



AN UNPREDICTABLE EXPRESSION OF HUMAN POTENTIAL

Teacher's Documentation

14.10.2017-19.01.2018

b. BEIRUT ART CENTER
مركز بيروت للفن



This Document is aimed at teachers: it is not meant for students' use. It does not replace the visit, nor is it a record that documents the exhibition. It is a research tool to be used by the teachers to address the exhibition in relation to different knowledge backgrounds so that they can refer to it in the course of their practice. The Workbook exists to facilitate the teachers's use of the visit for work-in-class purposes and to inspire them and guide them through their teaching practices.

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I. Curator's Statement

تعبير لا يمكن التنبؤ به عن قدرة الإنسان

An Unpredictable Expression of Human Potential

هزّت أعمال الشغب الغاضبة ضاحية «سان دوني» الباريسية بعد الاغتصاب المزعوم للشباب «تيو» من قبل الشرطة، وهو غضب يتصل أيضاً بحادثة خنق شاب أسود يدعى «أداما تراوري» بينما كان محتجزاً لدى الشرطة قبل ذلك بعام. في لندن، عاين السكان الغاضبون الجثث المتفجّمة في إحدى بنايات برج غرينفيل المحترق. وفي لبنان، ينشأ جيل من الشباب السوري تحت وطأة وضعهم كلاجئين. تتميز خبرة الشباب في أنحاء العالم اليوم، بالتجربة المباشرة أو غير المباشرة، باصطدامها مع العنف المؤسساتي اليومي، المصحوب بفقدان الثقة في الدولة، يصوغه خطاب النيوليبرالية (وطنياً كان أو عالمياً) الاستبعادي والإقصائي.

بدلاً من مطالبة الفن بإيجاد حلول أو رسم طوباويات الحنين التي تلجأ إلى مشاريع يسار الماضي القريب الفاشلة، يسعى هذا المعرض للاستجابة للحظة العالمية الراهنة، التي يمكن فيها استشعار تحول نموذجي في التعبير الثقافي. عنوان المعرض مُستوحى من تحليل الصحافي جوشوا روتمانز لتعريف راييموند ويليامز للثقافة باعتبارها نقيضاً عضويًا ومتغيرًا ومتمردًا لدفق الحضارة المنضب. إن الثقافة - في تحولاتها الدائمة وما تتعرض له من تداول ديناميكي - هي في صميم تعبيرات جيل من الشباب المحيط، يحتجّ ضد قرارات فرضت عليه من قبل أجيال سبقتة - موروث لم يطلبوه ولم تجنيه أيديهم - ومن قبل عنف الدولة المتفشي والمتفاقم.

الفنانون مدعوون للمشاركة في عمران هذه اللحظة وتعريفها والتعبير عنها. تتخبط المشاريع مع ثقافة الشباب وحالة الغضب والقلق الاجتماعي، ومع البيئات الحضريّة الخائفة، ومع التهريب، ومع ثقافة الاحتجاج. تلك المشاريع تنبثق أيضاً من كل ما سبق، مُتجاهلة أعراف الفن والتصميم والأدب والسينما والأزياء والشعر وتقاليدها. لذا، فالمعرض يهدف إلى كشف التشابك المعقد لمناخ الفوضى العالمية الشاملة والأمم الفاشلة (وإن كان التلاعب بها لا يتوقف)، وطاقة الرّفص الشبابي للسرديات المتعارف عليها. يجتمع فنانون من لشبونة وأثينا وتطوان والجزائر وباريس وبرلين والدار البيضاء وبيروت... للتعبير عن وجهات نظر متنوعة، تتحد ضمن زاوية تستعرض الحال الراهن، من مدخل السخرية والمصارحة والنقد والاحتفاء.

هشام خالدي

Riots shake the Parisian suburb of Seine-Saint-Denis after the alleged rape of young Théo by police, an outrage haunted by the strangling of a young black man named Adama Traoré who died whilst in police custody one year earlier. Angry residents confront the charred carcass of the burnt-out Grenfell tower block in London. A generation of young Syrians grow up paralyzed by their refugee status in Lebanon. Young people's experience around the world today, both mediated and direct, is an encounter with daily structural violence, marked by a continuous distrust of the state, and shaped by exclusion from the national and global neoliberal narrative.

