in their focus on curatorial concepts, exhibition layouts and above all the figure of the curator. What is furthermore striking – at least from the perspective of the discipline of art history – is their lack of methodological and theoretical rigor. Exhibitions are complex entities and, in order to grasp their singularity and historicity, it is necessary to develop an appropriate terminology. A history of exhibitions can be successful only if we have a concept of its object – that is, we first need a theory of exhibitions before we can write their history. Martin Jay argues that "what makes theory necessary, if by itself insufficient, is precisely the no less blatant incompleteness of its others. That is, in the imperfect world we inhabit [...], no possibility of self-sufficient immanence exists on the level of

[1] In some cases, the two fields are explicitly demarcated from one another. To name but one example: Jens Hoffmann characterizes the aim of the journal *The Exhibition* to be "by curators for curators" (Hoffmann 2010, 3), which suggests a separation between curatorial studies and art history. Needless to say, one cannot draw an accurate line between the two. For a comparison of the different fields in which publications on the history os exhibitions appeared and how each form a specific canon, see my article: Vogel 2017.

practice, experience, hermeneutic interpretation, narrative intelligibility, or empirical facticity" (Jay 1996, 178). We could paraphrase Jay by stating that one of the reasons for the necessity of theory lies in the inaccessibility of its objects. In order to understand a given "thing" (be it art, music, exhibitions etc.), we develop theories, even though we know they are insufficient. What is paradoxical about this movement, however, is that theories do not just find their object; rather, they first construct it. That is why no object can persist without the meta-layer that essentially declares it as the object of study (cf. Jahraus 2011, 25).

In curatorial discourse, we find a certain reluctance, if not resistance, to theorize about the exhibition. In lieu of a theory of exhibitions there is discussion of "the curatorial". This substitution is neither an equivalent, nor merely a makeshift replacement. Instead, as I would like to argue, it performs, like any substitute, the task of masking more fundamental underlying problems. The aim of this paper is thus to reconstruct the emergence of the term "the curatorial" through an examination of its function in curatorial discourse, which also means inquiring into its relevance for art history proper.

A blurb on the back of the anthology *The Curatorial: A Philosophy of Curating* reads: "Stop curating! And think what curating is all about."[2] This sums up Paul O'Neill's description of the "curatorial turn". It not only explains the rise of the exhibition as "the main means through which contemporary art is now mediated",[3] it also helps account for the "the respectability of the phenomenon of curating" (O'Neill 2011, 15), including the growing discourse surrounding it, manifested in "[d]iscussions, lecture programs, conferences, publications, and discursive events" (ibid. 18). Starting in the early 1990s and intensifying in the early 2000s is the inclusion of discursive formats in (and sometimes *as* or *instead of*) exhibitions – sometimes referred to as the "paracuratorial"[4] – and also the production of books, magazines and other publications written about curating, by curators and in some cases intended for curators: "Curating is 'becoming discourse' in which curators are willing themselves to be the key subject and producer of this discourse" (ibid. 19). One of the objectives of these publications is "self-historicization", i.e. the construction of narrative that explains the present by linking it to a precedent in the past.[5] Curatorial discourse is determined predominantly by curators themselves, actors within the field of exhibition talking about their own object and even about themselves.[6] Not surprisingly, the interview is the most frequent genre or type of text within curatorial discourse. Curators thus have a double capacity to produce the object both on the level of practice and, subsequently, on the level of history (or theory). In addition to collections with interviews, we find volumes on formative curators, which in some cases resemble accumulations of materials, whereas in other cases they are to be understood as something like a catalogue raisonné. Then there are journals. *The Exhibitionist*, for example, published between 2010 and 2016, claims to be the first magazine dedicated to curating.[7] The 2010s were marked by the founding of a number of other short-lived journals on curating, most of which were connected to a curatorial studies program, such as *Red-Hook* (CCS

[2] Ivan Gaskell wrote a brilliant review of this book, especially about the recurring call for a "new epistemology" that some of the volume's authors found in the idea of "the curatorial". His review is summed up in the following sentence: "I am left wondering whether there is, in truth, any epistemological crisis whatsoever, rather no more than a failure to think clearly" (Gaskell 2015, 210).

[3] One may very well ask whether there has ever been a time since the establishment of the Salon in 1667 when this was *not* the case.

[4] For example: Paldi 2011.

[5] Hans-Ulrich Obrist's *A Brief History of Curating*, a collection with influential curators, is maybe the most telling example. In the afterword to the book, Daniel Birnbaum describes the curators assembled in the book as Obrist's "parents" and "grandparents" (Birnbaum 2008, 293).

[6] In another article I offer a bibliography and paradigmatic examples: Vogel 2014.

[7] This claim is not entirely correct. Earlier examples include *Manifesta Journal* (since 2003) and *ONCURATING.org* (since 2008). Even *META* (1992-1993), published during Ute Meta Bauer's tenure at Künstlerhaus Stuttgart can be understood as a magazine that is solely dedicated to curating.

Bard) and *Well-Connected* (HGB Leipzig). A journal that still exists, and the only one that is independent and academic, is the *Journal of Curatorial Studies*.[8] The content of the first two is not so much a theorization of practice (cf. Glicenstein 2015, 184-189) nor especially a "How To" of exhibition making, but rather a mixture of (often very personal) accounts of exhibitions by other curators (something in between a historical account and a review), musings over one's own exhibitions and more general thoughts about curating. The same trajectory can be found in countless anthologies with generic titles such as *What Makes a Great Exhibition?*, *Curating Subjects* or *Everything you always wanted to know about curating: but were afraid to ask*. Despite the difference in formats, approaches and contexts, they are all united in their aim to establish a tradition and thus justify their own practice through discursive accounts.

In the following, I will focus on texts devoted to the question of "the curatorial", i.e. texts that were published in anthologies, written or edited by writers active in the field of curatorial studies.[9] These texts are paradigmatic and representative of curatorial discourse, and are of particular interest because they intend to define the very objective of this discourse.

II. Curating vs. "the curatorial"

Not long ago, in 2003, Alex Farquharson could muse over the "recent appearance of the word 'to curate'" which he understood as a "shift in the conceptions of what curators do, from a person who works at some remove from the processes of artistic production, to one actively in the thick of it." (Farquharson 2003, 8). While "to curate" is still a rather young verb, its triumph cannot be overestimated (cf. Balzer 2015); by contrast, the noun "the curatorial" is even younger and even more ambiguous. It is a truism – which does not facilitate an analysis, quite the contrary – that the emergence of a new field of study enforces its own terminology. In the case of curatorial discourse, this applies especially to the concept of "the curatorial". The discussion of "the curatorial" appeared at a specific moment in time and marks a certain progress in curatorial discourse. While "the curatorial" as we understand it today, i.e. as a relatively fixed concept, is virtually absent from discursive formats and publications in the 1990s, this period nonetheless established an initial thinking about the practice of curating[10] – about one's own doing – and tried to legitimize the first wave of curatorial study programs. The 2000s contributed to the meta-layer of this specific moment, inquiring about the essence of one's doing (and, here too, legitimizing the second wave of curatorial study programs): Thinking about the thinking about curating. This shift is marked by the shift from "curating" to "the curatorial".

An important feature in the discussion about "the curatorial" is thus its hierarchical relation to curating: "The curatorial" is introduced as a conceptual difference

[8] The peer-reviewed journal *Stedeljik Studies* (since 2014) is worth mentioning here, but it is a somewhat peculiar case as a hybrid between a journal for exhibition studies and a publication that is (if only loosely) connected to the collection, history and program of the Stedeljik Museum Amsterdam and thus more in the tradition of museum yearbooks.

[9] Maria Lind's text is an exception insofar as it was initially published in *Artforum*, but later re-published in her *Selected Writings*. Lind reiterated her notion of "the curatorial" on several other occasions.

[10] It is telling that those publications focused on "curating" and not "the exhibition", which means they focused on only one aspect of a relatively large complex (to phrase it as an analogy: "curating" is to "exhibition" what "writing" is to "literature"). A theory of exhibitions would also encompass a theory of curating.

and adopts an operational role in the ongoing process of self-legitimation of curatorial practices. Maria Lind begins her seminal text on "the curatorial" with the claim "that curating is much more than making exhibitions"; there is something beyond curating, namely the curatorial as a "multidimensional role that includes critique, editing, education, and fundraising" (Lind 2010, 63). In her differentiation between curating and "the curatorial", Lind draws a parallel to Chantal Mouffe's differentiation of "politics" and "the political" – a differentiation based on Martin Heidegger's conceptions of "ontic" and "ontological".[11] Politics is for Mouffe an empirical realm, part of political science and "business as usual" – parliaments and laws are located in the realm of politics. The political, by contrast, is the domain of the philosopher, because the philosopher does not inquire into the facts of politics, but instead into its essence. Politics operates on the ontic level, whilst the political operates on the ontological. This means that politics is focused on various political practices in the conventional sense, whereas the political concerns the manner in which society is structured. When applied to "curating" and "the curatorial", this means that "curating" is the mere technical side, the sheer organization and administration of an exhibition. But what is "the curatorial"? This remains unclear in Lind's argumentation. She argues that "'the curatorial' [is] a more viral presence consisting of signification processes and relationships between objects, people, places, ideas, and so forth, a presence that strives to create friction and push new ideas." (ibid. 64). This could mean everything – or nothing at all.

In another text, Irit Rogoff and Beatrice von Bismarck start their dialogue by distinguishing between "curating" and "the curatorial", which is between a "professional practice" on the one hand, and an "event of knowledge" (Bismarck and Rogoff 2012, 22-23) that is rather difficult to pin down, on the other.[12] While curating happens in the regime of representation, "the curatorial makes it possible for us to affect a shift in emphasis to a very different place, to the trajectory of activity. So if I am curating, the emphasis is on the end product [...], in the curatorial, the emphasis is on the trajectory of ongoing, active work, not an isolated end product but a blip along the line of an ongoing project" (ibid. 23). The following passage has a similar impact, when Beatrice von Bismarck understands "curating" as a "constellational activity", which is only the basis for "the curatorial": "the curatorial is the dynamic field where the constellational conditions comes into being. It is constituted by the curating techniques that come together as well as by the participants [...] and finally by the material and discursive framings, by the institutional, disciplinary, regional, racial, or gender specific" (ibid. 24-25). Again, both Rogoff and von Bismarck make it rather hard to understand what actually qualifies as "the curatorial" or to identify cases in which "curating" transforms into "the curatorial".

In the same vein, Jean-Paul Martinon and Irit Rogoff, both co-founders of the PhD program "Curatorial/Knowledge" at Goldsmiths College in London, make the distinction between "curating" and "the curatorial" into a central feature of their argument: "Initially we recognized a necessity to distinguish between 'curating' and 'the curatorial'. If 'curating' is a gamut of professional that had to do with setting up exhibitions

[11] Lind takes Mouffe's terms for granted. Lind does not question this structural conception (Heidegger via Mouffe), nor does she reflect upon the usefulness of such a transfer of philosophical concepts to the field of curating.

[12] It is worth mentioning that, already a decade earlier, Beatrice von Bismarck wrote a text in which she tried to define the activity of curating; the text does not, in any way, anticipate the appearance of the concept of "the curatorial" (cf. Bismarck 2004).

and other modes of display, then 'the curatorial' operates at a very different level: it explores all that takes place on the stage set-up, both intentionally and unintentionally, by the curator and views it as an event of knowledge. So to drive home a distinction between 'curating' and 'the curatorial' means to emphasize a shift from the staging of the event to the actual event itself: its enactment, dramatization and performance. 'Curating' takes place in a promise, it produces a moment of promise, of redemption to come. By contrast, 'the curatorial' is what disturbs this process; it breaks up this stage, yet produces a narrative which comes into being in the very moment in which an utterance takes place" (Martinon and Rogoff 2013, ix).

Two observations are important here. First, Martinon links "the curatorial" directly with the curator. He privileges the curator. This stands in direct contrast to Maria Lind's view, for example, who does not limit the appearance of "the curatorial" exclusively to the curator and instead opens it to other actors in the field of the exhibition. The second observation concerns the moment of disturbance: While it is unclear what is disturbed and what such a disturbance looks like or why it occurs, it is through such a rhetoric of disturbance that "the curatorial" is structurally assimilated to concepts such as "literariness". The concept of "literariness" – to stay with this example – does not concern all forms of literature, but rather the very essence of literature in the realm of language. And very often the appearance of something like "literariness" is framed as a moment of rupture, of disturbance – a moment of rupture within the realm of "normal" (i.e. non-literary) language.[13] In drawing an analogy to common topoi of theoretical thinking, Martinon ennobles the idea of "the curatorial" as an autonomous category.

Although the three discussions of "the curatorial" differ from each other, especially in how "the curatorial" is contrasted with "curating", they do have a common denominator: the very fact that they try to establish a difference between "curating" and "the curatorial". It is also a way to avoid talking about the practice of curating and thus also about the theorization of practice. And it can furthermore be understood as a way to avoid talking about "the exhibition", which is considered a topic primarily for museum studies and art history. We could thus rephrase what Julian Myers identified as a "phobia of artworks" (Myers 2011, 27) in curatorial discourse as a "phobia of exhibitions".

III. Expanding the domain of "the curatorial"

A second common characteristic of the conception of "the curatorial" is its expansion to other fields.[14] "The curatorial", especially when framed as a kind of condition, finds a place not merely in the realm of exhibitions, but also in other activities and fields (cf. Lind 2010 and Martinon 2013). Such a dissolution of limits – or

[13] Prominently, for example, in: de Man 1986, 10.

[14] It is remarkable that a different form of the expansion of curating – i.e. the diffusion of the term to restaurants, shoe shops, blogs etc. (cf. Balzer 2015) – is absent from the discussion. This absence, in turn, sheds light on how "the curatorial", even though it starts from an expanded understanding of its activities, for better or worse still insists on rather conservative delineations of the art system.

how Theodor W. Adorno (2003, 368) phrased it: "fraying" – is also a key feature of contemporary art.[15] This is, again, another strategy to align curatorial practices with a common topos of how other cultural practices are understood. One could even speak of a "mimicking" of contemporary art in order to ennoble curating as a form of art, contrary to the "traditional" role of curating as serving art.

It is, however, astonishing that most of the texts on "the curatorial" avoid specific examples in which "the curatorial" may or may not be found. This also means that the argument is not based on reference to a specific historical precedent, even though it is clear that all implicitly agree on such a historical moment, namely the 1960s, with canonical forerunners in the early 20th century.[16] This is surprising insofar as a large part of the curatorial discourse is preoccupied precisely with its history, not only by focusing on a certain object in this history, but also by inscribing its authors into this history.

Examples used – however rarely – to support the definition of "the curatorial" are usually taken from what could be called curatorial practice in an expanded field, that is, exhibitions that test the limits of what an exhibition can be. Lind, for example, talks about the biennial of São Paulo in 2008, specifically about the decision of the curators to leave most of the biennial's building empty; here "the curatorial" emerges in opposition to a usually crowded biennial display (cf. Lind 2010, 64). By the same token, Rogoff argues that the A.C.A.D.E.M.Y exhibitions in Hamburg and Eindhoven, in which she was involved in 2005 and 2006 respectively, were discursive projects and process-related structure challenged the notion of what an exhibition could be (cf. Bismarck and Rogoff 2012, 30-31).

We thus find, in unison with the distinction between "curating" and "the curatorial", an understanding of "the curatorial" that stems from the exception (if not an extreme exception): The norm of "the curatorial" is the exception. While such a conception of "the curatorial" may help us to understand very specific curatorial practices – most of them in the wake of (post-) relational aesthetics and New Institutionalism[17] – the theorization of an implicit curatorial exceptionalism excludes most of the exhibition practices and thus merely postpones (and distracts from) the problem of developing a theory of exhibitions.

IV. Presentation instead of representation

I mentioned that historical forerunners are only indirectly mentioned in texts that try to define "the curatorial" (whereas numerous publications talk indeed about important exhibitions and curators as role models). One example of such an unmentioned reference is Lind's emphasis on presentation instead of representation: "Rather than representing, 'the curatorial' involves presenting – it performs something that in the here and now instead of merely mapping it from there and then."

[15] While the effort of authors such as Terry Smith (for example, Smith 2012) can be understood as a theorizing of such a "dissolution of limits" of curating that investigates in practices that go beyond mere exhibition-making, it has to be noted that they look at this expansion from the view point of the exhibition. (In fact, upon closer examination, one sees that those incidents are in reality still tied to a rather narrow institutional setting of exhibitions). It would be an interesting task to assume the contrary position and look at such phenomena from the view point of (radical) pedagogy, political activism, or civic engagement.

[16] It is no coincidence that the emergence of the ("autonomous") curator and the formulation of new museum concepts happened at the same time and in connection with the emergence of post-studio practices and institutional critique since the 1960s. The discipline of curating cannot be cut off from this development. This parallel development is marked by frictions from the very beginning. To name but two examples of artists criticizing curatorial practices, then and now, see Robert Smithson's *Cultural Confinement* (1972) and Anton Vidokle's *Art Without Artists?* (2010).

[17] For a critical re-evaluation of New Institutionalism and all its ambivalences, see Voorhies 2017, 71-138.

(Lind 2010, 65). Here Lind addresses a feature that has been central to exhibitions and contemporary art since around 1960, which has focused less on a representative grouping of works than on the production of what could be called "spaces of experience" – often producing works on site while using the format of the exhibition as the work of art as such (to name some obvious, yet very different, examples: Marcel Broodthaers, Robert Smithson, Group Material, Martha Rosler, Willem de Rooij).
For Peter Osborne (2013, 27 and 162-168), the shift from representation to presentation may be a key feature of contemporary art that he directly links to global exhibitions. I would also argue that this shift has become a well-established topos in defining art since the modern period – think of the anti-mimetic impulse of early abstractionism as an anti-representational desire or Marcel Duchamp's emphasis on the exhibition value through his ready-mades as a shift towards presentation, but also conceptual art's manifestation in then uncommon modes of presentation or the already mentioned use of the exhibition form as a work of art. With such reasoning, the discussion about "the curatorial" places itself in a deep-rooted tradition that legitimizes what qualifies as art, without acknowledging the specificity of art works and asking how such a transfer of categories from art works to the exhibition could succeed.
It is unclear, however, whether terms like "the curatorial" can be useful in that context, because the curatorial act is still one that operates on both levels, presentation and representation. Focusing merely on the presentational aspect of curating excludes everything related to the surplus of meaning that is produced in an exhibition. Yet the similarity (and mutual influence) between artistic practices since the 1960s that could be reduced to the common denominator of "installation" and curatorial practices may be a good starting point for a theory of the exhibition. Such an understanding could be based on Juliane Rebentisch's *Aesthetics of Installation Art*. She pleads for a concept of art that mediates between aesthetical experience and an aesthetical object, while establishing their mutual dependence.[18] In light of her concept, one could inquire first into the significance of exhibitions in supporting and structuring both the aesthetical experience and object, and second into whether exhibitions are to be understood as aesthetical objects themselves.

[18] "Aesthetic experience [...] exists only *in relation* to an aesthetic object; conversely this object becomes aesthetic only by virtue of the process of aesthetic experience. The aesthetic object cannot be objectified outside aesthetic experience, nor does the subject ultimately become, on the occasion of an object that must be bracketed, the object of its own experience" (Rebentisch 2012, 11).

V. Autonomy and institutional critique

Tied to the understanding of "the curatorial" as a quasi-artistic phenomenon is the recurring claim of autonomy of "the curatorial". Again, autonomy is not something that is explicitly mentioned, but an idea that is visible between the lines. In fact, there are at least two different notions of autonomy present in the discussion of "the curatorial". The first one designates the movement of specialization of "the curatorial", that is, a distancing from other fields and the idea of self-reliance. (I have already touched upon this notion in the differentiation between "curating" and "the curatorial" and in its freeing from disciplinary constraints of art history.)

The second notion of autonomy is more difficult to pin down. To cite one telling example: "The curatorial is an event from which nothing can be gained because, contrary to curating, which is a constitutive activity, the curatorial is a disruptive activity. It disrupts received knowledge: what we understand by art, art history, philosophy, knowledge, cultural heritage, that is all that which constitute us, including clichés and hang-ups. […] Nothing can indeed be gained from this event that we call the curatorial. The curatorial is really an unnecessary disruption of knowledge, that is, paradoxically, but necessarily, the birth of knowledge" (Martinon 2013, 26). All this sounds very similar to Immanuel Kant's discussion of the "purposiveness without purpose", which leads to a "disinterested pleasure", and Theodor W. Adorno's argument about the "double character" ("its autonomy and *fait social*") (Adorno 1997, 229). This notion of autonomy of "the curatorial" – however simplified this reference appears in the texts – describes a genuine quality of all (modern) art forms. Here "the curatorial" claims to be an artistic form in its own right. But, as Juliane Rebentisch, notes: "Art is not autonomous because it is constituted in this or that way, but because it allows for an experience distinct from the spheres of practical and theoretical reason, by virtue of the specific structure of the relation between its subject and its object" (Rebentisch 2012, 11). How can we understand the exhibition – both "classical" exhibitions, but also exhibitions described as "exceptions" – on such a basis? If the exhibition is understood merely as support for art works and for an aesthetical experience, then it does not qualify as autonomous. But if we, on the contrary, frame the exhibition as an aesthetical object itself and the reception of the exhibition (i.e. a spatio-temporal setting of (art) objects with all its different layers of mediation) as an aesthetical experience – for which there are sometimes good reasons – then one should be allowed to ask whether terms such as "the curatorial" are at all necessary and whether concepts such as "installation" would not be more adequate.

What can be gained if "the curatorial" is understood in terms of autonomy? What does it consequently mean for the relation between exhibition and art work? There is no indication whether "the curatorial" produces autonomy or merely sustains autonomy once it has already been guaranteed. If we do not want to simply dismiss such arguments as art-speak nonsense (cf. Levine and Rule 2012), but inquire into their function in defining "the curatorial", we can at least note two different effects that are tied to the two different notions of autonomy: First, the emergence and specialization of any new field always operates through a claim of autonomy; second, the alignment to established notions of art – especially the assertion of a purpose-free or pure character of art – results in an understanding of curatorial practices as quasi-artistic practices with the very same entitlements and freedoms. The insistence on the autonomous character of "the curatorial" may also help explain why most of the examples used to illustrate "the curatorial" are highly self-reflexive exhibitions; in turn, the choice of examples can be understood as a claim of autonomy on yet another level, that is, the self-reflexivity of (modern) art. The claim of autonomy seems to be contradicted by a functionalization of "the curatorial", precisely through the use of a vocabulary familiar to us from institu-

tional critique.[19] To name just a few examples, "the curatorial" "breaks open existing structures" or it "questions boundaries" and institutional limits. Thus "the curatorial" is framed as a politically potent tool. Other terms that regularly point in this direction are "intervention", "gap", "friction" and "disturbance". I will not go into the discussion about the relation between curatorial practices and institutional critique – that is, artistic practices that are functioning "curatorially", albeit *as* artistic practices – or the institutionalization of institutional critique in "New Institutionalism". But it is worth asking what epistemological impact such an analogy has for our understanding of the term "the curatorial" and why exactly curatorial discourse should be politically privileged.

The claim of criticality is one of the most important assets in the realm of contemporary art. It is, to speak with Marina Vishmidt, the "sine qua non for discursive legitimacy in the circuits of art production and mediation" (Vishmidt 2008, 253). She develops this thought as follows: "It is a familiar grammar of power, which sporadically adopts the strategies of the 'weak' as a means of legitimation, either by invoking the socially marginal symbolically, or by disregarding power differentials in promoting strategies of flexibility and evasion which can only tend to affirm domination when such differentials are not taken into social and historical account. [...] Moreover, it repeats the idealistic error characteristic of academic cultural studies that sees 'boundaries' as semiotic prejudices rather than material facts, taking the signs of injustice as such, provoking solely discursive remedies" (ibid. 259).

Vishmidt's argument is quite fitting to the curatorial discourse. Here, too, one is faced with the emphasis on criticality and political efficacy for the field of "the curatorial", whereas power relations and actual political entanglements are, by contrast, concealed. (One could even argue that this disguise is one of the main reasons for producing texts.) It is important to note that this concerns not only the politics of institutions and their agendas for which curators produce exhibitions, but also the production of curatorial discourse in general, the very possibility of speaking about "the curatorial" as a system based on political mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion that define the position of each participant.

VII. The function of theory in curatorial discourse

While "the curatorial" may very well be a legitimate concept that designates something important, it should not be taken as the starting point for a theory of exhibitions (i.e. "the curatorial" for exhibitions is unquestionably not what "the literary" is for literature). Efforts to understand "the curatorial" nonetheless show – against its intention – that it occupies a function in the discourse of art. Paul de Man identifies one of the greatest problems of theory in the "tension [that] develops

[19] On the relation between autonomy and (or rather *in*) institutional critique, see: Fraser 2004 and Fraser 2012.

between methods of understanding and the knowledge which those methods allow one to reach." (de Man 1986, 4). What de Man argued in the context of literary theory can be applied to the theory of exhibitions. This would then concern the gap between actual exhibitions or the historicity of certain exhibitions, on the one hand, and theoretical models that fail to offer valuable explanations of its object, on the other. In other words, there is a discrepancy between what concepts such as "the curatorial" say and the phenomena they supposedly refer to. This has to do first and foremost with the refusal to talk about "the exhibition", which has been substituted with "the curatorial" – albeit this is merely a diagnosis and not an explanation. We need to look at the epistemological and political aspects on which the discussion of "the curatorial" is founded, with a view to the epistemological and political consequences it causes or tries to stabilize.

Let us stay with de Man: "Literary theory can be said to come into being when the approach to literary texts is no longer based on non-linguistic, that is to say historical and aesthetic, considerations or, to put it somewhat less crudely, when the object of discussion is no longer the meaning or the value but the modalities of production and of reception of meaning and of value" (ibid. 7).

Applied to a theory of exhibitions, this could mean focusing not on the historical value of an exhibition or its meaning, but rather on how meaning is produced in exhibitions in the first place. This shifts the focus away from a simple progress-oriented narrative – one invention follows another – based on constants and central categories, accompanied by deviations to these constants.[20] Understood in these terms, my depiction of attempts to define "the curatorial" does not qualify as a theory. But I would like to argue that, even though it is not a theory qua definition, it is nevertheless used and treated as a theory in curatorial discourse. This is further supported by the hypothesis that the function of theory in curatorial discourse is one of legitimacy, in fact, in a double sense: legitimacy of a certain object or objective, and legitimacy of the speaker's position.

While the legitimizing aspect of theories applies, to a certain degree, to all fields where theory is used, the curatorial discourse exhibits some special features and problems. In curatorial discourse, the development of theories and key concepts is always connected to the establishment of a certain practice that is then, circularly, taken to support the accuracy of the theory. In relation to autonomy, we see how models of authorship are naturalized for the object of the exhibition, a privileging of certain actors against other actors. If "the curatorial" is used as a theory in curatorial discourse, this entails not merely reflecting on one's own activities. In fact, it has two more important consequences: First, it guides the reception and gives a set of categories on how to evaluate exhibitions, and second, it fosters specific commitments that imply a kind of standardization, making it a prerequisite to engage with certain ideas, exhibitions and practices. In this sense, conceptions such as "the curatorial" do not only provide a setting for curatorial practice, but also establish a manner of speaking with diverse terms and categories. It is not the practice alone that forms a field and ensures a certain esteem, but also the posi-

[20] I understand this as one of the urgent tasks of art history: to work on a theory of exhibitions. This is, I believe, only possible if the position of its authors is marked by a certain distance to the object of study. The fact that established concepts such as "the curatorial" do not suffice to grasp what *the* exhibition is not a sufficient reason to jettison theory altogether – this would be, as Paul de Man argued, "like rejecting anatomy because it has failed to cure mortality" (de Man 1986, 12).

tion within a discursive formation and the establishment of a common vocabulary. A concept like "the curatorial" is less an explanation of a certain practice than it is the reproduction of a certain consent and, accordingly, the regulation of discourse. Thus, we must always ask who is speaking, and from what strategic position of power these speech acts are performed. Furthermore, we must reflect on what they covertly suggest, including those things that remain unsaid.

VIII. Coda

While all the above-mentioned aspects of "the curatorial" contribute to its (implicit) ideology – i.e. the (hegemonic) production of meaning that legitimizes (and excludes) certain curatorial practices, including its consequences in the wider world of contemporary art – I would like to conclude with an aspect that relates to ideology on yet a different level, to be more precise, to institutional-political issues between art history and curatorial studies.[21] The very shift from "the exhibition" to "the curatorial" also concerns a dissociation or distancing from other disciplines such as art history, whose point of departure is the exhibition. But such a distancing is not only a dissolution from a discipline; it also fosters the establishment of a new discipline or at least supports a discipline in the making, namely, the field of curatorial studies.[22] In this sense, the appearance of concepts like "the curatorial" have the legitimizing function not merely of framing or sustaining a certain object or practice, but above all of producing a common discourse.

Why, though, did concepts such as "the curatorial" only appear in the past ten years or so? If they operate to legitimize objects, practices and actors, why did they not appear already in the 1960s or 70s, or even earlier, during the formation and establishment of what is called curatorial practice? Maybe it is not so much, or not only, a certain practice that needs to be legitimized *as* practice and concepts *as* concepts. Rather, those concepts may also serve to politically legitimize the establishment of curatorial studies programs. It is obvious, for instance, that these terms developed within the framework of such programs and that they serve to justify their existence – especially in opposition to other academic programs and in the process of the marketization of the university. The introduction of study programs such as "curatorial studies" has to be seen as part of a larger shift in the humanities, which are under (economic) pressure to produce graduates with a clear job profile. This is also a question concerning the allocation of funding. In the concluding paragraph of her text, Maria Lind even suggests that "the curatorial" – now understood as a method – is a way out for the overproduction of graduates in curatorial studies: "If 'the curatorial' […] can be present in the work of practically anybody active in the field of contemporary art, it could also be used as an escape route for someone who, like myself, is responsible for graduating fifteen curatorial students per year. Where will they find work? Given the proliferation of curatorial programs across the

[21] An in-depth (praxeological) study, backed by empirical data (curricula, funding structures etc.), of the history of curatorial study programs still needs to be written. This study would have to look not only into the professionalization of curating as a reaction to contemporary curatorial practices in the wake of the expansion of contemporary art, but also into the restructuring of HE, especially the shift towards professional training in the humanities under the pressure of the Bologna Process. The argument that is brought forward here makes the simple point that there is a convergence between the establishment of terms such as "the curatorial" and the introduction of curatorial study programs: Theories have consequences – and not merely because all authors who have formulated an understanding of "the curatorial" are (or were) also directing curatorial study programs.

[22] A thread that this paper could not follow is the relation between amateurism and the professionalization of curating through academic programs and how this might shed light on the success of concepts such as "the curatorial". This question would have to be discussed in at least two different steps. A first line of thought would look into how the "social turn" of curating – especially through collectives or DIY initiatives – has blurred the figure of the curator and how such practices forward a self-understanding that is similar to conceptions such as "the curatorial". (This is, as I have shown, a key aspect in the discussion of "the curatorial", but there is still the necessity to confront the "theoretical" claims with actual exhibitions and their political and economic constraints.) A second inquiry would look into the seemingly paradoxical task of curatorial study programs to professionalize what they themselves very often proclaim to be an "amateurish" practice.

globe, some creative thinking has to be done to determine which jobs they should look for. The existing curatorial positions simply won't suffice" (Lind 2010, 65-66). Such an understanding of "the curatorial" makes another layer in its function in the curatorial discourse clearly visible: its position in the academic system as a form of legitimation of certain programs that need to distinguish themselves from others (and these are, for the most part, very costly post-graduate programs). I would thus advocate for an understanding of those texts that does not only inquire into their epistemological impact or interest, that is, their sense and value, but also into the practices and context that produce such texts and what consequences they have. In other words, what is their agenda? And this entails examining the academization of curating and the establishment of curatorial studies at universities and art academies – a particularly pressing task if we recall that one of the key features of the curatorial discourse is its self-understanding as a form of institutional critique. ●

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Abstract

This article looks at three case studies to probe into the fruitful relation between art exhibitions and the publications that follow from them. Phaidon's *Exhibitions That Made Art History* are examples of the weightiness of exhibitions' reception, and useful to analyse the ploys with which exhibition histories impact the construction of art histories. A couple of *Mousse* magazine issues help to expand the possibilities of documentation, criticise the reliance on images and ponder if rhizomatic histories can be woven from a plurality of voices. The exhibition catalogue of *When Attitudes Become Form* (2013) serves to unpack exhibitions' "aura" and the possibility of thinking beyond their (un)repeatability. Following the idea that publications cannot be regarded as neutral evocations of exhibitions, the article traces the ways in which these two platforms of display intertwine to create exhibition histories. ●

keywords

EXHIBITION STUDIES
PUBLICATIONS
EDITORIAL
POLYPHONY
DOCUMENTATION

Resumo

Este artigo aborda três estudos de caso, a fim de investigar a produtiva relação existente entre exposições de arte e as publicações que delas resultam. Os volumes *Exhibitions That Made Art History* da Phaidon exemplificam o impacto da receção de exposições, e são aqui usados para analisar os mecanismos através dos quais a história das exposições influencia a construção de histórias da arte. Os dois números da revista *Mousse*, que são também abordados neste artigo, permitirão expandir as possibilidades da documentação de exposições, criticar a nossa confiança nas imagens, e ponderar de que forma histórias rizomáticas dos eventos expositivos se podem ou não tecer a partir de uma pluralidade de vozes. O catálogo da exposição *When Attitudes Become Form* (2013) servirá como base para desmontar a "aura" da exposição e para podermos pensar além de sua (ir)repetibilidade. Perseguindo a ideia de que as publicações não podem ser consideradas evocações neutras de exposições, o artigo examina de que forma estas duas plataformas diferentes de exibição se articulam na criação de histórias de exposições. ●

palavras-chave

ESTUDOS DE EXPOSIÇÃO
PUBLICAÇÕES
EDIÇÃO
POLIFONIA
DOCUMENTAÇÃO

Peer Review

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THE PUBLICATION AS EVOCATION

EXHIBITION HISTORIES' PRINTED MATTER

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There is a non-straightforward and yet deeply necessary relationship between exhibitions and the publications about them. The bond, in turn, touches upon several of the nodes that the make the research field of exhibition studies a fertile one: it primarily has to do with exhibitions' documentation, but also with their reproduction and repetition, with their reception, and the way they are archived and historicised. The following question is therefore germane to the field: how do publications truthfully and productively depict exhibitions?

Governed by diverse conventions of time, exhibitions are intrinsically provisional whereas publications are, if not the exact opposite, at least considerably more permanent. Even if both involve the dissemination of work – creating platforms for the audience to encounter it – an exhibition is conceived as an unstable entity whereas a publication is produced to be self-contained and durable. These non-aligned temporalities affect the way exhibitions come down in history: the nuances or variances with which the narrative that traverses an exhibition can be conceived by its curator and then arrise in a spectator's mind is difficult to translocate into a publication that is geared towards presenting the event as a fait-accompli. The stories told by each of these platforms are bound to be different, inevitably conditioned by their ontology.

Space-wise, exhibitions build a narrative where fragmentation and dispersion is inevitable – of course, in each particular case to a different extent – while printed matter most commonly takes us from word to word, line to line, page to page. In general terms, it could be said that books build linear and self-standing narratives and, conversely, the narratives of exhibitions are inherently discursive and digressing. How can a book communicate this fragmentation? To what extent is it important to show the dispersion, rather than synthesising it?

The anthology *Thinking about Exhibitions* was published more than twenty years ago by the Anglo-American academic publisher Routledge. Other than recognising the exhibition as a key player in contemporary culture, the editors play with establishing an analogy between an anthology and an exhibition, defining both as "collections of discrete entities compiled for purposes of validation and distribution" (Greenberg et al. 1996, 1). They anchor the centrality of exhibitions in the postmodern context, positing them as discursive structures. In their definition of exhibitions and anthologies, they replicate Michel Foucault's understanding of the discursive as a system of dispersed statements transforming into a critical debate. They put forward that exhibitions "establish and administer the cultural meanings of art" (ibid., 2) and demand that their histories, structures and socio-political implications be analysed, theorised and written about. They delimitate their territory against what is considered, with Daniel Sherman and Irit Rogoff as references, museum culture. They state that the difference between the fields will have to do with the focus that is put on temporary exhibitions, on understanding instances of crises, of exploring the architectural politics and especially, unpacking the experience of exhibitions outside museum spaces.

The field has gained traction in the last couple of decades by focusing the historian's effort on the time and place where art meets its public. Rather than looking at the individual artist, this field of research builds on art history by analysing the plethora of agents and factors that influence the public presentation of art; and as a consequence, the field is rooted in the sociological, political and economic factors that interplay in art historical narratives.

Arguably an offspring of New Art History and, in particular, its imbrications with semiotics, exhibition studies follows on the footsteps of radical art historians – who have insisted on the interconnectedness of three considerations that define their object of study: an artwork's representational structures (intrinsic and extrinsic), the viewing subject that creates meanings out of it, and the historical context. Similarly, semiotics' encounter with art history introduced new areas of debate among which we find "the problematics of authorship, context, and reception" (Bal and Bryson 1991, 174). Exhibition studies propounds new ways in which to tackle those areas. *Thinking about Exhibitions*' extensive bibliography includes Umberto Eco's essay "A Theory of Expositions" published in 1967. The Italian semiotician addresses the "meaning" of the Expo 67 world fair by tackling, among other issues, architecture and design as acts of communication. He describes the entrance, the walls, the images, the decoration and the interiors, and the different ways in which these elements communicate a message – it can be considered, alongside the well-known articles by Brian O'Doherty "Inside the White Cube" (O'Doherty 1999), as a crucial starting point for the field.[1] Eco introduces the idea that there is a way in which an exposition exposes itself.

The layers implicit in exhibitions' constitution and the complexity of synthesising these into the kind of linear narratives that structure publications, is what this article will look to probe into. Because of the impermanent nature of its

[1] This research focuses on contemporary exhibition studies literature, looking at books and magazines published since the filed's inception as an academic or research venture. Historical examples – with Denis Diderot's reviews of the French Salons as pioneers – are outside of the scope of this investigation.

object of study, exhibition histories' reliance on publications as a form of evocation is inevitable. Historically necessary and yet intrinsically inadequate, this genre of printed matter will adopt many forms and be traversed by a range of problematics.

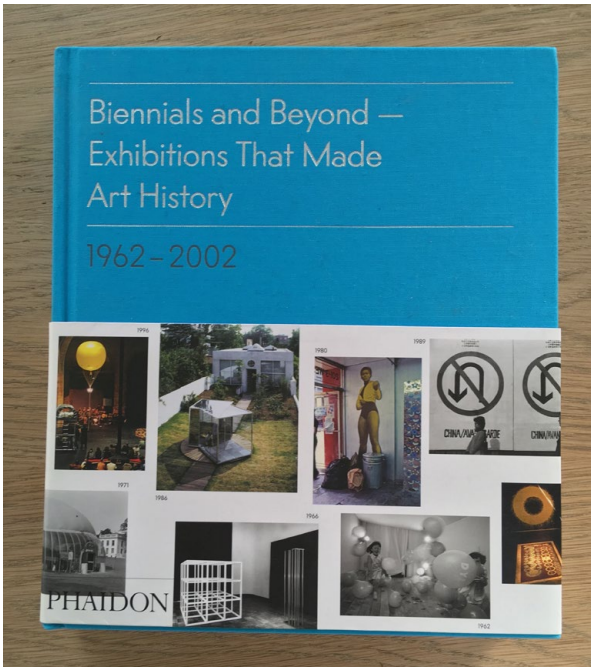
Exhibitions that made art history

The plethora of art books that now populate museum libraries and bookshops the world over were once the result of illustrated publishing's new-found ability to make art accessible to wide audiences. Its reproductions could be rendered so true to life that the public could almost dispense from having to go see the original – a case in point are publishers like Phaidon and Thames and Hudson, which in the mid-twentieth century inaugurated an era when the public could appreciate a full-page colour reproduction alongside gatefolds of its most prominent details in a mass-produced and relatively cheap book. Some of the publications that register the exhibition are both a continuation and a step-aside from this modern industry.

This category of books fosters representation values. By merging approachable texts with images, the volume facilitates an appreciation of the artwork that matches that of the spectator in the museum. When art historian Bruce Altshuler authored two of the first Anglophone volumes of exhibition histories, was he trying to provide a similar representation system? To what extent can the act of visiting an exhibition be depicted on the page, and what tools need to be employed in order to convey this experience editorially?

Altshuler's *Salon to Biennial* and *Biennials and Beyond*, published by Phaidon in 2008 and 2013 respectively, observe a linear method, tracing a historical progression through fifty exhibitions that took place from the mid-nineteen century to the present day. Individual chapters focus on a single show that is presented through a concise introduction, a summary of key information, and a recollection of primary sources. Images include varied installation shots and reproductions of related ephemera, while textual sources range from transcripts from the exhibition's press release and curatorial texts that accompanied the project, to reviews and articles published at the time it took place (Figs. 1 and 2).

The emphasis lies on recovering materials from the time of the exhibition – in the preface, this method is accounted for by arguing that unveiling such material can enrich or, conversely, problematise our understanding of contemporary art and its recent past. Providing the reader with content that is in its majority undigested, these books' histories are reconstructed through compilation. The unearthing of documentation is a historiographical method in itself, but here it underpins an opportunity to bring a plurality of voices to bear, a multiplicity that is in line with exhibitions' fragmentary nature.



Figs. 1 and 2 – Bruce Altshuler, *Biennials and Beyond: Exhibitions that Made Art History: Volume 2: 1962-2002*, Phaidon Press, 2013. Photo credit: the author.

This means that, for example, Freeze exhibition (London, 1988) is depicted with both images of YBAs during the installation process as well as the opening night – the former conveying the do-it-yourself ethos that gave birth to the exhibition, while the latter reveal the accelerated process that would kick off then and soon after establish London as a creative capital. Similarly, two articles are published alongside: the first, from the Guardian and dated 13 September 1988, declares the show's success and the city's new role in the art market; whereas the second – a piece by Liam Gillick writing two years afterwards – inquisitively tries to unpack how the urban conditions, UK politics and London's new galleries, can help understand the conundrum that really gave Freeze its visibility. The reception of exhibitions becomes as weighty as its conception, and the volumes balance these forces by mixing sources that give prominence to one and the other.

Notwithstanding this plurality of viewpoints, Altshuler's publications are also symptomatic of the drawbacks of linear histories of exhibitions. The volumes' subtitle, *Exhibitions that Made Art History*, leaves little room outside of the narrow trajectory distilled in Western art historical canons. In the preface to the 2013 volume, Altshuler mentions "art-making by members of marginalised groups, and activities in non-Western nations and postcolonial societies" (Altshuler 2013, 7) as a delineated and separate entity. The author explains that even if some such exhibitions were included, the main thread of the books follows Western canons. The "other" shows would seem to disturb the progress – progress here being a loaded term that cannot be separated from ideas of development and its modernist implications.

A third publication by Bruce Altshuler shares the characteristic of mapping a continuous history of exhibitions. *The Avant-garde in Exhibition* was published in the US in 1994 and outlines the dynamics of the modern period exclusively.[2] Highlighting the idea of a network and its importance in the generation of debates, Altshuler explains that avant-garde movements depended on confrontation and that the realm where these encounters took place was the exhibition. However, in this book, the artists and their original artworks remain at the forefront of the analysis, even if the exhibitions are used as the editorial backbone. The illustrations included are, for the most part, reproductions of artworks interspersed with portraits of important figures. It is only sporadically that an installation photograph appears.[3] The modernist approach takes on a redoubled expression here, relying on the linear timeline – where progression is singled out as a value, and development from one show to the next is expected – but also subordinating the use of art exhibitions to tell the story of individual artist genius. This publication not only shows the risks of any linear narrative, but also calls into question the extent to which histories of exhibitions can fit the linear model at all. Do they not demand instead a rhizomatic model? Can a vertical, escalating story, where the next exhibition is presented as surpassing the previous one, be acceptable today?

The research project "Histoire des Expositions: Carnet de Recherché du Catalogue Raisonné des Expositions du Centre Pompidou", that ran from 2010 to 2014, puts together the exhibition history of the institution – a linear history in a more constricted frame – and was published digitally.[4] Two features are worthy of mention: the undiscriminated inclusion of shows, following the logic of the catalogue raisonnée which is indifferent to the importance of each exhibition but instead provides a complete account of all the existing ones; and a plurality of timelines presented to be read simultaneously, mapping a criss-cross of agents and authors, locations and markets.

Examples like these reveal the ploys with which exhibition histories can impact the construction of art history. Altshuler's Western-centred subtitle pumps energy into an existing canonical vision, as does the selection of shows that fills the books' pages. Linear recounts of historic progression reaffirm modernity's hegemonic paradigm. And yet the plurality of voices that are brought to bare insert nuances, generate disruptions and allow the reader to enter the fragmentary world of the exhibition.

Two issues of *Mousse* magazine

Polyphony is the strategy at play in issue number 51 of *Mousse* magazine. Published in December 2015-January 2016, it presents photographs of shows that took place during the decade that spans 1985 to 1995 – the last years before exhibitions started to have an online presence through gallery and museum websites. The images

[2] Bruce Altshuler, *The Avant-Garde in Exhibition: New Art in the 20th Century*, New York, Abrams, 1994. *Salon to Biennial* also bears a modern timeframe yet it is published as part of the two volume series, where the second volume includes contemporary art exhibitions.

[3] Even if photographs of shows will become more common as technology progresses, there is an interesting contrast with a precedent publication, *Die Kunst der Ausstellung*, published in Germany in 1991. It includes one, if any, reproductions of artworks per chapter – the majority of images are of installation views. Interestingly, the only chapter that does not include an installation photograph has a double page spread with small reproductions of artworks that are arguably presented in a similar way to how artworks would be arranged on the wall, stressing a reading of the artworks next to one another.

[4] Accessible through http://catalogueexpositions.referata.com/wiki/Bienvenue. Last accessed September 2018.

are compiled thanks to the suggestions of a variety of contributors, generating a random and yet multiple and rich collection. There is a simple but powerful resort to compiling the history of a decade using just photographs, allowing these to mix and visually connect to one another, creating new, maybe inexact, but nonetheless compelling, narratives and histories (Fig. 3).

The photo issue assembles pictures that survived from the time when exhibitions occupied a more ephemeral condition, one that the editors argue was then replaced with the possibility of browsing through an exhibition online. It is interesting to re-think the extent to which installation photographs are being taken for granted today and what their full impact is in the way exhibitions are experienced. Twenty years later, photographs and photographers have not only become ubiquitous, but there is also a vast range of platforms where these can be instantly made public. The magazine instead frames a time when these images were not part of the publics' appreciation of an exhibition, which retained the aura of a non-reproducible event: "viewing a show would mean, quite simply, visiting it", states the editorial.[5] Being embedded in a society that produces images of almost every situation, it is becoming impossible to imagine what the difference in appreciation would be if our encounter of an exhibition was not mediated by photographs – those we can see before going, those we can produce during our visit, and those that remain available after we exit the space.

In *Stedelijk Studies* issue two – published in 2015 and devoted to mapping exhibition studies' present condition – an essay titled "Documenting the Marvellous" sheds light on a similar problematic from a historiographical perspective: the extent to which researchers' cling on documentation and its availability to write a history of exhibitions.[6] Even if primary sources are a challenge common to every historian, this article unpacks the particular relationship between three-dimensional and temporary exhibitions, and the two-dimensional but permanent photographs that document them. Author Madeleine Kennedy suggests a revision of the historical relevance that is conferred to exhibitions due to the existence and quantity of material that is available about them. Kennedy's case in point is the canonical Surrealist show of 1938: because the exhibition was thoroughly documented – the artists themselves were conscious of the importance of recording the show and tracing the public's experience – it has come to occupy a disproportionately central place in history compared to other Surrealist exhibitions. The last section of this article raises similar questions about the catalogue *When Attitudes Become Form*, published in 2013 by Fondazione Prada.

Experience, documentation and history all intertwine around *Mousse* 51. The issue is put together thanks to the suggestions submitted by a pool of collaborators (writers, artists, curators, critics, historians). The unsystematic histories that are woven from this plurality of voices inevitably carry a level of chance that shakes up exhibition studies canon. Instead of ticking the boxes, these compilations can shed light on new shows and sometimes even address historical absences (Fig. 4).

[5] *Mousse Magazine* 51. *Exhibitions 1985-1995*, December 2015-January 2016. Editorial, last accessed March 2019, http://moussemagazine.it/mousse-51-out-now/.

[6] Madeleine Kennedy, "Documenting the Marvelous. The Risks and Rewards of Relying on Installation Photographs in the Writing of Exhibition History". *Stedelijk Studies Exhibition Histories* 2, 2015.

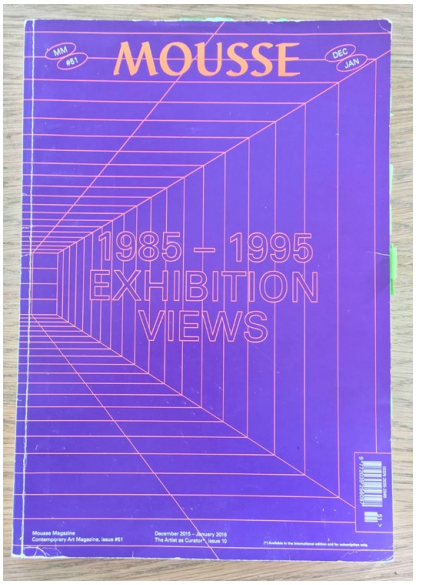


Fig. 3 – *Mousse Magazine* issue #51 *Exhibitions 1985-1995*, 2015. Photo credit: the author.

Fig. 4 – *Mousse Magazine* issue 51 *Exhibitions 1985-1995*, 2015. Photo credit: the author.

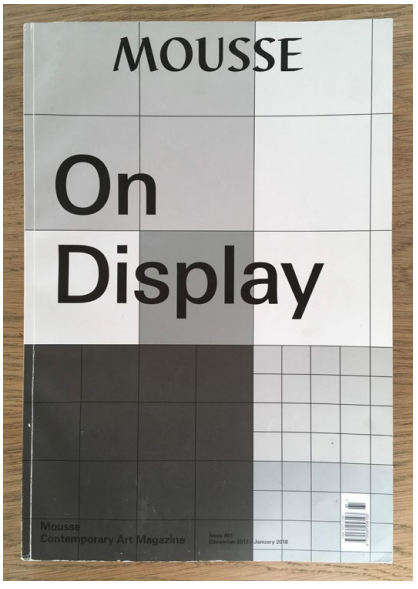


Fig. 5 – *Mousse Magazine* issue 61 *On Display*, 2018. Photo credit: the author.

Mousse 61 (December 2017-January 2018) shares this characteristic of disturbing the canons by assembling its list of exhibitions using the recommendations of a pool of contributors, and also bears strong ties to the idea of compilation and polyphony discussed above. Centred around exhibition design and architecture and the way these display-systems have permeated art practices, the issue presents thirty clusters of exhibitions, grouped together because they employ a similar or relatable design. Drawing imaginary venn diagrams within these clusters and also between them, the magazine presents itself as a mood-board but it is also a strong testimony to the rhizomatic possibilities of the field. It weaves histories that oppose hierarchy, work beyond binaries – canonical and experimental, central and peripheral, commercial and institutional – and are multiple and diverging (as opposed to just progressing linearly) (Fig. 5).

With the text element pushed to the end of each cluster – in what seems like a gesture against the proliferation of spoon-fed explanations in wall texts – each one starts by presenting a series of images that follow one another and are connectable by more or less apparent links. For example: Sir John Soane Museum's unfolding *Picture Room* is paired with Goshka Macuga's replica of it (2003), and juxtaposed with the seminal shot of Daniel Spoerri's tilted room in "Dylaby", the 1962 psychedelic exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. The next spread shows a full-bleed image of Lina Bo Bardi's mid-century exhibition design at Museu de Arte de São Paulo, Brazil, which is followed by a 2015 re-enactment of Bo Bardi's display structure in an Australian contemporary art gallery. It is only then that text appears, to first caption and then expand on the visual threads connecting the cluster of images. The editorial structure foregrounds the images and what they convey in

Fig. 6 – *Mousse Magazine* issue 61 *On Display*, 2018. Photo credit: the author.

relation to the spaces' composition: it is less important to know who is the artist is or what is the name of the venue – the visual element, an exhibition's arrangement and the way it occupies the room, is the telling part (Fig. 6).

Mary Anne Staniszewski's book *The Power of Display* (1998) deals specifically with the way exhibitions were staged, installed and designed throughout the twentieth century in the Museum of Modern Art, New York. By presenting exhibition design as an aesthetic medium and a loaded element of institutional rhetorics, the volume identifies the history of display as one that should inform the way art comes down in history. Staniszewski's book grounds exhibition design as a precedent to thinking about exhibitions as complex semiotic networks. In the same way as *Mousse* Issue 61, it opens the possibility of analysing the "visual ways of story-telling" (Bal and Bryson 1991, 175) that intertwine in exhibitions.

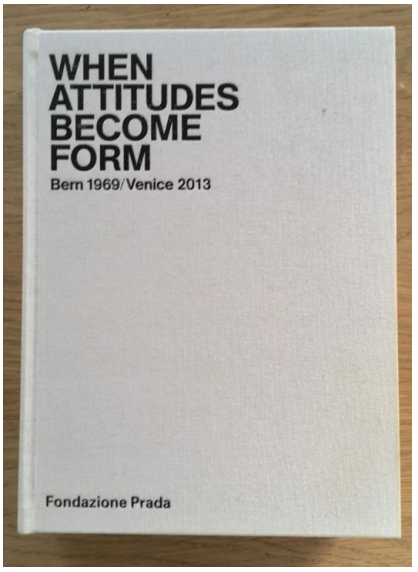


Fig. 7 – Germano Celant et al., *When Attitudes Become Form: Bern 1969/Venice 2013*, Fondazione Prada, 2013. Photo credit: the author.

When Attitudes Become Form, Bern 1969/Venice 2013

The catalogue published alongside the reconstruction "When Attitudes Become Form" that Fondazione Prada presented in 2013 (Celant et al. 2013), functions as a matryoshka doll of "remembering exhibitions" – a concept coined by Reesa Greenberg in 2009.[7] The volume evokes the exhibition that evoked the exhibition. As such, it provides grounds to reflect on the exhibition's "aura" and the extent to which its temporary nature and (un)repeatability can be challenged (Fig. 7).

On black, tinted backgrounds, the first three hundred and sixty pages reproduce photographs of the well-known 1969 exhibition. The images document the empty space, the flow of the artworks being created, the moments of intensive activity and the in-between pauses, the finished display, the audience's arrival and the opening night. There are images showing each one of the rooms and multiple shots of almost all of the artworks on display. Both space-wise and time-wise, the sequence is exhaustive.

In the short introduction to this first section in the book, there is a credit listing the archives of seven different photographers who shot the exhibition at different moments. That the installation process was documented as thoroughly is in line with the shift taking place during the 1960s – when many of the artists started to conceive of the gallery as a space of experimentation and production – which in turn triggered Harald Szeemann's curatorial vision: to invite the artists to replicate their working methods inside the kunsthalle. Their understanding of the installation moment as integral to the work calls for the accompanying recording and resgistering of it. So in a way, the documentation reproduced in the 2013 catalogue is not only an archival treasure but a cornerstone of the seminal show. As Christian Rattemeyer's study of this exhibition states: "Szeemann would seem to loom large behind these documentary endeavours: he invited Bélilos to film the artists working in the galleries and Shunk's photographs became a part of his personal archive, rather than remaining at the kunsthalle" (Rattemeyer 2010, 40).

It is interesting to think then to what extent do these archival photographs conform the exhibition, and whether they are an ever-present display platform in themselves rather than just a posthumous resource. They pose a challenge to the exhibition's temporary nature: when the installation choreography is no longer being enacted, does this mean it ceases to exist or can it be understood as a lingering presence that materialises in the photographs that register it? Was it not a ghostly energy that endured within the kunsthalle as the public strolled through its rooms? And if the latter is possible, would it not then also be possible to say that "Live in Your Head. When Attitudes Become Form: Works – Concepts – Processes – Situations – Information" is exhibited anew each time a public flicks through these photos? (Fig. 8). "To choreograph an exhibition is to envisage both an exhibition *in* a moment of time and the exhibition *of* a moment of time" (Copeland 2013, 20), explains curator

[7] Reesa Greenberg, "Remembering Exhibitions: From Point to Line to Web". *Tate Papers* 12, 2009. Accessed September 2018, https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers /12/ remembering-exhibitions--from-point-to-line-to-web.

Fig. 8 – Germano Celant et al., *When Attitudes Become Form: Bern 1969/Venice 2013*, Fondazione Prada, 2013. Photo credit: the author.

Mathieu Copeland in his analysis of a different exhibition that shared the ambition of removing the object from the centre of the display. The catalogue *When Attitudes Become Form* intersperses the images with plans of each room, enhancing the navigational possibilities of the material, which is laid out carefully and arranged to prompt a tour-like sensation. In so far as these pages enable the reader to undertake a virtual "walk through" of the space and installations, do they actualise a particular moment in time and straddle between their condition of documentary material and exhibitionary matter? (Fig. 9).

Differently, the pictures of Fondazione Prada's reconstruction are centred on showing the old and the new, the way the space was adapted and the textures that resulted from the translocation. "To reprise an exhibition can be seen as an attempt to envisage its memory, to re-insert it in reality" (Copeland 2013, 22), materialising its legacy and allowing it to expand. Playing with the notion of unrepeatability, curator Germano Celant conceived a one to one organization of the space, a full-scale installation where the architecture becomes fluid and the core of the operation has to do with replicating the spacial dynamics and the relations between

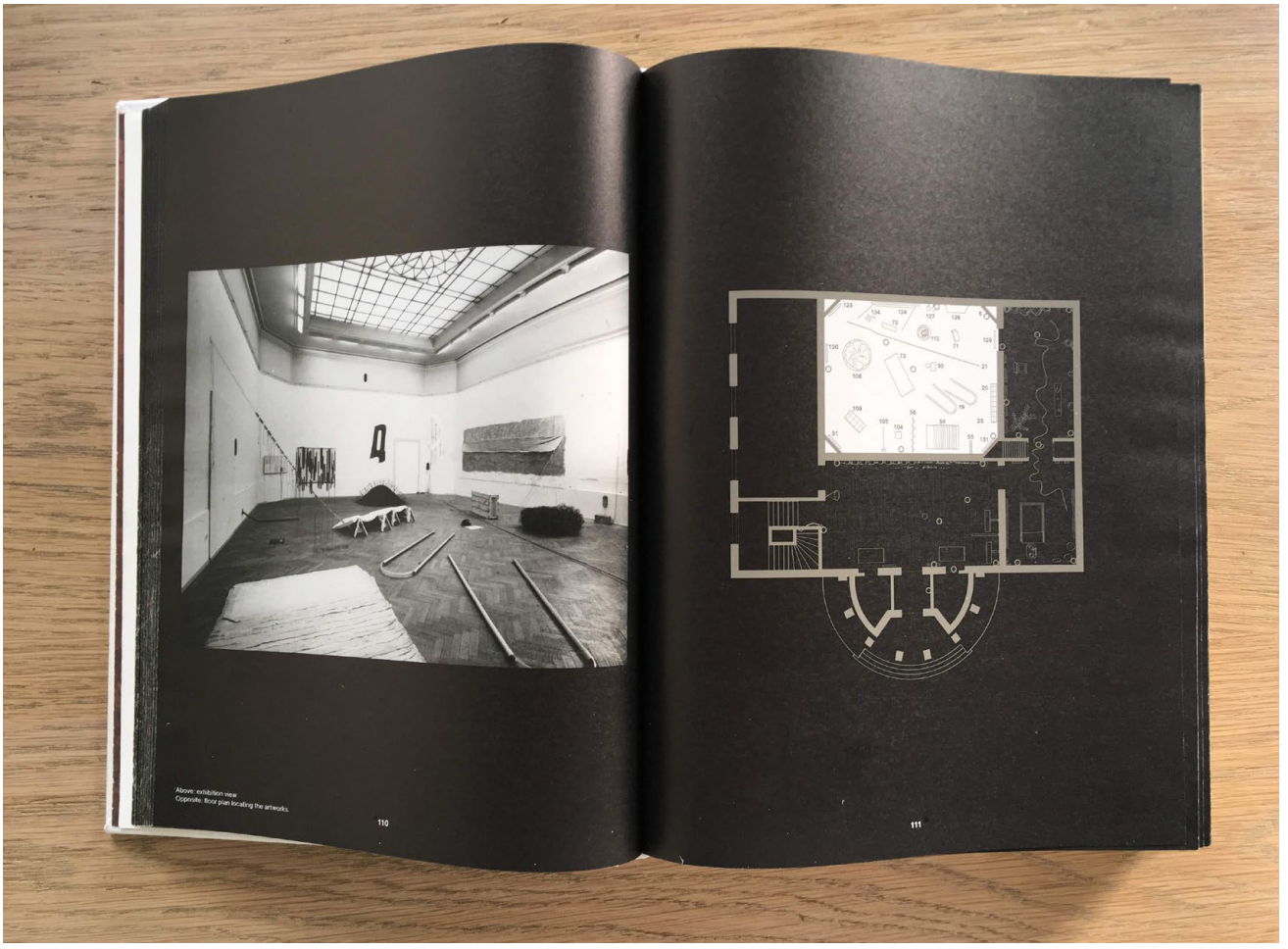


Fig. 9 – Germano Celant et al., *When Attitudes Become Form: Bern 1969/Venice 2013*, Fondazione Prada, 2013. Photo credit: the author.

objects as they lay in the rooms. Acknowledging the autobiographical motivation behind this endeavour, Celant characterises the exhibition as an act of memory and the catalogue as a (more objective) act of history. Even if sections of the publication like the Register – where a meticulous chart compares the artworks on display in both shows and provides a series of factual references – comply with this division, the story in photographs with which the catalogue departs blurs the boundaries.

Partisan histories

The question then is whether publications can be regarded as neutral evocations of exhibitions or if they are better described as two platforms that intertwine to write partial histories.

Exhibition studies fall under the larger umbrella of the discipline of art history. However, it is a new field that emerged concomitantly with the expansion of the

study of art – the field can be presented as a "global native", since its birth following the events of 1989 make it inhabit a conception of the world where contemporary art canons can no longer be reduced to narratives of centres and peripheries. If this is the case, then enlarging the field's disciplinary boundaries and geography of thought is pivotal to developing its full potential. Accessing a variety of art practices, those that are scattered around the world and convene to be represented under the exhibition form, is exhibition studies' pull.

In constant dialogue with art history and its overwhelming Western scope, the histories of exhibitions carry a potential to upset those power dynamics. The printed matter that emerges to accompany exhibitions, and that which is published later on to revisit them, can engage with this potential – looking back, correcting, and threading in new histories. As Peruvian curator Miguel A. López stated: "We do not recover the past in order to make it exist as a bundle of skeletons, but to disturb the orders and assurances of the present" (López 2010, 20).

The publications analysed here present varied models that result in heterogeneous histories. Far from being neutral, they put forward editorial systems that have implications – underscoring multiple or single voices, choosing linear or rhizomatic narratives, spotlighting documentation and establishing its sway. In a field where the object of research is transient, what can and cannot be regarded as a productive depiction of it is a central question. This article has delineated the structures of some books and magazines in order to map the range of possibilities that are open to the exhibition historian; and has uncovered the motives and agendas behind each of these history writing exercises. The examples used here show that far from being neutral evocations, publications shape exhibition studies.

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Abstract

This essay explores the idea of photographs of exhibitions, often used as archival materials for studying the history of exhibitions, as a specific genre of image making. It explores the basic concepts, conventions, and functions of so-called "installation shots" or "exhibition views," and constructs a basic typology of typical visual elements by studying the approximately 600 photographs reproduced in *Mousse Magazine's* 2015-2016 issue #51 entitled "Exhibition Views 1985-1995." In particular, this essay considers the way exhibition photographs reify images of complex spaces and events while simultaneously suggesting narrative, movement, and complexity in their static imagery. ●

keywords

INSTALLATION SHOT
EXHIBITION VIEW
EXHIBITION PHOTOGRAPHY
EXHIBITION HISTORIES

Resumo

Este ensaio explora a ideia de que a fotografia de exposições, muitas vezes usada como material de arquivo para o estudo da sua história, pode ser entendida como um género de criação de imagens específico. Explorando conceitos básicos, convenções e funções das chamadas "imagens de instalação" ou "vistas de exposição", constrói-se uma tipologia básica de elementos visuais recorrentes, a partir do estudo das cerca de 600 fotografias reproduzidas no número 51 da Revista *Mousse* intitulado "Exhibition Views 1985-1995" (2015-2016). Em particular, será abordada a forma como as fotografias de exposição reificam imagens de espaços e eventos complexos, ao mesmo tempo que sugerem narrativa, movimento e complexidade através do seu imaginário estático. ●

palavras-chave

IMAGENS DE INSTALAÇÃO
VISTAS DE EXPOSIÇÃO
FOTOGRAFIA DE EXPOSIÇÃO
HISTÓRIAS DAS EXPOSIÇÕES

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EXHIBITION VIEWS
TOWARDS A TYPOLOGY OF THE INSTALLATION SHOT

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Published in winter 2015-2016, the fifty-first issue of the contemporary art journal *Mousse Magazine* examined the theme "Exhibition Views, 1985-1995." The 344-page publication presented a roster of 270 "consequential", "innovative", or "historicized" art exhibitions – from smaller gallery exhibits like Sue Williams' solo show at New York's 303 Gallery (1992) to large-scale events like the 1987 *Skulptur Projekte Münster* – all produced in the critical theory, mass media, big money, new technology, do-it-yourself environment of the late 80s and early 90s. Calling itself an "album of recommendations" compiled from the "favorite shows" of "writers, artists, curators, dealers, and friends" of the editors, the special issue finds its place alongside other anthologies that chart a trajectory of landmark historical art exhibitions.[1] Publications from Ian Dunlop's 1972 *The Shock of the New: Seven Historic Exhibitions of Modern Art* to Jens Hoffmann's 2014 *Show Time: The 50 Most Influential Exhibitions of Contemporary Art* construct a canon of well-studied examples at the center of a "history of exhibitions."[2] But as much as *Mousse* 51 offers another list of significant events, it simultaneously presents itself as a photo album of "exhibition views", unique images that offer glimpses of artworks on display. The issue therefore takes up an under-addressed aspect of exhibition studies: the question of photographic images of exhibitions, also known as "installation shots." As the *Mousse* editors note, their period of focus represents the moment just before exhibitions "went online" and became subject to constant photographic documentation by organizers and audiences alike. This shift has both transformed the way we interact with displays of art as well as cemented the exhibition view as a "requisite genre" of photography.

The idea of exhibition photography as a defined genre with attendant conventions, meanings, and functions begins to take shape in this essay, part of a larger in-progress study that historicizes and theorizes the installation shot. Here, a set of fundamental concepts and a basic typology of conventional visual codes are

[1] This introductory text appears on page one of the magazine as well as on *Mousse* 51's website: http://moussemagazine.it/1985-1995-exhibition-views-2015/ (last accessed April 2019).

[2] Other examples include Altshuler, Roters, and Afterall Books' multivolume series "Exhibition Histories".

gleaned from historical examples and the readymade "data set" created from the approximately 600 photographs in *Mousse* 51. This extensive set of images, made primarily by numerous professional photographers both named and unknown, offers a circumscribed, yet randomized, collection, more diverse than the series of regularly reproduced shots from iconic (often modern or avant-garde) exhibitions like New York's 1913 "Armory Show", the 1915 *Last Exhibition of Futurist Painting 0,10* in Petrograd, or the 1920 *First International Dada Fair* in Berlin. *Mousse* 51 also provides a more manageable set of examples relative to the countless installation shots currently found in exhibition catalogues, books, magazines, newspapers, and archives, but also on museum, exhibition, and gallery websites, as well as online publications, private smartphones, photo apps, and social media accounts across the world. This essay outlines some key issues surrounding exhibition photography and molds an emerging typology of the genre through *Mousse* 51's unique archive.

Exhibition views and installation shots

Whether called "exhibition views" or "installation shots"[3], photographs of temporary exhibitions, museum spaces, and other types of displays share a basic definition. Typically (but not exclusively) documentary in function, they record works of art intentionally on display in a space consciously arranged for viewing. Often they are formally commissioned by museums, galleries, or event organizers with a particular style, strategy, or function in mind. Sometimes they are made informally or independently by autonomous, amateur, or anonymous photographers with greater artistic control. In either case, these photographs are always constructed compositions that remake and remediate their fundamental subject matter.

Installation shots might also be said to possess a special status as images. That is, they are themselves aesthetic compositions that contain and display other aesthetic compositions, although their subjects ("original" artworks and "real" exhibitionary spaces) are more readily and traditionally recognizable as such. Thus, while they function differently, exhibition views are of the same order as their subjects; they are images of images, pictures of pictures, compositions of compositions. Each installation shot invites conscious or unconscious comparisons between the photograph itself and its contents, and therefore between the image-making powers of the photographer and those of the artist. Installation shots also operate (and often represent themselves) as miniature, two-dimensional "exhibits" or "museums" constructed by a photographer who re-curates and archives the scene.[4] Thus, they not only suggest parallels between the defining power of the photographer who makes "permanent" the ephemeral work of the curator or art institution, they also re-inscribe the significance of "exhibiting" as "*the* medium through which most art becomes known" and accumulates value (Greenberg et al 1996, 2).

[3] Claire Bishop notes that the term "installation shot" originally referred to photos of installation art before the term "installation" became a broader reference to exhibitions (Bishop 2005, 6).

[4] As I discuss elsewhere, one way to consider the installation shot is as a dialogue among three types of image-making agents: artists, curators, and photographers. See Floyd 2015, 187-188.

[5] Brüderlin's text appears in the catalogue of a 1993 exhibition he curated for the Hochschule für angewandte Kunst in Vienna, *Das Bild der Ausstellung/The Image of the Exhibition*. Today, it remains one of the few sustained discussions of this type of photography. Other examinations include Brian O'Doherty's now-classic *Inside the White Cube*, where installation shots form part of his important argument about the idealizing and commodifying strategies of the modernist gallery. A very recent chapter (2018) by Julie Sheldon tracks important historical examples of the form, including Le Gray's photographs, in terms of concepts of modernism and considers the relationship of the installation shot to modern modes of display. The vast literature on copies and photographic reproductions of works of art, the relationship of photography to the museum as well as to three-dimensional sculpture, and the history of architectural photography is also crucial to thinking about exhibition views.

Exhibition views, including those in *Mousse* 51, therefore simultaneously exist as exhibitions and images that reproduce exhibitions and images. Or, as Markus Brüderlin writes, "the image turns into an exhibition and the exhibition turns into an image" (8).[5] The act of looking at an installation shot therefore doubles our spectatorship as we look through one image-exhibition and into another. That these two-dimensional, photographic exhibition "spaces" today may be consumed in increasingly diverse formats, sizes, and media, from printed reproductions in the pages of books, newspapers, and magazines to digital images projected on large screens in auditoriums or on small cellphone displays, speaks not only to their power and ubiquity but to their further complexity. Multiple layers of creating, presenting, representing, documenting, disseminating, and receiving undertaken by sometimes-collaborating, sometimes-competing creators and institutions are bound up in each installation shot and its history. Each photograph raises equally complicated questions about the fundamental, perhaps even determinative power of documentation and mediation in defining and understanding both art objects and the attendant disciplines and institutions that perform the creation and continuation of aesthetic values.

The history of exhibition photography, too expansive to recount in detail here, offers numerous opportunities to locate the installation shot's longstanding and powerful functions, meanings, and conventions, in some ways little changed since its origins. Gustave Le Gray's photographs of the annual Paris Salons of 1850-1853, some of the earliest examples of this type of photographic practice, anticipate, for example, the still-pervasive camera angles seen in many of the *Mousse* examples and demonstrate the typical installation shot's point of view, namely, the approximate eye level of a standing viewer (Fig. 1). This approach frames exhibitions and artworks in ways that signify, replicate, and reinscribe the actual experience of the exhibition, despite the unreal and idealized rectangular frame and fixed, unchan-

Fig. 1 – Gustave Le Gray, Gallery near the Salon Carré, the Salon of 1850-51. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

ging sightline. While human eyes attached to moving visitors constantly shift and rove, exhibition views often compose their subjects along perspectival systems that reinforce the rectilinear structures of the traditional gallery, especially the modernist "white cube", and favor symmetry, balance, and harmonious compositions that assert the two-dimensional surface of the photograph. In this way, installation shots are tied to earlier artistic traditions of "images of images", from various types of reproductions of individual works of art to representations of the spaces and places of image consumption. Paintings and prints of cabinets and *Wunderkammern*, real or allegorical gallery scenes, pictures of artists' studios, souvenir Salon prints, as well as more general subjects of still life and interior architectural views, all inform the modern exhibition photograph.

Le Gray's Salon photographs also point to the central problem of authorship that lies at the heart of photographs of exhibitions, a kind of tension among three creative forces: the artist whose original work is on view; the curator who organizes and shapes the exhibition; and the photographer who records it all. Le Gray, who wished to be an artist, experienced the repeated refusal of his works from the annual Salon (Maufras 2002, 340). Nevertheless, Philippe de Chennevières, Inspector of Provincial Museums and organizer of exhibitions of living artists, commissioned him to document the Salons (Bolloch 2006, 20). Le Gray's photographs, beautiful, harmonious arrangements noted for their "skillful handling of volume, the overhead lighting, and the whiteness of the marble", exert themselves as aesthetic images on par with the classicizing images and spaces he records (Aubenas 2002, 359). While the Salon was a "theatre of success from which he had been excluded", the assignment, which seems to have come with little direction from the curator, offered Le Gray "a chance at revenge, of a sort" (ibid., 359). That is, not only could Le Gray assert his own skills by means of the photograph, visually juxtaposing his expressive and technical capabilities with the virtuosity of the real "accepted" artworks (or, rather, with his images of them). As the documentarian of these scenes, he has the last word on the look and meaning of the artworks on display. In the end, photographic records like Le Gray's photographs and *Mousse*'s album of images are the "only true reality" of these now-historical events (Brüderlin 1993, 8).

Despite their power to record and archive the ephemeral, their close ties to artistic traditions, and the "artistry" they often demonstrate, the intended functions of most exhibition views conspire to mask their makers. Because these photographs are usually produced as records of artworks, art events, and institutional practices, their most basic function is to create an effective portal that allows us to look at or see "into" an exhibition, to a greater or lesser degree, and towards the "original" works of art beyond the photograph's picture plane. Installation shots make exhibitions, curatorial practices, institutional frameworks, and, in different ways, their contents visible. But rarely does the installation shot vociferously announce its own image-ness, let alone its status as an "artwork"[6], even when photographers bring their creative and interpretive powers or technical and artistic skills to bear on the displays before them. In short, the exhibition view is almost always trea-

[6] However, some photographers like Thomas Struth and Louise Lawler have made photographs of exhibitions and displays part of their fine art practices.

ted as a "copy" of something else (an artwork, an event, a space, an institution), rather than its own original. This hierarchy of "real" artwork and exhibition over the photograph-as-artwork-and-exhibition is evident in the way these images are often credited to the artists whose work is reproduced or to the exhibiting (often commissioning) institution. As with many installation shots, a number of the *Mousse* photographs give no mention of a photographer's name.[7] Even famous images of exhibitions, photographs that have shaped our understanding of the artists, movements, and events they document, are often "orphans" whose creators and creative origins are completely unknown.[8]

The widespread anonymity of exhibition photographers, despite their power to remediate and author exhibition history, underscores the typical documentary functions these photographs carry out through a wide variety of forms and formats. Indeed, one photograph may be used over time in numerous ways and may appeal to viewers differently depending on their relationship to the event. For some viewers, installation shots recall memories of shows they attended, works they have seen, or spaces they have visited. For others, they may produce a sense of desire and anticipation to see events they will view in the future. Finally, exhibition views may produce a sense of curiosity or longing for events we can never experience because they are in the past or beyond our reach.

No matter their effect, since the 1850s, installation shots have served these goals. They operate as archival records that allow art institutions, organizations, and groups to study and historicize their collections and activities. Exhibition views, made by in-house or contracted photographers, market and promote museums and exhibitions, whether reproduced as postcards, advertisements, announcements, exhibition catalogues, books, and journals, or on digital platforms like websites and social media applications. Print and online mass media outlets that report on art and culture also illustrate features, essays, and reviews with installation shots. And, in recent years, with the development of smartphones, more and more exhibition spectators are not only allowed but are encouraged to make digital photos in exhibition spaces, and share them widely to promote the individual, the art, and the exhibition in different ways. For many viewers today, experiencing an art event in person means viewing much of it through their phone screens as they make pictures and take "selfies" in the space of the gallery. In this way, the exhibition is viewed simultaneously in real-time as both a living experience and as an installation shot. This shift in spectatorship requires us to consider the ways that exhibitions today are constructed less and less as experiences in and of themselves and more and more as potential photographs and opportunities for further remediation and promotion. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some contemporary curators indeed consider the "photogenic" nature of their displays as part of the curatorial process. The expansion of installation shots in the 80s and 90s, as evidenced by the *Mousse* issue, has in fact also paralleled the rise of a "history of exhibitions", a subfield of art history that originated in the 60s and 70s, developed in the 80s and 90s, and reached more widespread acceptance in the last two decades. No longer simply a backdrop

[7] Questions of copyright figure here. "Ownership" of these photographs varies depending on the context of their making as well as other contractual agreements between, for example, artists, exhibiting entities, and archives.

[8] Since the nineteenth century, a number of photographers, like Le Gray, have made "views of art objects" their specialty, although the history of this photographic trade has been little studied (Aubenas 2002, 332).

to artworks, the exhibition itself, whether defined as medium, process, network, or apparatus, has become a discrete subject of study for art historians. In particular, studies of individual historical events often treat them as visual and spatial "objects" as if they were discrete artworks themselves or works of installation art, a form developed contemporaneously with this subfield. Installation shots, primary documents of these examples, have played a special role in developing this field. Specifically, they have determined which events are studied and by what methods they are approached. Historical exhibitions with accompanying photographic documentation are more likely to be analyzed than events with no visual archive, and therefore are more likely to enter a "canon" of historically important events.[9] The uneven visual documentation of historical exhibitions – Lucy Lippard, for example, notes that her generation often didn't concern themselves with photo documentation – also skews the field (Lippard 2010, 197).[10] Art history's privileging of visual evidence, and in the case of exhibition histories, the reliance on images that are themselves highly constructed and framed, reminds us that pictures of these historical events are only small fragments (in some ways, fictive fragments) of the complexities that are an exhibition's true nature and history. A focus on the public, visual mise-en-scène of an exhibition threatens to block our view of the complicated networks, processes, economies, and ideologies that lie "behind the scenes". In our urgent and habitual desire to seek out the "original" artworks and unique designs in the installation shot, we must not forget to take notice of the photograph's power and ability to reauthor their narratives. Each exhibition view opens a doorway, but to what?

[9] Bruce Altshuler, for example, notes that the availability of installation photographs was a "fundamental selection criterion" in compiling the cases that make up his two volume *Exhibitions That Made Art History* (Altshuler 2008, 7).

[10] Lippard, discussing her career as a curator, states, "There's not much documentation available. We didn't do much of that in those days. I didn't even have a camera…" (Lippard 2010, 197).

Mousse 51

Mousse 51's cover image similarly evokes a kind of entry into the space of an exhibition (Fig. 2). Its grape and salmon-colored design represents a grid-like "architectural" space. Reminiscent of 80s-era video games or digital modeling programs, the image also suggests the basic framework of a traditional installation shot and points to the idea of the magazine itself as a space of display. But beyond *Mousse*'s glossy exterior, typical of high-end art journals, lies a flimsy newsprint interior signifying its up-to-the-moment content. Founded in Milan in 2006 by Italian curator Edoardo Bonaspetti, editor until 2018, the respected periodical's large tabloid format offers its international readership thoughtful essays, serious reviews, interviews with artists and curators, and numerous illustrations. Highly "curated", each issue tracks contemporary art issues derived from the interests of staff and contributors. "I've always preferred projects and magazines whose editorial slant is clearly visible", says Bonaspetti (Bonaspetti 2017). Like many journals, an online presence also bolsters *Mousse*'s print distribution. *Mousse* 51, for example, reproduces its photo album in grainy, printed format but also as sharp-focus digital imagery on its website. In another interview, Bonaspetti related this remediation to the theme of *Mousse* 51.

Fig. 2 – Cover design for *Mousse* 51, December 2015-January 2016.

"We have collected hundreds of images of exhibitions", he notes. "They are not much circulated images. It is a sort of revival of analogue on digital, from fundamental to underground exhibitions. It is fantastic to observe how certain logics of displays and documentation changed radically since those years" (Bonaspetti 2015). *Mousse* 51 indeed depicts the wide variety of innovative artistic and exhibitionary forms of the period, from alternative art spaces and massive biennials to white cubes and black boxes containing objects, installations, documentation, videos, performances, and more. And while the evolution of contemporary art since the mid-80s is apparent, the issue also demonstrates that certain aspects of exhibition documentation have remained entrenched. This tension between change and variation and a certain homogeneity and unity may also be found in the issue's overall design. The over 250 pages of diverse, color and black/white installation shots, from 1/8 page illustrations to full two-page spreads, appear varied and collage-like, despite being arranged austerely on a grid. Each exhibition is afforded a few photographs; minimal captions give the exhibition title, location, date, curator, and photo credits, but no further commentary. White space breaks up each spread creating varied, geometric rhythms across each page. Sometimes one exhibition stands alone, but more often photographs from different events converse across the fold.

Mousse 51's scheme for sequencing the exhibitions remains unclear. Organized neither chronologically, alphabetically, nor by location, the order may reflect sets of personal choices by recommenders, a list of whom appears on page one. If so, this fact goes unremarked. Instead, in their diversity and seemingly arbitrary arrangements, the pages replicate the cacophony of images, multidirectional vistas, and unstructured physical and visual movement one experiences in "real" contemporary exhibitions. But a narrative structure throughout the photo collection sometimes bubbles up in subtle ways, from formal or thematic correspondences among photographs or exhibitions or an image's relationship with the structure of the issue itself. For example, the issue's album begins with a single photograph on a double-page spread from

Barbara Bloom: The Reign of Narcissism at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles in 1988-1989 (44-45). Bloom, who creates conceptual installations that speak to the relationships among objects, spaces, collections, photographs, books, and other media, makes a fitting opening. The photograph's "perspectival" composition and central doorway signifies an entry point. Conversely, the issue ends with a full-page photograph by Michael Schuster of *Félix González-Torres/Rudolf Stingel* at the Neue Galerie Graz in 1994 (295). González-Torres's curtain of pearls draws a close over the photograph, the exhibition, and *Mousse* 51.

These opening and closing pages of *Mousse*'s "exhibition" of exhibitions reminds us that these events are themselves narratives constructed from the discrete objects, environments, and texts that make up their design and concepts,but are also kinetic, temporal sequences produced through the movement of the spectator's eyes and body in their spaces. Sometimes a curator establishes a clear directionality the viewer should follow, but always the visitor constructs an individual self-driven narrative through her movements and choices. Mieke Bal has astutely likened such moving, time-based narratives to films. Furthermore, as Bal discusses, exhibition designs often make use of particular cinematic strategies like "scenes", and "closeups" (Bal 2007). As I argue elsewhere, if exhibitions are like films, then installation shots might in fact be their film stills, fixed (and therefore "fictive") fragments of their temporal, moving networks (Floyd 2015, 190). Film stills, as opposed to frame stills, were traditionally taken by stills photographers, often uncredited, who documented the making of a film by creating composed static images of the moving scenes shot by the cinematographer, either alongside the rolling camera or restaged after the scene wrapped. The pictures functioned as archival documents for the studio, studies for the director, and photographs for advertisements. Both photographers of film stills and of installation shots share the difficult tasks of recreating the experience of a sequential, moving narrative in a single, static image that suggests the concept of a whole and creates an appealing or informative image that can used for different functions (Campany 2007, 7). Many of the "types" of exhibition views that follow may indeed be categorized by the ways they operate as fragments, suggest exhibitionary narratives, or replicate the "real-life" experience of an exhibition in a static composition, including the contemplation of objects and the movement of viewers in space.

Some "types" of exhibition views

The majority of exhibition photographs mimic views seen by actual spectators, even as they idealize or reauthor those vistas through formal and technical choices. Suggestions of "real-time" experiences serve as convincing "memories" for visitors or allow those who have not seen the show to (imaginatively) transport themselves "into" the event, as a preview of what they might see or as a substitute for what they cannot. In each case, however, photographers must consider how to frame

the readymade arrangements of spaces and objects from which they build their images. Indeed, it is often the architectural or spatial contexts that delimit the composition or determine the position of the camera. The "types" of exhibition views below are a few of the most basic ways that space and objects are typically ordered in installation shots. The various relationships of the camera, a stand-in for the viewer, to art objects, architectural elements, and other spectators make up some of the most common conventions.

1. Eye-level views and aerial shots

The installation shot's ubiquitous "eye-level" approach can be recognized in most photos in *Mousse* 51. Photographs taken from a low angle near the ground or from high above a gallery, as in Rudolf Nagel's 1991 photograph of the MMK, Frankfurt (284), are unusual (Fig. 3). Other examples include Werner Zellien's 1991 view across the atrium of the Martin Gropius Bau at *Metropolis* (76) or a two-page spread of

Fig. 3 – Pages 284-285, *Mousse* 51, December 2015-January 2016.

a 1992 photograph by Rene Pötzscher that looks down from the top of a staircase onto the ground floor gallery of the Documenta Halle at *documenta IX* (164-165). Despite their "magisterial gaze" over and across large swaths of these exhibitions, like an establishing shot in a film or a wide vista of a landscape, these "aerial", or "panoramic" views (Sheldon 2018, 130) provide a sense of the event's overall space and design. At the same time, these broad vistas signify the exhibition as a whole while shaping it into an image that can be commanded and consumed in its entirety. In these photographs, the individual artworks are secondary and remain at a distance, waiting to be approached and observed.

2. Distant views and closeups

Exhibition photographs taken at eye-level also offer a variety of distant approaches to works of art as well as the rarer closeup shot. Faraway shots, while similar to panoramic views, also reify a complex space and situation into a single image. They are not always useful for identifying or analyzing particular artworks or details, or for signifying the kind of contemplation traditionally associated with viewing art; instead they suggest spatial and contextual relationships and the geography of the exhibition. Photographs where art objects are in the background, difficult to make out, or beyond the scrutiny of the viewer, create a longing to get a better look or move in closer. They may frustrate by withholding identification or information. Conversely, closeup images focused on a single object or group of objects allow close examination. They may encourage a desire to "touch" or test their "reality". At the same time, they obliterate an understanding of an object's placement in space or its relationship to nearby objects. In short, closeups function more like traditional image reproductions. Ben Blackwell's 1989 photograph of Group Material's *AIDS Timeline* at the Berkeley Museum of Art, for example, offers a closeup of two "SILENCE=DEATH" t-shirts and some nearly-legible wall text (120) (Fig. 4). A second photograph above and an image on the facing page of Martha Rosler's 1989 exhibition at the Dia Art Foundation (121), represent more typical "hybrid" compositions in which easily viewable objects in the foreground are juxtaposed with more distant spaces in the back, often through the use of a long depth of field.

3. Floors and doors

The Group Material and Martha Rosler documents capture a common element often emphasized in installation shots. In both photographs, as well as in the photo of *7 Rooms, 7 Shows (Binging)* at MoMA PS1 from 1992-1993, the empty floor becomes significant in the depiction of the exhibition (82-83) (Fig. 5). In Blackwell's photograph, the floor, perhaps the most dominant element in the image, stretches out

in front of the viewer like an arrow, offering up an entry into the photo and a spacious field in which to imaginatively move about. Such exhibition views construct an idealized picture of the gallery. Rarely are we afforded the space to move about so freely in an exhibition or to have such room to ourselves. In the PS1 photograph the floor also becomes a path in, around, and toward the various objects on display. The background contains a further signifier of movement. An open door proposes that there is more to see or further to go. Doorways often allow glimpses at other artworks in spaces beyond, hinting at what's to come. They suggest directionality of narrative and physical movement. In contrast to panoramic views, they assert the space (and the photograph) as a mere fragment of something larger or not easily contained. Similarly, doorways provide an "escape valve" for the viewer's focused vision and mitigate the feeling that we are held within the circumscribed space of the photograph where walls form compositional barriers on one, two, or three "sides" of the picture.

Fig. 4 – Pages 120-121, *Mousse* 51, December 2015-January 2016.