Instead of asking for solutions from art and sketching nostalgic utopias that take recourse in failed leftist projects of the recent past, this exhibition seeks to respond to the present global moment in which a paradigmatic shift can be sensed in the air and through cultural expression. The exhibition's title is drawn from journalist Joshua Rothman's analysis of Raymond Williams' definition of "culture" as the organic, heterogeneous and disobedient inversion of the disciplinary thrust of "civilization." Ever shifting and subject to dynamic re-appropriation, culture is central to a younger generation's expression of frustration with and protest against the rampant violence of the state and decisions imposed on them by older generations - an inheritance they did not ask for and did not shape.

Artists are invited to express, define and participate in the tectonics of this moment. Projects coalesce around and emerge from youth culture, social anger and unrest, carceral urban environments, trafficking. They protest culture while disregarding the conventions of art, design, literature, film, fashion and poetry. The exhibition thus aims to reflect the complex entanglement of a pan-global climate of entropy and failed (but ever manipulated) nationalisms, and the energy

of youthful rejections of received narratives. Artists are drawn together from across metropolises such as Lisbon, Athens, Tétouan, Algiers, Paris, Berlin, Casablanca and Beirut to represent diverse perspectives that converge in a viewpoint, surveying the state of things on the ground through irony, sincerity, criticality and celebration.

Hicham Khalidi

II. Artist Biographies

Sabrina Belouaar

Born in Charenton le Pont (Paris), France, lives and works in Paris, France. Belouaar studies at the École Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Marseille (DNAP Mention, DNSEP Félicitations). She received the Showroom 2016 Art o rama, Friche Belle de Mai, Marseille, France. Her recent solo exhibitions include: Alfortville (in collaboration with Mohamed Bourouissa) at Ambacher Contemporary Gallery, Munich (2016), and

Henna (2017)

Henna on canvas, 200 x 151 cm

Mate de Peau (2015)

Makeup on paper, 6 x 31 x 24 cm

Malaxe (2013)

Video, 55'3"

The works of French/Algerian artist Sabrina Belouaar revisit existing problems such as social inequality, identity and the status of women. She transposes personal, multicultural, social and historical references into clues, traces or symbols, using materials that were prominent in her youth, such as henna. In this exhibition, three works are presented. In Henna (2015), a monochrome of henna questions the body and origins as the smell of henna fades illustrating memories that escape us over time. Mate de peau (2015) is a series of facial prints of makeup configured into an "anthropometric" statement. In the video Malaxe (2013), we see the hands of the artist manipulating henna; a gesture of immersing oneself in both a culture and personal history.



Sabrina Belouaar, Malaxe (2013)

Sara Sejin Chang (Sara van der Heide)

Sara Sejin Chang (Sara van der Heide), (b.1977, Busan, South Korea) lives and works in Amsterdam and Brussels. Her work consists of political and poetic interventions, drawing series, performances and films through which she proposes a more inclusive modernity. Her work calls for a meditative state of mind where divisions imposed upon us by history – between distinct domains of culture, between cultures, between various –isms in art – are made to collapse. Among others, she has amongst others participated in various exhibitions and performed at the following venues: at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Amsterdam; the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; the 1st Asia Biennial/ the 5th Guangzhou Triennial, Guangzhou; The School of Kyiv:

Mother Mountain Institute (2017-ongoing) **Installation, wooden structure/box, two audio files, rotating mechanism with two spheres representing sun/moon, papier mache mountain, information desk**

The Mother Mountain Institute (2017-ongoing) was created in order to collect and tell stories of mothers who were forced to abandon their children, often due to pressures from patriarchal society, the church or the state. The project inquires how, in the constellation of international and interracial adoption – with its various stakeholders including adoption agencies, governments, criminal traffickers, the adoptees and the adopting parents – the life of the birth mother is often forgotten or overlooked.

A large wooden box with painted interior acts as a model representing the solar system. Two spheres, representing the sun and the moon and the mother and the child all at once, rotate within the space like clockwork. The red-yellow spheres each move at their own speed, occasionally meeting. A yellow circle surrounds a small white mountain in the middle of the room. Two figures are called upon: the Mother and the Mountain. A woman's voice narrates the story of a birth mother, based on an interview that took place in South Korea in February 2017. The mountain speaks in turn as a spiritual entity that provides possible answers to impossible questions, which transcend rational thought or knowledge. Drawings are on display, made over the course of several years during walks on various mountains that are known for their spiritual qualities in Poland, India, South Korea and most recently Lebanon.