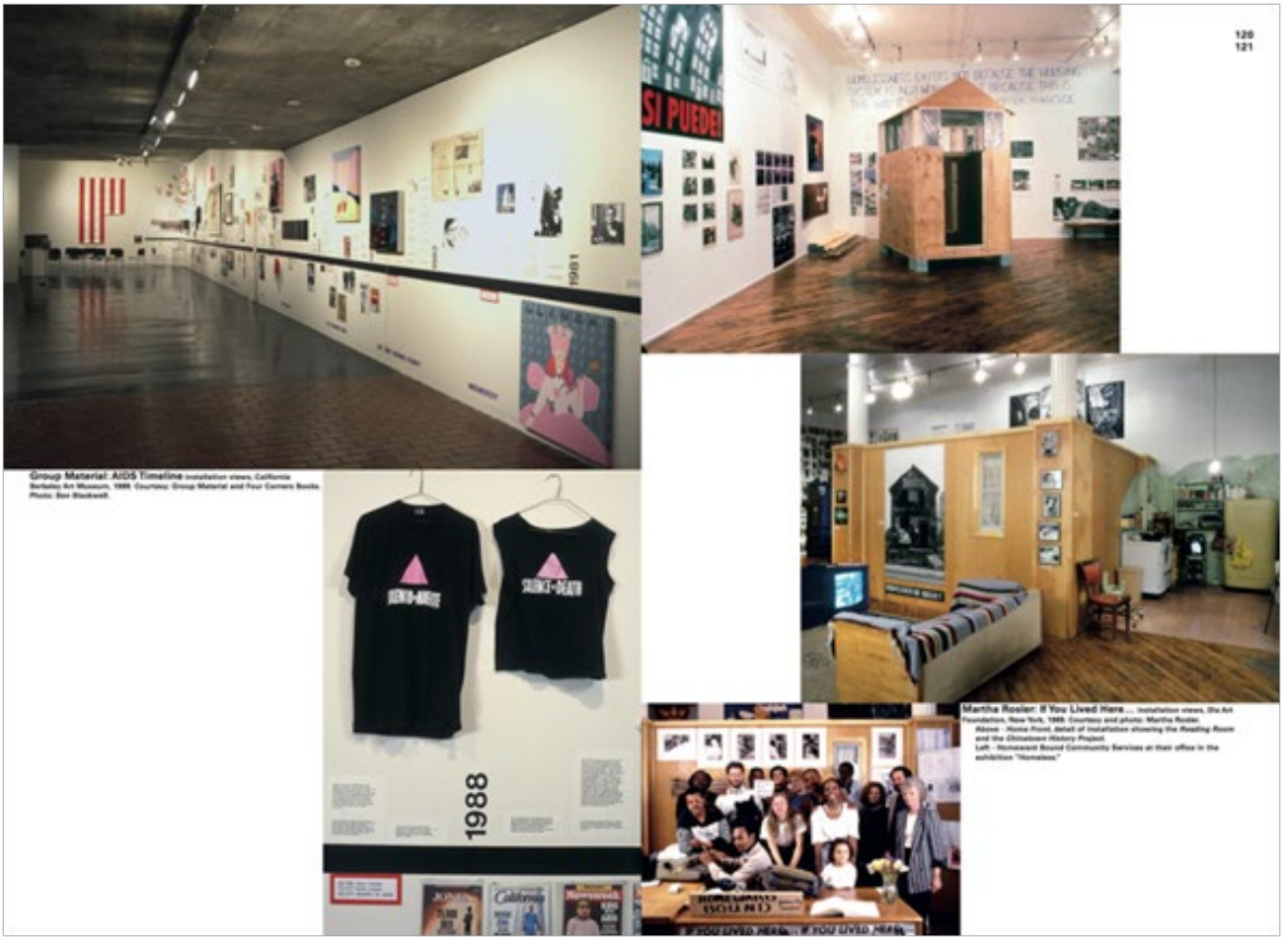

Fig. 5 – Pages 82-83, *Mousse* 51, December 2015-January 2016.

4. Walls

Exhibition photographs documenting typical rectangular galleries tend to frame the straight lines and right angles of these spaces in three ways. Some installation shots position the camera so that its sightline is perpendicular to a single, flat wall, for example, in a 1993 photograph from *Kontext Kunst: The Art of the 90s* at the Künstlerhaus Graz (50, top left) or a similar image by Jeremy Millar on the opposite page from *The Institute of Cultural Anxiety* at the ICA in London in 1994-1995 (Fig. 6). Like closeup views, these photographs depict a focused area of the show and represent the ideal, intended activity of spectators in an exhibition. That is, they replicate the vision of a static viewer, standing still and looking closely at a work or works of art. Some are strictly head-on. Others are taken at an oblique angle suggesting subtle movement down the wall. In either case, the omission of large areas of floor space, open doors, or distant artworks, underscores these images as representations of sustained looking, rather than movement.

While photos of single walls are today fairly uncommon, perhaps because they offer little formal dynamism, visual appeal, or distinct details about location, photographs that frame two walls, often "hinged" at the center of the photograph like a book spine or diptych joint, or three walls, arranged in a symmetrical, "perspectival" composition like a theatre stage, are found much more frequently. In both cases, these images allow the photographer to represent a greater sense of the spatial and object-based relationships in the gallery, create a feeling of both three-dimensional movement and two-dimensional interest. They simultaneously construct an allusion to the overarching power of the installation shot to frame, order, harmonize, and re-stage the complexities of exhibitonary events. The most idealizing views

Fig. 6 – Pages 50-51, *Mousse* 51, December 2015–January 2016.

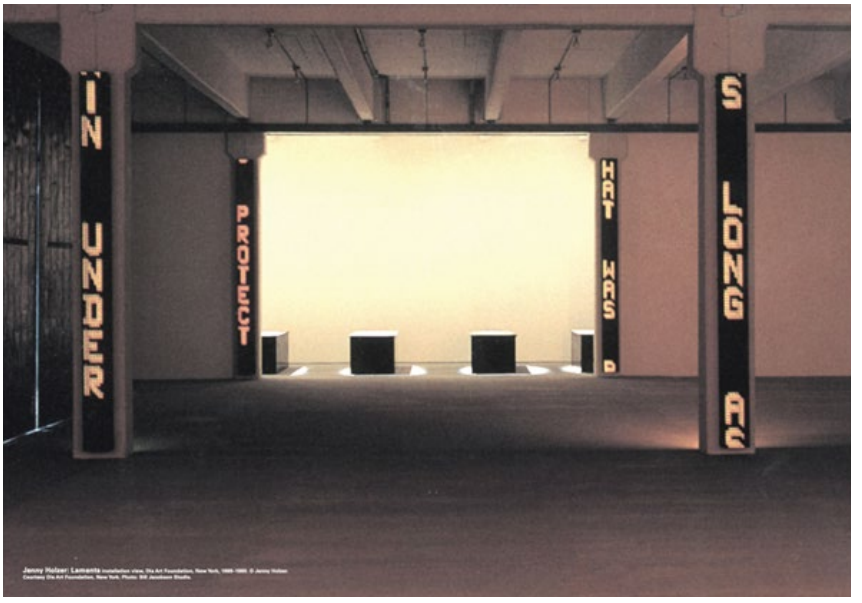

Fig. 7 – Pages 116-117, *Mousse* 51, December 2015–January 2016.

are perhaps those that depict three walls symmetrically as in the two-page photo from 1989-90 of *Jenny Holzer: Laments* at the Dia Foundation (116-117) (Fig. 7). Here, architectural elements become orthogonal projections suggesting Renaissance one-point perspective's idealized systems of space and viewership in which pictures are likened to windows through which one views, orders, and commands an illusionistic world. In this case, the photograph's picture plane becomes the fourth wall of an ideal gallery enclosing a hermetically sealed exhibition and its history within a single image.

5. Visitors and viewers

Breaking the perfect silence of these ideal galleries are the visitors and viewers that populate many installation shots. As in nineteenth-century paintings, prints, and drawings of exhibitions and galleries, figures in most installation shots are captured modeling appropriate art-viewing behavior as they observe, contemplate, converse, read, and move in space. In different ways, they invite us to identify with them and project ourselves into the photograph. Like *Rückenfiguren* in a Caspar David Friedrich painting, the anonymous visitors seen at the MMK (see Fig. 3) match our own position facing the photograph; by identifying with them we enter their scene. The blurry figures at right also signify life in the gallery, in contrast to the static, reified, and timeless perspectival images discussed above. Hans Braun's record of spectators gathered around a Robert Longo sculpture at *documenta* 8 (1987) offers a further touch of the human (and humorous) (Fig. 8). Here, in an unusual framing, visitors simultaneously face both the art and meet our gaze (114). Their position around the sculpture urges us to move in, connecting with them and completing their circle.

The legible exhibition viewers in this photograph, with their individual personalities and 80s fashions, now mark this scene as "historical", and might provide a useful visual archive that speaks to a different exhibitionary time and place. But there are limits to what we can "see" inside installation shots, essentially photographic fragments structured in conventional, artificial, or idealizing ways. As they operate in the *Mousse* issue, and in countless catalogues, ads, websites, and Instagram accounts, they become signs and symbols for the idea of an exhibition, evidence of an event's existence, and signposts in the "lives" of individual works of art. As "images of images" or "exhibitions of exhibitions", they can become reminders that ask us to see the issues of power and agency at the heart of mediating and remediating art and culture – not only the overt power of "visible" institutions and practices such as museums, galleries, and art events, but that of more "invisible" conventions and traditions such as the photographic reproduction of objects of aesthetic, economic, political, and cultural value. We must remember to contemplate their structures, histories, and makers as much as we consider them useful tools for understanding "authentic" artworks and "real" exhibitions.

Fig. 8 – Pages 114-115, *Mousse* 51, December 2015-January 2016.

The viewers at the center of the *documenta 8* photograph also unknowingly point us toward the future of installation shots, a future in which exhibition visitors are now becoming central in new and different ways. As we seemingly enter another period in the history of this photographic genre, in which audiences are not just elements of the photograph's subject, but more and more are the primary makers and disseminators of such images, the practice of exhibition documentation seems to be de-centralizing and perhaps diversifying. Variously encouraged by the marketing departments of art institutions, by selfie and Instagram culture, and hashtag trends, exhibition visitors, armed with personal cell phones, are not only consuming art and art events photographically thereby amassing their own archives of images. Through social media and other digital platforms, they are simultaneously publicizing, marketing, historicizing, and potentially transforming the practice of exhibition making and documentation itself. Whether this new life of the exhibition view will ultimately reinscribe or remake the practice remains to be seen. ●

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Abstract

In the past few years, due to the remarkable development of art biennials around the globe and their public popularity, different research projects have drawn attention to their history and how they have impacted on the production and reception of artworks in various local and regional scenes. Focusing on two texts, written within one year of each other, by Mário Pedrosa and Pierre Restany, important cultural agents of the time, I shall address the impact of some of these shows in the 1960s, especially the Venice and the São Paulo Biennials. Moreover, I intend to assess their hierarchical position on the international art scene at the time, asking one main question: since its inception, the São Paulo Biennial has adopted the Venice model, but at what costs? ●

keywords

ART BIENNIALS
1960S
MÁRIO PEDROSA
PIERRE RESTANY

Resumo

Nos últimos anos, devido à notável expansão e popularidade das bienais de arte em todo o mundo, diferentes projetos de investigação têm vindo a debruçar-se sobre a sua história e impacto na produção e recepção de obras de arte, em contextos locais e regionais. Tendo como base dois textos escritos com um ano de diferença, um da autoria de Mário Pedrosa e outro de Pierre Restany, dois dos mais importantes agentes culturais da década de 1960, será analisado o impacto das bienais neste período, especialmente das de Veneza e de São Paulo. Para além disso, este artigo analisa a posição hierárquica destes dois certames, a partir de uma pergunta central: desde a sua criação, a Bienal de São Paulo adotou o modelo de Veneza – mas a que preço? ●

palavras-chave

BIENAIS ARTÍSTICAS
DÉCADA DE 1960
MÁRIO PEDROSA
PIERRE RESTANY

Peer Review

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BIENNIALS, THERE AND HERE

THINKING ABOUT THE SÃO PAULO BIENNIAL AND THE "VENETIAN FORMULA" IN THE 1960S THROUGH THE EYES OF MÁRIO PEDROSA AND PIERRE RESTANY

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Introduction

The Brazilian Mário Pedrosa (1900-1981) and the French Pierre Restany (1930-2003) were prominent art critics and cultural agents engaged in the defence of modern and contemporary art and have crossed paths on several occasions, in South America and in Europe. Both participated actively in the international biennial circuit of the 1960s, organizing or promoting some of these events or participating in its juries.

In recent years, their legacy has been the focus of growing interest and attention of numerous researchers from various origins. In 2006, an international conference, *Le demi-siècle de Pierre Restany*, which resulted in an expansive publication, paid homage to Restany in Paris and discussed several aspects of his activity, including his ability to form networks and act as an international cultural agent (Leeman 2009). In 2015, the Museum of Modern Art of New York published the first anthology in English of Mário Pedrosa's writings, in the collection *MoMA's Primary Documents*, which hopefully will magnify his ideas. Two years later, in 2017, the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía held a large exhibition about Pedrosa's work, which also originated a catalogue with some of Pedrosa's writings translated to Spanish and expert texts.

In Brazil, there have been several studies about Mário Pedrosa, about the importance of his role as an art critic both at home and abroad, with particular attention given to the organisation and publication of his writings on art, by Aracy Amaral (1980s) and by Otília Arantes (1990s). Pierre Restany's trips to and from Brazil and Argentina and the controversies caused by his ideas have also been the subject of several researches. However, there have been very few studies that collate their actions.[1]

This article intends not only to highlight the importance of the role they played in a broad scenario, but also to reflect on the significance of the art biennials as venues of cultural, political and commercial competition among nations in the 1960s. My interest in the theme is related to the project I am conducting with the support of the Brazilian National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), which discusses the effects of the circulation of foreign artists and art critics in South America, as well as the participation of South American artists and art critics in major international art events of the 1950s-1970s.[2]

The modernity of Mário Pedrosa

In 1970 the Brazilian art critic Mário Pedrosa writes a long text about the São Paulo Biennials, in which he discusses Brazilian art of the last fifty years and assesses the show, then in its tenth edition.[3] Pedrosa had been an early advocate of the biennial, considering that it could curb the cultural isolation in which Brazil lived and, simultaneously, give prominence to the country abroad.

Soon after the opening of the São Paulo Biennial in 1951, he published an article in a Brazilian newspaper in which he highlighted three points that, in his opinion, justified the importance of holding a show of such scale in Brazil: an opportunity to update the domestic art scene; raising the country's profile abroad and embolden the São Paulo event in relation to its Venice counterpart (Pedrosa 1951a) (Fig. 1). As we shall see, he would return to these topics in several other texts.

Mário Pedrosa was a key witness and active agent in the cultural transformations that occurred in Brazil from the 1930s to the 1970s, having worked on different fronts throughout his career, which is remarkably unique. He experienced a cosmopolitan education and international travel like few South American critics were able to enjoy back then, and attained a level of professional recognition unusual for Brazil's art scene, comparable perhaps to his Argentinean contemporaries Jorge Romero Brest and Marta Traba (settled in Colombia) and fellow Brazilian Sérgio Milliet.

From a wealthy and influential family (his father was a Senator for the state of Paraíba and minister of the Federal Budget Oversight Board), from the age of 13 to 15 Pedrosa studied in Switzerland and then graduated in law in Brazil in 1923, however never practiced the profession. He began to work as a literary critic in the 1920s

[1] Schroeder (2015) discusses both men's contribution to the boycott of the 1969 São Paulo Biennial, and also comments, albeit briefly, on the stance they each took in relation to the art of the time.

[2] The objective of this research, entitled *O trauma do moderno: trânsitos entre arte e crítica de arte na América do sul (1950-1970) [The trauma of the modern: flow between art and art criticism in South America (1950-1970)]*, is to analyse the different strategies of internationalization and cultural affirmation adopted in that period and, more specifically, to reflect on the role of certain institutions and agents on the diffusion of certain artists and trends.

[3] The text "*A Bienal de cá para lá*" [The Bienal from here to there] was first published three years later, in 1973, in the collection published by Ferreira Gullar, *Arte Brasileira hoje: situação e perspectivas*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, which included texts by different historians and art critics, as well as contributions by Brazilian contemporary artists.

Fig. 1 – Opening of the 1st São Paulo Biennial, 1951. © Cav. Giov. Strazza. São Paulo Biennial Foundation Archives.

and as an art critic in 1933, with a paper about the German engraver Kathe Kollwitz, who was exhibiting in São Paulo. He then went on to write regularly about art for newspapers and magazines in Brazil and, more sporadically, in foreign periodicals. Parallel to his work as an art critic and also as a secondary school teacher, Pedrosa took on various tasks and positions in the field of culture and cultural management: he sat on the juries of important national and international competitions (Biennale de Paris, Tokyo Biennale, New Delhi Triennial, among others); he was president of the Brazilian Association of Art Critics (ABCA) and vice-president of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA) on two separate occasions; he organised the International Congress of Art Critics held in Brasília, São Paulo and

Rio de Janeiro in 1959; he directed the São Paulo Museum of Modern Art from 1961 to 1963; he curated the 6th São Paulo Biennial (1961) and coordinated the creation of the Museum of Solidarity, in Chile, during the presidency of Salvador Allende.
A prominent political Trotskyist activist, Pedrosa was arrested and forced to live clandestinely or in exile from Brazil at different times in the country's history, having resided in Berlin (1927-1929), in France (1938 and 1973-1977), in the United States (1939-1945) and in Chile (1970-1973). He also spent time in Japan in 1958, as a UNESCO fellow. He had close relations with the surrealists in Paris in the late 1920s (his sister-in-law Elsie Houston was married to Benjamin Péret) and he was friends with several artists, including the sculptor Alexandre Calder, whom he met in the United States.
Despite his declared affiliation to Marxism, having been a member of both the Communist Party and the Socialist Party in Brazil, Pedrosa, upon his return from exile in the United States and due to his admiration for Calder's art, engaged in championing abstract art, openly contesting the relevance of a figurative painting of nationalist character (such as, for example, socialist realism). He even declared, in 1957, that "the so-called abstract painters are the most aware artists of the historical period in which we are living, for they know that the documentary role of painting is over. Its function is now another: to expand the field of human language in pure perception" [4] (Pedrosa 1957, 8).
In fact, Pedrosa was the first critic in Brazil to systematically defend abstract art (of a constructive tendency) since the 1940s, considering it one of the most powerful instruments for creating a new society. Together with the poet and critic Ferreira Gullar, he was also one of the early advocates of the neoconcrete movement, created in Rio de Janeiro in 1959 to oppose the rationalism of the Brazilian abstract avant-garde, practiced in São Paulo by the members of *Grupo Ruptura* [Rupture Group] from 1952 onwards, but without relinquishing their relationship with constructivist ideas. He acted as a mentor for the neoconcrete artists, who regularly gathered in his Rio de Janeiro apartment, and as an ambassador for the group, in Brazil and abroad, promoting their works, projects and ideas in articles, conferences and meetings.
It should be mentioned that abstraction was regarded with reservation and resistance in Brazil right up to the end of World War II, both by politicized artists and members of the modernist generation, for it was believed that only figurative art could have a legitimate social purpose and be accessible to all. Pedrosa was a pioneer in arguing against this train of thought, seeking to associate social revolution and avant-garde art, including here what he referred to as "virgin art" – the art "of the children, of madmen and primitives". He was equally one of the great heralds of modern Brazilian architecture, whose greatest achievement came about (not without contradiction) with the construction of the country's new capital city, Brasília, inaugurated in 1960. However, he would vehemently reject informal art, considering it mere cathartic projection, bound to the artist's individuality.

[4] Unless otherwise indicated, translations are mine.

Thus, in the 1950s, Pedrosa publicly defended an "adventure" like the São Paulo Biennial, since, in his eyes, it would potentially break away from the provincial mentality that still dominated in Brazil in the field of arts. A few months after the opening of the show, Pedrosa would go back to expressing his enthusiasm about the real possibility of updating Brazilian art scene, asserting that the contest "had shown by comparison against what is being done abroad how our artistic movement finds itself in a primary stage" (Pedrosa 1951b, 7).

Pedrosa and the São Paulo Biennial: reviewing the show and its impact on the local scene

Twenty years after the first São Paulo Biennial, Mário Pedrosa's vision of the show becomes more critical and less optimistic. In the text under analysis here, "A Bienal de cá para lá", written while he was preparing to go into exile again[5], Pedrosa discusses the conditions that enabled the creation of the Biennial in Brazil – the growth of São Paulo city, its intense industrial activity, the establishment of post-war European entrepreneurs in Brazil and their competition for symbolic capital and cultural status, the alliance between businessmen and governors – and asks himself "what effects, what repercussions did the series of Biennials that followed the first had brought for the expansion of modern art in Brazil?" (Pedrosa 1973, 6). In his opinion, the first biennial "was pure improvisation" by its creator, the industrialist Francisco Matarazzo Sobrinho (known as Ciccillo Matarazzo), who also founded the São Paulo Museum of Modern Art (1948).[6] And chance circumstances guaranteed its continuation: invited to preside over the commemorations of the fourth centenary of the city of São Paulo, which would be in January 1954, Ciccillo Matarazzo introduced the idea of a second edition of the Biennial in the list of commemorative projects[7]. The success of that edition, which brought Picasso's *Guernica* to the country, was key to the show's continuity in Brazil.[8] For Pedrosa and several other Brazilian intellectuals, it was the greatest modern art exhibition held in the world for a decade (Fig.2).

In Pedrosa's recapitulation of the history of the show (Pedrosa 1973), he states that it was evident that the São Paulo Biennial had definitely broken up the closed circle within which artistic activities were developed in Brazil, "transforming São Paulo into a living centre of contact and exchange of impressions and ideas among critics and artists from around the world, but above all from Latin America" (Pedrosa 1973, 10).

Although never disputing the adoption of the Venice Biennale model in São Paulo, Pedrosa observes that "not all progress is made without counter-movements, without steps backwards and without risks" (…): by "withdrawing Brazil from its

[5] In 1970, Pedrosa was accused by the military dictatorship in power since 1964 of defaming Brazil's image abroad by reporting incidents of torture in the country to the international press. Foreseeing his own conviction under the National Security Act, he decided to leave Brazil for Chile.

[6] It should be noted that the São Paulo Biennials were initially organised by the São Paulo Museum of Modern Art. In 1963 Ciccillo Matarazzo created the São Paulo Biennial Foundation, a private entity that took on the responsibility for the documents and production of the biennials.

[7] The fourth centenary of the foundation of city of São Paulo was a celebration that mobilised São Paulo society and gave rise to urban interventions of various kinds, including the completion of the Ibirapuera Park, where the São Paulo Biennial Foundation building can be found today, which houses the show.

[8] The European delegations brought for its special rooms works by some of the leading names of the historic avant-gardes, such as Kokoschka, Mondrian, Klee, Ensor and Munch, while the United States was represented by works by Calder, de Kooning and Motherwell, among others. Italy and France organised special rooms dedicated to the masters of futurism and cubism in the post-war world. Also of note is the room dedicated to Walter Gropius, one of the founders of Bauhaus, and who came to Brazil to receive the International Architecture Prize for his body of work. But certainly one of the main highlights of the show was the Picasso room, with fifty works of the Catalan artist, including the canvas *Guernica*.

Fig. 2 – Opening of the 9th São Paulo Biennial, 1967. Mário Pedrosa (on the left) and Ciccillo Matarazzo (on the right), with an unidentified person (in the center) in front of a painting by Robert Rauschenberg. © Unidentified author. São Paulo Biennial Foundation Archives.

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Fig. 3 – "Non a la Biennale de São Paulo: dossier", 1969. Julio Le Parc Archive, Paris

sweet and placid isolationism, the Biennial launched the country into the arena of international fashion, of the spurious personal and even national arrangements regarding prizes, prestige politics among national delegations, and wheeler-dealer politics among individuals" (Pedrosa 1973, 10). In his opinion, "the São Paulo biennials quickly became a migratory gate for successive international movements that came and went," leaving local critics with their "tongues out" and harming "efforts towards our own development in the creative field", which were not duly appreciated by the hegemonic circuit[9] (Pedrosa 1973, 60).

The art show had thus become an art fair; its prizes lost their meaning due to the absence of any objective criteria for their award and holding it no longer brought any prestige to Brazil. Pedrosa is categorical in his appraisal: "doing the biennials again like those that were staged before is a provincial waste of money, energy and goodwill. And the prestige that it would bring Brazil, that's all over, it's no longer an option" (Pedrosa 1973, 55).

It should be highlighted that Pedrosa thought the crisis was broader and was affecting not only the Venice Biennale, which had undergone reforms following the wave of protests in 1968, but also the great collective art manifestations around the world. But Venice, he stated, was "an organization of Italian tourism, and (...) its lawful operation is perfectly guaranteed"[10] (Pedrosa 1973, 55).

[9] According to Pedrosa, "new trends were not imposed once and for all. But rather drop by drop, as critics, artists, amateurs who struggled so hard to learn, to assimilate this or that school, movement, in general had no taste or appetite the following year to accept, swallow another dose of novelty, another very latest trend contrary to the preceding principles and ideas" (Pedrosa 1973, 50-51).

[10] The 1968 Venice Biennale was marked by a series of contestations, which had begun at the Milan Triennial, on the conveyer belt of student and worker protests in France, which spread through Europe. The awards ceremony was postponed, in fear of further protests, and then abolished for the immediately subsequent biennials.

He expressed similar discontent in relation to contemporary art in general, for, in his opinion, it was showing itself to be increasingly subordinate to capitalist market laws. In several texts published in those years, Pedrosa would criticise the overwhelming power of the market and the publicity industry, asserting that the mass consumer society was not a favourable platform for the arts. In 1966, Pedrosa had even – in a ground-breaking manner – declared the end of the modern artistic experience: "we are not within the parameters which we called modern art," he stated. "Call this post-modern art, to indicate the distinction" (Pedrosa 1966, 10).
In the 1970s, the Brazilian situation had become particularly edgy for the country had been under dictatorial rule since 1964 and the effects of censorship and systemic repression were being felt in the field of arts. In May 1969, the military regime cancelled the show of the artists who would represent the country at the 6th Biennale de Paris, ordering its disassembly hours before its official opening.[11]
This repressive act, which was imposed after the seizure of some artworks during the 2nd Bienal de Bahia (held in Salvador) and the 3rd Salão de Ouro Preto, stirred up reactions in Brazilian artistic circles, especially of the Brazilian Association of Art Critics (ABCA), which was then presided by Pedrosa. It triggered an international movement which would result in several countries boycotting the 10th São Paulo Biennial, scheduled for the end of 1969, and in artists of various nationalities subscribing to the *Non à La Biennale* manifesto, which circulated in Europe and in the United States[12] (Fig. 3).

Pierre Restany between Brazil and Argentina

One of the key players in the international boycott of the 1969 São Paulo Biennial was the French critic Pierre Restany, a prominent figure on the European art circuit, especially between Paris and Milan, as the promoter of *Nouveau Réalisme*, who also made his presence felt on the South American circuit of the time.[13] Although he had never been a jury member or commissioner of the French delegation to the São Paulo Biennials, Restany would regularly visit Brazil in the 1960s and 1970s to follow some editions of the show, about which he published long articles in the international press and art journals.[14] In fact, his first visit to Brazil came about through an invitation from Mário Pedrosa to the 1961 São Paulo Biennial, of which, as we have mentioned, Pedrosa was curator. The two men would meet again on several occasions in South America and Europe. In 1967, Restany was invited by Ciccillo Matarazzo to organise the Art and Technology room for the 1969 São Paulo Biennial, which he was set to do together with Belgian artist Pol Bury, but ended up cancelling his participation due to his involvement in the boycott. Nonetheless, as we shall see, he still travelled to Brazil that year.

[11] The names selected to form the Brazilian delegation for the 6th Biennale de Paris included Antônio Manuel, Humberto Espíndola, Carlos Vergara and Evandro Teixeira. Some of the artworks dealt with current themes and had clearly political content.

[12] However, although extensive and widely supported, the boycott was not complete and the 10th São Paulo Biennial took place on the scheduled date, with several absentees and last-minute participants.

[13] Restany was the author/organiser of several books about contemporary art, in which he expressed his personal views, and regularly contributed to leading art and architecture magazines of the time, such as *Combat, Cimaise, Domus* and *Planète*. On his globetrotting activities, I reproduce here the account given by Maria Grazia Mazzocchi (2003), who worked alongside Restany at *Domus*: "Nobody could keep up with Pierre on his travels around the world of art. At the Venice Biennale, he couldn't take two steps without being waylaid by countless admirers or beleaguered by supplicants who would accost him with requests for advice, information, a good word here or there. Only on board a plane could he have a bit of peace. Pierre spent much of his life flying from one continent to another, taking his lucid criticism and inexhaustible enthusiasm to every corner of the planet."

Restany visited Argentina for the first time in 1964, as part of the jury for the Instituto Torcuato di Tella Prize, alongside Clement Greenberg, and began to take a special interest in the cultural life of Buenos Aires, following the work of several Argentinean artists. At the time, his favourite for the prize, the sculptor Arman, ended up losing out to the painter Kenneth Noland, who had been supported by the North American critic. The following year, in 1965, Restany published an enthusiastic article about the Argentinean art scene in *Planète* magazine, comparing it positively to the New York scene, and placing it at a level above that of Brazil.

Furthermore, he was never overly keen on 1950s/60s Brazilian constructive art, despite declaring in some articles published in the 1960s his appreciation of the work of some Brazilian sculptors and engravers of the time and, later on, of Hélio Oiticica's work (whom he knew through Pedrosa) and his concept of marginality. Nor was his view of the construction of Brasília a positive one; although acknowledging its symbolic role for Brazilian society, Restany considered it a dead, lifeless city, as its population would occur in an entirely artificial manner.[15]

In 1965, during another visit to Brazil, Restany gave an interview to the newspaper *Correio da Manhã* in which he criticised the 8th São Paulo Biennial, deeming it weak in relation to the 1964 Venice Biennale, and suggested changes for the show; specifically, that national representations should be abolished in favour of a thematically structured show and that the jury should be formed exclusively by experts. He also argued that, as had been the case in Venice since 1960, the São Paulo Biennial should forbid from the jury commissioners from exhibiting countries. Restany picks up this issue again in 1969, when, after leading the international boycott, he comes to Brazil to meet Ciccillo Matarazzo and presents him with a restructuring plan for the São Paulo Biennial, retrieving several of his previous ideas. On this occasion, he reasserted the importance of the São Paulo Biennial in the international context, declaring that "the São Paulo Biennial could and should be questioned but it is too important to be sacrificed. The questioning this year gave it a universal measure, as for a long time the cultural world has been waiting for restructuring of similar shows, and Venice and São Paulo are the most important biennials" (Maurício 1969, 3).

It is worth pointing out that many of his general ideas and remarks about Brazil and its art scene stoked criticism and negative reactions among intellectuals in Brazil. Pedrosa, for example, translated Restany's *Manifesto for Total Art* in his column in the *Correio de Manhã* on 17 March 1968, but still contested the optimism of his French colleague regarding technological development and the promise of a total art for the 21st century.

Ten years later, the *Rio Negro Manifesto* or *Integral Naturalism Manifesto* published by Restany in Europe in 1979, after a trip to the Amazon with artist Franz Krajcberg and advertising executive Sepp Baendereck the year before, caused much stronger and more incisive controversy, with accusations from Brazilian critics and intellectuals that it was a new attempt at cultural colonisation[16] (Fig. 4).

[14] Letters kept at the Archives de la Critique d'Art, in Rennes, reveal that Restany wrote to different publishers of international magazines to propose texts about the exhibitions and places he visited in South America.

[15] In an article published in 1975, Restany presents a broader snapshot of Brazilian contemporary art, in which he discusses its diversity and wealth in a more positive light and asserts that he owes Mário Pedrosa for his knowledge of Brazilian art. In this text he also declares that "his judgment about Brasília had been hurried, for today it is a city of 800,000 inhabitants and with the administrative and diplomatic transfer practically complete" (Restany 1975, 20).

[16] On this subject, see, for instance, Rosemary O'Neill. "Le naturalisme integral de Pierre Restany: la perception discipline et la dématérialisation de l'objet" and Stéphane Huchet. "Pierre Restany, quels échos brésiliens?" (Leeman 2009, 172-189 and 311-324). See also the master's dissertation of Carmen Palumbo (2018), an in-depth study about the theme.

Fig. 4 – "Rio Negro Manifesto" or "Integral Naturalism Manifesto" published by Pierre Restany at *Natura Integrale* magazine, issue 1, April/May 1979.

Restany and the art biennials: reflections on the success of the "Venetian formula"

In 1969, Restany publishes a text about the art biennials in a book he edited with Pierre Cabanne, dedicated to the avant-garde manifestations of the 20th century. In this text he discusses the success of the "Venetian formula" from an acutely French (or even Parisian) perspective, which advocates the need to recognise the relevance of the art of his country, while at the same time acknowledging (and mourning) the secondary position it occupied on the international art circuit at the time.

Furthermore, he outlines a series of parallels between the large shows of the period – such as the Venice and São Paulo Biennials, the Paris Biennale and documenta – in terms of impact and relevance to the time, which helps us understand the networks of interest in play in those years.

Restany recalls that the 1968 Venice Biennale opened in a "heavy atmosphere, dominated by the international gusts of student epopee, marked by the explosion of Parisian barricades and traumatized by the recent occupation of the Milan Triennial". For him, it was "a lightweight biennial, based on a single keyword, 'economy-restriction', full of petty-minded machinations and laden with opportunism" (Restany 1969, 116).

Nevertheless, despite the criticisms of the 1968 edition, Restany thinks that the biennial model was still essential for the evaluation of contemporary art work and defends the supremacy of the Venice Biennale in relation to art shows of the same ilk, highlighting attributes such as: the solemn nature of the event, the awards system, frequency, broad confrontation of works, and creation of a specialist audience. Venice, stimulating a substantial flow of international exchanges, contributed to the development of cultural events of universal calling, but, in his opinion, the other more recent biennials (São Paulo, Tokyo, Ljubljana, Menton, Tehran and San Marino, among others) lacked the charm and pomp of the Italian city (Restany 1969, 111) (Fig. 5).

In his view, on a global scale only the São Paulo Biennial could also be considered "an important piece in the subtle mechanism of compensation and exchange" which ruled contemporary art and its institutions. But his observations about the Brazilian show are not all praiseworthy. He notes that the São Paulo Biennial was conceived in the image of Venice and therefore reflected the main guidelines used there, including as regards the awarding of prizes. Although the São Paulo Biennial had for several years confirmed "the superiority and prestige of the European schools", he regretted that the tables had been turned: in 1963 the jury had made a mistake by awarding the grand prize to the "mediocre [Adolph] Gottlieb at the expense of [Pierre] Soulages". Similarly, in 1967, São Paulo witnessed the "scandal of César's failure, who everyone had expected to win the Grand Prize, given the importance and quality of his retrospective. (...) Awarded with a consolation prize,

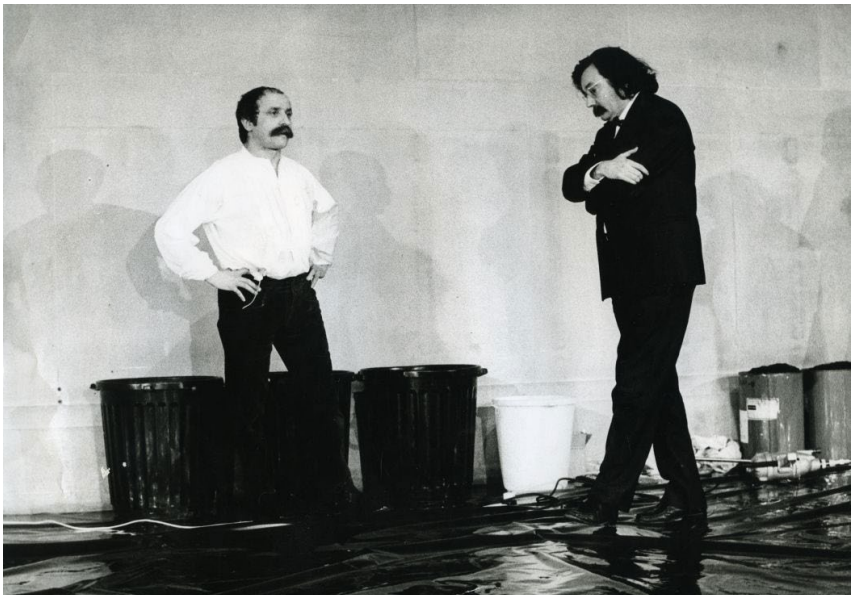

Fig. 5 – Pierre Restany (on the right) and César (on the left) at the Tate Gallery on the occasion of one of César's action-happenings, 1968. © Tate Archive Photographic Collection: César.

César rejected it" (Restany 1969, 117).[17] As Isabel Plante pointed out, there was no French member at the São Paulo Biennial jury that year, and Restany feared the French delegation would return empty-handed[18]. In search of support, he wrote to some of his South America colleagues, like the Uruguayan Angel Kalenberg, that "it would be a shame if such a brilliant French selection were to pay the price of a diplomatic alliance between underdeveloped countries! A negative record in São Paulo would also be used in Paris by all the reactionary officials as proof of the aberration of such a current choice" (Plante 2009, 300).

From his point of view, documenta was still an "exhibition organized by the Germans for the Germans," which offered the displeasure of being held "in a remote corner of the German province, a few kilometres from the GDR (East Germany)". Although Restany noted changes in the direction of documenta 4 (1968), the last one organized under the aegis of its architect, Arnold Bode, he was still critical of the fact that its visitors "were walking away with the impression that youth and freshness, impetus and inventive force in contemporary art were now exclusively reserved for the United States" (Restany 1969, 118). The Kassel strategy of 1968 "could only serve to accelerate international artistic emigration to New York".[19]

Restany was also reticent about the Biennale de Paris, created in 1959 by Raymond Cogniat with the aim of bringing Paris back to the centre of the international art world, investing in the production of artists aged under 35 (the age limit for participation).[20] He highlights its experimental character, but believes that it was a rather modest step in this heated dispute for a hegemonic position in the panorama of arts. Nor were the Parisian Salons created in the immediate post-war period, like the *Salon Comparaisons* and the *Salon de Mai*, still able to compete with the great shows held abroad, "in the London style of the Tate Gallery or in the German fashion of documenta" (Restany 1969, 112).

[17] Restany came to Brazil for the opening of the Biennial and then travelled to Rio de Janeiro with César, who did a performance – with one of his expansions – at the city's Modern Art Museum. Leonor Amarante, in her book about the São Paulo Biennial, comments on the controversy regarding the award for César: "By awarding the English painter Richard Smith, 36, the jury struck at the superstar reputation of the French sculptor César Baldaccini. Incensed by not winning the Grand Prize, just one of the ten regulatory ones, Baldaccini decided to refuse the $2,200. "All this is ridiculous", he thundered. "Any one of my sculptures is worth $10,000. If they want to award youngsters, then they should do so to my colleague Pierre Raynaud, who produces original and powerful sculpture" (Amarante 1989, 174).

[18] The French delegation was selected by Michel Ragon and formed by César, Alain Jacquet, James Guitet and Jean-Pierre Raynaud.

[19] It is important to note that Restany was not entirely wrong in his analysis about documenta. According to Walter Grassakamp (2017), the first documentas were not really international shows. "It was not even European, but rather a very German event indeed." And about the 1968 documenta, his analysis also corroborated Restany's observations: "What was most eye-catching in the fourth documenta was the presence of North American artists representing colour-field painting, hard-edge painting, and – most surprising of all – pop art and minimalist art. Corresponding to almost a third of all the artists invite, the American contribution led to the fourth documenta to be nicknamed the American documenta."

[20] The Paris Biennale had the support of André Malraux, then Culture Minister. It was a political project that was implemented following the failed French participation in the 1958 Venice Biennale, when the country did not win any of the main awards.

Restany realised that Paris, previously considered a cradle of the art world, was becoming isolated against a radically evolving global backdrop: "Paris feels increasingly provincial. Its great aesthetic discussions submerged in parochial matters. It is gradually forgetting how to see big" (Restany 1969, 118).
Just like many of his contemporaries, he also believed that contemporary art, which he defended, lacked institutional support in France and he called for concrete changes: "new methods to revive the artistic life, in line with a worldwide outlook, should be employed. (...) It is time for Paris to have its true 20th century museum, if it wants to remain a permanent forum for artistic creation" (Restany 1969, 117-118).

Mário Pedrosa and Pierre Restany regarding the hegemonic artistic circuit

As Caroline Jones observed, the format of the art biennials derives directly from the great trade fairs and Universal Expositions held in the 19th century in Europe and these exhibitory forms shared structures and functions. In her opinion, "when we look beyond claims to futurity or assertions of contemporaneity, we can begin to see the historical connections linking biennials to world fairs, tourism, and spectacular urbanism, with implications for the efficacy and purpose of these exhibitions for the present" (Jones 2010, 68). Jones considers that the existing art world cannot live without the biennials, but also highlights that the biennials had to adapt to the artists demands of a critical globalism and grew to embrace art as experience, especially from the 1960s onwards.[21]
Bruce Altshuler, another author who examined the history of the great art exhibitions of the 19th and 20th centuries, considers that until the mid-1960s the primary purpose of large, recurring international art exhibitions was to report the state of contemporary art. "Beyond motivations connected with economic development and tourism, or with local and national pride, reporting the sate of contemporary art remained a central rationale for these immense events. Toward the end of the 1960s, however, this would no longer seem sufficient justification" (Altshuler 2013, 13). The expansion of the contemporary art market and the increase in the number of commercial venues for contemporary art made the biennials re-evaluate their goals. The 1960s and 70s were also a period of intense transformations in the field of art exhibitions and curatorial strategies. In 1969 Harald Szeemann organized at the Kunsthalle in Bern *When attitudes become form,* an exhibition that would become famous for breaking away from traditional prescriptions of presentation and assembly and for projecting the figure of the independent curator. In 1972, Szeemann would be the curator of documenta 5 and leave his mark on the history of the German show.

[21] For critical globalism, she understands "an approach to art-making, a mode of reception for art-viewing, and a hermeneutic for curatorial practice (...), aesthetic response to economic, technological, and cultural processes of globalization" (Jones 2016, xiii).

In this context, the structure that governed Venice and São Paulo – of national representations and several awards – looked outdated, inadequate. While the Venice and São Paulo Biennials sought to reinvent themselves, abolishing, for example, their awards system, other biennial formats began to be implemented in different parts of the world. Several of the major exhibitions created outside of hegemonic centres from the mid-1950s to the 1980s have insisted on "critical regionalism as the means for realigning cultural networks across geopolitical divides", thus adopting a critical stance to the established model of the Venice Biennial and engaging with artists, curators and places formerly excluded from the hegemonic circuit (Gardner and Green 2013, 4). Therefore, the texts analysed here gain even more relevance when we consider that they were published at a time when artistic and cultural values were being intensely revised and a "crisis" gripped several institutions of legitimization. From distinct perspectives and in view of different challenges (repression of freedom of expression in Brazil and a breakup of the hegemony of French art), their authors reflected on the exhaustion of the Venice Biennial model and the rules of the international art world (Fig. 6). Despite their cosmopolitan experience and their shrewdness, both authors reveal a deep connection to their place of origin and discuss general themes from a local perspective, thus assuming a clearly political stance. Mário Pedrosa obviously resented the fact that Brazil had failed to take on the leading role on the international cultural stage that he had so desired, despite the vitality and originality of its artistic production in the second half of the 20th century. Moreover, he noted with sorrow that the country's modernization that began post-war had failed to promote any significant social transformation. The situation became more tragic as the political environment deteriorated in everyone's eyes, with freedom of expression curtailed and opponents to the dictatorial regime installed in 1964 relentlessly persecuted. Unlike Restany, who defended the integration of art and technology, Pedrosa aimed his attention at the artwork of primitive cultures and peripheral groups, and longed for a time and a

Fig. 6 – Pierre Restany and Mário Pedrosa in the 1970s. © Unidentified author. Fonds Pierre Restany. Archives de la Critique d'Art.

place where Western values could coexist with alterity. He continued to believe in the creative and revolutionary power of developing societies or even of the less favoured classes of first world societies. In his opinion, "below the line of the hemisphere soaked in wealth, progress and culture, life was germinating" (Pedrosa 1976, 40).

Pierre Restany, meanwhile, remained steadfastly positioned as a French critic, for whom his cosmopolitan, and therefore privileged, viewpoint could support his opinion and suggestions regarding other art scenes. It is worth remembering that he was one of the rare European critics of the period who sought to actually interact with the cultural-artistic circles of Brazil and Argentina. However, he did not shirk from presenting himself as a privileged intermediary of these groups for the European public, thus taking a stance of a somewhat colonial slant.

As mentioned above, Restany carried out his analysis of the 1960s art biennials from a distinctly French perspective, debating the loss of France's hegemonic position in the global cultural scene. His criticisms of the São Paulo Biennial, for example, become more stinging when the show begins to award its most important prizes to North American artists. It should be stressed that his general view of the symbolic fall of France is an accurate one, matching in several aspects the diagnosis presented by other agents. In the following years, the French government decisively supported the creation of a string of prominent cultural spaces, including the Musée National d'Art Moderne and the Centre George Pompidou, the FIAC (International Contemporary Art Fair) and the Contemporary Art Centres, seeking to engineer changes in this troubling state of affairs. In 1969, the situation was still murky, and political and cultural institutions were striving to assimilate the shock of the 1968 protests. Although France would fail to regain its previous hegemonic position, of a global centre and lighthouse for the arts, the country did not entirely lose its capacity to make an impact on the international scene.

In the field of the "history of exhibitions", the São Paulo Biennial has been relatively conspicuous, since it was the first great international modern art contest held outside Europe, and in a peripheral capital. However, as we have seen, it was designed with the same format as the Venice Biennial and it did not dispute the "Venetian formula"; on the contrary, it made use of this formula in order to fight for a prominent position on the international art scene. It should be noted that its foundation was part of a broader modernization project of Brazilian society and was implemented with the support of the federal government, which intended to instil an image of Brazil as one of the future world powers, including in the fields of arts and architecture. At the time, the country was living a period of economic growth, leveraged by São Paulo, a city that contrasted with the rest of the country due to its intense industrial activities and its high population of foreign immigrants. In its more than fifty years of activities, the São Paulo Biennial has insisted on its internationalist vocation. Nevertheless, its most recent editions have reflected the desire to break away from a Eurocentric view of art.[22]

Mário Pedrosa, as mentioned earlier, was one of the first to advocate for the São Paulo Biennial. In his initial view, the event would serve to bring Brazilian artists up

to date with the rest of the world, to broaden the country's artistic frontiers and to strengthen its international ties. In 1970, however, he assessed that this broadening had not been accompanied by international recognition of Brazilian artists and artworks, and that market interests, directed from outside to inside the country, controlled the show. Despite its various crises, of a political, conceptual and also financial nature, the São Paulo Biennial, in a constant state of reinvention, stands the test of time, but the debate raised by Pedrosa about the limits of local cultural affirmation strategies remains open. ●

[22] One can highlight, in this process, the 24th edition, held in 1998, known as the "Anthropophagic Biennial" for using the concept coined by the modernist writer Oswald de Andrade in his 1928 Manifest to connect the entire show.

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Abstract

It has been over 200 years that the term "exhibition" (roughly in the meaning in which we use it today) appeared for the first time, when philosopher Friedrich Schlegel mentioned it in a letter to a friend after visiting the Louvre Museum in 1802. In addition to the concept's long history, exhibitions are extensive, in the sense that they reach ample geographies, and are often under pressure to reach large numbers of people. They are also exhaustive, in the sense that they entail a wide range of formats and sizes and in that they represent diverse ideologies.
I will explore the question of whether the exhibition – in its concept, its form, its life, its omnipresence – is in addition exhausted and whether this potentially hinders its societal impact, assuming this medium is able to offer such possibility. Is it a practice that is potentially consumed, drained, or depleted, and fatigued of being simultaneously so many things, in such a variety of ways, in so many places of the world and for this extended period of time? Or does it simply need a rest to recoup its creative energies? These questions will be analysed through the lens of "closed exhibitions" of art (1960-2017), which arguably counter the logic of overproduction. This essay argues that closed exhibitions could potentially trigger novel reflections on issues of commonality and shared experience. ●

keywords

CLOSED EXHIBITIONS
INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE
EXHAUSTED EXHIBITION
SCHLEGEL
COMMONALITY
SHARED EXPERIENCE

Resumo

O termo "exposição" (sensivelmente no sentido que em que o usamos hoje) terá sido utilizado pela primeira vez há mais de 200 anos, quando o filósofo Friedrich Schlegel o referiu numa carta enviada a um amigo depois de visitar o Museu do Louvre em 1802. Para além da sua longa história, as exposições são conceitos amplos, no sentido em que abarcam vastas geografias e estão frequentemente sob pressão para chegar a um grande número de pessoas. E são também conceitos exaustivos, pois incluem vários formatos e dimensões, e representam ideologias diversas.
Este artigo procura interrogar se a exposição – no seu conceito, forma, vida e omnipresença – é também uma noção esgotada, e se isso pode dificultar o seu impacto social, assumindo que este *medium* tem essa capacidade. Será a exposição uma prática potencialmente gasta, esvaziada ou extenuada, e exausta de ser tantas coisas ao mesmo tempo, em tantos lugares do mundo, e por tanto tempo? Ou precisará simplesmente de fazer uma pausa para recuperar as suas energias criativas? Estas questões serão aqui analisadas pelo prisma de uma série de exposições artísticas "fechadas" (1960-2017), que parecem contrariar a lógica da superprodução. Este ensaio explora a forma como as "exposições fechadas" podem desencadear novas reflexões sobre ativismo coletivo e sobre experiência partilhada. ●

palavras-chave

EXPOSIÇÕES FECHADAS
CRÍTICA INSTITUCIONAL
EXPOSIÇÃO ESGOTADA
SCHLEGEL
ATIVISMO COLETIVO
EXPERIÊNCIA PARTILHADA

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THE CLOSED EXHIBITION
WHEN FORM NEEDS A BREAK

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In his interrogation of exhibition canons, Bruce Altshuler critically asserts that a "'curatorial cannon' will include a pantheon of curators as well as exhibitions – Harald Szeemann as well as *When Attitudes Become Form*" (Altshuler 2010-11, 9). Retrospectively, Szeemann's 1969 show established itself as a landmark, unfurling a rich mapping of subsequent dates and events that were mainly related to processes of opening up, of presenting art and ideas to the public. Since this essay is less an interrogation of canonisation in exhibition-making and more an intention to reflect upon the function and necessity of the exhibitionary form, my efforts will concentrate on events that instead folded inward: "closed exhibitions" of art (1960-2017). Drawing on early conceptions of the function and necessity of the exhibition, I will explore the question of whether the exhibition of art – in its concept, form, life and omnipresence – is exhausted, and whether this potentially hinders its societal impact, assuming this medium is able to offer such possibility.

* * *

One of the first traceable occasions on which we find the concept of "exhibition" used roughly as we know it today is in 1802. In September of that year, Friedrich Schlegel wrote a heartfelt letter to "a Friend at Dresden" describing two of his visits to the Louvre Museum, which by then had been open for nine years. During the first visit, after noting the unsuitability of the building to serve as "a temple for the noblest of the imitative arts", Schlegel (2014 [1802], 2) narrates his journey through the museum's halls, which ends with the Italian Old Masters. While complimenting the hanging and condemning the lighting, he interrupts the thread of the journey by noting his entrance into a room in which he finds works that were unarranged, disorganised and "not intended for immediate exhibition", some of them in need of restoration (ibid., 2). He then goes back to describing rooms in which the Old Masters harmoniously cohabited with Etruscan antiquities.

In stark contrast to the description of his first visit, the description of his second visit starts with an air of disappointment: ancient treasures were moved to give space in the room to works by *modern* artists, who according to Schlegel were now organised "by what we should term an 'Exhibition'" (ibid., 3). He immediately associates this concept with a temporary arrangement, hoping that after the occasion, the Old Masters will be put back in to place: "a few months must elapse before the pictures we love and reverence, or any others comparable to them in merit, again adorn the walls" (ibid., 3). Despite his seemingly dispirited remark, the philosopher recognises the value of these temporal arrangements: "every new collection of old paintings forms a separate body, a novel combination, in examining which the amateur often finds a new light thrown upon circumstances which till then had perhaps been unnoticed or ill-understood" (ibid., 4). Over two hundred years after the concept of the exhibition started to be used, the question of its value and its function then and now, remains: has the exhibition been, or is it still, a medium through which light is thrown upon circumstances that are unnoticed or ill-understood? should this even remain its primary function?

We can account for at least two hundred years of the concept of exhibition, in addition to hundreds of years of practices of display: practices that range from Upper Paleolithic ornaments to cabinets of curiosities, salons, collections, world's fairs, contemporary biennials, or blockbuster shows, to mention only a few examples of an exhibit in its traditional understanding. Additionally, the concept has been more recently inhabited by the idea of the exhibition in the expanded sense. This entails theories and practices that go beyond the hanging of objects, instead freeing up space for project-oriented activities and dialogical exchanges. In short, the concept of exhibition (mainly within contemporary art) has generously embraced a wider variety of artistic encounters that are no longer reduced to unidirectional subject-object relationships.

In concept and in practice, exhibitions are extensive, in the sense that they reach a wide range of geographic locations and are often under pressure to reach large numbers of people. They are also exhaustive, in the sense that they entail a wide range of formats and sizes, and in that they may represent diverse ideologies. This is in itself not a problem. On the contrary, it reflects the significant political potential inherent in this medium and in its ability to transcend geographical, historical and material boundaries. Although much work remains to be done, efforts are being made by large-scale events, museums, and art institutions of all sizes to bring people of diverse socio-economic or ethnic backgrounds together through their exhibition programmes, often fostering community-building, identity formations and transcultural exchanges (see Byrne et al. 2018 and Kadoyama 2018). Through unprecedented articulations of concepts and ideas, exhibitions offer us a glance into living together within diversity, antagonism included. However, in some geographies, there seems to be an overproduction of exhibitions, which raises the question of whether such a large number is necessary. Thus, both function

and necessity are key issues to consider when analysing conceptual and historical approaches to exhibition-making. Is it a practice that is potentially consumed, drained or depleted, and fatigued of being simultaneously so many things, in such a variety of ways, in so many places of the world and for this extended period of time? Or does the exhibition merely need a rest to recoup its creative energies? Arguably, closed exhibitions potentially counter the logic of overproduction, and in my view are in some cases symptomatic of exhaustion of the medium. However, their study is relevant insofar as they seem to implicitly support the continued relevance of the exhibition. By this, I mean that despite their ostensible negation of the medium, they nonetheless operate within the same framework. At worst they advocate for its existence; at best they open up the question of the function or the need for the exhibition at all in today's context, as well as the question of its potential.

Possibilities of exhaustion: a brief history of closed exhibitions

In order to offer a clear definition of a closed exhibition that is relevant to the questions I want to explore, I will use as a guide the concept of the closed exhibition and the examples proposed by the project "Retrospective of Closed Exhibitions" at Fri Art Kunsthalle Fribourg in Switzerland, plus one additional recent example towards the end of the article. Brief accounts of those closed exhibitions will be provided by separating them into four categories: closed exhibitions that have acted primarily as signature artworks, as pieces of Institutional Critique, as politics, and as experimentation. Such a divide follows neither the chronology of the original exhibitions nor the programming of their recent reconstructions at Fri Art. Closed exhibitions during the period of the 1960s to 1980s have identifiable features that differ from more recent models, as did artworks associated with different waves of Institutional Critique (see Steyerl 2006). However, my proposed structure allows for the identification of valuable perspectives offered by examples outside the western canon. The selection and proposed organisation of case studies for this brief historical account are not exhaustive of the history of closed exhibitions and are not intended to be inflexible categorisations. The selection is, however, representative and the headings useful insofar as they help us shed light on possibilities of exhaustion of the exhibition.

In 2016, Fri Art Kunsthalle planned a series of eleven closed art exhibitions that anachronistically recreated art historical closures of exhibition spaces. One after the other, eleven artists' gestures took over the institution between August and November. Curated by Mathieu Copeland, the project "Retrospective of Closed Exhibitions" came to an end with a celebration that marked the reopening of the

space after the series of closures and the launch of the accompanying publication, *The Anti Museum* (2017).

a) Closed exhibitions as a signature

The retrospective began by recreating Lefevre Jean Claude's gesture. In 1981 the artist attached a text to the windows of the Yvon Lambert Gallery in Paris during its summer closure. The text announced "an exhibition by lefevre jean claude 11.07/31.08 '81", and nothing else happened. Other closed exhibitions recreated at Fri Art that acted at the time as works of art or as artistic processes included Matsuzawa Yutaka's 1964 *Ah, Nil, Ah, A Ceremony of Psi's Secret Embodiment Drowning in the Wilderness: Prototype Exhibition*, in which the artist opened his bedroom in Shimo Suwa for display, making it a "venue", while closing the Naiqua Gallery in Tokyo, reclaiming it as an "anti-venue". This gesture resonates with his studies at the time on matter/anti-matter, which culminated in his principle of the "vanishing of matter". Maurizio Cattelan's first solo exhibition took place in Bologna in 1989. The artist closed the Neon Gallery, leaving only a sign that stated in Italian "*torno subito*", meaning "be right back". In 2002 Santiago Sierra closed Lisson Gallery in London with a corrugated iron curtain (Fig. 1). This curtain was an attempt to emulate the closure of Argentinian banks during the crisis (1998-2002) in which the government prohibited customers from withdrawing money. In 2007 Rirkrit Tiravanija inaugurated the exhibition space at Toronto's OCAD by covering

Fig. 1 – Santiago Sierra, *Space closed by corrugated metal*, Lisson Gallery, London, September 2002, Print, 150 x 225 cm. © Santiago Sierra; Courtesy Lisson Gallery.

the entrance to the space with bricks, with a message painted in black letters claiming: *"Ne Travaillez Jamais"*, meaning "Never work". This statement makes direct reference to the graffiti painted in 1953 by Guy Debord in Paris with the same message, expressing the Situationists' views on the alienating working conditions of their time (Copeland 2016, 34-38).

The works above mentioned cut across art historical categories and periods. What they have in common is that they belong to a series of individual gestures performed by each (male) artist. Although in some cases these works included art historical or political references, each gesture seems to be connected not so much to an art historical network or community than to a somewhat self-referential artistic trajectory. This arguably results in making each individual's oeuvre appear as an art historical exception. As a consequence, these gestures were more directly intended, consumed and interpreted as works of art: as statements, as signature works, the significance of which is better understood in the context of an artist's whole body of work, including his exhibitions.

b) As Institutional Critique

The retrospective also featured closures that were intended, consumed and interpreted less as works of art or as artists' statements than as gestures directly linked, although not necessarily intentionally, to the first wave of Institutional Critique (with a capital I and C). This does not mean that the following closed exhibitions were devoid of self-referentiality: they weren't, not aesthetically and not politically. Nor does this mean that that the legitimacy of the criticism they strived to perform was reduced or amplified. It only means that the subject of criticism was – for better or for worse – defined in terms of art history, albeit only in retrospect. Alexander Alberro offers a detailed account of how in the 1960s, the art world's infrastructure became central to some artists' work, making the art institution an object of scrutiny. Here the art institution is understood in its expanded sense, as further elaborated by Andrea Fraser (2006). Institutional Critique made manifest artists' dissatisfaction with institutional infrastructures and with the conditions they offered to staff, artists and members of the public (Alberro 2009). Two examples of this, among many others, are the closed exhibitions by Daniel Buren and Robert Barry. In October 1968, Buren was invited to his first solo exhibition at the Apollinaire Gallery in Milan. His response was to cover the entrance to the gallery space with his now classic striped wallpaper (Fig. 2), much to the disappointment of those who now think of Institutional Critique as a flight from the object or the individual. Green and white lines covered the glass door, preventing access to the space for the duration of the exhibition (Copeland 2016, 35). Subtly acknowledging the retrospective art historical interpretations of his body of work, and, similarly, identifying his gesture with what Schlegel thought was the function of an exhibition, Buren claims, "I did indeed close the gallery for over a month. But what I did in closing it

Fig. 2 – Daniel Buren, *Papiers collés blanc et vert*, travail *in situ* at gallery Apollinaire (Milan), October 1968. Detail. © DB-ADAGP Paris.

was to bring to light a work which today – more than at the time – is typical of a certain approach to its material" (Buren 2016, 83). What became evident through this type of closure was that the spatiotemporal framework traditionally enabled by an exhibition was not a precondition for art to exist.

While Buren closed the gallery "without saying it was closed" (ibid., 83), Robert Barry had three closed shows that came to be with an announcement in front of each space. The galleries sent out an invitation in his name that included the closure dates. The artist stated that from 17 to 31 December the Art & Project Gallery in Amsterdam would be closed, and on 30 December the Sperone Gallery would close in Turin. From 10 to 21 March 1970, the same happened at the Eugenia Butler Gallery in Los Angeles (Copeland 2016, 35). In Barry's exhibitions, the work was the closure, yet he declares the work to be a direct attack on the gallery system: "Yes. I was anti-gallery … I was pushing the art world context, and the gallery system" (Barry 2017, 94-95).

Neither Buren nor Barry make specific references to Institutional Critique when talking about their closed exhibitions. However, they both seem to acknowledge a disjunction between the intentions of their works and their further interpretations. As explained by Buren (2016, 85-86) the nature of their closures differed: the former wanted to criticise the way in which the galleries had been used so far – their

function – whereas the latter targeted their essence. Yet the two artists took the gallery space as both a medium for their work and as the object of their criticism.

c) As politics

By describing closed exhibitions as politics, I am referring to those exhibitions that make statements beyond the world of art and exhibitions, simply because there is one. At different moments in history and through radical, yet indirect gestures, the following three closures instigated reflection either on systematic or political conditions.

A month before the paradigmatic *Tucumán Arde*, one of the artist groups from Rosario (Argentina) involved in its planning was also organising the "Ciclo de Arte Experimental (CAE)". From May to September of 1968 this group organised a series of experiences in Rosario, the final one announced to take place from 7 to 19 October. Graciela Carnevale's *Untitled,* later popularly known as *Encierro* ("lock-up" or "confinement") aimed at making the public aware of the socio-political situation in the country by inviting them to think about the consequences of living under censorship and repression (Carnevale 2015, 77). *Encierro* was not merely a closed exhibition, but an action in which the public was locked up in a small gallery space: a closed exhibition with the public inside (Figs. 3 and 4). Guests, friends and passers-by came to the opening. Shortly after, Carnevale got out, locked the door without them knowing and left. She didn't know the outcome until the next day: chaos. Outsiders trying to open the door, insiders tearing posters or trying to dismantle the window. Finally, a passer-by broke a window and set them free. For Carnevale, *Encierro* went beyond criticism, in so far as the group's experiments were a "proposition of the possibility of doing things differently, of thinking differently, of considering art differently – with a role in society" (ibid., 79).

This section transitions from the critique of an oppressive regime to a reflection on an ostensibly less oppressive issue: the blurring of lines between work and leisure, often epitomised by artistic labour. With hints of institutional criticism, the following two closures relate to the body of work of the artist and the collective that produced them. As part of their series on holiday exhibitions, in 1999 Swetlana Heger and Plamen Dejanov closed the Mehdi Chouakri Gallery in Berlin from 12 to 28 February, requesting that all staff members go on holiday, and indeed they took a vacation with the production money for the show. For the opening, visitors found a shut gallery with a sign by the door that read "Galerie wegen Urlaub geschlossen 12-28.2.1999", meaning "Gallery closed for holidays 12-28/2/1999". Upon everyone's return, the artists asked staff members to keep the gallery space empty while they worked in the back. Staff members were then meant to talk to visitors about their time on holiday, and an album with photographs was displayed for the rest of the exhibitions alongside other works. The exhibition was open until April (Dejanov 2016, 110-11). Heger comments "...What

Figs. 3 and 4 – View of Graciela Carnevale's 1968 action *Encierro* (Confinement), Rosario, Argentina. Courtesy of the artist.

is related to work? Well, it's holidays. Artists are never expected to go on holiday … [they] seem to others somehow always on vacation (or unemployed)" (2016, 118). This project touches upon how artistic work is socially perceived, often dismissively, in comparison to other types of labour that sit more comfortably with neoliberal notions of productivity.

In preparation for her upcoming exhibition, Maria Eichhorn conducted a research meeting with staff members of Chisenhale Gallery in London in which she inquired about their working conditions. Fundraising had become a significant aspect of the life of the institution "… leaving less time for artistic research or time to reflect" (Eichhorn 2016, 135). Staff members felt that work and personal time had become increasingly blended. In 2016, a year after this meeting, Eichhorn closed the gallery space for the duration of her show (23 April-29 May). Titled *5 weeks, 25 days, 175 hours*, it referred to the duration of the project, for which full-time permanent members of staff were expected not to work (Fig. 5). This was announced in a statement hung by the doors of the closed gallery, mentioning that the exhibition opened with a symposium "exploring contemporary labour conditions, featuring lectures by Isabell Lorey and Stewart Martin and chaired by Andrea Phillips …" (Fig. 6). The artist unveils a link between time and artistic production: "… once work is suspended while staff members continue to receive pay, the artistic work can emerge" (Eichhorn 2016, 136). These days, creativity is drained and squeezed

Fig. 5 – Maria Eichhorn, *5 weeks, 25 days, 175 hours* (2016). Installation view, Chisenhale Gallery, 2016. Commissioned and produced by Chisenhale Gallery. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Andy Keate.

by bureaucratic tasks that are paradoxically dedicated to the survival of the art institution, the place where creativity is supposed to flourish.

These three case studies reflect upon the structure of closed exhibitions: they conceal in order to show. The first one locks you up to trigger thoughts of freedom, the second one sends you on holiday, challenging the social understanding of certain types of labour, and the third one releases you from the pressure of art in the hope that art will actually emerge from it. This last example relates to the exhaustion of exhibitions not only as a medium, but also to the energies and efforts invested in their production, or their overproduction.

Among the variety of possibilities of exhaustion discussed so far, these case studies also make us reflect on the financial aspects of exhibitions in general (be they open or closed): there are positive financial implications with signature works, no matter how explicit the reference to Argentina's financial crisis seems to be, as in Sierra's closure in Lisson Gallery; closed exhibitions are cheaper to produce, unless

Fig. 6 – Maria Eichhorn, *5 weeks, 25 days, 175 hours* (2016). Installation view, Chisenhale Gallery, 2016. Commissioned and produced by Chisenhale Gallery. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Andy Keate.

the budget is allocated for staff members going on holiday; exhibitions cost money, money that most art institutions do not have in excess, hence the centrality of fundraising. The list goes on. This, however, is only one side of the coin. It is important to consider that art exhibitions (mainly open ones) have also become mechanisms for survival, especially in large-and mid-scale art institutions: they not only bring money, but also help to increase the number of visitors, supporting institutions when justifying the continuation of public or private funding. For instance, the V&A's key marketing objectives include "to increase visitor numbers" and to "increase revenue through temporary exhibitions" (V&A, n.d.). From its reopening in 2012 to 2015, the Palais de Tokyo nearly tripled its number of visitors but hosted "more than five times as many exhibitions a year as it did pre-renovation, which is likely to keep people

Fig. 7 – Hi Red Center, "The Great Panorama Exhibition (aka Closing Event)", 1964. Photograph provided by The Estate of Jiro Takamatsu, Courtesy of Yumiko Chiba Associates.

coming back" (The Art Newspaper 2016). This is not cynical criticism of increased participation. On the contrary, my intention here is to ask whether the increased number of exhibitions is at all related to the quality of the engagement with existing, new and diverse publics. In this case, I am making a gesture towards questions of when the production of exhibitions becomes overproduction, and whether anything is lost by multiplying the number of exhibitions available. The reference to Eichhorn's project shows that, at the very least, the institutional pressure to increase the number of exhibitions produced can cause loss of creative energies due to the physical and intellectual exhaustion of the individuals assigned to produce them.

d) As experimentation

The following examples are chronologically the first and the last interventions in our brief history of closures, both coincidentally taking place outside the west, in Japan, and in Costa Rica. The *Great Panorama Exhibition* (aka *Closing Event*) ran from 12 to 16 May 1964 at the Naiqua Gallery in Tokyo (Fig. 7). Hi Red Center, an anti-art collective formed mainly by Takamatsu Jiro, Akasegawa Genpei and Nakanishi Natsuyuki announced that the space was closed "by the hands of Hi Red Center. When you have free time, please make sure not to visit it." A map of the space was printed, indicating where the closed door was. The opening day entailed its closure: the artists used hammers and nails to close the place, surrounded by no friends, no drinks and no speeches. The only thing left inside was a cockroach trapped in a glass as a witness. It was released and thanked at the opening party (Akasegawa 1984, 52). The opening part, on the last day, marked the opening of the closed space and Jasper Johns, who was in the crowd, did the honours and pulled out the first nail. Yoko Ono and Sam Francis were there too, alongside many other attendees. Drinks were served. By playing with the concepts of opening and closing, the collective wanted to turn the outside world into their object of presentation, into a great panorama. Naiqua Gallery was not a commercial space but an alternative gallery, or, as it was better known in Japan, a "rental gallery" that strived for experimentation and total freedom (Tomii 2016, 48). Hi Red Center's intervention emerged in the context of the Anti-art movement in Japan, and as Reiko Tomii suggests, it would be a mistake to interpret it through the eyes of a Euro-American tradition (2016, 48). Akasegawa Genpei offered his perspective, admittedly among many others, when coming up with this idea. He was working with wrapping things such as canvases, a carpet, a radio or an electric fan. Eventually, he would want to wrap a building and the wrapping desire would only escalate: "after a building, I will have to wrap a city, a nation, the earth. And ultimately, the whole universe. Everything else will be no more than a stopover on this grand finale" (Akasegawa 2016, 51). Although referring to a different project, he draws upon the same rationale for *Great Panorama*. As I interpret it, this first ever closed exhibition made it clear that these groups of artists in Japan had come to the conclusion in the early 60s that what could be exhibited was infinite. The medium was exhausted and everything else, be it format, shape, size or region, would only be an escalation, a testing of the limits of what could be exhibited, where, and how. Anything else would be exploitation that would leave the medium exhausted. This message could not have been conveyed by opening yet another show; it had to be conveyed by closing it. *Great Panorama* was also the last event of the "Retrospective of Closed Exhibitions" in Fri Art, and also finished with an opening party in 2016.

To close this section, I will discuss what to my knowledge has been the last case of closure. This is not a single exhibition, and it was not part of the retrospective at Fri Art. TEOR/éTica is a small visual arts organisation in San Jose, Costa Rica, founded in 1999 with a particular interest in supporting artistic practices and discourses from

Central America and the Caribbean. The space has been significant in providing support and international visibility to young artists from the region. In 2017, their curatorial team decided to undergo a process of institutional transformation into a space that was even more flexible and dynamic. They started by dismantling the top-down approach and experimenting with more collective forms of management, as well as thinking about "ways of doing". Inspired by Arts Collaboratory, an ecosystem that they belong to, composed of like-minded spaces in different parts of the world, ideas of institutional self-care, self-limitation and commonality surfaced. This brought about a discussion on the centrality of the exhibition, ultimately leading to the decision not to host any exhibitions in 2017. Instead, the exhibition space was used for research purposes and conversations, something that differed from what the space had been doing since its inception. This decision was not only an institutional experiment but also "a response to the fatigue of always doing the same and the bureaucratisation of daily life".[1] The temporary closure of the whole exhibition programme directly gestures towards the problem of exhaustion, which is not only of an intellectual type, as *Great Panorama* showed us, but also of a physical kind. *5 weeks, 25 days, 175 hours* shed light on staff members and artists in the art institution being exhausted, partly due to the blurring of lines between labour and leisure that have become part of the overall functioning of the institution. TEOR/éTica's case, however, points to the exhibition as the direct cause of institutional fatigue. The exhibition, once and often still the heart of art institutions, is now put aside to bring new life into their programming. It is no longer about experimenting with possibilities that the exhibition allows for, but about experimenting with the possibilities that emerge without it, especially if this translates into caring for a public or into building communities around your arts organisation.

[1] Miguel A. López. 2016. "Interview with Miguel A. López". Interview by Alaina Claire Feldman. *Independent Curators International*. Posted on 24 February 2017. Accessed March 2019, http://curatorsintl.org/research/interview-with-miguel-a.-lopez

What's lost

A brief snapshot of the history of closed exhibitions sheds light on several possibilities of exhaustion, ranging from tiredness as a result of the art world's infrastructure, its institutions or the working conditions they offer; of debilitating political regimes; or of the limitations of the art object when bound to materiality and place. In most cases – especially with closed exhibitions as Institutional Critique, as politics, and as experimentation – these diverse possibilities do justice to Schlegel's original conception of the (open) exhibition by throwing light "upon circumstances which till then had perhaps been unnoticed or ill-understood" (2014 [1802], 4). However, like most exhibitions, closed exhibitions are a double-edged sword. They do not negate the exhibition as form, and it is yet to be seen whether they can have an impact on much-needed critical reflection upon – and renovation of – the art institution. In fact, from the above case studies, we learned that some closed exhibitions affirm the institution and its traditional formats in so far as the

closures are merely temporary. Much of the time, the programme returns to normal in the same way that Schlegel's Old Masters were bound to return to display at the Louvre Museum after 1802.

At worst, a closed exhibition can be a missed opportunity for a potentially fruitful, shared experience. At best, it can be only a missed opportunity to put together yet one more display that the world needn't see. Questions of function and necessity beyond the importance of self-referentiality remain open in closed exhibitions as signatures. Much work that lies beyond the scope of this essay is needed to address them, and much interpretative work has been done already in addressing the significance of individual artistic trajectories. Thus, this will be put aside in this context. Closed exhibitions that (albeit unintentionally) speak to the canon of Institutional Critique unveiled certain conditions that were at the time overlooked. As valuable and significant as they were, questions of function and necessity seem to have been overshadowed by art historical discussions. These discussions allowed us art historians and art critics to build a narrative around critical gestures produced by artists. Although often followed by optimism (Meyer 1993, Fraser 2006, 123 and Bass 2016), such gestures were quickly scrutinised in the field by questioning whether this strand of conceptual art went far enough. Seen only from the perspective of the construction of this particular narrative, and without considering the public value that these events might have had, there is the question of whether exhibitions should speak mainly to art enthusiasts, not to mention the recent interest amongst scholars to theorise and (re?) historicise reconstructed art historical exhibitions, which on their own have great historical and pedagogical value, especially for teachers of art history. Beyond the general art history lesson and the added experience of learning beyond the textbook, the risk of these exhibitions is again that they may be reduced to self-referentiality, to being footnotes in the art historical canon, which would only result in further exhaustion. Returning to the first missed opportunity, one should ask what a closed exhibition says about commonality and shared experience, which are areas in which the exhibition can arguably exert its political potential. Are these aspects lost?

Conclusion: exhaustion, temporality and lessons learned

Closed exhibitions here reveal two significant aspects, albeit certainly not the only ones, in relation to how the contemporary art exhibition sometimes unfolds: either as a mechanism for the perpetuation of power or as a medium of possibility. In the former scenario, the exhibition is exhausted because certainty is being favoured over experimentation, formulaic approaches over risks and variety of experience over meaningful encounters. The exhibition is tired of attracting the public instead

of creating it, of ticking boxes instead of building communities. It is tired of serving as an instrument for managerial purposes, of surviving and helping the institution to survive instead of living a public life of its own. Most importantly, it is tired of being a signature, a footnote to a centralised, elitist and imperial art historical narrative. This seems particularly exhausting when, upon reflection on the latter scenario, the exhibition is a medium from which valuable and transferable lessons could be learned.

In both its traditional and its expanded sense, the exhibition is a space where a multiplicity of objects, stories, materials, ideas or people can be together in a shared space, often in "novel combination[s]" and throwing new light "upon circumstances which till then had perhaps been unnoticed or ill understood" (Schlegel 2014 [1802]). Not only is the medium itself constituted by diversity and multiplicity, but it can also project these values to the outside by offering the opportunity for people to gather around it, even when disagreeing. Within an artistic encounter of this sort, we sometimes experience cross-cultural narratives, becoming aware of the possibility to decentralise the dominant stories that have been constituting and feeding our identities. Some exhibitions even unveil how histories are constructed elsewhere, or how our own stories, passions, and beliefs could be articulated from a different perspective. The exhibition as a medium has proven successful, within its realm, in disrupting our sense of imperial certainty, not by means of reproducing imperial values through its sizes, formats or geographical reach, but rather by calling them into question and showing us how conceptions of centre/periphery are movable. Numerous exhibitions offer us the option to disturb our long-term constructed aesthetic taste charged with prejudice and indoctrination, making us see that unlearning is not only possible but potentially pleasing and meaningful, even if at times hard and uncomfortable. These lessons, and probably many others, are (if only potentially) transferable to social and political realms, as we saw with Carnavale's approach to *Encierro*.

Beyond notions of commonality, acceptance, and shared experience that exhibitions could imaginably teach us, there are specific meaningful notes to extract from closed exhibitions. Despite not always being places for shared physical experiences, some closed exhibitions offer us the possibility of exercising collective curiosity, for wondering and for thinking together even if physically apart. Countering the anxiety for overproduction and the urgency for immediate cultural satisfaction, a closed exhibition demands that we take a break to think and to reflect. I hereby conclude by suggesting that investing in further research around each exhibition and around strategies to strengthen community engagement seems more necessary than to be constantly propelling new ones. More time is needed for each proposition to grow and to create communities around it. Deeper reflection could come through diversifying research methodologies and subjects surrounding the exhibition space instead of footnoting narratives; stretching production and public engagement timescales instead of increasing outcomes; and allowing for the creation of communities around cultural production, acknowledging the importance of time and

patience. Ultimately, the contemporary art exhibition should be allowed to exert and instigate the same patience that Schlegel used to characterise the concept of exhibition to his friend in Dresden in the first place, making temporality not only a necessary condition but its most valuable one, even if for him this meant buying time before his revered Old Masters were put back into place. ●

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Abstract

Considered the most unsuccessful show in the Hayward Gallery's history, the Artist Placement Group's exhibition *inn7o: Art and Economics* (1971-72, London) was advertised as an "exhibition in time." The exhibition was an opportunity for the Artist Placement Group (APG) to document their progress in negotiating artist placements within industrial corporations, such as British Steel, Esso Petroleum, and ICI Fibres. The exhibition co-opted corporate language and ritual, creating a replica of a typical boardroom where meetings between artists and members of industry took place, live, throughout the entirety of the exhibition. This paper re-considers the *inn7o* exhibition within the context of a shifting British economy and subsequently a re-defining of Britain's intellectual left. This paper will argue APG's radicalism should not be defined by democratic participation, but instead, in terms of how language within an exhibition can be used to redefine discourse, blurring and subverting the boundaries between art and economics. ●

keywords

LANGUAGE
CONCEPTUAL SCULPTURE
CORPORATION
1970S

Resumo

Considerada o maior fracasso na história da Galeria Hayward, a exposição *inn7o: Art and Economics* (1971-72, Londres), organizada pelo Artist Placement Group (APG), foi promovida como uma "exposição no seu tempo". Este evento constituiu uma oportunidade para o APG documentar o seu progresso nas negociações para a colocação de artistas em corporações industriais, como a British Steel, a Esso Pretroleum e a ICI Fibres. A exposição apropriou-se da linguagem e processos corporativos, apresentando uma réplica de uma sala de reunião empresarial, onde decorriam ao vivo encontros entre artistas e membros da indústria. Este artigo reanalisa a exposição *inn7o: Art and Economics*, tendo em consideração o contexto da época, marcado por uma economia britânica em mutação e, consequentemente, pela redefinição da esquerda intelectual do país. Este artigo argumenta que o radicalismo do APG não deve ser definido como participação democrática, mas sim pelo modo como a linguagem de uma exposição pode ser usada para redefinir narrativas, esbatendo e subvertendo as fronteiras entre arte e economia. ●

palavras-chave

LINGUAGEM
ESCULTURA CONCEPTUAL
CORPORAÇÃO
DÉCADA DE 1970

Peer Review

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MORE FOR LESS

ART, LANGUAGE AND THE CORPORATION IN THE *INN70:ART AND ECONOMICS* EXHIBITION (1971-72) AT THE HAYWARD GALLERY, LONDON

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"More for less' an appropriation of disputed territory
known to exist between art and economics."
(Artist Placement Group, *inn7o: Art and Economics* exhibition catalogue, 1971)

Dismissed by critics as naïve and subsumed by ideology, the Artist Placement Group's exhibition, *inn7o: Art and Economics* (1971-72), was considered one of the most unsuccessful shows in the history of London's Hayward Gallery.[1] Advertised as an "exhibition in time", *inn7o* was an opportunity for the Artist Placement Group (APG) to document the progress of their ambitious project, to negotiate placements for artists within industrial corporations.[2] However, at the exact historical moment the APG chose to place artists within industry; the industrial landscape of Britain was significantly changing. The "stop-go" policy of wage controls by the Labour government defined the socio-political context of the late 1960s/1970s as a period of extreme division and skepticism in the political party system; specifically, the relationship between government and industry. The news media subsequently became a site of political blame. Leftist publications, like the *New Left Review,* claimed that politicians and their policy's use of language had failed to create compromise. Within this context it is significant that APG's negotiation of placements and subsequently the exhibition's text was dependent on the creation of their own language; a glossary of terms that re-crafted industrial corporations' terms, contracts and graphic design to form hybrids with their own art practice. This paper argues the APG's creation of their own terminology operated as an artistic strategy to re-define methods

[1] For reviews of *inn7o: Art and Economics* see Peter Fuller, "*inn7o*: The Artist Placement Group", *Art Review* 23 (25), December 18, 1971: 772, and Philip Oaks, "Art Clocks In", *Sunday Times*. November 28, 1971.

[2] Artist Placement Group. *inn7o: Art and Economics.* London: Hayward Gallery Press, 1971.

of negotiation from within the industrial corporate apparatus at a time when the public viewed industry and government's language as inherently flawed. However, in their redefinition of industrial corporate terms and process the APG would ultimately also challenge the industrial and art world's expectations of what constitutes an exhibition.

The Artist Placement Group

The APG was conceptually conceived by Barbara Steveni and established as a charitable trust in 1966 by John Latham, Barbara Steveni, David Hall, Anna Ridley, Jeffrey Shaw and Barry Flanagan.[3] Two years later, the APG held a symposium titled, *Industrial Negative*, at the Mermaid Theatre in London inviting artists, members of industry and government. During this symposium, the APG announced their objective: to insert art, "the other," or as their symposium title suggests "the negative," directly into the modes of capitalist production. To do this, APG negotiated what they termed artist placements or "proto-types" within different industrial corporations. Through these placements/"proto-types," the APG sought to juxtapose and critically question what they perceived as artificial divisions within society.[4] These divisions included perceptions of use versus uselessness in capitalist production, left versus right political affiliations and the organization versus the individual. The APG argued that through the confrontation of these binaries the artwork could create space in the public's imagination for a new vision of the world economy; an economy where these differences co-existed, but where they took part in a more productive totality – in APG's words, to achieve a "Total Economy."[5]

Central to APG's utopic vision was the creation of their own vocabulary. APG's lexicon was composed of practical adaptations made through the process of negotiation with industry and through extensive theoretical discussions held between group members. For example, the negotiated contract with industrial corporations, largely executed by Barbara Steveni, was titled an "Open Brief." The term "Open Brief" refers to the open-ended nature of the placement contract. The contract states, "…the artist is not committed to devising any work of art, product or idea."[6] The negotiation process and the "Open Brief" contract with each industrial corporation were the foundation of APG's practice. The language of the contract arguably cancelled out or negated the concept of a contract. There was no predetermined outcome, no obligation by the artist. However, while the contract did not specify the form of artistic outcome, it did require the commitment of the corporation and the artist to a future exhibition at the Hayward Gallery in London. The "exhibition clause" reads,

The Company has agreed to pay the full costs (transport, installation, maintenance and insurance) of the exhibition at the Hayward Gallery in November

[3] Barbara Stevini, "Barbara Steveni and the Artist Placement Group (APG)". Accessed April 2019, http://flattimeho.org.uk/apg/.

[4] Artist Placement Group. 1968. "Industrial Negative Symposium Questionnaire". TS, Tate Archive, London.

[5] Artist Placement Group. 1965. "Group Proposal". TS, John Latham Archive, Flat Time House, London.

[6] Artist Placement Group. 1968. "Sample Contract". TS, Tate Archive, London.

and December 1971, of an art, work or idea devised by the artist during the period of Association, which it is agreed would contribute to the objectives of that exhibition (agreed by Company, Artist and APG).[7]

The exhibition was later titled *inn7o: Art and Economics* and shown from December 1971 to January 1972 at the Hayward Gallery in London.

[7] Ibid.

The catalogue

The catalogue for the Artist Placement Group's *inn7o: Art and Economics* is an 8 x 10 inches booklet. The cover is composed of narrow columns of numbers in small black print. Like computer data, the numbers scroll down the page. However, occasionally the data is interrupted by blank white rectangles. The gaps in the text are sporadic, like missing puzzle pieces of negative space. The title of the exhibition is printed in large red text and pasted directly on top of the numerical background. It reads, "inn7o Records of an exhibition located in the period 1970-1971 and culminating at the Hayward Gallery" (Figs. 1 and 2).

The inside pages of the booklet mimic the typology and design format of *The Times Financial News*: narrow columns of text with large block headlines and images that line the top of the page. The content of the catalogue is a pastiche, featuring short texts written by the APG and other writers/theorists connected to the Group. The texts are given headlines such as "A national coalition of the iron and steel communities – GE" and "An independent TV Company – DH." The titles refer to the individual placements represented in the exhibition and the initials for the artist

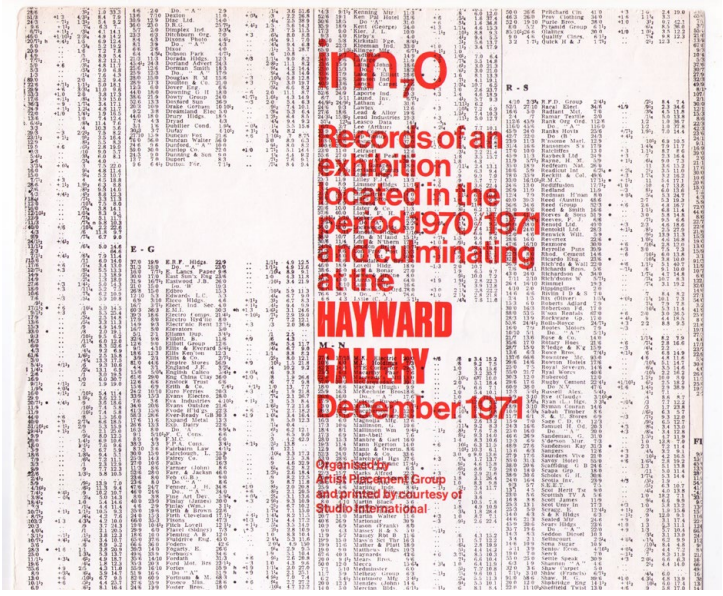


Fig. 1 – Exhibition cover of catalogue for *inn7o: Art and Economics* (1971-72) published by the Hayward Gallery Press, London, 1971. Copyright: Barbara Steveni Archive.