Sara Sejin Chang (Sara Van Der Heide), Mother Mountain Institute (2017 - ongoing)

Christopher Ian Smith & CJ Clark

Christopher Ian Smith is a filmmaker and audiovisual artist with a background in television and music. For many years he was a DJ/VJ and performer with the audiovisual group Addictive TV. He was involved with the production and live performance of a wide range of experimental films, audiovisual cut-ups and motion graphics. This included performances and screened work at festivals and venues across the globe, including: Centre Pompidou, ICA and National Film Theatre. Now he is primarily focused on working with moving image. His films span documentary and fiction, sometimes merging the two. He is primarily focused on the interplay of landscape, folklore, architecture and the uncanny. His films include the experimental narratives ARTERIAL, A LONG WALK TO SLEEP and recent projects include the the improvised folk-thriller SULPHUR. Chris's films and moving image work has been screened at festivals globally, and he has been selected for a number of film development and talent schemes. He also founded and programmed the future film symposium EMERGE which is part the East End and Cork Film Festivals. Leipzig Class.

CJ Clarke is an award winning visual artist. He is the author of Magic Party Place which was shortlisted for the Aperture Paris Photo First Book Award 2016, Arles Authors Book Award 2017 and Photo Espana Book of the Year 2017. Completed over the course of ten years, the book documents contemporary England, mapping the roots of Brexit in the process. His film Mother & Daughter won the inaugural BJP/Canon Open Shutter award. He also wrote and directed It Shouldn't Happen Here an advert Save the Children's UK poverty campaign. In parallel to Magic Party Place, CJ has been working on the project Loyalists about contemporary Northern Ireland. His work has been commended in the Ian Parry Award, twice in the Observer Hodge Award, three times in the Magenta Flash Forward Award. He is co-founder of crowd sourced activist initiative, The Rape in India Project (www.therapeinindiaproject.org/). He is co-founder and director of Just Another Photo Festival (<http://www.justanotherphotofestival.com/>), a guerrilla festival that democratizes visual media by taking photography to the people and forging new audiences.

Magic Party Place (2016)
CJ Clarke and Christopher Ian Smith
Digital prints, Variable dimensions

New Town Utopia (2017)
Christopher Ian Smith
Video, 60'

In this collaboration, artists CJ Clarke and Christopher Ian Smith deconstruct and interrogate their individual projects, presenting a large-scale photographic project, Magic Party Place (2016) by Clarke, and a feature documentary, New Town Utopia (2017) by Smith. Together they explore the mood of contemporary England through the post-war era, sometimes modernist, and often brutalist architectural and social constructions known as "new towns."

New towns were originally designed as social utopias along Thomas More's vision, in order to create "a new type of citizen, a healthy, self-respecting, dignified person with a sense of beauty, culture and civic pride." Specifically focusing on the English new town of Basildon, this project explores the intentions and successes of such top-down social planning, and its impact on the behaviors and attitudes of its residents.

Sixty years on, the town has become deteriorated, degenerated and desaturated. Art and culture are almost a distant memory there and Basildon is now referred to as the worst town in Britain. The original architecture and urban planning, once thought to be so progressive, are now often vilified in the face of this struggling local economy, fragmented community and terrible reputation.

Coming in the wake of Brexit and a general election that revealed the divided state of the United Kingdom, this project delves beyond stereotypes to reveal the true heart of a community, which represents the mainstream of society yet perceives itself – like many working class communities – to have been pushed to the margins.