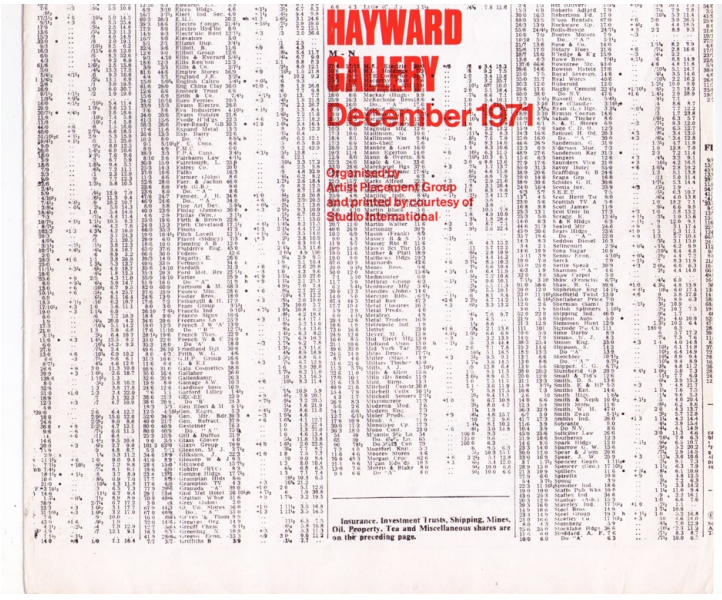
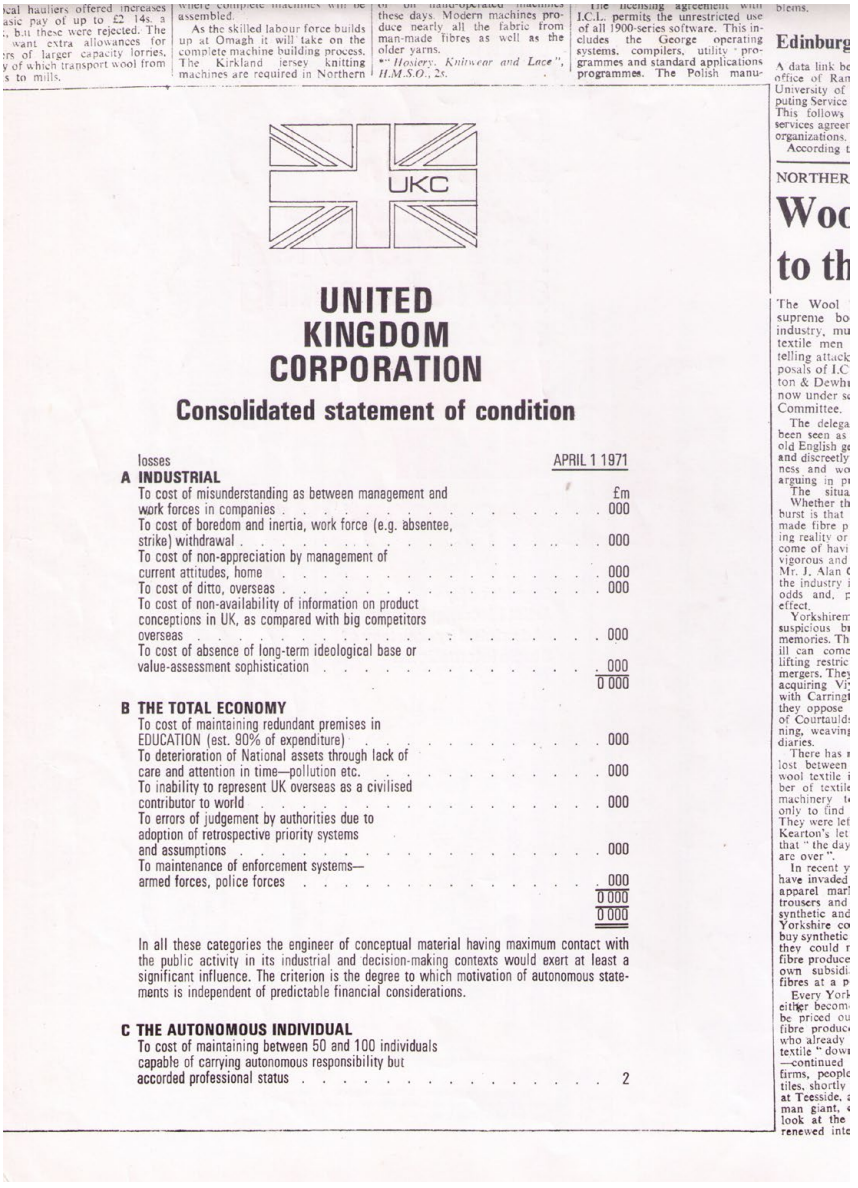


Fig. 2 – Additional photograph of Exhibition cover of catalogue for *inn7o: Art and Economics* (1971-72) published by the Hayward Gallery Press, London, 1971. Copyright: Barbara Steveni Archive.

who participated, thus GE stands for Garth Evans and DH for David Hall. The short texts describe the progress and/or outcome of each placement.
Throughout the catalogue, the text is interrupted by advertisements and reports. One full page is titled, "United Kingdom Corporation Consolidated Statement of Condition April 1, 1971" (Fig. 3). Printed on the page is a title, date and two columns. In the left column is a list of what APG argue are the total economic losses currently unacknowledged by the U.K. government's policy. These losses include the "cost of misunderstanding between management and work forces in companies," the cost of "boredom and inertia, work force (e.g. absentee strike) withdrawal" and the



UKC

UNITED KINGDOM CORPORATION

Consolidated statement of condition

losses	APRIL 1 1971
A INDUSTRIAL	
To cost of misunderstanding as between management and work forces in companies	£m 000
To cost of boredom and inertia, work force (e.g. absentee, strike) withdrawal	000
To cost of non-appreciation by management of current attitudes, home	000
To cost of ditto, overseas	000
To cost of non-availability of information on product conceptions in UK, as compared with big competitors overseas	000
To cost of absence of long-term ideological base or value-assessment sophistication	000
	0 000
B THE TOTAL ECONOMY	
To cost of maintaining redundant premises in EDUCATION (est. 90% of expenditure)	000
To deterioration of National assets through lack of care and attention in time—pollution etc.	000
To inability to represent UK overseas as a civilised contributor to world	000
To errors of judgement by authorities due to adoption of retrospective priority systems and assumptions	000
To maintenance of enforcement systems—armed forces, police forces	000
	0 000
	0 000

In all these categories the engineer of conceptual material having maximum contact with the public activity in its industrial and decision-making contexts would exert at least a significant influence. The criterion is the degree to which motivation of autonomous statements is independent of predictable financial considerations.

C THE AUTONOMOUS INDIVIDUAL	
To cost of maintaining between 50 and 100 individuals capable of carrying autonomous responsibility but accorded professional status	2

Fig. 3 – Artist Placement Group. "United Kingdom Corporation Consolidated Statement of Condition." In *inn7o: Art and Economics*, 23. London: Hayward Gallery Press. Copyright: Barbara Steveni Archive.

cost of "errors of judgment by authorities due to adoption of retrospective priority systems." The immaterial factors APG points to are largely social problems that are usually not prioritized by an industrial budget. The adjacent column lists the amount of pounds lost by each of these factors. The monetary amount for each identified "loss" is consistently zero £ (pounds).[8]

APG's mock "statement of condition" suggests that while the listed economic losses may not be assigned a monetary value or considered important in the short-term, they are nonetheless long-term losses for the U.K.'s economy. APG's critical approach to language is therefore tied to their critique of economic policy. The APG use corporate language and format to ultimately question what is given value and what is not within conventional statements of economic policy.

The Sculpture

inn7o: Art and Economics' exhibition space showed documents, sculpture and film from all the placements that were currently in progress. These included Garth Evans and the British Steel Corporation, Stuart Brisley and Hille Furniture Co, Leonard Hessing and ICI Fibres, Andrew Dipper and Esso Petroleum and John Latham's placement with Clare Hall Hospital. The exhibition was considered a "working demonstration." APG, they declared, is concerned with the artist's capacity to be an engineer of conceptual material.

The artist or "engineer's" conceptual material took on varied forms.[9] Garth Evans transported pieces of steel from the British Steel Corporation onto the gallery floor space and showed a film of him exploring the stockyards. Andrew Dipper presented documentation of his time on the "Bernicia" oil tanker headed from the Indian Ocean to Africa, part of his placement with Esso Petroleum. Other works, such as John Latham's placement with Clare Hall Hospital were more visceral, exhibiting a record of Latham's recovery from a near fatal car accident that occurred months before the exhibition. The work "Hospital" was composed of x-rays that showed Latham's seven broken ribs and lung damage, the remains of the crashed automobile and photographs of nurses and doctors.[10] However, the exhibition's sheer diversity in the hybridist approaches to materials and documentation was held together by the common language of the presentation boards and the catalogue.

In addition to the importance of printed language, the APG also appropriated spoken language and corporate ritual, creating a replica of a boardroom. The "boardroom" featured a large table with chairs, where meetings between artists and members of industry, business, education and the government took place, live, throughout the entirety of the exhibition. The APG considered these meetings an artwork in itself and the rational for its title, *The Sculpture*.[11] However, the meetings were not intended to invite audience participation. In order for the APG and guests to hear one another speak, the space was separated from the rest of the gallery by

[8] Artist Placement Group. 1971. "United Kingdom Corporation Consolidated Statement of Condition", *inn7o: Art and Economics*. London, U.K.: Hayward Gallery Press, 23.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Peter Fuller, "*inn7o*: The Artist Placement Group", *Art Review* 23 (25), December 18, 1971: 772.

[11] Antony Hudek. "Staging Dissonance: Artist Placement Group's Performative (Non-) Exhibitions", *Journal of Curatorial Studies* 2 (3), October 2013: 303-328.

transparent plastic. This strategy allowed visitors to observe the live discussions, but not distract from "business." *The Sculpture* thus took the form of a semi-private perpetual business meeting.[12] The conversations were filmed and projected onto monitors throughout the exhibition space. Participants included industrial representative Peter Baron from ICI Fibres, Derek Dalton the principal of Fine Arts at Newcastle and members of the APG – Barbara Steveni, John Latham, Garth Evans, David Hall and Leonard Hessing. In video recordings of the event, Steveni describes *The Sculpture*, "It was an opportunity for the people we had been approaching to come to us".[13] The topics of their discussions included the experience of artists during their placement, the possible benefits of industries taking on artists and industry's anxiety over what industry and the APG perceived as a growing alienation of the working class (Fig. 4).[14]

"I hope you will not mind my going on about this – but as you are who you are…"

inn7o: Art and Economics opened to predominantly negative reviews. *Art Review*'s critic Peter Fuller lamented,

> The weakness which one constantly faces in his work (John Latham and/or APG) is his naïve belief that class differentiation and the separate motivations of workers and management can be fused into one simply by changing the language.[15]

Fuller's review goes on to argue that the APG's central paradox was their "mock economics;" their attempt to intervene or change corporate terminology, while at the same time co-operating with, and therefore upholding, the existing corporate management structure. Fuller's review concludes by stating that despite idealistic intentions, *inn7o: Art and Economics* was a futile exercise that resulted in the complicity of art with management culture.[16]

In retrospect, Fuller's review arguably assumes a binary position that dictates two choices: to ethically align oneself with either the working class or management. In regard to language, this translated to the adoption of bureaucratic language or not. The binary framing of these choices ultimately came to define not only APG's practice, but historic narratives of the broader Conceptual art movement. A movement that like the ideological apparatus of the corporation, the APG had one foot in and one foot out of throughout the entirety of their practice. However, within Fuller's critique the ambiguity of language itself is arguably overlooked; i.e. the nuances in contract, the exhibition catalogue and the conversation of *The Sculpture*.

In 1970, one year before *inn7o: Art and Economics*, art critic Rosetta Brooks considered John Latham's practice and ultimately APG's use of language from a more

[12] *The Sculpture* at the Hayward was a recreation of an event held a year earlier during the exhibition *Between 6* at Kunsthalle Dusseldorf in Germany.

[13] Artist Placement Group. 1972. "The Sculpture". TS, Film from Barbara Steveni Archive, London.

[14] My description of *The Sculpture* is formed by interviews with Barbara Steveni and her personal film footage from the exhibition. Barbara Steveni Archive, accessed 2017.

[15] Peter Fuller, "*inn7o*: The Artist Placement Group", *Art Review* 23 (25), December 18, 1971: 772.

[16] A critique that is strikingly similar to Fuller's is a later more general observation made by art historian Benjamin Buchloh in his seminal text, "Conceptual Art 1962-1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions" (1990). He states, "Conceptual Art came to displace…the mass-produced object and its aestheticized forms in Pop Art, replacing an aesthetic of industrial production and consumption with an aesthetic of administrative and legal organization and institutional validation." (Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "Conceptual Art 1962-1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the critique of Institutions", *October* 55 [Winter 1990]: 119).

Fig. 4 – *The Sculpture*, 1971, Hayward Gallery, London. Photo Credit: Artist Placement Group. Copyright: Barbara Steveni Archive.

nuanced point of view. Brook states: "By treating forms of painting (or Language as he does in his later work) in such a way as to reveal their inert valueness… Latham's works are tools but not ordinary tools because they operate through their own self-destruction" (Brooks 1975, 11). In her review, Brooks' interprets Latham's and to a large extent APG's political act as the creation of tools that serve only to deconstruct themselves. In the case of *inn7o: Art and Economics*, the APG created their own 'tools' through new terminology and new phrases borrowed from the administrative realm of the corporation. However, the APG's intention was arguably

not to change the system through this new terminology, but rather to draw attention to the negotiation of that language; to examine its ambiguity, loop holes and ultimately to negate or critically question their meaning.

Although, perhaps what is most important is why the APG felt the need to create their own terms in the first place. In their view, administrative language was not culturally dictating class structure or art production but, in contrast, had culturally failed to achieve anything. According to the APG their contemporary language had failed to describe artist practice, economic policy and more broadly failed to put into words the changing class conditions of the time. In APG's words, "This problem is a matter of pictures- the difference between the pictures we have of who we are and the context of this who and those of a reality viewed from a meta-historical position is a reliable measure of dis-placement, dis-ease…events are structured but not in terms currently used."[17]

The poverty of theory

The failure of contemporary language to capture a holistic view of society was a common theme that was referenced across disciplines throughout the 1960s. The desire for a perspective that presented a more inclusive vision of society was rooted in the post WWII's splintering of the British political left. The fragmentation of Britain's left has been eloquently described by historian Perry Anderson as a diaspora of socialist and anarchist thinkers whom were specifically interested in what they termed "full social process." While "full social process" is often used as an umbrella term for a variety of topics, it can be loosely defined as the desire to convey the individual's relationship to greater society in all its social, economic and political totality.

The diversification of leftist views at this time was fueled by a re-visiting of Marx's historical materialism and a critique of Althusserian Marxism (see Anderson 1980; Hamilton 2011, Chapter 7). Central to this critique was prominent British historian and class theorist E.P. Thompson's text "The Poverty of Theory" (1978).[18] Anderson in his text, *Arguments within English Marxism,* succinctly summarizes Thompson's analysis of Marx when he states, "Marx was guilty in Thompson's eyes of the extrapolation of the purely economic categories of capital from the full social process" (Anderson 1980, 98). In other words, that Marxism at this time, most notably Althusser, had abstracted individual and collective "experience" to the point where they could no longer transcend economic and societal categories. While Thompson's perspective was and still is highly criticized, his sentiment was evident in many parallel movements including mass education protests that sought to eliminate what students considered to be detrimental discipline divisions within curriculum. For example, the "sit-in" at the Hornsey College of Art (1968), at which prominent

[17] Artist Placement Group. Date unknown. "Britain Industry and Purpose of the APG". TS, John Latham Archive, Flat Time House, London.

[18] Thompson, E.P. 1978. *The Poverty of Theory: or an Ornery of Errors.* London: Merlin Press.

individual APG members Stuart Brisley, John Latham and Barbara Steveni came together to demand financial reform and an increased interdisciplinary curriculum.[19] While the APG purposefully refrained from directly aligning themselves with a known political faction, their informal participation in collective action such as the "sit-in" facilitated an epistemological suspicion in the categorization and the fragmentation of societal experience. A critique of their contemporary Marxists, that became the foundation of APG's crafting of their own political position; to achieve a more "total economy". However, key to crafting APG's "total economy" was to respond to one particular problem, the divisive nature of language.[20]

Within APG's theoretical notes (they were opposed to creating a group manifesto), this argument is supported by John Latham's frequent references to quantum physicist David Bohm. A disillusioned communist, Bohm modeled a philosophy that addressed the problem of comprehending a world framework through the inherently divisive nature of language. A position he most famously conveyed in his text *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* (1980). In his chapter, *Wholeness versus Fragmentation,* Bohm states, "Fragmentation is now very widespread, not only throughout society, but also in each individual." (Bohm 1980, 2), and continues: "Being guided by a fragmentary self-world view, man then acts in such a way as to try to break himself and the world up, so that all seems to correspond to his way of thinking" (ibid. 3).

In Bohm's philosophy, APG found a contemporary kindred spirit in re-imagining the possibility of perceiving society as an indivisible whole. However, perhaps most influential was Bohm's belief that the primary catalyst of our fragmented perception of society was language (ibid. 36). And it was specifically the association of language with detrimental divisions in society that brought the divisiveness of language to the forefront of the politics of APG's practice.

The failure of two systems

Within the *inn7o: Art and Economics* exhibition catalogue and Group statements, APG argued that language not only failed in its attempts to describe art, the economy and the relationships between different parts of society, but that it was also inherently a politically divisive medium.[21] Accusations that were reflected in Leftist media's critiques of U.K.'s economic policy at the time, such as *The New Left Review*. As the 1960s came to a close, the "stop-go" policy of the imposition of wage controls by the Labour government under Prime Minister Harold Wilson defined the cultural context of APG's practice as a period of extreme division and skepticism in the political party system. The Labour party itself was considered a conglomeration of contradictions; a party that advocated long-term socialist reform yet implemented short-term wage controls. These contradictions led to a broader public belief that there was a contemporary absence of a radical or alternative socialist policy put

[19] Stuart Brisley, Hornsey College of Art, "To the Authorities whoever they are", 1968. Stuart Brisley Archive, London.

[20] Artist Placement Group, "Language as a Dividing Medium", 1983. TS, John Latham Archive, Flat Time House, London.

[21] Artist Placement Group. 1983. "Language as a Dividing Medium". TS, John Latham Archive, Flat Time House, London.

forward by any major political party. As a result, increasing pressure was placed on the role of Trade Unions to fill this political void. However, the increased pressure led to hostility, creating a divisive culture between Unions and Management that played out in the news media (see Rowthorn 1967, 210-227).

The media's coverage of this hostile division was most famously critiqued by the *New Left Review's* 1967 publication, titled, *The Incompatibles*. Essays such as Philip Tonybee's "The Inequality of Language" argues that media outlets, such as *The Times*, through their choices in language not only sowed division but upheld the belief that Unions and Management were incapable of coming together for the "common good" of the economy. Specific phrases used within these publications such as "The Country cannot afford" were, according to Tonybee, a constant "evolving self-justification" (Tonybee 1967, 97); a justification that promoted the maintenance and acceptance of the existing unequal economic system. Tonybee concludes,

This language is to be found in its most polished and accomplished form on the leader-pages of all those newspapers which defend the existing social system. The British in particular are a moralizing nation, and it is by scarcely disguised moral arguments that we are constantly urged to accept the present structure of our society (ibid. 95).

However, the essays included in *The Incompatibles* do not limit their critiques to the news media, but further level these same accusations at the use of language in industrial contracts themselves. For example, changes to the language in collective bargaining contracts from the late 1960s onward, would monumentally change the U.K.'s future economic policy. Tony Topham in "New Types of Bargaining" describes this shift in his case study of Fawley Oil Refinery, part of Esso Petroleum, a British division of American Standard Oil. (The same fraction of the corporation that hosted Andre Dipper's Artist Placement that is displayed at *inn7o: Art and Economics*.) In his essay Topham argues that Esso used "high-toned language" in an attempt to describe an "enlightened labour policy" that was ideally executed by a paternalistic management. However, Topham observes that the contract in actuality used language to hide the commercial motive of "a drastic intensification of work." (ibid.). Therefore, Esso's language attempted to shift moral responsibility to management but simultaneously gave management more power at often detrimental costs to the labour force.

Re-socialization

The essays in *The Incompatibles* describe the use of divisive, optimistic or paternalistic language to create often destructive divisions and to deceptively change the scope of collective bargaining to prioritize management's control over the labour force. The inequality built into the language of these smaller contracts played out on the national stage through a series of unsuccessful government negotiations

between management and unions: "In Place of Strife" (1969), The Industrial Relations Act (1971), The Trade Unions and Labour Relations Act (1974) and the "Social Contract" (1974-79). As a result, the policy that defined the 1970s, was from the public's perspective, unable to find the language to understand or facilitate cooperation between different political fractions.

This general assumption ultimately tied the absence or failure of politically progressive language to the absence or failure of a radically political body. This sentiment is reflected in the APG's notes from the period when they state, "the current state of the global zeitgeist in 'every aspect' is the polarization into 'free enterprise' and 'socialist ideological' frameworks. Both systems at present fail."[22]

The presumed failure of language and subsequently representation ultimately created an opening for APG's practice. The contract, the boardroom and print media for the APG became sites to negate political divisions while at the same time maintaining their artistic autonomy. Within this ambiguity, *inn7o: Art and Economics* does not replicate the ideological problems of its political context but rather creates new terminology that ultimately dismantles itself by showing were the "logic of language" ceases to hold.[23] By showing the gaps in language the APG attempted to suggest the idea of dissolving and re-composing one's own perspective and subsequently society's perspective…a re-socialization.

However, as indicated by Fuller's review, *inn7o: Art and Economics'* was poorly received and generally misunderstood by the media and art world. The perceived failure of the exhibition led one of the APG's biggest benefactors, the U.K. Arts Council, to cut its funding. The Arts Council claimed that the APG did not show sufficient results and was more interested in "social engineering" than art production.[24] The APG interpreted their negative reception as a misunderstanding of their project that was tied to the inherent biases within corporate language, and therefore, the political policy they were trying to challenge. In Steveni's words, "the left and the right had gone to bed together." Coupled with a decline in the economy, the very existence and subsequently the success of the APG, the Group argued, could not be measured by existing perceptions of value.[25]

In the aftermath of *inn7o: Art and Economics*, Steveni negotiated the *British Civil Service Department Memorandum* in Whitehall; a memorandum that opened the door to artist placements within a number of U.K. government organizations including the Department of Environment and the Department of Health and Social Security.[26] In the years directly following this negotiation, the APG created the term Incidental Person to replace artist in the majority of their literature and contracts. In a period where political rhetoric had encouraged division rather than representation, the APG would continue through out the 1980s to try and change the language and subsequently the cultural imagination. ●

[22] Artist Placement Group. Non dated [1970s]. "Aspects of a Single Problem". TS, John Latham Archive, Flat Time House, London.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Artist Placement Group. 1972. "The Arts Council". TS, John Latham Archive, Flat Time House, London.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Barbara Stevini. 1972. *British Civil Service Department Memorandum*. TS. Barbara Steveni Archive, London.

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Abstract

The present paper studies two exhibitions that are virtually unknown in the field: the Belgian art expositions in Philadelphia and Buenos Aires in 1882 and 1887. The exhibitions took place outside the contexts of universal expositions and world fairs but they were not private commercial ventures. They were government projects, driven by consuls and by the King Leopold II. For this reason, I consider these exhibitions as results of economic, political and colonial endeavors rather than artistic products. The focus is not on the artworks, but on the dynamics underlying, and generated by, the exhibitions. As this study demonstrates, these art shows were not just instruments to open new markets for Belgian art abroad, but also constituted a medium to negotiate and shape relationships and narratives with and in foreign countries. ●

keywords

BELGIAN ART
BUENOS AIRES
PHILADELPHIA
EXHIBITION HISTORY
CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

Resumo

O presente artigo estuda duas exposições praticamente desconhecidas: as exposições de Arte Belga em Filadélfia e Buenos Aires, realizadas em 1882 e 1887 respetivamente. Nenhuma das exposições se enquadra no contexto das exposições universais e das feiras mundiais, nem representa empreendimentos comerciais privados. Porém, ambas configuram projetos governamentais, promovidos por cônsules e pelo próprio rei Leopoldo II. Por essa razão, estas exposições são aqui consideradas mais como resultados de esforços económicos, políticos e coloniais, do que como produtos artísticos. O foco de interesse não se centra nas obras de arte, mas na dinâmica subjacente às exposições, e por elas gerada. Como este estudo demonstra, estas mostras artísticas não serviam apenas como dispositivos para abrir novos mercados para a arte Belga no exterior; elas constituíam também um meio ideal para negociar e moldar relações e narrativas feitas com, e em, países estrangeiros. ●

palavras-chave

ARTE BELGA
BUENOS AIRES
FILADÉLFIA
HISTÓRIA DAS EXPOSIÇÕES
DIPLOMACIA CULTURAL

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PECULIAR RELATIONSHIPS ON DISPLAY

BELGIAN ART EXHIBITIONS IN PHILADELPHIA AND BUENOS AIRES IN 1882 AND 1887

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Introduction

Exhibition studies came into being as a research field roughly in 1990s when a series of key publications including *Exhibition Cultures*, *Thinking About Exhibitions* and *The Power of Display* introduced new perspectives on the social, political, economic and artistic dimensions of exhibitions in history (Greenberg et al. 1996; Karp and Lavine 1991; Staniszewski 1998). Exhibitions were exposed as ideological constructs, embedded in identity politics, economic interests and multiple social, political and artistic discourses. In the same period, seminars and studies such as *Los estudios de arte desde América Latina* and *Beyond the Fantastic: Contemporary Art Criticism from Latin America* opened new perspectives on art, especially revealing the biased discourse of US exhibitions of Latin American art.[1] The last decade saw the field of exhibition studies expand exponentially primarily because of the vogue of curatorial studies and cultural economics (Boersma and Van Rossem 2015; Myers 2011). Much of the recent scholarship is steeped in post-colonial theory and global art history, addressing issues of center-periphery relationships and the impact of cultural traffic. In this vein, Marta Filipová advocates in *Cultures of International Exhibition 1840-1940* to look beyond the world fairs organized in major sites of capitalist culture and to direct attention to shows in smaller cities, such as Glasgow (1888) and Brussels (1910). In other words, she directs the attention to exhibitions

[1] Between 1996 and 2003, a group of historians, art critics, artists, writers and curators met seven times in different countries to present papers and discuss new methodological and critical perspectives within the framework of the project *Los estudios de arte desde América Latina*, coordinated by Rita Eder. The seminar resulted in multiple articles and books. For more information see: http://www.esteticas.unam.mx/edartedal/PDF/inicio.html (accessed April 2019) and Mosquera, 1995.

in "the margin", i.e. "on the borders of monarchies and empires, where cultural and ethnic tensions were strong and where new centers were created" (Filipová 2015, 4). The publication, that brings together the work of fifteen scholars, draws a map of exhibitions that is invisible in the established art historical canon, thus raising a wide range of interesting questions about cultural politics and exhibition-making. The present paper contributes to the expanding map of new narratives by analyzing two expositions that are virtually unknown in the field: the Belgian art expositions in Philadelphia and Buenos Aires in 1882 and 1887.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, Belgium participated at several international exhibitions, including the Exposición Internacional de Santiago de Chile (1875), the Centennial Exhibition of Philadelphia (1876), the Sydney International Exhibition (1879), the Melbourne International Exhibition (1880-1881), the Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition (1887), the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago (1893) and the Louisiana Purchase Exposition (1904) (Balcers and Jaumain 2010, 11-37). The Belgian art expositions in Philadelphia and Buenos Aires of 1882 and 1887 were part of this global cultural movement but took place outside of the contexts of universal exhibitions and world fairs (Fig. 1). This does not imply that they were private commercial ventures. The exhibitions were government projects, driven by consuls and by the King Leopold II. For this reason, the focus of the present paper is not on the artworks, but on the political, economic and colonial dynamics underlying, and generated by, the exhibitions. As it demonstrates, the art shows were not just instruments to open new markets for Belgian art abroad, but also constituted a medium to negotiate and shape relationships and narratives with and in foreign countries.[2] The exhibitions are hardly known, because information about them is scant and difficult to access. The most important sources are press reviews, published in Belgian, Argentinian and North-American newspapers and a handful of documents, preserved in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Methodologically, the article combines historical research with a discourse analysis. It maps for the first time the exhibitions, including the actors, artists and artworks, and examines the projects' discourse and reception. In this way, it reveals an essential moment in the burgeoning practice of organizing Belgian art exhibitions outside of Europe, and yields new insights into the intricate role of art in international economic, political and colonial relationships.

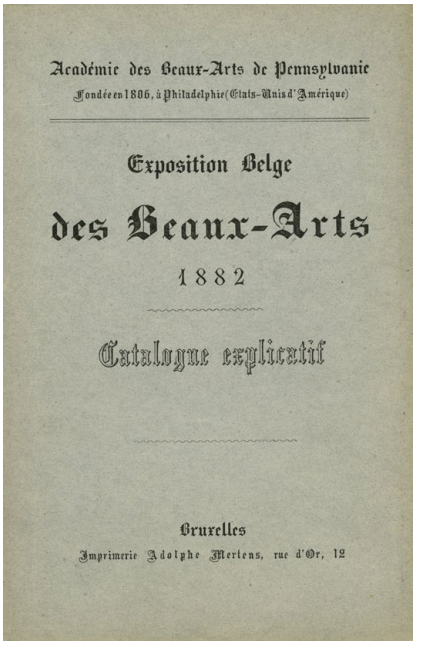

Fig. 1 – *Exposition Belge des Beaux-Arts, Catalogue explicatif*, 1882 - front cover. Copyright: Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts Archives, Philadelphia, PA.

Exhibiting Belgian Art in *centres extra-européennes*

On the 30th of November 1882, a small note appeared in the Argentinian newspaper *El Diario* announcing that the King of Belgium, Leopold II, had approached the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asking for the support of the government to organize

[2] An in-depth study of the selection of artworks and their reception falls outside of the scope of the present paper but will be addressed in the near future in the context of a broader postdoctoral research project on Belgian art exhibitions overseas.

a Belgian art exhibition in Buenos Aires. The exhibition would serve "the same purposes as the one produced a little while ago [in April 1882] in Philadelphia" and was "a means" to counter the "false criticism" that the Belgian school was in decline.[3] It is important to bear in mind that in 1882, Buenos Aires did not yet have a well-established art circuit. There were no fine art museums, official academies or modern art galleries. The main places to see art were small shops that sold all sort of goods, ranging from painters' tools to books, photography, music instruments, antiquities and curiosities. However, because of a booming agro-export industry and a growing bourgeoisie class, the 1880s witnessed a huge influx of artworks and artistic objects from Europe that were exhibited in the shop windows of the commercial venues and in temporary exhibition spaces (Baldasarre 2006, 26-56). For instance, in March 1886, the London Fine Arts Society organized the *Exposición de arte contemporáneo de Inglaterra*, showing 150 artworks at Avenida Florida 81.[4] In 1888, a committee supported by the French Minister of Public Education, the director of the Fine Arts department, the director of the national museums, and the merchant J. Delpech, produced an ambitious exhibition of French art in the Járdin Florida (Baldasarre 2006, 46). The same year, a Spanish exhibition took place at the Cámera de Comercio Española in Buenos Aires (Fernández García 1997, 120-24). The request of Leopold II, however, preceded this wave of national exhibitions in Argentina. As the announcement in *El Diario* highlights, the idea was informed by the Belgian art exhibition, organized at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia. According to the Royal Decree, published in *Le Moniteur*, the objective of the latter was to expand and increase the Belgian art market.[5] According to North American critic Edward Strahan, Belgian Consul-General Edouard Sève created the project after seeing the commercial success of two expositions of American artists that were studying in Europe (Fig. 2). Yet, what could have been a magnificent survey of Belgian art in the United States was according to the critic a failed presentation of art *pour l'exportation*:

> His object, beyond a doubt, was commercial; to open a new conduit for the sale of Belgian pictures – a class of art market by the most terrific fecundity – would be a work worthy the best efforts of a patriotic representative. A scheme, however artistically managed, always smacks of its true motive, and the discerning eye plainly sees the fingers of a man's hand writing the fatal words, "commercial, commercial, job lots, dealers' remnants," all over the exhibition. This feature, by the bye, does not prevent many of the canvases from being admirable. But the show, taken as a whole, has that fatal dealer's wareroom look which distinguished the French, the German and the Dutch rooms in the Centennial Exhibition.[6]

The criticism published in the *New York Tribune* went even further, claiming that only a few still-lives by Mr. Hubert Bellis "show artistic feeling".[7] Belgian newspapers by contrast gave a different impression of the exhibition. According to *Le Courrier de l'Escaut* it was a great success: Belgian artists that had lost their reputation because of mediocre copies and false attributions had won back the sympathy of the

[3] S.n., "Exposición de Arte Belga", *El Diario*, November 30, 1882.

[4] Pincel, "Bellas Artes: La Escuela de Pintura Inglesa Contemporánea", *Sud-América*, March 24, 1886.

[5] The official act was republished in *L'Indépendance Belge*, January 6, 1882.

[6] Edward Strahan, "The Belgian 'Salon' at Philadelphia. I", *The Art Amateur* 6 (1882): 122.

[7] Edouard Sève responded to the *New York Tribune* article, explaining the rivalry and jealousies between the art centers in New York, Boston and Philadelphia (Sève 1882a, 10-14).

Fig. 2 – L. F. Rojas – Portrait of Eduardo Sève, cónsul general y encargado de negocios de Bélgica en Chile. Engraving published in *Correo de la Exposición* 1875-1876 (30 September 1875), 77. Copyright: Memoria Chilena.

North-American people.[8] *L'Echo du Parlement* translated fragments from American newspapers *The North American*, *The Times* and *Progress* that highlighted the triumph of the opening night and praised the selection and quality of the artworks. The exhibition was "representative in the best sense of the word", a comment that stands in sharp contrast with Strahan's text that questions whether it is at all possible to make an Belgian art exhibition without artworks by Louis Gallait, Henri Leys and Paul-Jean Clays.[9] Only on one issue all critics agreed, the project achieved its goal of commercial success, selling about forty-three artworks.

The Belgian art exhibition opened in Buenos Aires on the 5th of October 1887, five years after Leopold had approached the Argentinian government. Why it was not realized earlier is unknown. Ernest Van Bruyssel, who was the Consul-General of Argentina from 1883 until 1899, headed the project together with a commission, appointed

[8] S.n., "L'exposition des Beaux-Arts organisée à Philadelphie", *Le Courrier De L'Escaut*, July 23, 1882.

[9] S.n., "Exposition Belge de Philadelphie", *L'Echo Du Parlement*, May 28, 1882; Edward Strahan, "The Belgian 'Salon' at Philadelphia. I", *The Art Amateur* 6 (1882): 122.

by the government, that coordinated the selection and shipping process in Belgium. Based on the Royal Decree published in *Le Moniteur*, the exposition's objective was the same as the one in Philadelphia: to introduce contemporary Belgian art and expand its market.[10] Interestingly, like in Philadelphia, the result was a commercial success, that drew fierce criticism in the foreign press and praise in Belgian newspapers. The Argentinian *La Gaceta Musical* speaks of an exhibition with "artworks made *pour l'exportation*, artworks that had not found a home in Europe and had been sent to the young and inexperienced America that will pay them *dearly*, convinced that it got a *good* prize".[11] In other words, the organizers were unaware that in Argentina "pictorial art is finding its way and quality begins to be properly appreciated".[12] Critic and painter Fernando Carvalho claimed in *El Nacional* that if he had to judge Belgium's artistic development based on the exhibition, the conclusion would be that the country is "in the field of pictorial art still in its diapers".[13] Only *El Diario* was more positive. The critic that signed as 'Marcial' praised the institutions and people behind the project, highlighting the importance of organizing national exhibitions in Buenos Aires. Not everything was good. The sculptures and watercolors were insignificant. However, overall the artworks were of "good quality".[14] The article reads as a propaganda piece, masked as criticism, which it most probably was, considering that two months later, in a more reflective article, Marcial described the exhibition as "feeble" and an example of how "good taste in Buenos Aires can still get lost".[15]

In Belgium, magazines and newspapers unequivocally celebrated the exhibition. *La Meuse* echoed the official discourse, describing it as a good opportunity for painters and sculptors. The event showed Argentina the high quality of contemporary Belgian art and created new economic possibilities.[16] The *Journal de Bruxelles* focused on the magnificent opening and the commercial success. The exhibition was organized in two salons of the foyer of the prestigious Colon Theatre, lit by electric lights, and was officially inaugurated by the President of Argentina, Miguel Ángel Juárez Celman and Vice-President Carlos Pellegrini. In the first five days twenty-four artworks were sold.[17] The author of the article congratulated Ernest Van Brussel and called on other consuls to continue the expansion of Belgian art outside of Europe:

> En présence de tels résultats, de vifs éloges sont dus à M. le consul général Van Bruyssel qui a pris l'initiative de cette exposition d'accord avec MM. les ministres des affaires étrangères et des beaux-arts. Il est à espérer que dans l'intérêt de nos artistes l'exemple des exposition de Port Adelaide et de Buenos-Ayres sera suivi par nos consuls dans les principaux centres extra[-]européen[ne]s.[18]

The article brings a third exhibition into the picture: the Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition that was organized in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne and the fiftieth anniversary of the Proclamation of South Australia. The scale of the Adelaide Jubilee was distinct from the Philadelphia and Buenos Aires exhibitions since it comprised several sections in which many countries participated. Curiously, the fine arts section only had an Australian, British and Belgian "picture gallery", which means that the Belgium government had decided to take part in an exhibition that primarily displayed a colonial cultural relationship (S.n. 1887).

[10] Charles Verlat, director of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp was the president of the commission, Alex Robert Coosemans and Mr. De Groot were members and M. Van Bree, attaché at the Agricultural Department was the secretary. S.n., "Exposition de Buenos-Ayres," *La Meuse*, July 4, 1887. A similar committee managed the Philadelphia exposition. S.n., "No Title", *De Koophandel van Antwerpen*, January 17, 1882.

[11] Emphasis as in the original text. S.n., "La Exposición Belga", *La Gaceta Musical* (Buenos Aires), October 9, 1887: 2.

[12] S.n., "La Exposición Belga", *La Gaceta Musical* (Buenos Aires), October 9, 1887: 2.

[13] Fernando Carvalho, "La Exposición Belga", *El Nacional*, October 13, 1887.

[14] Marcial, "Concurso Artístico. Croquis I", *El Diario*, October 5, 1887; Marcial, "Concurso Artístico. Croquis II," *El Diario*, October 6, 1887; Marcial, "Concurso Artístico. Croquis III", *El Diario*, October 7, 1887.

[15] S.n., "El Arte En Buenos Aires", *El Diario*, December 11, 1887.

[16] S.n., "Exposition Des Beaux-Arts à Buenos-Ayres", *La Meuse*, June 20, 1887.

[17] The newspaper mentions the following sales: *Le portrait of S.S. le Pape* by Alexandre Thomas (bought by the Argentinian President as a present for the archbishop of Buenos Aires), *En temps de paix* by Rosiers (bought by M. Pellegrini, Vice-President), *Vue de Spa* by Van Luppen (bought by Dr. Quintina, former President of the Chamber of Deputies, Rector of the University), *L'hiver* by Comeyn (bought by Christophersen, Representative of the *Compagnie de Chargeurs Réunis de Havre*), *Petite mère* and *Réprimande* by Comeyn, *Le printemps* by Mlle Triest, *Après la parade* by Vanden Eycken, *Fleur de thé* by Mlle Emma de Vigne (bought by banker Lisandro Bellinghunst), *Manola au balcon* and *Moine lisant* by Robert (bought by Cramwell, President of the Municipal Council of Buenos Aires), *Vue*

The economic motivation behind Belgium's participation in the exhibition in Port Adelaide is obvious from the discourse. As one anonymous Australian critic remarked:

> The King of the Belgians is well known for the keen interest which he takes in all that affects the commercial development of his country. Especially is he interested in its foreign trade, and it is therefore not surprising to find that a number of valuable and representative exhibits are on view in the Belgian court whose existence is largely due to his energy.[19]

Belgium and Australia already had strong economic ties: "The trade between Belgium and South Australia and her Northern Territory is already very extensive, being second only to that with Great Britain, and it is in the desire of Leopold II to do everything which may encourage it," including investing in the fine arts exhibition.[20] Multiple articles highlighted the efforts made by Leopold II. He personally lent out his own full-length portrait and that of King Leopold I, assured the presence of busts depicting the King and Queen, and "gave other aid in connection with the Belgian gallery".[21] In this way, the King ensured that the fine arts section demonstrated Belgium's political power and highlighted the political lineage between Belgium, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and South Australia, which was even stronger – as most critics pointed out – by the fact that Leopold I was the uncle of Queen Victoria.

In the present state of the investigation, it is impossible to reconstruct the Buenos Aires exhibition since the catalog is lost. From the press reviews one can infer that it presented a mixture of (studies of) history paintings, genre paintings, portraits and landscapes by salon artists and museum directors, such as Francois Bossuet, Emile Claus, Jacques Carabain, Edgar Farasyn, Léon Herbo, Joseph Stallaert, Charles Verlat and Emile Wauters. There is no mention of royal or explicit political imagery as in the Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition.[22] The same holds true for the Philadelphia exposition. The catalogue lists artworks representing Belgian landscapes and vernacular culture, still lives, portraits, medieval scenes and orientalist subjects (De Winter et al. 1882). However, the involvement of Leopold II that connects the expositions raises questions about the political motivations, besides the economic expansion of the Belgian art market and the "correction" of how contemporary Belgian art was perceived. In other words, were the projects only artistically commercial or was there a hidden agenda?

Politics at play: art, commerce and colonization

The Philadelphia exhibition was framed by a series of five lectures that portrayed (the history of) Belgium from different angles. The first focused on political institutions, the second on public education, the third on science, the fourth on the

à Pailhe by Van Luppen (bought by M. Tornhuis of the Provincial Bank), *Scène campinoise* by Van Leemputten (bought by M. Harning, General-Consul of Argentina in Belgium). The exhibition's committee bought *La châtelaine* by Herbo for the tombola. Other sales of which the buyers remain unknown are: *Rue à Mont-Rose (Italie)* by Carabin, *Paysanne flamande* by Claus, *Retour du troupeau* by De Beul, *Portrait de Rubens* by Dans, *Clara la rousse* by Degeeter, *Les pecheurs en priere* by Aloïs Boudry, *Lecon de dessin* and *Printemps de la vie* by Farasyn, *Coin de lagune* by Rul, *Repos du modèle* by Keirsbeelk, *Chemin des bouleaux* by Auten, *La Marocaine* by Mellery and a work by Mme Ronner. S.n., "Nos Artistes à Buenos-Ayres", *Journal De Bruxelles*, November 13, 1887.

[18] S.n., "Nos Artistes à Buenos-Ayres", *Journal De Bruxelles*, November 13, 1887.

[19] S.n., "The Jubilee Exhibition. The Belgian Court," *The South Australian Advertiser*, June 30, 1887.

[20] Ibid.

[21] S.n., "The Jubilee Exhibition", *The South Australian Register*, June 20, 1887; S.n., "The Adelaide Jubilee Exhibition. The Art Galleries", *The South Australian Advertiser*, June 21, 1887; S.n, "Nos Artistes à Buenos-Ayres et a Port Adelaide", *Journal De Bruxelles*, October 25, 1887.

[22] For a selection of the artists, represented at the Buenos Aires exhibition see note 18.

fine arts and the fifth on the economic situation. Interestingly, the publication that reproduced the fine arts lecture and summarized the other talks framed the exhibition differently than the press did. The over-all message of the speakers was that "[t] he future [of Belgium] was safe and bright" (Sève 1882a, 6). In every respect, the country was moving forward, making progress. Belgium appeared as a model to be followed. Edouard Sève also highlighted the nation's superiority over the United States of America: "At the end of prof. Van Daeli's lecture [on public education], I expressed the hope that one day the United States would also come and learn something in Belgium upon the question of public instruction and teaching" (Sève 1882b, 7). About the fine arts, he wrote: "To speak of the fine arts is to speak of the progress of mankind, of works of genius, of the good, the true, the beautiful; of everything that polishes, purifies and sweetens the manners of nations" (Sève 1882b, 7). In the context of the United States, where the fine arts were still in their incipient phase, this type of discourse subtly reinforced the hegemonic relationship and the importance of international exchange. This motif becomes explicit when Sève quoted the commentaries made by French artist Frédéric Auguste Bartholi at the International Exhibition of Philadelphia in 1876:

> The Centennial Exhibition [...] has been glorious for the Americans, in showing all they have been able to produce so rapidly. They have the natural ambition to shift for themselves, and they will certainly succeed. It is a warning to the manufacturers of the old world. Fortunately, each people keeps as his own some leading qualities in certain products, hence there will always be a need for international exchange. The United States succeeding in making almost everything at home, can see also that if they do not wish to remain stationary in works in which taste is the principle feature, *they must open their doors wider than they do now to foreign countries,* if not, by using only their own products, a few manufacturers would be the only ones to benefit themselves; the entire nation being no longer stirred by the sight of possession of better, would forcibly cease to develop itself. *When the United States will reduce their custom duties to a moderate tariff, the consumers of the country will gain by it* (Sève 1882b, 8-9).[23]

The phrasing here makes it very clear that the objective of the Philadelphia exhibition of 1882 was not merely to show the development of Belgian art and expand its markets, but also to promote the nation and negotiate the economic relationship with the United States of America. It raised a matter that had already been addressed during the Centennial Celebrations but that had not been changed drastically. Moreover, as Sève's discourse shows, the fine arts were the perfect instrument to demand more "openness" because they reveal the difference in "civilization" between both countries. "The exhibition," according to the consul, would "cause serious progress to be made in the Fine Arts in the United States" (Sève 1882b, 9). It would put an end once and for all to the idea of inferiority of Belgian contemporary art and inspire local artistic development. Belgian art would conquer its place in American museums and collections. He suggested that other (European) countries

[23] Italics added.

should follow the example so "the Americans will be enabled to study successively […] all foreign schools" (Sève 1882b, 9).

Thus, we see how the exhibition was the start of a cultural colonization and the demonstration of a hegemonic relationship, with the underlying motivation to negotiate the economic exchanges between both countries. Tellingly, Edouard Sève was the founder of the American-Belgium Chamber of Commerce, an institute that was responsible for much of the commercial activity between the ports of the United States of American and Antwerp. The Chamber was also the main sponsor of the project.[24] Most texts portray Sève as a *libre-échangiste*, who is convinced that "the principle cause of our [Belgium's] prosperity lies in the enjoyment of an almost complete political and commercial liberty".[25] His brief history of Belgian art published in 1894 in the *British Journal of the Society of Arts*, was a plea for deregulated commerce and trade. The consul again used the arts as an alibi to promote a liberal Belgium. Sève, who was a consul in Chile, the United States of America, Spain and the United Kingdom, dedicated most of his career to this issue.[26] For instance, in Philadelphia, he participated in the debate on import taxes on foreign artworks. He managed to receive special treatment for the importation of the Belgian artworks. The critic Strahan wrote:

> A capital idea has been inaugurated, to combine the privileges of a museum and of a possible salesroom; the Academy has been constituted a bonded warehouse for the reception of these canvases. The bulk of pictures therefore pay no duty, the customs being collected only from such as are sold.[27]

Yet, for Sève exceptions were not enough. Custom duties were responsible for the nation's artistic poverty and had to end. His battle and that of many others was, however, in vain. The Tariff Act of 1883 raised the taxes for all objects, except for the works of American artists that remained on the free list (Barber 1999, 215-22).

In Buenos Aires of the 1880s, art taxes were part of the public debate on the lack of official infrastructure, institutions and support. In 1883, Eduardo Schiaffino, a critic, artist and pioneer in the institutionalization of art in Argentina, famously demanded the government to take up its responsibility and support the incipient art scene. He wanted the State to commission national artists for the construction of monuments, the decoration of public buildings, the representation of historical events and meritorious persons, and to reduce or eliminate the import taxes on artworks. In addition, he asked for a national public gallery and official protection to national artists and foreign artists who were based in Buenos Aires.[28] Schiaffino, together with many other artists and critics, argued for a European model that would bridge the distance with the "Old Continent" by facilitating cultural traffic. The Belgian art exhibition, like any other foreign exhibition in this period, was used to continue the debate. In his scathing review, Fernando Carvalho wondered whether "it would be necessary to say something about the artworks' prices?" In his view, the quality of the artworks was mediocre to bad, but the importation tax of forty-eight percent "explains and justifies everything".[29]

[24] A.M., "Les Chambres de Commerce à l'Étranger", *La Revue Diplomatique et Le Moniteur Des Consulats* 13, no. 9 (February 1891): 6; and Barber 1999, 215-16.

[25] S.n., "Nécrologie. Mort de M. Édouard Sève", *La Flandre Libérale*, February 12, 1912; A.M., "Les Chambres de Commerce à l'Étranger", *La Revue Diplomatique et Le Moniteur Des Consulats* 13, no. 9 (February 1891): 6; and Barber 1999, 215-16.

[26] Edouard Sève, "The Arts and Industries of Belgium and the Antwerp Exhibition, 1894", *The Journal of the Society of Arts* 42, no. 2 (1894): 283-98.

[27] Edward Strahan, "The Belgian Salon at Philadelphia. Conclusion", *The Art Amateur* 1 (1882): 4.

[28] Schiaffino formulated these demands under the pseudonym Zigzag in the essay *Apuntes sobre el arte en Buenos Aires. Falta de protección para su desenvolvimiento* that appeared in El Diario in the course of September 1883. The complete essay can be found in his unpublished notebook, preserved at the Archivo General de la Nación, Folder Schiaffino. Zigzag, "Apuntes Sobre El Arte En Buenos Aires. Falta de Protección Para Su Desenvolvimiento", in *E.J.S. Traducciones y Artículos, Buenos Aires 83-84 (Unpublished Notebook)*, ed. Eduardo Schiaffino (Buenos Aires, n.d.), 42-60.

[29] Fernando Carvalho, "La Exposición Belga", *El Nacional*, October 13, 1887.

There is considerably less information available about the exposition in Buenos Aires than about the one in Philadelphia, which makes it difficult to identify the exact political motivations that had informed and shaped the project. However, here it is important to look at the context. What is clear is that Leopold II's request to organize the exhibition in Argentina came at an important moment. From 1880 onwards, Belgian emigration to Argentina substantially increased. The year 1881 signaled the start of the colonization project by Eugène Schepens, a physicist from Welden. The agricultural community in Villaguay, Entre Rios – that was called "a colony" – would become a model to promote emigration to Argentina in Belgium. Other private colonization initiatives followed, and in 1888 and 1889 the migration stream peaked (Stols 1998, 15; Vloeberghs 2016, 6-8). The Belgian migration was part of an international migration: between 1880 and 1914 more than 4 200 000 persons arrived in Buenos Aires, the majority of which came from Europe, more specifically Italy, Spain, France, Germany and England. The agrarian export boom and the strong industrial growth had turned the country into one of the wealthiest of the world (Devoto 2009, 13-16, 247-48).

Argentinian migration became a political issue in Europe, including in Belgium where the failed colonization of Santo Tomás in Guatemala – Belgium's first official colony by Royal Decree (1841-1856) – was still fresh in the memory of many. As a result, the government neither supported nor advised against the colonization projects, adopting a non-interventionist position until the scale of the Argentinian migration forced the government to act. But even then, it diplomatically took small measures, such as regulating the migration transportation, and establishing a network of information offices that had to prevent people from crossing the ocean uninformed or misinformed (Vloeberghs 2016, 11-13; Ansiaux 2006, 150). At the same time, ideas to colonize foreign territories or set up small agricultural communities overseas were very much alive amongst Belgian investors, entrepreneurs, politicians, diplomats and members of the Royal family.[30]

Both Leopold I and Leopold II inquired into the possibilities of establishing a Belgian community in the fertile land of the pampas (Ansiaux 2006, 3; Vandersmissen 2009, 358). Charles-François d'Hane-Steenhuyse, before becoming a politician, headed an expedition in the region as early as the 1850s. A firm believer of the economic potential of colonization and emigration, he published the pamphlet *Société de Colonisation et de Commerce belges. Etablissements à former sur les rives de la Plata, du Parana, de l'Uruguay ou du Rio Salado*. He could count on the support of the Belgian King but his ideas were too radical for the government, and were never realized (Vandersmissen 2009, 194-97). Ernest van Bruyssel, the consul behind the Belgian art exposition of 1887, was part of this group of fervent advocates of colonization of, and emigration to, Argentina. He was a historian and paleographer, who in 1862, because of his work on the Belgium's history of international commerce, became the assistant of Alexis Brialmont, head of Leopold II's documentation network known as "the Arsenal". The network focused on gathering information and creating discourse about international political and economic

[30] As scholar Robert R. Ansiaux remarks, the law of 1856 that forbade the government from intervening in migration did not prevent Leopold I or anyone else to pursue imperialist adventures (Ansiaux 2006, 150).

relationships and colonization, and was an essential tool in the development of the King's colonial doctrine (Vandersmissen 2009, 380-88). In 1868, Leopold II promoted Van Bruyssel to consul in Washington. His diplomatic career brought him from 1884 until 1899 to Buenos Aires, where he was the Belgian consul for Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay.[31] In 1886, the government ordered him to write a report about the social, economic and political conditions of Argentina. The document that was published two years later shows his opinion about emigration and private colonization projects:

Si l'on veut éviter, en Belgique, une période de crise commerciale et industrielle déjà commencée, et qui deviendra de jour en jour plus intense, on doit s'attacher à en faire disparaitre les causes. L'émigration, avec sa puissance expansive; l'extension de nos relations actuelles vers les contrées d'outre-mer, contribueront à les neutraliser. […] Nous avons voulu y prendre part, et nous offrons aujourd'hui à nos compatriotes les renseignements qu'un long séjour dans la République Argentine nous a permis de recueillir sur ce pays, concernant les avantages qu'il présente aux émigrants européens. Ses marches commerciaux sont déjà connus, car la Belgique fait avec l'État argentin, chaque année, pour plus de 100 millions de francs d'échanges. Nous souhaitons vivement les succès qu'elle y a obtenus donnent plus de poids à nos remarques précédentes sur l'utilité des expéditions lointaines, en faisant mieux comprendre les bénéfices qu'on retire, et la possibilité de les réaliser (Van Bruyssel 1888, 32-33).

Consequently, Van Bruyssel committed to expanding and maintaining the Belgian community in Argentina. He wrote several publications that, as a critic remarked, could serve as a guide for anyone who wanted to migrate to the region.[32] He co-founded a Belgian association in Argentina that "help[ed] newcomers to overcome the difficulties of a new language, customs and habits" and that functioned as "a sort of scholarship to find work". It solved an issue that was considered a barrier for many volunteers to migrate: it brought the immigrants in contact with owners of colonies, industrialists and "anyone in need of manpower".[33] Together with his wife, the French writer Jeanne de Tallenay, he also supported several philanthropic initiatives, organized for and by the Belgian residents. In a banquet in his honor, a spokesman of the "elite of the Buenos Aires Belgian colony" praised him for his patriotism: He was "the excellent patriot that took as a motto: 'I am Belgian and I am foreign to what is not Belgian'". In addition, the text highlighted his efforts to create "union or cohesion in our [Belgians residing in Argentina] patriotism."[34]

The fragmented sources about Van Bruyssel's stay in Argentina portray him as a vital figure in the "Belgian colony" that was growing exponentially and posed many problems at the time. He understood that for the colonization/ emigration project to succeed, it was important to create a community. All his efforts reinforce the hypothesis that the exposition was not only an economic venture, it was also a patriotic deed that had to strengthen the cultural fabric of the "Belgian colony". It was a way to make Belgium visible in the Argentinian capital, like

[31] Folder "Ernest van Bruyssel", Diplomatic Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belgium.

[32] H.C., "La République Argentine", *L'Indépendance Belge*, January 2, 1887.

[33] S.n., "Les Belges Dans La République Argentine", *Gazette De Charleroi*, March 30, 1889.

[34] S.n., "Un Banquet", *Le Courrier De La Plata*, June 28, 1892. Unfortunately, the text does not detail which were the philanthropic initiatives that he and his wife supported.

the British, French and Spanish exhibitions had done. Through art, Van Bruyssel wanted to generate a positive image of his home country in Argentina. Interestingly, he only partially succeeded: the sales were good but the criticism was severe. He did produce a positive image about migration and cultural exchange in Belgium. As mentioned above, in 1887, migration to Argentina was a dominant issue. The press elaborately informed the public about colonization projects and emigration, reporting good and bad experiences.[35] Van Bruyssel's work, like that of other writers, travelers, businessmen and politicians, was often subject to fierce criticism. It was considered biased, promoting an uncertain future that in reality frequently involved exploitation or failure.[36] Viewed in the context of the migration discourse in the Belgian press, the positive commercial outcome of the first Belgian art exposition in South America confirmed the idea of Argentina's wealth and demonstrated the country's openness to Belgian art and culture. The artworks could not end up in museums – as in Philadelphia – because of the lack of institutions. However, the official support was obvious from the list of buyers that was published in the press and that included the president, the vice-president and the president of the Municipal Council of Buenos Aires.[37] Van Bruyssel achieved something similar when he organized a benefit concert in Buenos Aires with the Choral Association for the victims of the mine catastrophe in Anderlues, a village in the South of Belgium.[38] Just like the exhibition, the charitable act showed how the Belgian presence in Argentina could contribute to the development of the home country.

Concluding remarks

The discourse produced by the exhibitions shows artworks and exhibitions as instruments of civilization, used with certain objectives and from a particular perspective that was centered on Belgium. The tensions generated by the hegemonic relationship are reflected in the criticism and discordant reception. The expositions testified to the unequal relationship by incorporating a large quantity of "mediocre artworks" that were sold for high prices. Both in Philadelphia and Buenos Aires, critics reacted to the arrogance of the exhibition makers. In the US, they even raised the question whether it was necessary to show Belgian art at all, considering the superiority of French art. Some liked to see more American artists on display.[39] However, this critique was not transmitted at home by the Belgian press, and it was marginalized by the booming industry of international expositions and world fairs. The expositions were part of an international movement that was expansive. In both countries, other (types of) Belgian art exhibitions followed. Organized inside and outside of the framework of international group expositions, they continued the cultural diplomacy, implicitly endorsing Leopold II's colonial project. For instance, in 1905, the year of Belgium's 75th anniversary of

[35] One of the colonization projects of that year was called *Nueva Flandres* and had the objective to create an agricultural community of 125 families on Península Valdés. Florimond Van Varenbergh was in charge of the colonization. S.n., "Colonisation Belge", *Courrier de l'Escaut*, September 23, 1887; S.n., "Colonisation Belge", *Journal De Bruxelles*, September 22, 1887. One of the many informative notes about emigration: S.n., "Émigration", *Gazette De Charleroi*, September 10, 1887.

[36] A critic from *Le Soir* considered Van Bruyssel's publication about Argentina a propaganda brochure that did not mention anything about the slave-like conditions of migrants in the country. D.A., "La Traite Des Blancs", *Le Soir*, July 24, 1889. A lecture by the traveller M. Peterken about Argentina had "the nature of advertisement for emigration" although it was based on official figures and facts. The critic advised everyone to pass by the Argentinian consulate that provides free information. S.n., "Société Des Conférences de l'Ecole Industrielle", *Gazette De Charlerois*, October 31, 1887. See also: Vloeberghs 2016.

[37] See note 18.

[38] Van Bruyssel was involved in the foundation of the *Société Chorale Belge*. S.n., "Dans Une Lettre", *Le Soir*, June 5, 1892.

[39] S.n., "Belgian Art", *The Critic*, no. 34 (1882): 120; S.n., "A Riduculous and Disgraceful Quarrel", *Quiz, a Weekly Journal of Society, Literature and Art*, no. 36 (1882): 3-4.

Independence, the Belgian colony in Buenos Aires ordered a bronze medal from the artist engraver Paul Fisch that shows on the front side the effigies of Leopold I and Leopold II with the inscription "75ième Anniversaire de l'Independence de la Bélgique 1830-1905". The back displays a lion standing upright surrounded by the inscription "Colonie Belge de Buenos-Ayres, Septembre 1905" (Laloire 1907, 49-50) (Figs. 3 and 4). The medals that were distributed among the participants of the celebrations and the local authorities of Buenos Aires expressed the patriotic sense of community that reigned in the port capital of South America and that five years later would be staged again for a world audience at the International Centennial Celebrations of Argentina.[40]

The paradox of a country promoting its superiority through artworks that were considered "mediocre" by art critics inevitably raises questions about the artistic quality of the exhibitions. The artworks on display were not the ones that had received awards at European salons and/or were already known in the United States or Argentina through the circulation of magazines and newspapers. Several critics explicitly wondered who were the artists on display? The magazine *The Critic* argued that at the Philadelphia exhibition "[s]o few of the names are known that it is not worth while retailing them at any length".[41] Edward Strahan

Figs. 3 and 4 – Paul Fisch – Leopold II and the Colonie Belge de Buenos-Ayres, 1905. Medallion, front and back. Copyright: Royal Library of Belgium, KBR.

[40] I am currently preparing a paper on the Belgian participation at the Centennial Celebrations of Argentina in 1910.

[41] S.n., "Belgian Art", *The Critic* 34 (1882): 120

[42] Edward Strahan, "The Belgian Salon at Philadelphia. Conclusion", *The Art Amateur* 6 (1882): 6

from *The Art Amateur* looked forward to another kind of Belgian exhibition "without any panel paintings of little stuffed birds and with the signatures of those artists who have been heard of in the world at large".[42] The lack in quality was associated with the absence of "Masters" such as Lawrence Alma Tadema, Henri Leys, Louis Gallait or Alfred Stevens. At the same time, the exhibition boosted the popularity of some Belgian artists, such as Evariste Carpentier. *The Critic* considered his painting *Les Réfugiés* (1880), that represents an episode from the French War in the Vendée, as good as a work by Meissonier. He (or she) added that "[a] country that boasts an artist so good need not to be ashamed of a large body of second and third-rate painters".[43] The work was, however, one of the few that came with credentials. It had been shown at the Paris Salon of 1880 and had received positive criticism in the French press. The newspaper *La Presse* described it as "un grand drame dans un petit cadre", which indirectly points out another characteristic of the Philadelphia and Buenos Aires exhibitions: the dominance of artworks of smaller size.[44]

In order to fully grasp the artistic meaning of the exhibitions, a more elaborate study would be necessary. Additional archive research might yield further insights into the selection of artworks and a more thorough analysis of the works would

[43] S.n., "Belgian Art", *The Critic* 34 (1882): 120.

[44] S.n., "Le Salon de 1880", *La Presse*, June 1, 1880: 2.

allow us to specify the notion of "mediocrity" in and outside the context of the exhibitions. The present paper viewed the exhibitions through the lens of cultural diplomacy, in order to reveal the underlying political and commercial motives. These elements must also be taken into account by a global art history that seeks to understand how cultural exchange not only occurred in great networks but also through seemingly minor events and mediocre artworks that did have an effect on the status of artists and artworks, as well as the artistic scenes and discourse at home and abroad, by building networks.

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Abstract

The *Mostra della Pittura Italiana del Seicento e Settecento* held in 1922 at the then Pitti Royal Palace (Florence) was the first in a series of exhibitions defining an art historical chronology, schools and the hierarchies of Baroque art, most of which are still valid to date. This exhibition was also the first to showcase a re-discovered Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571-1610) then presented akin to a revelation. The exhibition undoubtedly dealt with new readings of art history at face value but was also motivated by explicitly political overtones informed by the politics and international ambitions of the Kingdom of Italy.
This paper explores the duality of the exhibitions' complex narrative bridging politics and art history. It also reviews the genesis of 20th century Caravaggio studies and the ways and means how this was acknowledged within the Anglo-Saxon world of academia over time. ●

keywords

CARAVAGGIO
SEICENTO
BAROQUE
ART HISTORY
POLITICS

Resumo

A *Mostra della Pittura Italiana del Seicento e Settecento*, realizada em 1922 no Palácio Pitti (Florença), à época residência oficial real, foi a primeira de uma série de exposições que definiram a cronologia artística, as escolas e as hierarquias da arte barroca, e que, na sua maioria, permanecem válidas até hoje. Esta exposição também foi a primeira a redescobrir a obra de Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571-1610), então apresentada como uma revelação. Se a exposição ofereceu, sem dúvida, novas leituras para a história da arte, ela foi também motivada por razões explicitamente relacionadas com a política e com as ambições internacionais do Reino da Itália.
Este artigo explora assim a ambivalente e complexa narrativa das exposições dedicadas ao barroco italiano, e o modo como elas articulam política e história da arte. Analisa-se igualmente a génese dos estudos de Caravaggio no século XX e de que forma eles foram sendo reconhecidos pela academia anglo-saxónica ao longo do tempo. ●

palavras-chave

CARAVAGGIO
SEICENTO
BARROCO
HISTÓRIA DA ARTE
POLÍTICA

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"*L'IMMENSO SEICENTO*". THE 1922 FLORENCE EXHIBITION OF ITALIAN *SEICENTO* ART AND THE POLITICS OF CARAVAGGIO STUDIES

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The triumph of Baroque art celebrated in art historical studies, exhibitions and publications from the beginning of the twentieth century is perhaps best described in a statement by Italian artist Primo Conti (1900-1988), quoted in the first edition of the journal *Il Centone*, which was published in 1919. Conti uncompromisingly describes the period as *"grande e divino … immenso seicento"*, broadly translated as "the immensely dominant and spiritual seventeenth century" (Mannini et al. 2010, 27). Conti's contemplative statements are nothing short of euphoric as he succumbs to being willingly intoxicated by the beauty of the art of the period showcased in various museums, including the Pitti and Uffizi in Florence.

Three years later, Florence hosted the *Mostra della Pittura Italiana del Seicento e Settecento*, which in English reads as 'Exhibition of Italian Seventeenth – and Eighteenth-Century Painting', at the then Pitti Royal Palace. This was the first ever exhibition, in a series, to define an art historical chronology for the Italian Baroque, including schools and most of the hierarchies defining master and follower that remain valid to this day. Indeed, the project rethought what had until then been perceived to be a decadent period, instead viewing it as the logical, heroic conclusion or apogee of the Renaissance. In the course of the revised narrative which the exhibition sought to propose, Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571-1610) was repositioned as the gateway or introductory linchpin in this now immensely significant period, and his stature reassessed in terms of a colossal revelation. Indeed, we may safely assert that the relevance and significance we attribute to Caravaggio today was set and subsequently consolidated from this point in time.

This paper explores the impact of this major exhibition on art history studies from the immediate to the long term. It also explores the various strands of intent, particularly political, which inform the *raison d'être* of this project and the impact of the proposed narrative for *seicento* art on the immediate reception, understanding and rediscovery of Baroque art. Last but not least, this paper reviews the significance of Caravaggio as he was seen at that time, the political undercurrents related to this

emphatically renewed significance, and the ways and means by which Caravaggio studies connect with and relate to this major exhibition.

The project

The *Mostra della Pittura Italiana del Seicento e Settecento* was the first in a series of exhibitions to define a general chronology for Italian Baroque art, otherwise described as *seicento* art. The main scope and objective was to validate the period's relevance and significance in terms of key works by the masters of the period which the exhibition sought to identify for each regional school (Antico 2010, 57). This narrative was articulated thanks to a curated choice of more than a thousand paintings from public and private collections, and with a very broad provenance. Indeed, the selection of works on display was anything but restricted to works in Italy, and included loans from French, German, English and Austrian collections chosen by an international pool of curators and experts purposely convened or handpicked by the organising committee. The exhibition catalogue provides a broad overview of the exhibition layout and the selection of works proposed within each section. The catalogue lists works by artists featured in the exhibition in alphabetical order, with some having a handful of paintings on display. Others would be represented by only one painting, suggesting that the intention was not to hint at a chronology for each artist but to home in on a wireframe hierarchy for each of the different regional schools. The exhibition was laid out across almost fifty halls, and photos of the project suggest that there was no interest in scenography to accompany the hang. The exhibition promoted lesser-known seventeenth century artists, listed as masters, school of and followers, including Giovanni Battista Ruoppolo (1629-1693), Salvator Rosa (1615-1673) and Mattia Preti (1613-1699), amongst others (Mannini 2010, 28).

The concluding report presented by art historian and art critic Ugo Ojetti (1871-1946), the then president of the executive committee of the exhibition, provides insight into the motivations and objectives guiding this project. A superficial reading of the exhibition project based solely on the exhibition catalogue, reviews and photographic documentation may suggest an overtly art historical purpose behind the re-evaluation of Baroque art, which had previously been considered to be the decadent sequel to the Renaissance. This was, indeed, one of the objectives spelt out by Ojetti, although this was to be expected. There was more to this exhibition project, which goes beyond art history. Ojetti has no qualms in confirming that the exhibition was set up to commemorate Italy's victory over Austria during World War I and adds that this was done with the specific objective of bolstering patriotism and sustaining national pride (Amico 2010, 57-58). Such an uncompromisingly nationalistic objective would have bolstered efforts at re-asserting the supremacy of the Italian schools, now brought together under the remit of the Kingdom of Italy, which had been established a few decades before, in 1861, and their standing as a reference point for European schools, including

the French (connected to Rome), and the Spanish and the Flemish (both inspired by Venice). Indeed, Ojetti claims that the key works of the seventeenth-century European schools had relegated to oblivion their corresponding Italian sources, to which they were clearly indebted. The exhibition would thus reinstate them as the source and inspiration of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European schools (Ojetti in Tamassia 2005, 31-35). Such specifically nationalistic efforts would have also, by consequence, informed a very specific art historical narrative and visual arts practice. The report also underpins a pressing need to expose Italian contemporary artists to acknowledged sources, and the exhibition was officially recognised for its appropriateness as one such source of inspiration (Mannini 2010, 28). Indeed, Ojetti urged Italian artists not to feel intimidated by the challenge seemingly posed by international art movements, and some did indeed take up *seicento* artworks and artists as their inspirational leitmotif. Primo Conti was one of these (Anna Mazzanti et al. 2010, 136 and 168).

Caravaggism: reborn or reinstated?

The linchpin artist of the exhibition can, perhaps, be considered to be Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571-1610), who is described as the project's rediscovery and the revelation of a new art world (Moschini 1922, 149-152). The exhibition featured twenty out of the then thirty-five works securely attributed to Caravaggio and purposely selected for this exhibition by art historian Roberto Longhi (1890-1970), acknowledged by one and all as the scholar to have rediscovered Caravaggio (Tarchiani 1922, 738-762). This focused selection promoted a formalist reading of the artist's repertoire rather than underpinning Caravaggio's realism, which historian Lionello Venturi (1885-1961) actively advocated, or the artist's classicism, which art historian and critic Matteo Marangoni (1876-1958) sought to prove. Indeed, Longhi believed that the work of art had to be considered in its purest form, independent of subject matter, and connections with the Impressionists, including Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), Gustave Courbet (1819-1877) and Edouard Manet (1832-1883) were actively suggested (Mannini 2010, 28, 31). History was of no interest to Longhi and certainly disconnected from his formalist reading of the artwork. Longhi's formalist assessment of Caravaggio's work also includes comparisons with Cézanne, which had previously been proposed in 1913. Both artists are described as *trasfiguratori di materia,* which broadly translates as "alchemical transformers of pictorial matter" (Mannini 2010, 30). Similar juxtapositions of seventeenth-century artists and Impressionist painters were proposed by other scholars, too. Lionello Venturi juxtaposes Valentin de Boulogne's *Cardsharps* (currently at the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden), then attributed to the school of Caravaggio, with Cézanne's *The Card Players* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) in *Il Gusto dei Primitivi* (Zanichelli Bologna, 1926). This formalist reading of Caravaggio prevailed in the appraisal of the artist's work, albeit in sharp contrast to the politico-nationalistic

Figs. 1-4 – Some views of the *Mostra dell'arte Italiana del seicento e settecento* at Palazzo Pitti, Florence, 1922.

narrative which co-exists comfortably with the art-historical counter-perspective, and which the exhibition sought to articulate. Ojetti rightly claims that Caravaggio was unanimously chosen by the exhibition's scientific committee because of his radically innovative style (Ojetti, 1922, in Tamassia 2005, 31). There is also a veiled comment aimed at the supremacy of Italian schools in Ojetti's claims that Rembrandt was metaphorically born in the arms of this giant. Ojetti thus acknowledged Caravaggio as the supreme artist from which seventeenth-century European art, including the established masters defining its canon, symbolically originates. This major rethinking of Caravaggio's art contrasts sharply with his standing in art historiography and the generally lukewarm perceptions of his art, until that point in time. The artist's repertoire had lost its lure by the mid-seventeenth century, and was possibly also mired in the controversy raised by patrons and peers, mostly relating to his iconographical interpretations (Terzaghi 2008, 32-54). Caravaggio's art is described by Abate Luigi Lanzi in his *Storia Pittorica dell'Italia*, published in 1795, as mundane, particularly in his choice of subject matter, including objects and scenography. This denigratory approach to the artist resurfaces again in John

Charles Van Dyke's *A Text-Book of the History of Painting*, published in 1909. Van Dyke titles his chapter "The Decadence and Modern Work," and his comments are in line with those of Lanzi published a century before:

> Caravaggio thought to represent sacred scenes more truthfully by taking his models from the harsh street life about him and giving types of saints and apostles from Neapolitan brawlers and bandits. It was a brutal, coarse representation, rather fierce in mood and impetuous in action, yet not without a good deal of tragic power. His subjects were rather dismal or morose, but there was knowledge in the drawing of them, some good colour and brush-work and a peculiar darkness of shadow masses (originally gained from Giorgione), that stood as an ear-mark of his whole school." (Van Dyke 1909, 128)

Incidentally, Van Dyke's book was published concurrently with Roberto Longhi's earliest studies on Caravaggio.

The clash of art historical narratives

Ojetti's comments in the exhibition catalogue might be appropriately read within the context of established art historical narratives, particularly British, to which the revised significance of Caravaggio would be an alternative narrative. Almost contemporary to the 1922 *Mostra dell' Arte Italiana del Seicento e Settecento*, British theorist, artist and art critic Roger Fry (1866-1934) sought to challenge Caravaggio's reassessed referential status within the Italian *seicento* tradition. Fry's essay "Settecentismo", published in the *Burlington Magazine,* can be rightly described as an anti-thesis grounded within the then-established Anglophile narrative (Fry 1922, 158). Fry's point of departure is aesthetic formalism, which leads him to reject enthusiasm for research into the art of the seventeenth century when still "devoted to elucidating the tangled history of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries." Fry disowns Caravaggio's art, describing it as the product of "essentially journalistic talent" akin to cinema, and acknowledges the artist's untapped potential in comparison to what he painted. He also disowns Caravaggio's significance as a watershed and claims that not "...all Italy went a-whoring after the new idol... among those who were infected by the malady there were many cases of recovery" (Ibid., 163). Indeed, Fry would have still recognised Italian sixteenth-century art as the period worthy of reference and which "holds the supremacy and calls the tune for the sixteenth century," yet "in the seventeenth century Flanders carries on the more fertile and central doctrine." (Fry 1927a, 59). Fry acknowledged the seventeenth century as "one of the most prodigious events in the history of European art", with Peter Paul Rubens as "the only one to uphold and carry on its spirit when Italy herself had lost the clue" (Fry 1927b, 138).

There is, indeed, a streak of politics in Fry's counter arguments. First of all, he unquestionably points the finger at the perpetrators of these narratives, whom he describes

as "young Italian writers", which lead "to the formation of a creed and a dogma (…) opposed to the critical spirit." This, he claims, was true to the nature of Italian identity, frequently marked by a restless style, which he attributes to ethnicity and politics. He claims that "The strange thing is that the aspect of the Italian character which creates Futurism and Fascism should have taken so long to find its expression in art. For, up to the seventeenth century it is hard to find any trace of it" (Fry 1922, 158).

Fry's reading of Caravaggio's style is comparable to his reading of Futurism, particularly his "turbulence and impatience", and his appeal "to the love of violent sensations and uncontrolled passions… Like them he mocked at tradition. Like them he was fundamentally conventional and journalistic" (Fry 1922, 163).

Fry's reaction might have a context in the general reading of art history from a British perspective. It is worth noting that the artistic production of post-Renaissance Italy had been questioned earlier on by some scholars, including Bernard Berenson who comments in his concluding statements to his 1907 essay on Northern Italian painting – "although in the last three and a half centuries [Italy] has brought forth thousands of clever and even delightful painters, she has failed to produce a single great artist" (Samuels et al. 1987, 47).

This divergence in art historical narratives goes beyond the rethinking of Baroque art promoted by Italian art historians to include the Renaissance itself. The 1930 exhibition of Italian art at Burlington House, London, entitled *Italian Art 1200-1900*, had brought to the United Kingdom some of Italy's major masterpieces; this in spite of staunch resistance to their loan by museum curators, art historians and others (Haskell 1999, 462-472). Particular requests forwarded by the exhibition committee had also been met with strong reservations on the Italian side. Francis Haskell quotes a letter dated 6 April 1929 which briefly sums up the reaction of the Italians: "they are leaking all over the place: they have included some rubbish unworthy of an exhibition of this kind and omitted other first-class and particularly interesting works which would not be difficult for me to obtain. *Contenti loro, contenti noi*" (Haskell 1999).

Caravaggio scholarship

There is no question that the *Mostra dell'Arte Italiana del Seicento e Settecento* can be rightly acknowledged as a milestone for Baroque art history studies. German art historian Walter Friedlaender (1891-1984) considered the exhibition as the beginning of a research journey that was later to culminate in the *Mostra del Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi* held at the Palazzo Reale (Milan) in 1951, curated by Roberto Longhi (Friedlaender 1953, 315). Writing in *The Burlington Magazine*, the British collector and Italian art connoisseur Denis Mahon (1910-2011) gives the 1951 Caravaggio exhibition its due credit, rightly predicting that it would be a defining stimulus for Caravaggio studies (Mahon 1951, 222-235). Indeed, a string of

publications by Caravaggio scholars, including Bernard Berenson, Lionello Venturi, Walter Friedlaender and Roberto Longhi himself, followed suit. In doing so, however, Mahon completely ignored the *Mostra dell'Arte Italiana del Seicento e Settecento*. This might have to do with the overtly political connotations of the 1922 exhibition, but its 1951 counterpart informed political readings too, in spite of a radically diverse political climate and a more rigorous scientific approach (see Casati 2015, 81-104).

We can certainly consider that the *Mostra dell'Arte Italiana del Seicento e Settecento* initiated what the 1951 Milan exhibition consolidated (Terzaghi 2017). The focus was undoubtedly on Caravaggio, but in the broader scheme of things, the Italian regional schools were also given due attention in the period between these two major exhibitions. Exhibitions held in response to a need to articulate regional narratives first mooted by the 1922 exhibition include the exhibition on the Venetian *Settecento* held in Venice (1929), the Spanish *seicento* exhibition held in Rome (1930), *La Mostra del Settecento Bolognese* held in Bologna (1935) and others (see Causa 2008, 11). These happened in rapid succession during the second half of the 1930s and concern, more often than not, the same political ambitions as those fostered by the *Mostra dell' Arte Italiana del Seicento e Settecento*.

Post-World War II British scholarship unquestionably acknowledges Roberto Longhi as a Caravaggio scholar. Friedlaender describes him as having become "the almost dictatorial – though not always unchallenged – master of Caravaggio philology" (Friedlaender 1953, 138). Although Friedlaender considered Longhi's attributions as occasionally containing many "half-truths, and even some incomprehensible misconceptions," there was no question about the quality and significance of his studies, "often painstakingly detailed and always written in a high literary style, (and which) contain a remarkable number of brilliant attributions and trouvailles; (…) also offer many striking insights into the nature of Caravaggio's genius" (Friedlaender 1953, 138).

Besides Longhi, Friedlaender also acknowledges Lionello Venturi's research in *L'Arte* (1909-1910) and his subsequent publication of a small book on Caravaggio (1921) as of equal standing, at least in the early years of the twentieth century. There is, however, little reference to Ojetti in the literature following the 1921 Florence exhibition. Indeed, even though Longhi's studies had been handpicked for the purpose of nationalistic and politically tainted art historical narratives, there is very little to suggest that Longhi himself was into politics directly and indirectly. Contrary to Longhi, Ojetti had been actively involved in pro-Italian propaganda during World War I[1] and had aspired to become a journalist earlier on in his career, before reading law.

British and Italian scholarship proceed along different tracks in relation to Caravaggio, and this was also the case before World War II. Indeed, there is a sharp contrast between Longhi's promotion of *seicento* art and Fry's counterarguments, sharp criticism and dismissive stance. However, both acknowledge and endorse a surprisingly similar methodology. Besides being both formalists, the two also expound the dialectic with Cézanne. Whilst Longhi compares Caravaggio to Cézanne, Fry studied Cézanne

[1] See Ojetti's *Il Martirio dei Monumenti*. Milano: Frateli Treves, Editori, 1917. Available in https://archive.org/details/ilmartiriodeimon000jet (accessed on April 2019).

by copying his works, including Cézanne's self-portrait in the National Gallery, London, besides his publication *Cézanne: A Study of His Development* (1927). In copying Cézanne's portrait, Fry did not resort to extracting the essential aesthetic idea of the picture but copies his model in an almost slavish manner, suggesting an interest in studying, understanding and emulating the essence of this painter (Reed 1990, 766-772). Like his Italian counterparts, Fry also advocated a new aesthetic language which could only be grounded in the past, unlike the dictates of mainstream modern art. His collection included the works of impressionist and post-impressionist painters, such as Derain, Bonnard and Rouault, but few works which feature dramatic subjects such as those to be found in Caravaggio's repertoire.

Conclusion

Caravaggio's reception within British art historical scholarship is a staggered compromise juxtaposed against the political backdrop of Italian nationalism. At first it is openly contested, perhaps due to its strong Italian nationalistic overtones, and considered to be uncomplimentary to an art historical narrative which would have read as an alternative or variant to the Italophile rereading of Baroque art assiduously promoted by Italian art historians. Indeed, the merits and competencies of Italian scholarship and art historians in general is called into question by Anglo-Saxon scholarship as Italian scholars seek to rethink long-established narratives and promote exhibition projects, particularly the *Mostra dell'Arte Italiana del Seicento e Settecento*, with an overtly political agenda. This does not mean that the scientific input to the curatorial choice was missing, but that this was not the only intent, possibly of a secondary nature. The 1951 post-war Caravaggio exhibition seems to have set the record straight in terms of scientific content as the main purpose and objective of Caravaggio's rediscovery. In the meantime, the end of World War II had ushered in a new world order. Nonetheless, politics were still evident in the exhibition's outreach and media coverage, and interfered in a reading that is apparently art historical, but has much deeper readings and connections.

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Abstract

Slides de Cavalete (1978-1979) is a slide-based artwork by the Portuguese artist Ângelo de Sousa (1938-2011). This paper explores issues related to the exhibition of *Slides de Cavalete* through the view of a conservator. In the absence of the artist, the display history of this work was traced with the aim of providing a base to substantiate the decision-making process of its exhibition and preservation. Published and unpublished documentation related to the exhibitions was consulted and personalities who could have witnessed the presentation of the artwork were interviewed. During this study it was understood that Ângelo de Sousa first presented the work projected on a canvas over an easel, for the exhibition *A Fotografia como Arte/A Arte como Fotografia* in 1979. In the two exhibitions carried out in 2017, the work was presented as a digital projection without the use of canvas and easel. This detachment from the first presentation, might have led to a misunderstanding of the work. Based on the conducted research and following the current procedures, display options for the exhibition of *Slides de Cavalete* are discussed. ●

keywords

ÂNGELO DE SOUSA
SLIDES DE CAVALETE (1978-1979)
SLIDE-BASED ARTWORKS
DISPLAY

Resumo

Slides de Cavalete (1978-1979) é uma obra de arte em suporte de diapositivos do artista português Ângelo de Sousa (1938-2011). Este texto explora questões relacionadas com a exposição de *Slides de Cavalete* através da perspetiva da conservação. Perante a ausência do artista, o presente artigo traça a história da exposição deste trabalho com o objetivo de fornecer uma base que possa auxiliar futuros processos de decisão, tanto em termos de montagem como de preservação da obra. Para tal, entrevistaram-se personalidades que testemunharam as apresentações anteriores deste trabalho e recorreu-se a documentação, publicada e inédita. Durante o estudo, percebemos que na primeira vez em que Ângelo de Sousa apresentou publicamente a obra, ela foi projetada numa tela sobre um cavalete, durante a exposição *A Fotografia como Arte / A Arte como Fotografia* em 1979. Já nas duas exposições realizadas em 2017, a obra foi apresentada como uma projeção digital sem qualquer recurso a tela ou cavalete. Consideramos que esta discrepância face à primeira apresentação pode conduzir a uma receção equívoca da obra. Com base na investigação desenvolvida, e respeitando procedimentos atualizados, este artigo discute possíveis opções de montagem numa futura apresentação de Slides de Cavalete. ●

palavras-chave

ÂNGELO DE SOUSA
SLIDES DE CAVALETE (1978-1979)
OBRAS DE ARTE EM SUPORTE DE DIAPOSITIVOS
MONTAGEM

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THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

DISPLAY OF THE SLIDE-BASED ARTWORK *SLIDES DE CAVALETE* (1978-1979) BY ÂNGELO DE SOUSA

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Introduction

Ângelo de Sousa (1938-2011) is one of the most important Portuguese contemporary artists, who worked[1] and lived in Porto (Portugal). According to Bernardo Pinto de Almeida[2] (2016, 228) "He was a unique, complete artist, like few others. One of the few whose work reached the level of being able to be shown anywhere in the world, coinciding, happily and precisely, with his time in history. He influenced his contemporaries and many others who came after, both formally and through his attitude, even when this was not immediately obvious." From the 1960s until the present day Ângelo de Sousa's work has been widely exhibited, both in Portugal and abroad.

During his life, Ângelo de Sousa was especially recognised for his work in painting, sculpture and drawing. However, he also produced a noteworthy body of pho-

[1] Ângelo de Sousa was a professor at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Porto.

[2] Bernardo Pinto de Almeida is a professor at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Porto, and a connoisseur of the artist's work. Since the 1980s, Almeida has been publishing articles dedicated to the artist's production. He also worked with him on several occasions, especially within the framework of the exhibition *Ângelo: Uma Antológica 1993* (1993).

tography and experimental film, which has recently been garnering considerable acclaim. Since the mid-1960s up to his last years of artistic production, he developed a close and daily working relationship with these media and left thousands of unseen works. As explained by Sérgio Mah, a professor and curator who has devoted himself to the study of Ângelo de Sousa's photographic work, "his work in photography and film was not a by-product or occasional distraction from his main creative output; instead, it played a central and propelling role at the heart of his artistic practice and imagination" (Mah 2017, 12). In fact, the artist participated in some of the most iconic exhibitions dedicated to the use of audio-visual supports both by artists and photographers in Portugal at the end of the 1970s and in the 1980s, such as *A Fotografia na Arte Moderna Portuguesa* (1977) at the Centro de Arte Contemporânea at the Museu Soares dos Reis in Porto (CAC-MNSR) and *A Fotografia como Arte/A Arte como Fotografia* (1979) at CAC-MNSR, Edifício Chiado in Coimbra and Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian (FCG) in Lisbon. In 1976, he presented the slide-based artwork *A mão esquerda (1ª série)* (1975) at the *Biennale di Venezia*. In the mid 1980s, Ângelo de Sousa stopped his black-and-white output and started working with colour photography (Sousa 2001, 47). Henceforth, the artist made thousands of colour slides. Of these works, two were defined as diaporamas: *A mão esquerda (1ª serie)*[3] and *Slides de Cavalete* (1978-1979). Slide-based artworks can be categorised as time-based media art[4] since they have duration as a dimension and are dependent on technology (such as video, film, software, etc.). Sara Gordon (2012), a time-based media coordinator at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden of the Smithsonian Institution, describes slide art as unique because, in addition to the equipment necessary to complete the artwork, a specific sequence and time is required to display the medium. From this point of view, slide-based artworks are completely different from film, in which time is expressed in the medium itself (Gordon 2012) and can be considered a hybrid medium, somewhere in between still photography and cinema (Weidner 2012d). Slide-based works only exist when exhibited in a specific/particular space, and therefore have an intangible and temporary nature. These characteristics make slide-based artworks challenging for conservators. As Tina Weidner (2012a) stressed within the framework of her research project at the Tate,[5] the main fragility of slide art comes from its dependence on media technology, which causes problems in terms of its long-term preservation and display. Slide-based artworks are constantly threatened both by the obsolescence of the exhibition copies and the display equipment. Since the original slides should not be displayed due to the aggressive conditions to which they would be subjected (light, heat, dust), the installation of a slide-based artwork is dependent on the ability to replicate 35 mm slides (Weidner 2012a). Exhibition copies might be produced by replicating the technology of the originals (duplicates) or converted into another technology, such as digital. For these reasons, while taking the decisions regarding the installation, the originally used technology is frequently replaced.

[3] A second series of this work was produced in 1977, under the title *A mão esquerda (2ª serie)*.

[4] Time-based media is the terminology commonly used in conservation, mainly in England (led by Tate) and the United States.

[5] The project carried out by Tina Weidner between 2011 and 2012 at the Tate was called *Dying technologies: the end of 35 mm slide transparencies* (Weidner 2012a).

Within contemporary art, in particular time-based media art and other works that lack fixity, the inevitability of change has been widely discussed and is well accepted today, for the sake of the continuity and presentation of the works. The possibility of adapting variable artworks, through collaboration between the artist, curators, conservators and other technicians, is now a current procedure for international cultural institutions (Warton 2016, 33). In this context, as stressed by the conservator Manon D'haenens (2016, 51), the role of the conservator has been the management and transmission of change. But what happens in the absence of the artist and of his guidelines regarding the creation and production of the artwork?

As Ângelo de Sousa is no longer available to interview, the history of his exhibitions became one of the unique sources for the understanding of the artist's intention regarding the display of his artworks. The exhibition of a work in different places and times might provide a reference for future display (Noordegraaf 2013b, 286). Therefore, considering the recent disclosure of the slide-based artwork *Slides de Cavalete*, a comprehensive history of its exhibition was pursued in order to substantiate the decision-making process regarding the display of this work. For such a purpose, published and unpublished sources of information found in the artist's archive and in public Portuguese archives, such as the one from *Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian* (FCG),[6] were studied. Unfortunately, only scarce information remains from those exhibitions, and most of the display options that were undertaken are not documented. Thus, oral testimonies from people who could have witnessed the presentation of the artwork have been collected. As a result of this investigation, this paper discusses and proposes guidelines for the presentation and preservation of *Slides de Cavalete*.

[6] Ângelo de Sousa's dossier, with personal documentation (reports resulting from grants attributed to the artist and correspondence exchanged with the institution), was consulted at FCG.

Slides de Cavalete (1978-1979) by Ângelo de Sousa

As an artist who was interested and informed about colour theories and perception, Ângelo de Sousa made several works in which he explored additive and subtractive synthesis as a means of expression. From the 1960s he decided to prioritise primary colours in order to achieve "the maximum effect with minimum resources" (Sousa 1985, 68). A few years after starting his famous 'monochromatic' series of paintings, he produced the slide-based artwork *Slides de Cavalete*, a diaporama composed of one hundred colour slides. As he was used to working with a subtractive synthesis in his drawing and paintings, the artist decided to work with additive synthesis (Sousa 2001, 18), by combining coloured lights.

Slides de Cavalete begins with eight introductory slides: PHOTOGRAPHS | PHOTOGRAPHS (SLIDES) | OF SOME PAINTINGS, IMAGINED AND INEXISTENT | (EXCEPT IN THE SLIDES THEMSELVES,

PROJECTED) | [spacer] | THEY COULD BE CALLED… | … EASEL SLIDES? | [spacer].[7, 8] This introduction is followed by the images constructed with additive synthesis. This set is composed of two parts: triangles (Part I) and rectangles (Part II) (Fig. 1), both shapes having the same proportions. The coloured images were produced by projecting white light from a slide projector through filters with the additive primary colours, red, green and blue (RGB), and capturing a superimposition of these lights successively, on the same frame. Thus, the artist sought to achieve the *maximum effect* without overexposure. For instance, by successively capturing multiple exposures of R, G and B, projected for the same time, he would obtain a white image. If he played with different proportions of the three filters, which

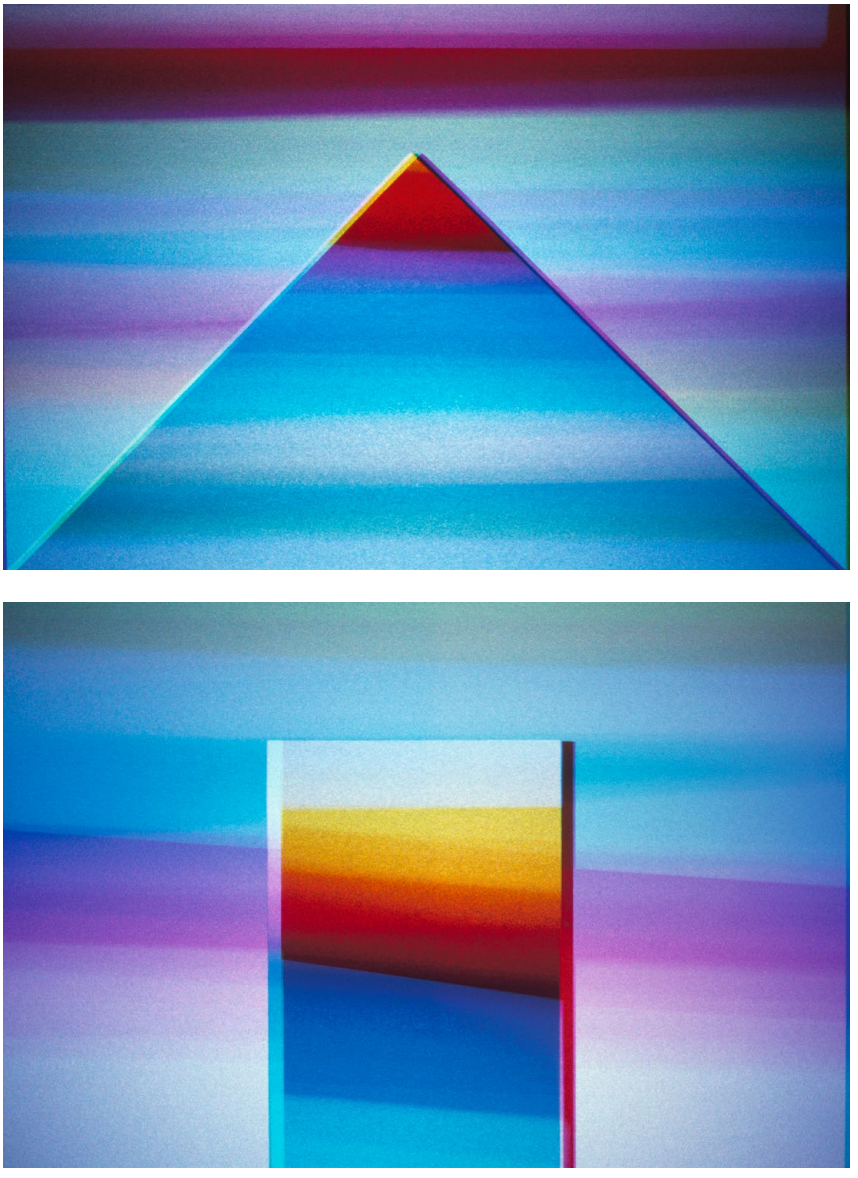


Fig. 1 – Ângelo de Sousa, *Slides de Cavalete* (1978-1979), 35 mm chromogenic reversal films with cellulose acetate base. Top: Example of a slide from Part I; Bottom: Example of a slide from Part II. Artist's collection.

[7] The two spacers (dark images with texture, without text) introduce a break in the reading of the text.

[8] Translation by the authors. fotografias | fotografias (slides) | de algumas pinturas, imaginadas e inexistentes | (excepto nos próprios slides, projectados) | [spacer] | poderiam ser chamados… | … slides de cavalete? | [spacer]

he controlled using opaque masks (hands or objects) to reduce light exposure in certain areas, he would obtain different colours and gradations. By obeying to the principle of additive mixing, he would be able to predict the result of the sum of the primary colours (Sousa 2001, 18-19). Ângelo de Sousa ended the work as he began it, with slides containing typed text: THE END | FOR NOW. | ÂNGELO DE SOUSA 1978-1979.[9] His unique sense of humour is evident in both the introduction and the conclusion of the work.

The images from *Slides de Cavalete* have clear similarities with his paintings both in their conception and form, in particular with the 'monocromatic' paintings, something to which Ângelo de Sousa may have wanted to allude by calling the work *easel paintings* (Mah 2014, 23). However, this parallelism does not seem to have any intention of reducing photography in relation to painting; on the contrary, it suggests the opposite. As in his 'monochromatic' paintings, he defined a shape and a background, and worked with them as independent pictorial spaces. These spaces acquired different depths depending on their tonal and textural heterogeneity, creating an illusion of perspective or three-dimensionality. Like some of his drawings, the lines of the triangle or rectangle define atmospheric zones, rather than geometric shapes. According to the produced combinations, each image may offer more fluid or more striking, more static or more dynamic, more two-dimensional or more three-dimensional atmospheres. Therefore, the sequence of the projection confers a narrativity of sensations. Like in his 'monochromatic' paintings, the chromatic gradations of *Slides de Cavalete* subtly reveal the chromatic complexity of the image through the creation of rhythms and contrasts created by the overlapped layers.

A thorough record of the production process of the work was found in his archives, with written explanations, schemes, test slides, and so on. Based on this valuable documentation, it can be concluded that the work was the result of extensive planning and experimentation. Sérgio Mah (2014, 23) described the work as one of the most astonishing and prodigious photographic works by Ângelo de Sousa.

As noted by Bernardo Pinto de Almeida (2018), Ângelo de Sousa's protagonism in the evolving Portuguese art scene from the 1960s onwards was possibly related to his use of audio-visual supports and to the plastic solutions adopted by the artist when using these media. Thus, his photographic and film works are important testimonies of the experiences of Portuguese artists in that period, and it can be stated that *Slides de Cavalete* has an important historical character.

The artist sought to explore the materiality of all of the media with which he worked. Materials in general are significant in the artist's works, carrying their own meaning. According to the survey conducted within the framework of this study on the photographic collection, about 89% of the colour photographs by Ângelo de Sousa are made of chromogenic reversal films (slides). Since the artist scarcely used other colour photographic processes, it can be concluded that slide technology is fundamental in his photographic work.

[9] Translation by the authors. fim | por agora. | ângelo de sousa 1978-1979.

Tracing the display history of *Slides de Cavalete*

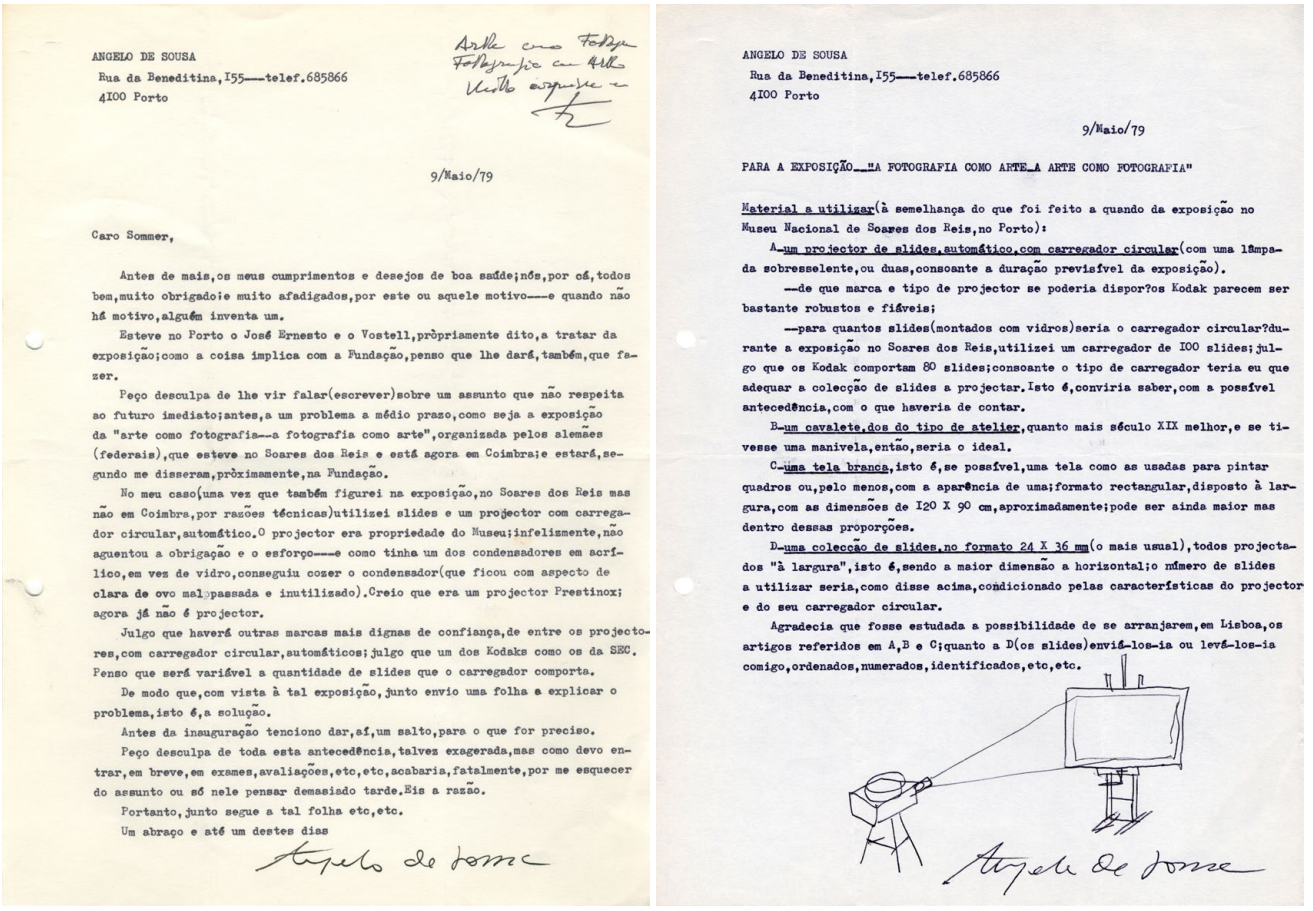
Although, as previously mentioned, *Slides de Cavalete* is one of the most ingenious photographic works produced by Ângelo de Sousa, it was only presented in two exhibitions during the artist's lifetime. While reading interviews with the artist, it is possible to understand that during his life he actively participated in his exhibitions' conception (Sousa 2001). As confirmed by Bernardo Pinto de Almeida (2018), the artist attributed the utmost importance to what was presented and how it was presented. He always looked for the most precise conditions to communicate his work. The work was shown for the first time in the exhibition *A Fotografia como Arte/A Arte como Fotografia*[10] in 1979, curated by Floris Neusüss.[11] According to Paula Pinto (2014, 185),[12] *Slides de Cavalete* was conceived to be presented on that occasion. The work was exhibited under the title *Easel Slides: Photographs (slides) of some imagined and non-existent paintings (except in the projected slides themselves)*.[13]
Ângelo de Sousa reported that Floris Neusüss objected to the inclusion of his work in the exhibition (Sousa 2001, 19). A possibility for the rejection could have been the interpretation of the artwork as a provocation, considering the scope of the exhibition, even though it is a true homage to photography, as a unique and specific artistic medium, which enables the exploitation and recording of light. According to Pinto's interpretation (2014, 185), the direct allusion that the diaporama established with easel painting prevented its comprehension. Despite this, the artwork was displayed, although badly projected and only until the projector ceased to function (Sousa 2001, 19-20). As previously mentioned, the exhibition was held in three different places: CAC-MNSR (Porto), Edifício Chiado (Coimbra) and FCG (Lisbon). The documentation relating to the exhibition at the FCG was accessed in the institution's archives, where a letter from Ângelo de Sousa was found (Fig. 2). According to that letter, the work was not displayed at the exhibition held in Coimbra. The letter describes some of the display setup used in Porto, and the necessary materials for the exhibition of the work in Lisbon. He explained that he used a slide projector, belonging to CAC-MNSR, with a circular tray and capacity for one hundred slides, which broke down during the exhibition. As a result, he asked for a safer automatic projector with a circular tray, suggesting Kodak as the brand. He also mentioned the fact that although the work is composed of one hundred slides, if the capacity of the projector from the museum were smaller, he could adjust the number of slides to be presented. Additionally, he requested an easel (ideally with a 19th-century appearance and a hand crank) and a white canvas (or at least something that resembled it) measuring 120 x 90 cm (or larger if within the same proportions) so that the slides could be projected onto its surface. At the end of the letter, there is a scheme with the display setup.
This discovery gives the title and subtitle used by the artist meaning. The artist possibly wanted to highlight the immaterial and throbbing features of the

[10] This was a travelling exhibition. Artists using photography as a mean of expression and international photographers with recognised work participated in this exhibition. Alberto Carneiro, Ângelo de Sousa, Fernando Calhau, Helena Almeida, and Julião Sarmento were the Portuguese artists shown (Sena 1998, 316).

[11] Floris Neusüss (1937) is a German artist who works with, writes and teaches about photography. In the 1970s he founded Kassel Foto Forum at the University of Arts in Kassel, for the exhibition of the photographic work by students. Neusüss consistently explored the photographic image without the use of a camera, producing numerous series of photograms. His series *Körperfotogramms* from the 1960s comprises examples of this (Squiers 2013, 25). He also works with double-exposures and negative montages, among other experimental practices.

[12] Ângelo de Sousa hired Paula Pinto as an assistant to work with him on his photographic collection.

[13] Translation by the authors. *Slides de Cavalete: Fotografias (slides) de algumas pinturas imaginadas e inexistentes (excepto nos próprios slides projectados)*.



ANGELO DE SOUSA
Rua da Beneditina, I55---telef.685866
4I00 Porto

9/Maio/79

Caro Sommer,

Antes de mais, os meus cumprimentos e desejos de boa saúde; nós, por cá, todos bem, muito obrigado; e muito afadigados, por este ou aquele motivo---e quando não há motivo, alguém inventa um.

Esteve no Porto o José Ernesto e o Vostell, pròpriamente dito, a tratar da exposição; como a coisa implica com a Fundação, penso que lhe dará, também, que fazer.

Peço desculpa de lhe vir falar (escrever) sobre um assunto que não respeita ao futuro imediato; antes, a um problema a médio prazo, como seja a exposição da "arte como fotografia--a fotografia como arte", organizada pelos alemães (federais), que esteve no Soares dos Reis e está agora em Coimbra; e estará, segundo me disseram, pròximamente, na Fundação.

No meu caso (uma vez que também figurei na exposição, no Soares dos Reis mas não em Coimbra, por razões técnicas) utilizei slides e um projector com carregador circular, automático. O projector era propriedade do Museu; infelizmente, não aguentou a obrigação e o esforço---e como tinha um dos condensadores em acrílico, em vez de vidro, conseguiu cozer o condensador (que ficou com aspecto de clara de ovo mal passada e inutilizado). Creio que era um projector Prestinox; agora já não é projector.

Julgo que haverá outras marcas mais dignas de confiança, de entre os projectores, com carregador circular, automáticos; julgo que um dos Kodaks como os da SEC. Penso que será variável a quantidade de slides que o carregador comporta.

De modo que, com vista à tal exposição, junto envio uma folha a explicar o problema, isto é, a solução.

Antes da inauguração tenciono dar, aí, um salto, para o que for preciso.

Peço desculpa de toda esta antecedência, talvez exagerada, mas como devo entrar, em breve, em exames, avaliações, etc, etc, acabaria, fatalmente, por me esquecer do assunto ou só nele pensar demasiado tarde. Eis a razão.

Portanto, junto segue a tal folha etc, etc.

Um abraço e até um destes dias

Angelo de Sousa

ANGELO DE SOUSA
Rua da Beneditina, I55---telef.685866
4I00 Porto

9/Maio/79

PARA A EXPOSIÇÃO__"A FOTOGRAFIA COMO ARTE_A ARTE COMO FOTOGRAFIA"

Material a utilizar (à semelhança do que foi feito a quando da exposição no Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis, no Porto):

A-um projector de slides, automático, com carregador circular (com uma lâmpada sobresselente, ou duas, consoante a duração previsível da exposição).

--de que marca e tipo de projector se poderia dispor? os Kodak parecem ser bastante robustos e fiáveis;

--para quantos slides (montados com vidros) seria o carregador circular? durante a exposição no Soares dos Reis, utilizei um carregador de I00 slides; julgo que os Kodak comportam 80 slides; consoante o tipo de carregador teria eu que adequar a colecção de slides a projectar. Isto é, convíria saber, com a possível antecedência, com o que haveria de contar.

B-um cavalete, dos do tipo de atelier, quanto mais século XIX melhor, e se tivesse uma manivela, então, seria o ideal.

C-uma tela branca, isto é, se possível, uma tela como as usadas para pintar quadros ou, pelo menos, com a aparência de uma; formato rectangular, disposto à largura, com as dimensões de I20 X 90 cm, aproximadamente; pode ser ainda maior mas dentro dessas proporções.

D-uma colecção de slides, no formato 24 X 36 mm (o mais usual), todos projectados "à largura", isto é, sendo a maior dimensão a horizontal; o número de slides a utilizar seria, como disse acima, condicionado pelas características do projector e do seu carregador circular.

Agradecia que fosse estudada a possibilidade de se arranjarem, em Lisboa, os artigos referidos em A, B e C; quanto a D (os slides) enviá-los-ia ou levá-los-ia comigo, ordenados, numerados, identificados, etc, etc.

Angelo de Sousa

Fig. 2 – Documentation found at Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian's archive related to the exhibition *A Fotografia como Arte/A Arte como Fotografia* (1979). © Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.

slide projection. Thus, the projected slides can be seen as 'some imagined and non-existent paintings', which only exist during the projection time. Apparently, the artist wanted to allude to the resemblance between *Slides de Cavalete* and his 'monochromatic' series of paintings, equating the photographic medium with the paintings by placing it over an easel. Moreover, the fact that the artist chose specific devices to be part of the display landscape assigns an important sculptural character to the artwork.

The letter found at the FCG shows that the artist was concerned with the display of the artwork under study, describing, in great detail, all the devices necessary to its proper presentation. No more documentation (published or unpublished sources) relating to the display conditions used in this exhibition has been found.[14]

Slides de Cavalete was only re-exhibited almost ten years later, in *Fotoporto: Mês da Fotografia* (1988). The exhibition was held at the Casa de Serralves (Porto) and curated by Fernando Pernes. No documentation (published or unpublished sources) relating to the exhibition was found at Casa de Serralves,[15] and the catalogue from the exhibition[16] contains very little information. Therefore, with the intention of gathering evidence on how the artwork was presented in the exhibition *Fotoporto:*

[14] No information relating to the exhibition was found at the MNSR archive. Additionally, none of the valuable information contained in the FCG's letter was described within the exhibition catalogue (*A Fotografia como Arte, A Arte como Fotografia*, ed. Fernando Pernes. 1979. Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian).

[15] This information was provided by Cristina Grande during a phone call (25 October 2017). Although she was part of the exhibition staff, she did not remember that the work under study had been displayed on that occasion.

Mês da Fotografia, both Manuel Magalhães[17] and Bernardo Pinto de Almeida were interviewed about the display setup of the work on that occasion.[18] Both had been involved in the production of the exhibition. Additionally, the artist Julião Sarmento,[19] who also participated in the exhibition, was questioned. Unfortunately, neither Magalhães, Almeida (Almeida 2018) nor Sarmento, were able to remember how the work was presented. Hence, and given the lack of documentation relating to that exhibition, it was not possible to trace how the work was displayed in 1988. Recently, photographic and film work by Ângelo the Sousa has been gaining notoriety. After the artist's death, *Slides de Cavalete* was presented in three exhibitions: *Encontros com as formas* (2014) at the Fundação EDP (Porto), curated by Sérgio Mah, *La couleur et le grain noir des choses* (2017) at the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian (Paris), commissioned by Jacinto Lageira, and *Potência e adversidade, Arte da America Latina nas colecções em Portugal* (2017) at the Museu da Cidade (Lisbon), curated by Marta Mestre. Additionally, on the 7 July 2018, the work was presented in a one-day session, within the framework of the *Jornadas Lúcidas 2 – Oporto*. This happening was organised by the Portuguese artist Alexandre Estrela at *Casa dos Marinheiros Mercantes* in Lisbon.

For the exhibition *Encontros com as formas* (2014), Mah made some tests by projecting the work with a digital projector and a slide projector. He concluded that the digital projection allowed for a better accuracy of colour reproduction, although the subtle variation between the colours and their density could be better achieved with the slide projector.[20] He therefore opted to exhibit a copy of the original slides in a slide projector. The one hundred slides were digitised in high definition and the digitised files sent to London,[21] to be shown in a chromogenic reversal film using a film recorder. These were used as exhibition copies.[22] The artwork was displayed in a small, dark room to provide an ideal scenario for the contemplation of the work alone (Fig. 3).[23]

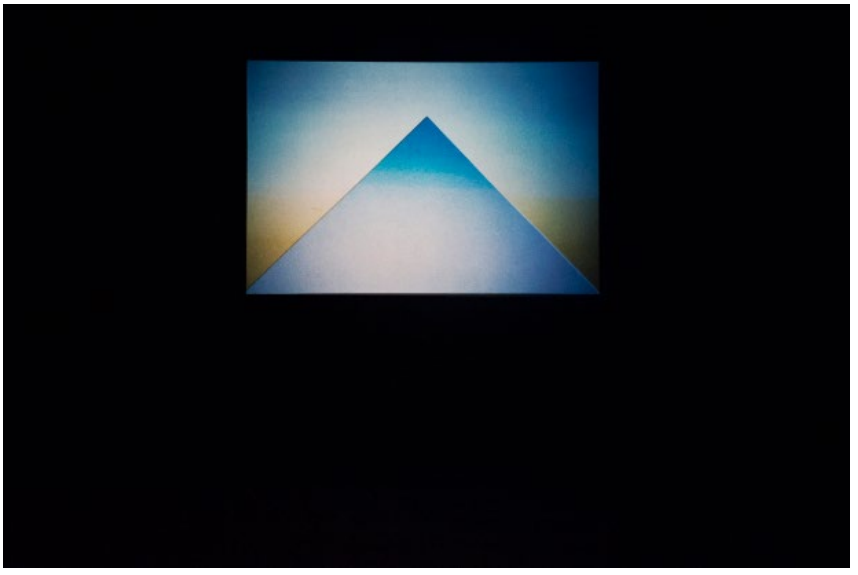


Fig. 3 – View of the exhibition of the work *Slides de Cavalete* (1978-1979) in *Encontro com as Formas*, 2014.

[16] *Fotoporto: Mês da Fotografia*, ed. Fernando Pernes. 1998. Porto: Casa de Serralves.

[17] Manuel Magalhães was interviewed in an informal way (5 May 2018), so the interview was not recorded.

[18] The curator of the exhibition was Fernando Pernes (1936-2010), who left no information.

[19] Julião Sarmento was interviewed in an informal way (17 October 2018), during a phone call.

[20] This information was kindly shared by Sérgio Mah (April 27, 2018).

[21] To the company *Digital Slides*: https://www.digitalslides.co.uk/wp-2013/ (accessed on 18 September 2018).

[22] This information was kindly provided by André Cepeda during a phone call (5 January 2018). Cepeda was the technician responsible for the digitisation of *Slides de Cavalete* and other photographic works by Ângelo de Sousa. The digital images were subjected to colour matching to ensure their approximation to the originals (in the current condition).

[23] This information was kindly shared by Sérgio Mah (27 April 2018). Only scarce documentation from the exhibition setup can be found in the exhibition catalogue and in the few press releases from the time. The dimensions of the projection are unknown.

In the exhibition *La couleur et le grain noir des choses* (2017), the digital copies made for the exhibition in 2014 were presented using a digital projector, placed at the top of the entrance staircase.[24] Likewise, in the most recent exhibition, *Potência e adversidade, Arte da América Latina nas colecções em Portugal*, similar options were undertaken. A DVD was made with three films and the work *Slides de Cavalete*, in order to be presented in a digital projector as a slideshow in a dark room (Fig. 4). According to the artist's son, Miguel de Sousa, the slides passed too fast because of an incorrect DVD *montage*.[25]

At *Jornadas Lúcidas 2 – Oporto* (Fig. 5), the work *Nobody Here* (2009) by Daniel Lopatin was exhibited along with the artwork under study, in a session dedicated to additive light. The exhibition copies used were produced following the same methodology and using the same suppliers as for the exhibition *Encontros com as Formas*. The work was projected using a slide projector on a 4m width screen. The projector only had the capacity for eighty slides, so a selection of the images to be presented had to be made.[26] Although some changes to the original presentation of the work were undertaken, the organisation made available to the public a handout in which the variations were described, and the curatorial options justified. After Ângelo de Sousa's death, different display options from those undertaken by the artist in the past were made, and it is possible to observe a gradual deviation from the first presentation of the artwork. Over time, *Slides de Cavalete* [easel slides] lost the easel and also the slides. As specialists in this field maintain, the reception of a work is highly dependent on the way it is presented (Szmelter 2011, 121). The public who saw the artwork at the last exhibitions, subsequently with interpretative new elements, might have experienced a different version of the work. Additionally, with the exception of the last exhibition, none of the curatorial options

[24] The dimensions of the projection were neither described nor documented, but they would certainly have been far more than 90 x 120 cm.

[25] This situation was fixed after the inauguration at the request of Miguel de Sousa, owner of the collection. When the exhibition site was visited, the projection was not working and, according to the staff present, the projector had been out of order for almost a month. As such, it was only possible to observe the room painted in black and with a white rectangle (75 x 100 cm) where the images should have been projected. These dimensions were below the 90 x 120 cm described by Ângelo de Sousa in the FCG letter, although within the same proportions.

[26] This option was undertaken, taking into account that the artist had predicted this situation, as described in documentation found

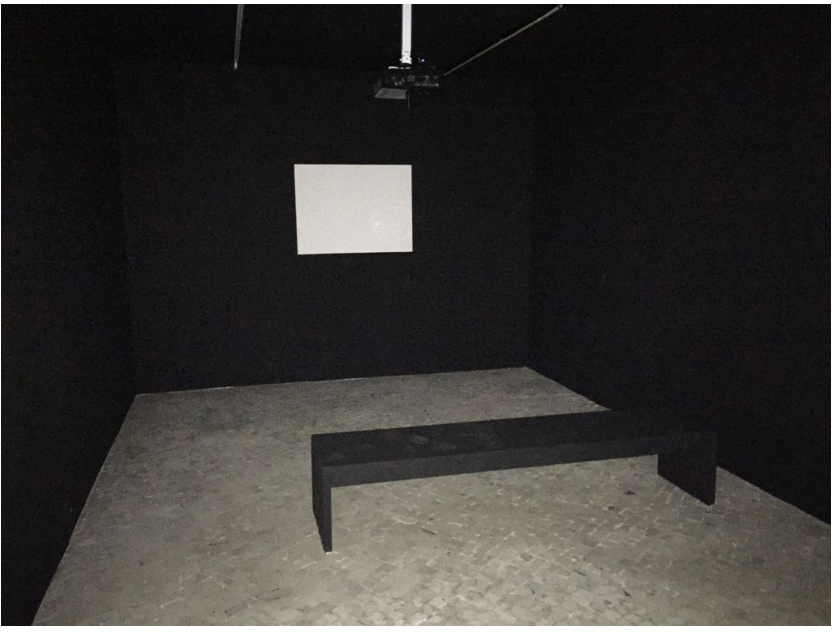


Fig. 4 – The work *Slides de Cavalete* (1978-1979) in the exhibition "Potência e adversidade, Arte da América Latina nas colecções em Portugal". Museu da Cidade, Lisbon, 2017.

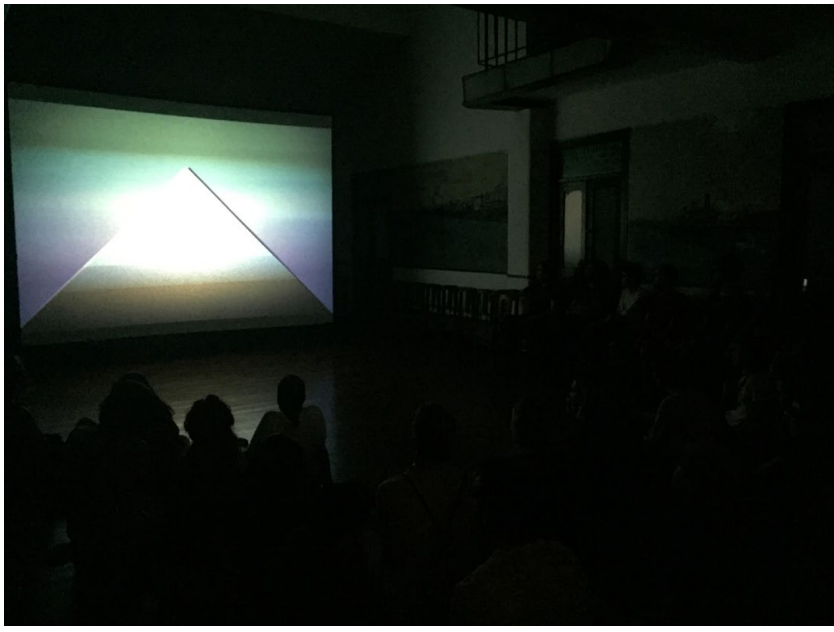


Fig. 5 – The work *Slides de Cavalete* (1978-1979) in *Jornadas Lúcidas 2 – Oporto*. Lisbon, 2018.

was explained to the visitor. As claimed by the conservator Sanneke Stiger (2016, 169), the clear communication of the material structure of the original artwork and its reinterpretation is fundamental for a proper experience.

Display options undertaken by Ângelo de Sousa

According to the investigation that was conducted, Ângelo de Sousa took different options over time concerning the display of his slide-based artworks in general. His slides were presented either in projections[27] or printed, using silver dye bleach (Cibachrome) or digital technology. It is also possible to observe different choices for the presentation of the same artwork. For instance, the work *A mão esquerda (2ª série)* (1977) was first projected in the exhibition *A fotografia na arte moderna Portuguesa* (1977), and then, since 1978, printed in Cibachrome. The sizes of the prints also changed: first the work was presented in a 18 x 24 cm format, but subsequently, since the exhibition *Fotografia* (2000), they measured 60 x 90 cm. In 2003, he decided to project the work again in the exhibition *Sem Limites*. Thus, although Ângelo de Sousa worked a great deal with slide technology and chose to specifically exhibit some of his works using slide projectors, he also displayed slide-based artworks (sometimes even the same work) as printed photographs framed and hung on the gallery wall. For instance, in the exhibition *Sem Prata* (2001), about half of the slide-based works were presented in projection (the originals), and the other half in digital prints (inkjet prints), showing his openness to vary the medium. Bernardo Pinto de Almeida thinks that the reason for these differences might simply be linked to the aesthetic character of the image (Almeida 2018). If in one case a slide could be displayed by projection, in others it could be presented printed with a specific technology. Therefore, if one artwork was firstly displayed with one technology, it could later be transferred to another one, more recent, where the image 'fits' as well (or even better) (Almeida 2018). Additionally, as Ângelo de Sousa was very cautious with materials (Ferreira 2011, 133), he could have been concerned with the durability of the artworks after successive projections, and so opted to print them.

When questioned about how he arrived at the idea of replacing the original photographic and film processes with digital printing for the exhibition *Sem Prata*, Ângelo de Sousa noted that the essential advantage of digital printing was the time and effort saved (Sousa 2001, 14). During the interview *"A Felicidade no gatilho": entrevista a Ângelo de Sousa* (Sousa 2001, 14), the curators made him see that the digital format was also a useful tool for image correction, such as abrasion and staining (negatives) and colour adjustments (slides), that otherwise, according to him, could not have been displayed (Sousa 2001, 14-15). Similarly, several of his

at the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian's archive relating to the exhibition *A Fotografia como Arte/A Arte como Fotografia* (1979).

[27] As far as it can be understood from the information contained in the catalogues and according to Bernardo Pinto de Almeida (Almeida 2018), it was contemporaneous procedure to display original slides in the exhibitions until recently.

films were transcribed onto VHS and converted to digital for display in the same exhibition. These options were made both for financial and practical reasons, due to the great number of selected films for the exhibition and long duration of the exhibition (four months). When asked if he was sorry about the films not being displayed in the original format, Ângelo de Sousa explained that although the difference between video and 8mm chromogenic reversal film was significant, Super 8 projectors have the disadvantage of creating a small image projection, besides the difficulty of producing a duplication with good colour reproduction (Sousa 2001, 16). Thus, it seems that Ângelo de Sousa was, at least in 2001, quite open to the idea of migrating the original audio-visual supports to another support, since it was, to his knowledge, the most reliable way to do it. Nevertheless, he did not affirm that they should all be converted into recent technologies.

As the curator D. H. van Wegen (2005, 206-207) argues, an artwork is an historical object, in some sense independent of the artist, and the interpretation of contemporary art is not the artist's job. According to the conservator Barbara Sommermeyer (2011, 143-144) "The conservator is responsible for the maintenance of the historicity and the zeitgeist of the work". Within the practice of conservation of contemporary art, the artist is called to participate in the decision-making process and constitute a source of information about the work and the creative process. However, as stated by Sommermeyer (2011, 150), the artwork itself should be the central source of information. The artist often wishes to update the artwork, which is a controversial option that can go against the conservator's point of view. Furthermore, it might be difficult for an artist to develop a rational distance from a work made years ago (Sommermeyer 2011, 146). As noted by the conservator Cristina Oliveira (2016, 219) during her investigation on the conservation of installation art, the artist's intention is not permanent. Frequently, the participation of the artist in the re-installation of the artwork might lead to significant alterations. This is why the opinion of the artist about a work made in the past should be discerned from his supposed original intent (Stigter 2016, 174). Additionally, the concept of the work can sometimes be better understood by the audience when displayed with its original materials, helping to place the work back in its time (Stigter 2016, 175). To quote Sanneke Stigter: "not only a change in the physical artwork causes shift in experience, the change in time does too, having ushered in a complete new visual culture" (2016, 175). Finally, in the opinion of Pip Laurenson (2005, 2), head of the Collection Care Research Department at the Tate, the role of a conservator is to understand what might constitute an authentic installation and ensure that this demanding goal is achieved. This is especially true in the absence of the artist. Therefore, the conservator (along with other heritage professionals and individuals responsible for the works) is responsible for the identification and maintenance of the significance of the artworks, so that future generations can enjoy them to the full.

Although updating the slide projector for digital technology might be tempting, it entails some problems. It apparently streamlines the exhibition of the works,

namely by reducing the costs and maintenance associated with slide exhibition copies (Weidner 2012a).[28] Despite the technical difficulties of maintaining the original display equipment, its substitution with a digital projector might modify the landscape, and consequently the experience of the artwork. First, the physical/sculptural effect of analogue and digital projectors is different (Lavezzo et al. 2015, 170-171). Moreover, the digital projector suppresses the sound experience of the slide projector mechanism passing the slides. Although it is possible to simulate the sound of the projector, this option would probably be too farfetched, considering the artist in question. Additionally, digital projectors are often launched with better resolutions, changing the visual appearance (dimension and quality of the projection) of the projected images (Monteiro 2015, 175). According to Bernardo Pinto de Almeida (2018), Ângelo de Sousa appreciated the performative character that the slide projector conferred to an exhibition, since it would allow for the phenomena of appearance and disappearance of images. Unfortunately, the digital projector also obliterates this characteristic transition effect between images (Monteiro 2015, 175). As pointed out by Barbara Sommermeyer and Claartje van Haaften (2016, 225), the light being projected through a chromogenic reversal film has a different appearance to a digital projection. There is an atmosphere of imperfection produced by the analogue equipment, and this aesthetic character should also be offered to the public (Monteiro 2015, 175).

As in the case of updating the display equipment, generating digital images instead of producing exhibition copies might be advantageous. After the discontinuation of duplication slides in 2010, the continuity of exhibition copies was under threat. Nowadays, the available films for duplication do not have the ideal emulsions for copying, unlike in the past (low-contrast film and very fine grain/very low ISO to capture detail), making it difficult to produce accurate duplications (Weidner 2012b). Nevertheless, by using chromogenic reversal films for the replication of works, it is possible to maintain the image characteristics and the aesthetic content of the original work. Instead of analogue duplication, digital duplication can also be considered as a solution. This means digitising the slides and flash for the digital files into chromogenic reversal films (Depocas n.d.). Generating digital intermediates might be advantageous, since it can be more easily manipulated. For instance, colour adjustments can be applied to the digital image before printing, simplifying the colour correction process. However, a digital image is an image electronically captured using light and converted into a numeric representation, so when using a digital copy, certain aspects of the original appearance of the work might be lost (Saba 2013, 101). Nevertheless, digital duplication allows for the maintenance of the original physical support (Weidner 2012c). According to the study conducted by Haida Liang, Pip Laurenson and David Saunders (2004), digital duplication has led to accurate copies.

A summary of the possible advantages and disadvantages of maintaining the original slide-based technology is presented in Figure 6.

[28] One way of assuring the availability of the slide projector is to acquire and accumulate projectors for future presentations (Depocas n.d.).

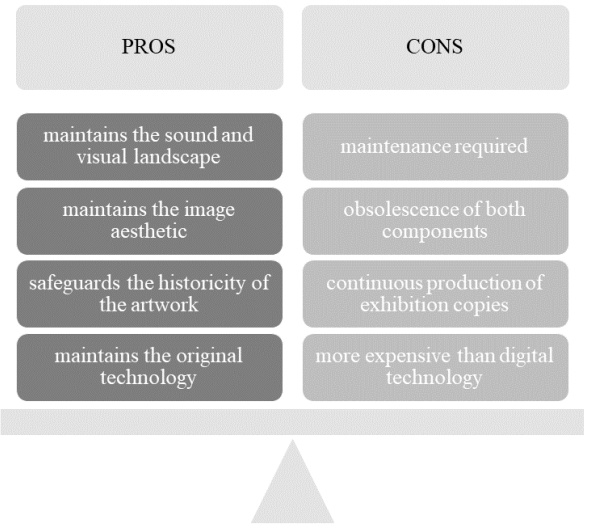


Fig. 6 – Summary of possible pros and cons of maintaining the original slide-based technology.

Proposal of guidelines for the exhibition of *Slides de Cavalete*

Based on the results from the research conducted so far and considering the absence of the artist in the decision-making process about the exhibition of *Slides de Cavalete*, we propose that the work should be displayed according to its first public presentation in 1979. To the best of our knowledge, the letter found at the FCG and written by Ângelo de Sousa within the context of the exhibition *A Fotografia como Arte/A Arte como Fotografia* represents the only instructions left by the artist regarding the display of *Slides de Cavalete*. Additionally, this approach ensures the maintenance of both the aesthetic characteristics and historicity of the work, which were considered part of its significance. The visitor may thus experience how the artwork was presented at the time of its conception. To do so, the following materials would be necessary (Fig. 7):

i) Number of necessary exhibition copy sets (according to the duration of the exhibition);
   The generation of copies made with the original technology (chromogenic reversal films) should be performed via either analogue or digital duplication to ensure the continuity of the aesthetic characteristics of the work.

ii) Automatic analogue carousel slide projector with capacity for 100 slides;
   projectors are mass-produced equipment, and thus are not valued for their uniqueness. As such, they can be replaced by an equivalent with negligible impact (Laurenson 2005, 2; Wijers 2013, 238). Nevertheless, proper equipment is crucial for the success of the display. Different equipment can produce different images; not only the projector itself but also its parts, such as lamps and lenses (Warda and Munson 2012). According to the letter found

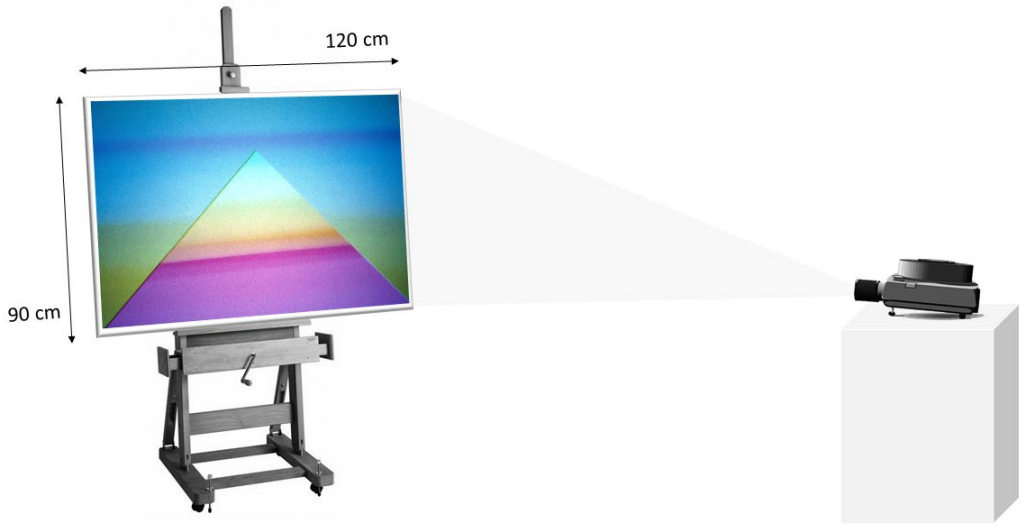


Fig. 7 – Scheme representing the proposed setup for the exhibition of *Slides de Cavalete* (1978-1979).

at the FCG archives, Ângelo de Sousa was not particularly set on using a specific projector. He refers only to Kodak as a reliable brand. Nevertheless, according to the scheme presented in the same letter, the projector is part of the scene. In the documentation relating to the production process for the artwork found in the artist's archive, he mentions a quartz lamp. The same type of lamp (or with equivalent spectral emission) could be used in the projection to avoid any interference with the colour of the images.

Although carousels with capacity for 80 slides might be easier to find than those with capacity for 100, the latter should be pursued (even if the artist acknowledged the possibility of adapting the artwork to the capacity of the carousel). Since Ângelo de Sousa is no longer available to carry out a selection of slides to be displayed, and did not leave any instructions regarding that matter, this task might raise issues relating to the identity of the artwork, as it would allow the production of multiple versions of the work.

iii) Bench/small table as support for the projector;
iv) Easel with a 19th-century appearance and a hand crank;
v) White canvas measuring 120 x 90 cm (or larger if within the same proportions);
vi) Slightly darkened room.

When a slide-based artwork is installed at the exhibition site, it must be adapted to the space (Philips 2015, 169). Different factors such as room size and illumination may influence its perception. Although no documentation was found referring to this issue, it was assumed that the room should not be completely dark so that the easel and canvas can be slightly visible. However, the levels of luminosity should not be very high, as otherwise the colours of the slides might not be correctly perceived. Moreover, although the work has been displayed in a single room lately, nothing leads us to believe that this was the artist's choice.

Although no graphic information was found regarding the display of *Slides de Cavalete* in 1979, based on the photographic documentation consulted at the FCG's archive, the exhibition space was shared with the work of other artists.

vii) One final issue to be considered is the projection duration of each slide. Since no references were found relating to this matter, some tests have been carried out in order to define a frame time. Based on those tests, it is recommended to project each slide for a period of 8 to 12 seconds, which seems the appropriate time to fully appreciate each image.

Conclusions

During the current investigation, it was understood that after Ângelo de Sousa's death, the slide-based artwork *Slides de Cavalete* (1978-1979) was exhibited following a different display setup to that of its first presentation in 1979. At that time, the work was presented by projecting the slides onto a canvas over an easel. After the artist's death, the canvas and the easel were removed, and more recently the slide projection has been substituted by a digital projection. Additionally, the curatorial options were neither documented nor communicated to the audience. For that reason, the gradual subtraction of the initial components composing the work might have led to its misunderstanding.

This paper therefore highlights the importance of revisiting the exhibition history for the decision-making process about the display and preservation of variable media such as slide-based artworks, especially in the absence of the artist. Based on the conducted research, guidelines for the presentation of *Slides de Cavalete* are proposed, aimed at making it possible for future generations to enjoy the artwork as it was designed by the artist at the time of its conception.

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Book reviews

JAMES VOORHIES. *BEYOND OBJECTHOOD: THE EXHIBITION AS A CRITICAL FORM SINCE 1968.*

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS / LONDON, ENGLAND: THE MIT PRESS, 2017

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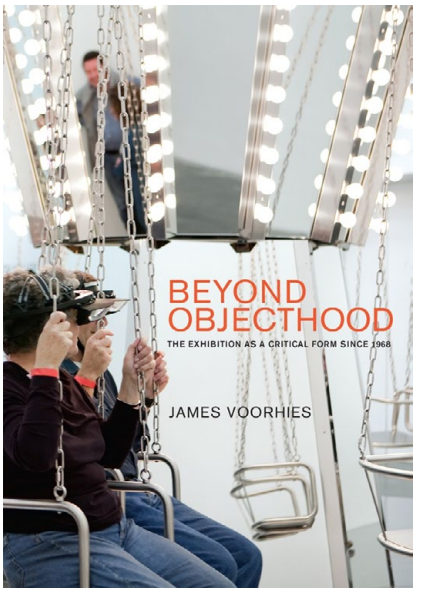

James Voorhies' *Beyond Objecthood: The Exhibition as a Critical Form since 1968*, guides the reader through a two-way street: that of the curator's mind and exhibition history since the late 1960s, and that of the visitor who, during these years, has been compelled to turn from spectator to participant. At its centre lies the object (a concept representing a twist on how an artwork was transformed into a new category of importance/perception/value) and its relation to a specific site. The author – a curator and art historian of modern and contemporary art, who is also Chair of the Graduate Program in Curatorial Practice, Associate Professor of Contemporary Art at California College of the Arts, San Francisco, and Director of the Curatorial Research Bureau – reminds us that his study "is not exclusively focused on a history of institutional critique", yet "it is important to point out that alternatives to existing curatorial models on the modern art institution began to take shape at this time" (p. 40). The current shift towards the "participatory" (a shift that specifically started with land art artist Robert Smithson's new proposals for the then called non-sites) is being differently discussed, as museums and other art institutions increasingly debate their role in society. This shift has its own history and *Beyond Objecthood* leads us precisely through that history and development. In its four chapters – "The Rise of the Exhibition as a Form", "On New Institutionalism", "The Efficacy of a Critical Art" and "The Industrial Art Complex" – , the book leaves no doubts on how our concept of art and artwork – and of museums and curators – has changed in the last 50 years, depending not only on the artists' creations but also on the curators' concepts, and on how production and reception became central to the equation. Different issues are examined in this work, namely: art criticism and new curatorial proposals, museums

and non-sites, the figure of the artist and the role of the curator as artist, critic and educator. Throughout the book, we are offered Voorhies' perspectives that necessarily cover events like Documenta, the Venice Biennale, the "anti-biennial" (p. 104) Manifesta, or sites like E-flux, discussing their purposes and consequences.

As concepts of "economics, entertainment and spectatorship" (p. 232) became increasingly central to contemporary art practice, traditional art sites, such as museums, began to change too, aiming to reach new and larger audiences by promising them a sense of difference and surprise, a sense of revelation. *Beyond Objecthood* unveils the way art, critical curation and exhibition have been historically intertwined, and how this connection has been essential in the very definition of both the artwork and the museum, questioning also, again and again, the cultural, social and economic value of an artwork and its place. At the centre of Voorhies' argument we find the exercise of curating as a means of creation (an artistic form in itself) and of communication. In this particular aspect, the role of education in museums and other venues and (non-)sites (or even through platforms such as E-flux) is also analysed as part of the critical curatorial model that arose with New Institutionalism, inviting audiences to become part of the process and part of the social and critical dialogue (see, for instance, pp. 73 or 197).

An important reflexive study on the expansive concept of the exhibition, *Beyond Objecthood* shows how a dialectic approach to alternative ways of thinking about art ended up involving one of the most traditional institutions, to the benefit of the public.

However, at the end of this challenging and referential work, some questions arise. North American scholar Frances Richard, in her review on *Beyond Objecthood*, had already pointed out how the "preponderance of his [Voorhies] references are male, and European" (see https://hyperallergic.com/388992/james-voorhies-beyond-objecthood-the-exhibition-as-a-critical-form-since-1968/). Another aspect may also strike the reader: the absence of more significant examples from the *traditional* art sites, or museums. Museums are in fact scarce in this book. While the text is particularly devoted to analysing the exhibition form, and therefore the object beyond itself (as a means of political and social communication as it is presented in non-conventional sites), the object within a collection, however, loses its interest to the author (or so it seems). And yet, since so many museums in the world have been closely observing participatory policies, following some of the trends of the curatorial practices studied by Voorhies, it would have been interesting to approach some of these experiences.

In spite of these obstacles, *Beyond Objecthood* is a must read. It provides relevant information and it takes the reader through the history of curating in the last fifty years, stressing the social, critical and political importance of art – even if it refers mainly to a very specific part of the art world, forgetting a whole range of experiences, geographies, contexts and actors. We may argue that a lot is missing. But, as always, any book – like any exhibition, dissertation or argument – is a small part of the whole universe. And this one, fortunately for the reader, raises far more questions than answers. ●

AMY SODARO. *EXHIBITING ATROCITY: MEMORIAL MUSEUMS AND THE POLITICS OF PAST VIOLENCE.*

NEW JERSEY, NEW BRUNSWICK: RUTGERS UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2018

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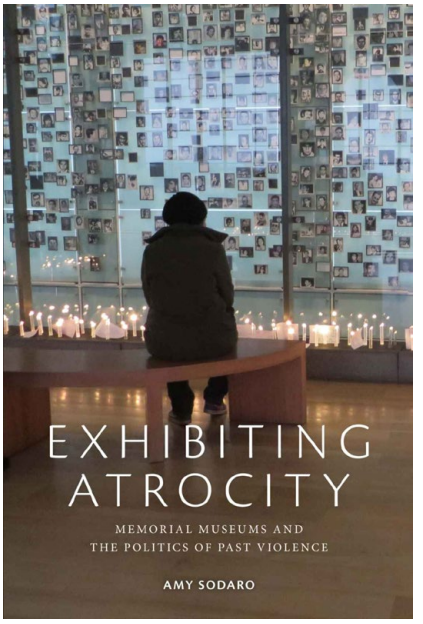

How to display some of society's most violent past episodes and their horror? The pain and trauma they caused? How to do this in such a way that it can be a lesson for humanity, so it does not happen again? How to process, manage, exhibit and transmit these difficult heritages to the general public? That is the proposal of Amy Sodaro in her most recent book, *Exhibiting Atrocity: Memorial museums and the politics of past violence*.

Situated at the intersection of memory studies (and certainly influenced by the seminal work of Paul Williams (2007)) and museum studies, this work addresses the importance of memorial museums both as mechanisms of remembrance and as arenas for the discussion and confrontation of society's violent past. These museums are as diverse as the atrocities that have been committed around the globe.

The author traces the emergence of these institutions through an in-depth comparative analysis of five international case studies: the United States Holocaust Memorial, founded in Washington DC in 1993, to remember the victims of the Holocaust; Terror Háza [the House of Terror], opened in Budapest in 2002, as a right-wing project envisioned to remember the ones who were held captive and tortured under National Socialist and Communist regimes in Hungary; the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre – a western initiative endorsed by the national government – inaugurated in Rwanda in 2004, to commemorate ten years of the Rwandan genocide; the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, established in Santiago do Chile in 2010, a place of remembrance for those who were tortured and/or disappeared during Pinochet's dictatorship; and the 9/11 Memorial Museum opened to

the public in 2014, in the same location of New York's World Trade Center, to narrate the horror and savage effects of the terrorist attacks in that area.

The author identifies how and why these memorial museums were created, describes their institutional practices and museographic discourses, as well as some of their challenges in handling and managing the "difficult heritages" they portray. As hybrid forms, of museum and memorial, these institutions reflect a change of paradigm in the way societies think about and deal with their 20th century past. This change, prompted by the WWII and the Holocaust memory, set a transnational and global archetype for remembering the past violence (p.15), and is intertwined with human rights discourses. The dissemination of these movements, the uprising of this memory "awareness" and the urge for the confrontation with the atrocities committed and the recognition of historical injustices, created space for "marginal" voices – that had been silenced and distanced from hegemonic narratives – to arise. The victims were finally heard, but more than telling their story, they wanted recognition for the abuses and wrongs perpetrated, as well as moral reparation and "symbolic healing". The establishment of a "politics of regret" (Olick 1964), taking the shape of public apologies and commemorations, was not compatible with the old memorial model anymore. These new forms of remembrance aimed to go beyond the tangibility of the stone and metal in which those monuments were commonly carved, as they were sensed as insufficient and inadequate to remember, portray, contain and narrate the violence, the horrors, and the traumatic pain inflicted to those who suffered brutal acts. Not only because these monuments were created in the 19th century tradition of national glorification, but also because they demanded a more permanent memory activation that would surpass the evocations held in special commemorative dates, through ritualized and institutional memory performances. Therefore, a historical setting was required and a museum would fulfil that role. Displaying material culture as a testimony of past atrocities, supported by a scientific framework, is a powerful tool of remembrance and confrontation, since museums hold a particular authority and legitimacy to produce knowledge. Memorial museums are then inclusive projects, where the effects of intolerance, exclusion, repression and hatred can be discussed and debated by their community of visitors through several activities, often promoted by research and educational centres available to the general public.

In her comprehensive examination of each case study through an institutional ethnography framework (p.6) – regarding museum planning, exhibition layout, museographic techniques and narrative building – Sodaro draws three main conclusions. She begins by arguing that, albeit memorialization processes take different forms regarding their geographical and cultural context and their various themes, the techniques employed for exhibiting atrocity are similar. The exhibitions analyzed strongly rely on documentation (particularly photography), interactive technologies, multimedia (with emphasis on video testimonies) and oral history for their storytelling, creating a powerful narrative that will impact the visitors and establish a stronger and emotional connection with them, transmitting memories that, in most cases, they didn't experience. This "prosthetic memory" (Landsberg 2004)

generates an identification with the victims (and also humanizes them), placing them at the same level as the visitor.

Secondly, those museums also share three important functions, defined by Sodaro as "preserving the past: memorial museums as truth-telling mechanisms" (p.163), "healing the present" (p.169) and "shaping the future: the memorial museums as sites for moral education" (p.173). The author traces the preservation of *in situ* tangible testimonies of past horrors and violence (like the musealization of concentration camps such as Auschwitz, which holds a collection of Holocaust relics) to demonstrate how this strategy is often followed by many memorial museums that are not located in the same sites where atrocities were committed. In these cases, victim's related objects and human remains are used as memory aids. But they also carry a powerful emotional significance as undeniable and tangible evidences of human rights abuse, of lives lost in tragedies and shall "… persist as record for posterity of man's inhumanity to man" (p.175). Sodaro further shows that holocaust museums (and particularly Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Israel) set the paradigm for the use of these techniques, elements, spatial layouts and narrative construction. These settings enable visitor immersion in the exhibition space, thus accomplishing another memorial museum's purposes: education for peace and promotion of human rights. Based on the assumption that "memory heals" (p.169), these institutions provide space for moral restoration and remembrance. Such forms of symbolic reparation are not directed to a specific community, but to society in general, in the present and in the future, as a form of "promise" (Arendt 1958), thus fulfilling the need for the "cosmopolitan memory imperative" (Levy & Sznaider 2005). By doing so, memorial museums clearly cut with the past – it is now a "foreign country" (Lowenthal 1985) – and set eyes on a peaceful and democratic future: " … the museum itself is an external symbol to the world that the present and (future) regime(s) will not allow such violence to recur." (p.171). However, this chronological and symbolic disruption, separating past and present and considering that the current political regimes are different (and even superior) from the ones that committed such hatred and intolerant acts, is dangerous. It conveys a *rhetoric* (p.182) that, despite "good intentions", can undermine the mission of these institutions, by replicating the same behaviours they condemn.

Finally, the author underlines that all these institutions have a political genesis, no matter where they are based and what stories they present. They reflect more the current regimes that led to their foundation than the past ones they intend to expose and to come to terms with. And although memorial museums' goals are promising, they may also present certain limitations that endanger the whole project from within. On the one hand, the chosen versions of the past and the empathy towards the victims might be fabricated according to the current needs of states or governments agendas, thus raising representability issues. What side is being highlighted? Who decides who "speaks"? The preference for representing some groups over the others establishes different categories of "suffering" and victimization. On the other hand, the remembrance goal of memorial museums seems to cloud the necessity of discussing past violence critically, making the hope they portray

seem "hollow" (p.195). Hence, the power of these museums is also their weakness, as memories can be easily instrumentalized, for instance by extremist groups or political regimes, to legitimize specific agendas and narratives.

Sodaro's work is extremely relevant not only because it convokes a (timely) reflection on these difficult heritages and memories, but also because it highlights the political nature of museums and the impact of its main communication media – the exhibition – on visitors. By addressing issues like atrocities and abuse of human rights, Sodaro's book meaningfully participates in the current awareness and discussion about humanity's past violence (such as colonialism and slavery), in which museums play an important role. As the recent debate regarding these matters suggests, it seems that the consequences of European colonial hegemony can no longer be ignored, and that museums have the moral and civic duty to perform such "politics of regret", as they were often symbols and agents of the regimes responsible for colonial violence and subjugation.

Presented in seven well-organized, clear chapters, Amy Sodaro's book inspires the reader to know more about these organizations and the violent acts they expose. While the author clearly sets the analysis of the exhibition production as her main goal, it would be interesting to know more about what happens in terms of reception. As she questions several times on *Exhibiting Atrocity*, are the messages being received loud and clear by the visitors?; is this "never again" ethics really inspiring people to do better or is something that is forgotten after crossing the museum exit? The timing for this book review could not have been more fortuitous; falling on January 27th, the Holocaust Remembrance Day, it reinforces, as I am writing, the relevance of this publication and of memorial museums. Even if they are reminders of humanity and fragility, at best and worst, one hopes that they'll help to educate and empower visitors, changing mentalities and contributing to a better world, so one can do more than just remember. ●

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FOTEINI VLACHOU. *THE DISAPPOINTED WRITER: SELECTED ESSAYS.*

LISBOA: EDIÇÕES DO SAGUÃO, 2019

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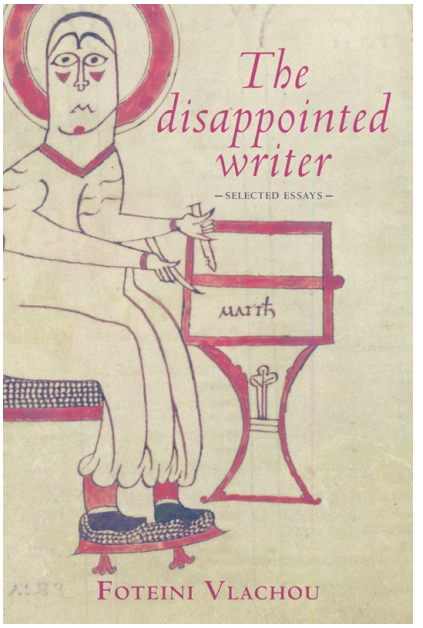

The disappointed writer gathers essays written by Foteini Vlachou (1975-2017) during her prolific and unconventional academic and research activity, which, among other insightful achievements, put periphery at the centre of a critically and ethically committed art historiography, as Terry Smith emphasises in his introduction. The art historian centres his text on the final essay of the book "Why Spatial? Time and the Periphery" (pp. 333-352), which presented an alternative stance (time) to consider peripherality, and underlines Vlachou's main contribution to this topical issue: "we should think of continuity and change in the history of art as occurring within a framework shaped less by the relationships between metropolitan centres and provincial outposts, more by relationships between unstable centres and several kinds of peripheries" (pp. XIII-XIV).

By considering "other temporalities" (pp. XXIII and 343-345), Vlachou's challenging proposal resonates with Smith's own reflections on contemporaneity, as the interview published in the current issue well demonstrates. However, Vlachou applies this alternative perspective in the revision of traditional historiography and in the analysis of creative practices from the past, proving its usefulness and effectiveness in undermining the canons and hierarchies of a history based in the binary relation between centre and periphery. Indeed, as she claims in her article (also quoted by Smith): "the periphery has the potential to subvert categories that have dominated (art) historical thinking since its inception (centre, canon, nation), while bringing to the fore the fundamentally unequal power configurations that have characterized the discipline and its various practices" (p. 335).

Vlachou's own personal and academic itinerary outlines a geography that is in the margins of the main narratives of European art, but is nevertheless able to naturally assume its autonomy and relevance. Having been born in Greece, she completed her PhD entitled *Art in the European Periphery: History Painting in Portugal at the*

beginning of the Nineteenth Century, in the University of Crete, under the supervision of Nicos Hadjinicolaou, in 2013. In the course of her research, she settled permanently in Portugal. She integrated the IHA/NOVA FCSH, where she coordinated the research cluster "art in the periphery". Before her premature death, she was preparing the book *Painting History, Monarchy and the Empire, Portugal c. 1799-1807* for Routledge. The collection of essays published in *The disappointed writer*, corresponds to these peculiar journeys in art history, but also testifies to the eclectic interests of the author, who was also a passionate cinephile.

Portuguese art, more specifically, Portuguese painting from the late eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century was the territory that Vlachou elected to respond to the need to "narrate the periphery" (quotation in p. xxiv). Accordingly, in the chapter "The Empire in Transition and History Painting in Portugal", the author looks into the complex textures of the political times that inevitably entangled artistic production. She is especially concerned with the "ruptures involving unprecedented events such as the migration of a Western monarch to a South American colony" (p. 97), which refers to the transference of the seat of Portuguese monarchy to Brazil in 1807, in the context of the French invasions. The phrasing of such event renders evident its uniqueness and the necessity of thoroughly examining reactions and consequences. In this case, as in others approached by the author in this book, crystallized readings that have neglected deeper involvements between political context and visual culture have blocked new and problematising approaches, more specifically: "the persistence of traditional historiography of art in Portugal that tends to interpret works by assigning them stylistic labels (romantic, neoclassic) or focus on monographic/ biographic approaches" (p. 98).

One of the most influential results of Vlachou's renewed observation of the period is the definition of the "New History Painting" that has as protagonists Francisco Vieira Portuense (1765-1805) and Domingos António Sequeira (1768-1837), who were also leading figures of Portuguese painting in the transition between the eighteenth and the nineteenth century. In different chapters the author highlights the "common ideological parameters" of both painters (p. 109), who attempted to convey the indissociable link between monarchy and the integrity of the empire as well as the redefinition of the "position of the aristocrat in a new world crystallized into visual ideologies, that were expressed in Portuguese history painting up until the departure of the royal family and court for Brazil" (p. 108). Those visual ideologies were diffused among a network of patrons, diplomats and artists, and materialized into a "subject matter exclusively from the Portuguese historical past, depicted in a way that stressed the – imagined – reality of the past" (p. 165) as opposed to the previous dominance of mythological or religious themes. Vlachou makes clear that this is a very specific episode in Portuguese artistic production and not simply a proto-Romantic stage.

By paying close attention to a neglected field in Portuguese art historiography, decorative history painting, Vlachou makes us recognize how canonical readings have undermined the way we look at a work of art or at an artistic corpus. Her analysis

of the decorative painting produced by Columbano Bordalo Pinheiro (1857-1929) is a telling example of the way a specific and undisputed narrative about a painter constructed around his celebrated tenebrist portraits obscured a significant aspect of his creative practice that, moreover, established a timely link with contemporary French production (pp. 213-235). Throughout the book, international articulations are emphasized; and more importantly, the centrality of the Portuguese context in the process of artistic creation and historiographic discussion is also argued, for instance in the impracticability of the Vasarian model for Portuguese historiography in the eighteenth century (pp. 45-47). Expanding the analysis of the Portuguese artistic panorama from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century towards neglected topics such as the late introduction of landscape as an autonomous pictorial genre in Portugal, the prominence of the tradition of the study of decorative arts, or the institutional history of the history of art, Vlachou concludes that "the history of art history in Portugal remains to be written" (p. 253). In the chapter dedicated to the teaching of art history in the Lisbon Academy of Fine Arts (pp. 253-261), she criticizes the "importation of a French-inspired model of art history" in the mid-twentieth century confronting it with earlier thinkers, writers and teachers, whose "nationalistic tone" suggested "a more suitable path for peripheral historiographies of art to follow, when dealing with the understanding of how the scientific object of art history was ultimately shaped in areas that may have, intellectually, crossed paths with the main centres of art history production, but that remained resolutely in separate spheres of activity and imperial priorities" (p. 261). Vlachou was not afraid to touch the margins of art history and bring them together in order to reveal, in a direct and engaging tone, fresh and compelling contributions to the discipline. *The disappointed writer* exposes an author with self-humour and a crude awareness of fleeting time, but resolutely committed to direct our look to obscured and neglected stories in their own time and context. ●

news

DoME: the database of modern exhibitions of european paintings and drawings (1905-1915)

At the beginning of the 20th century numerous artists founded ever-new avant-garde movements. They reached the public primarily through exhibitions – from Fauvism (1905, Salon d'Automne, Paris) to Suprematism (1915, The Last Futurist Exhibition of Painting 0,10, St. Petersburg). The art historical canon relies heavily on a limited selection of these exhibitions which, although they have been studied abundantly, only give a small glimpse into the events of that time. Many actors, places, and connections remain obscure. In order to write a proper history of modern art, we need to comprehensively consider the history of its exhibitions. DoME (https://exhibitions.univie.ac.at/), a database of modern art exhibitions, delivers the basis for such an overview. By grounding and expanding on Donald Gordon's 1974 *Modern Art Exhibitions 1900-1916, the database covers, as completely as possible, the European continent in regard to exhibited paintings and drawings for the crucial years between 1905 and 1915. DoME provides open access to a wealth of structured metadata of approximately one thousand exhibition catalogues. The catalogues' contents are translated as closely as possible into a digital format. The database currently contains about 150,000 catalogue entries by more than 11,700 artists.*

The extensive use of authority files (Getty's ULAN, AAT and TGN, Integrated Authority File, Wikidata) and the highly relational structure of the database enable detailed analysis across

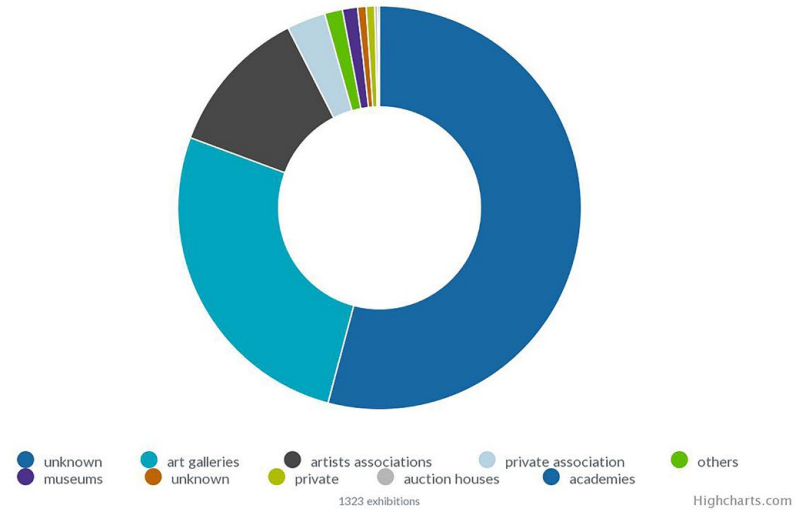

Fig. 1 – Pie chart showing the proportions of various types of venues the exhibitions contained in DoME are held at.

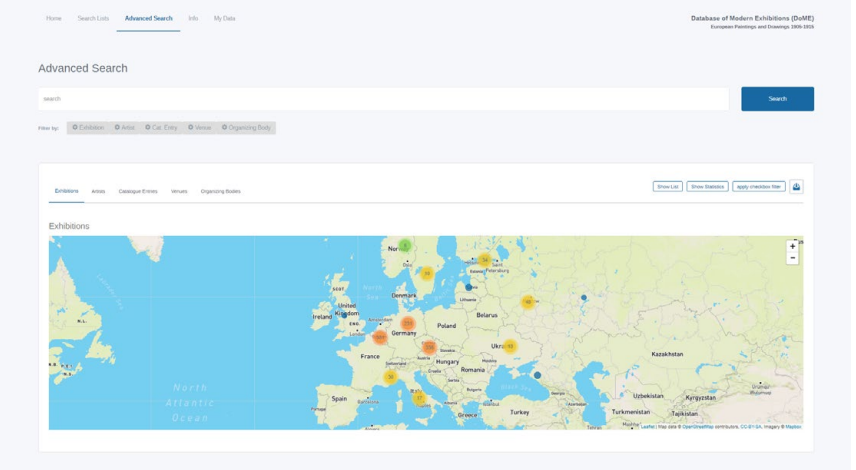

Fig. 2 – Screenshot of the map view of DoME, showing the geographic distribution of exhibitions in Europe contained in the database. © OpenStreetMap

*the many variations of languages and spellings within the original sources, in- and outgoing connection to the Linked Open Data Cloud, and the re-usage of this data. The initial interface includes interactive mappings and data visualizations (*Figs. 1 and 2) in the form of lists and statistics, selective combinations and advanced search options offering a variety of filters as well as save and export options that enable personalized research.

The queries and quantitative analyses supported by the database provide an answer to questions related to the chronology, geographic distribution and networks of modern painting: where (in which cities and institutions), when, how many artworks, and with whom did artists exhibit? Additionally, the broad and inclusive approach supports research oriented towards different areas of the art world, not only exhibitions, but also artists and artworks, museums and art market.

DoME is the first result of the research project "Exhibitions of Modern European Painting 1905-1915", located at the Department of Art History of the University of Vienna, led by Prof. Raphael Rosenberg, and funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF). ●

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Pathfinder: a system for data exploration, analysis, and visualization of art exhibitions

The growing consolidation of art exhibition studies as a research field has been accompanied by the emergence of numerous projects devoted to the construction of databases and archives, as well as the development of digital platforms for consultation and analysis. The Exhibitium Project (www.exhibitium.com), coordinated by the iArtHis_Lab research group of the University of Málaga (Spain) since 2015, falls within this research framework.

One of the devices developed within the Exhibitium Project is Pathfinder (https://hdplus.es/pathfinder/). Pathfinder is a system for exploring, analyzing and visualizing data about art exhibitions previously recorded in the Expofinder system (www.expofinder.es), a multi-relational database that is semantically enriched with fine-grained metadata. This design is based on the main theoretical framework that underlies the Exhibitium Project: network and complex system theories. Figure 1 shows the Expofinder conceptual model represented in a graph.

In general terms, Pathfinder was designed following four essential principles:

1. Flexibility and high precision in the search function. Pathfinder includes a powerful filter system based on combi-

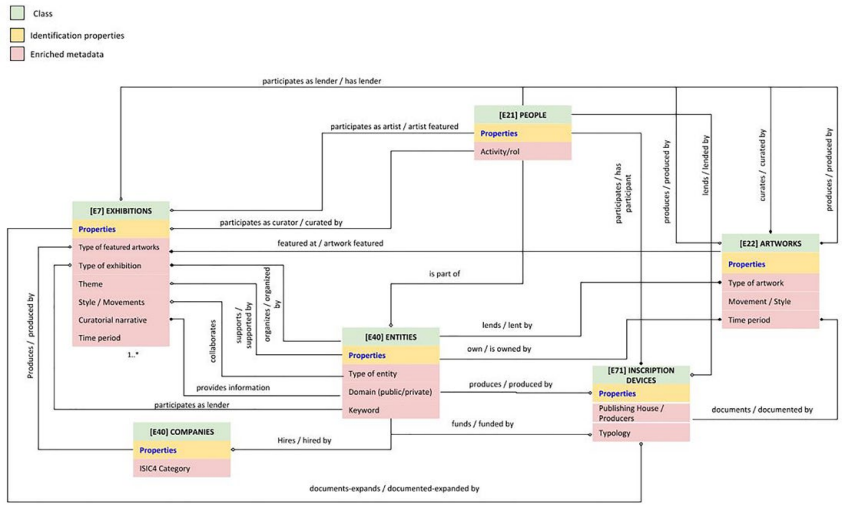

Fig. 1 – Exhibitium's conceptual model. © Rodríguez-Ortega & Cruces Rodríguez.

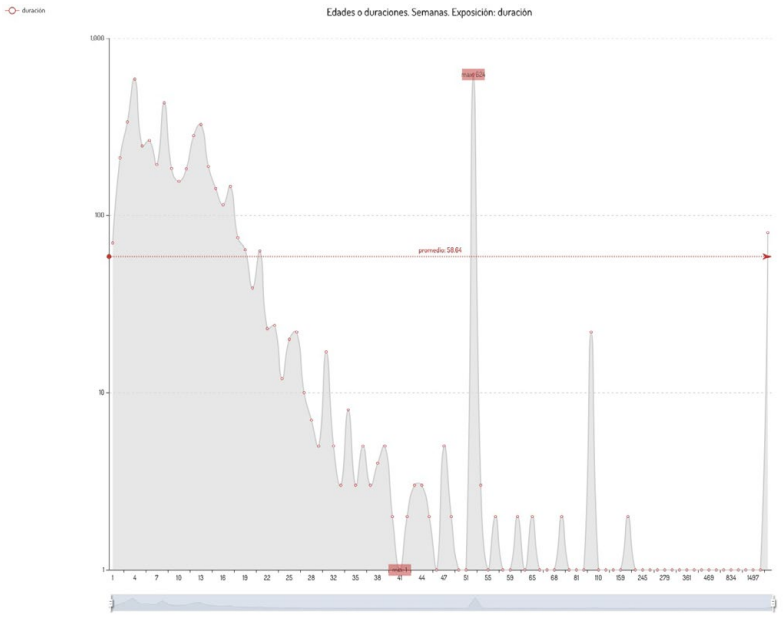

Fig. 2 – Exhibitions' length measured in weeks. The length ranges above the average line (in red) constitute outliers because of their infrequency: 1-19-week exhibitions and 1-year exhibition. Source: Expofinder. Analysis operated with Pathfinder .

nations of multiple queries that makes it possible to gather specific subsets of data using as many conditions as needed. Complementarily, the Expofinder multi-relational data model on which Pathfinder operates exponentially increases both the direct and indirect connections established among data. For example, we could retrieve a list of exhibitions held in Madrid, between 2010 and 2015, curated by non-Spanish curators, funded by private entities, where 25-35-year-old female artists participated with pictorial works.

2. Optimization of analytical engines for knowledge extraction based on quantitative processes by exploring statistical concepts potentially significant for humanistic research. For this reason, advanced descriptive statistics functionalities have been implemented, thereby making it possible to incorporate previously unexplored categories in the analysis of the art exhibition ecosystems, such as those of 'entropy' and 'outlier'. These categories help us in discovering atypical results that do not respond to the dynamics usually observed (Fig. 2).

3. Visualizations as crucial hermeneutic and interpretative tools. According to this idea, a broad array of visualization tools that can be configured by users have also been implemented in Pathfinder with the aim of making the information as insightful as possible. Together with the traditional maps, histograms and networks, others have been designed ad hoc for Pathfinder, such as those that we have called 'geograms' and 'taxograms' (Fig. 3). The geoanalytical section is made up of maps which, in addition to the usual georeferenced information and flow paths between connected actors, include a convex envelope calculation based on Delaunay triangulation and Thiessen polygons, which helps us to detect possible areas of influence based on the proximity between different groups of elements (exhibitions, artists, etc.).

4. Wide-range usability and interoperability. Finally, Pathfinder can operate

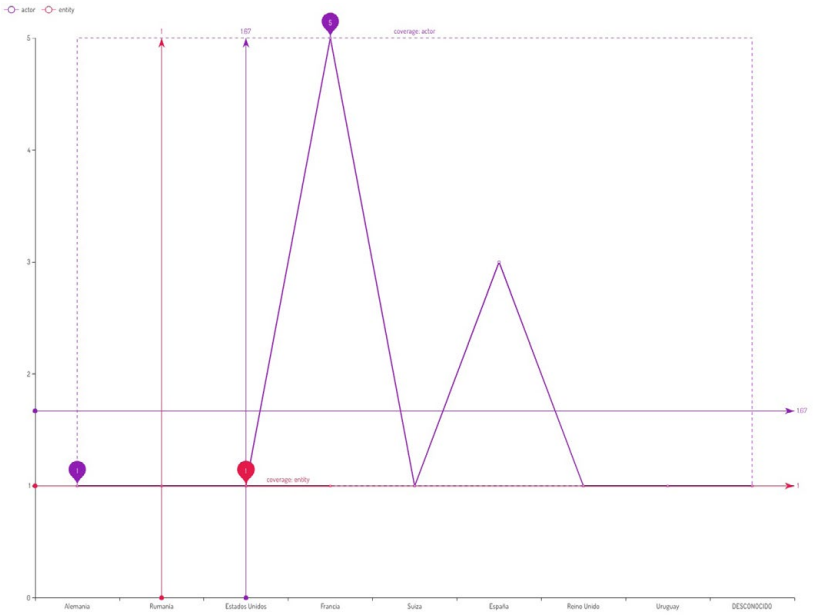

Fig. 3 – Geogram representing the exhibitions' geopolitical coverage regarding both actors (in purple) and institutions (in red). Source: Expofinder. Analysis operated with Pathfinder.

with any dataset – whether extracted from Expofinder or not – that matches up with the JSON structure available at https://github.com/antoniocruces/pathfinder. This means that Pathfinder can be used by any researcher interested in making use of the data exploration, analysis and visualization opportunities that Pathfinder offers. At the same time, any subdataset obtained with Pathfinder can be exported in standard formats to be processed using other platforms and software.

Pathfinder has been made possible thanks to funding provided by the Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad of the Spanish Government (HAR2014-51915-P) and the Centro de Estudios Andaluces of the Junta de Andalucía (PRY128-17). ●

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History of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's Art Exhibitions – Online Catalogue

The exhibitions organised by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (FCG) since 1957 have been one of its most important public activities. They are the result of the strategy of the FCG on the cultural and artistic field and express its interest in promoting young artists and stimulating heritage and artistic studies. In the meantime, the FCG's exhibitions have been an important tool for promoting international art in Portugal and for disseminating Portuguese art abroad.

The History of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's Art Exhibitions – Online Catalogue [*História das Exposições de Arte da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian – Catálogo Digital*] is a research project covering a relevant topic and based on fundamental documentary sources of Portuguese Art History and Museum Studies (see https://institutodehistoriadaarte.wordpress.com/research/ihafunded/historia-das-exposicoes-de-arte-fcg/).

This project aims at inventorying all the art exhibitions promoted by the FCG, collecting the most relevant data about each event: title, venue, dates, description, represented artists, curator, museographer, organization partnerships, graphic and photographic material, bibliography, press releases, critical articles or associated documents. The research is based on documental and bibliographic sources at the Gulbenkian Archives and Art Library (Figs. 1 and 2) and the collected data is being incorporated in a database. This platform will be available online for the public, in December 2019, allowing the scientific community and the general public ac-

cess to the history of the Foundation's exhibit activity and its sources.

This 5-year long research project, which began in 2014, is based on a strategic partnership between the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (scientific, editorial and executive production) and the IHA/ Institute of History of Art (FCSH, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa), whose research group *Museum Studies* scientifically supports this study by promoting the integrated training of researchers, namely with the supervision of curricular internships, Masters' dissertations and PhD theses.

The project History of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's Art Exhibitions – Online Catalogue poses, from the outset, several issues necessarily related both to the preservation and accessibility of the documentation produced in the context of the organization and production of the exhibitions or regarding the choice of its best methodological and scientific approach. In fact, the study of a relevant exhibition allows to expand the field of historical research through the development of more comprehensive studies, inserting the expository phenomenon in its cultural, social, artistic or diplomatic context. Exhibit-related documental material is essential to trace design and organization processes, to determine their true impact and make these events accessible at the present. Within the scope of this project, this will be achieved through collecting a large diversity of records made available by the range of documentation gathered in the noteworthy archive of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

Finally, this project aims to integrate the wide international debate related to the exhibition studies, and to participate in the recent process of patrimonialization and memory preservation of art exhibitions, an important object of study for art historians, critics and museologists. ●

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Figs. 1 and 2 – © Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

Laboratório de Artes na Montanha – Graça Morais

The Portuguese painter Graça Morais (b.1948) is the author of an extensive work which reflects both her origins – a small rural village in Northeast Portugal – and her experience in a cosmopolitan and constantly changing world. Her paintings not only evoke memories, but also describe contemporary events, thus intersecting the local and the global, the past and the present, in a dynamic approach that involves and questions the observer – and, through him, all humankind.

Inspired by the tutelary figure of Graça Morais and her fruitful and continuous activity over the last forty years, the Instituto Politécnico de Bragança [Polytechnic Institute of Bragança] (IPB) has recently created the Laboratório de Artes na Montanha – Graça Morais (LAM-GM) [Laboratory Arts in the Mountain – Graça Morais], a research structure that aims at promoting and disseminating scientific and artistic research and creation, also including formative activities, and academic training (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1 – The logo of Laboratório de Artes na Montanha – Graça Morais, inspired on Morais' original drawing *Ramo de Oliveira* [Olive Tree Branch], 2019 (Indian ink on paper, 10x15cm).

The LAM-GM is based at the School of Education and integrated in the Mountain Research Centre (CIMO), at IPB. Its creation results from a strategic partnership between the Câmara Municipal de Bragança [Municipality of Bragança] / Centro de Arte Contemporânea Graça Morais [Contemporary Art Centre Graça Morais], and the Instituto de História da Arte of the Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa (IHA / NOVA FCSH). LAM-GM also benefits from the support of the Foundation for Science and Technology. The LAM-GM activities follow four main guidelines:

1. Research, inventory and creation of a Documentation Centre on the work of the painter Graça Morais. The main objective of this new documentation centre is to promote the systematic inventory of Graça Morais' works and archives, in order to make them available to students and researchers who wish to study her artistic production. Furthermore, the centre intends to gather documentation on artists and works relating to the geographical context of the mountain.

2. Development of innovative curricular programmes at the IPB, with the immersion of students in research and art-practice contexts. The LAM-GM will contribute to the improvement of the art courses offered by the IPB, developing innovative methodologies which combine artistic practice and research, and promoting activities that articulate art and science.

3. Dissemination and promotion of artistic creation. With this purpose in view, several activities will take place: organization of masterclasses, thematic seminars, artistic residences and workshops; promotion of performing activities of artistic creation and training for specialized and non-specialized audiences; dissemination of results through publications and other didactic instruments; the creation of the Graça Morais Prize, which will award scholarships to young artists with recognisable creative talent.

4. Creation of a cross-border mountain artistic research network. The new research structure will develop its action taking the Northeast Portugal as its territory. It intends to constitute an interregional and cross-border network involving neighbouring institutions and art centres. It will connect the city of Bragança and its rural surroundings, with other Northeast councils, and also the Spanish border provinces (Autonomous Community of Castilla-León, province of Zamora). This new project aims at converting Bragança and its surroundings in a decentralized hub of cultural events. In this partnership, the participation of the IHA / NOVA FCSH in the project is coordinated by Raquel Henriques da Silva, who will provide scientific mentoring and engage senior and junior researchers in the promotion of academic initiatives.

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The NOVA/FCSH postgraduate progamme *Art Market and Collecting* attended the professional preview of the 58th Venice Biennial

Art Fairs and Biennials: Circuits of Art – a recently created practice-led course in the NOVA postgraduate programme "Art Market and Collections" – promotes critical analysis through observation, and allows students to experience the most relevant events of the contemporary art world. In the 2019 edition, and following a visit to the ARCO contemporary art fair in Madrid, the chosen art event was the oldest biennale in the world: La Biennale di Venezia. This year, the 58th International Art Exhibition, curated by Ralph Rugoff, is entitled *May you Live in Interesting Times*.

The five-day visit last May was an opportunity to observe and compare diverse curatorial practices, to go through and discuss the national pavilions according to concepts of "representation" or "under-representation", to scrutinise the Arsenale's Proposition A and the Giardini's Proposition B (sections which shared the same artists but configured different approaches to their works through diverse museographic strategies), and to immerse oneself in the biennale's parallel programme, taking place inside and outside the main venues. It was also a unique chance to feel the excitement and experience the atmosphere of the openings.

May you Live in Interesting Times invites us to reflect, through the critical eye of artists, on current concerns, such as migration and refugee crisis, large scale media manipulation and misinformation, identity and gender equality issues (presenting a significant number of women artists), ecology and digital pollution, referring extensively to post-internet and post-human conditions. Furthermore, it draws attention to artistic media, notably digital resource installations, painting and photography, but also performance, to which a specific opening programme was dedicated.

Fig. 1 – Venice Biennial – The Lithuanian Pavilion, *Is Sun & See (Marina)*, 2019. Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė, Vaiva Grainytė and Lina Lapelytė. Curator Lucia Pietroiusti.

Fig. 2 – Postgraduate Studies *Art Market and Collecting* – 3rd Edition. Students at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, 2019.

Besides the main exhibition and the national representations in the Giardini and Arsenale, the group also visited exhibitions in other locations in the city. Outside the main exhibition but resuming its narrative in a sublime and accurate form, the must-see was the Lithuanian Pavilion, awarded with the Golden Lion for Best National Participation (Fig. 1). *Sun & See (Marina)*, created by the artists Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė, Vaiva Grainytė and Lina Lapelytė and curated by Lucia Pietroiusti, is an ecological opera-performance, including around 20 performers, who sing the concerns about climate changes in an artificial, yet extremely realistic sandy beach.

The Portuguese presence, which does not integrate Rugoff's selection and programme, remained relatively unnoticed in the Palazzo Giustinian Lolin. Curated by João Ribas, the group of site-specific sculptures conceived by Leonor Antunes, titled *A Seam, a Surface, a Hinge, or a Knot*, dialogues poetically with the architectonic grammar of the baroque building. The visitors' experience is stimulated both by this spatial ambiance and by the peculiar scent of the materials used by the artist.

The parallel programme of the visit included spaces such as the Peggy Guggenheim Collection (Jean Arp) (Fig. 2), Palazzo Grassi (Luc Tuymans), Punta della Dogana, Chiesa di Santa Maria della Visitazione (The Death of James Lee Byars), Universitá IUAV (Future Generation Prize 2019), Fondazione Prada (Jannis Kounellis) or Espace Louis Vuitton (Philippe Parreno), among others. ●

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Gustave Le Gray, Gallery near the Salon Carré, the Salon of 1850-51. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

The *Revista de História da Arte* n. 14 addresses the "exhibition" not only as an object of study but mainly as a prolific problem. This theme is here covered through various lenses, underlining how the exhibition is a vital topic to many interdisciplinary and interrelated research fields that deal with museums, art, culture and diplomacy.

A *Revista de História da Arte* n.º 14 aborda a "exposição" não apenas como um objeto de estudo mas sobretudo como um problema com muitas ramificações. Este tema é aqui explorado sob diversas perspetivas que sublinham a importância vital das exposições para muitas linhas de investigação interdisciplinares que abordam os museus, arte, cultura e diplomacia.

APOIOS / PATROCÍNIOS

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