CJ Clarke and Christopher Ian Smith, Magic Party Place (2016)

Dala Nasser

Dala Nasser (b.1990) is a Beirut based artist. Her work centers around questions of material and process, producing works that respond to their physical, and contextual components, evolving autonomously over time. The defiance in Dala's work of conventional conceptions of painting, is clear; the specificity in the nature of the work is perhaps not so. By predominantly focusing on the intersection of material production in recent developments of pictorial practice, Dala has developed her own process using liquid latex as the binding core that merges to create a composite skin with the specific matter central to each piece. The work explores an observational view on and response to circumstance and context, particularly towards the current state in the artistic landscape. This participation in material context brings an objective, albeit personal agency to the making process. Having received her BFA in Fine Arts with focus in painting from UCL's Slade School of Arts in London, she was awarded the 2016 Boise Travel Scholarship and most recently the Surssock Museum in Beirut's 32nd Salon D'Automne Emerging Artist Prize. Her works

David Adjaye's Trash (2015)
Garbage, liquid latex, brick pigment, charcoal, tarpaulin,
195 x 177 cm

Yellow Complex (2015)
Turmeric, liquid latex, salt, charcoal, plaster, acrylic,
55 x 130 cm

Designed by world-renowned architect David Adjaye, the Aishti Foundation in Lebanon was officially opened while the city's unresolved garbage crisis unfurled. Social media outlets showed footage of garbage flooding the streets. International media, however, chose to cover the opening of the foundation. The painting, David Adjaye's Trash (2015), is made using the architect's garbage unrecognizably obscured with latex and pigment. The trash is branded with the deep red of the foundation building's facade, a latex skin mounted on the same tarpaulin sheets used to cover the heaps of trash that filled the streets of Beirut. The work relays its message through its materiality, hinting at a needed conversation without dictating its parameters. Bringing trash from the streets into an art institution, the piece confronts the consumption of art and it's role as an agent of change, alerting the viewer to our complicity in turning a blind eye.

The title of the work, Yellow Complex (2015), comes from a literal translation of the Arabic name for turmeric, the spice which has seen a recent rise in consumption due to increased awareness of its therapeutic powers, specifically for gastrointestinal healing. Combining natural elements such as turmeric, salt, and charcoal with manufactured objects like latex and glitter, the work questions the ingrained hierarchies of materials and mediums, as well as the contemporary consumer's preoccupation with food culture.



Dala Nasser, David Adjaye's Trash (2015)

Gaëlle Choisne

Gaëlle Choisne (b.1985, FR) lives and works in Amsterdam and Paris. She is currently in residency at the Rijkakademie Van Beeldende kunsten, Amsterdam (NL), until 2019. She has engaged with several private and public institutions, alternative projects, collective projects and extra cultural projects in Haiti. Exhibitions include Gallery La Centrale Powerhouse, Montréal; Villa Vassiliev, Paris; IAC, «Rendez-Vous15», Internationale Biennale of Lyon; Internationale Biennial of Havana, «Lejos del Teclado»; Villa Croce, Curators Ilaria Gianni and Anna Daneri, Genova; CAFA Museum, Rendez-vous 15, Beijing; MAMO, Cité Radieuse, «Cool as a state of mind», Marseille, amongst others.

Language of birds (2017) **Installation, 2017**

Language of birds (2017) **Video**

The protagonist of Gaëlle Choisne's pseudo-documentary is Libann Style-Keskia, a Beirut-born Lebanese rapper living in Lyon who works as a waiter and cook in a small restaurant in Villeurbanne. The video follows him as he writes texts, sings, stays with his friends and spends his time on the Internet searching for truths, both absolute and relative.

As we look for unofficial information, the language of birds is a useful tool for deciphering the hidden messages that are issued in the name of a new world order. In France, multiculturalism and globalization are the foundations that condition the lives of young people who are caught between the search for comfort and stability, and the uncertainty of a better future. Political violence and power accentuate the tension between pacifism or love, and the incitement for aggressive rebellion. The language of birds is the contemporary alchemy that transforms words into weapons, transmuting ills into positive energies. as the contemporary consumer's preoccupation with food culture.



Gaëlle Choisne, Language of Birds (2017)

Laura Henno

Laura Henno (b.1976, Paris) is a director, writer and photographer. Her films include *Koropa* (2016), *Missing Stories* (2014) and *Chamonix* (2003). *Koropa* was nominated for prizes at Thessaloniki Documentary Film Festival and Vila do Conde International Short Film Festival. Winner of the Pize Découverte of the Rencontres Internationales de Photographie of Arles in 2007, her photographic work is represented by Gallery Les Filles du Calvaire. Her films have been shown at Jeu de Paume, Paris; Festival international du film d'Afrique et des îles, La Réunion, France; Free Form Festival, Varsow, Poland amongst others. She has exhibited at BBB Centre d'Art, Toulouse, France; Centre régional de la photographie Nord Pas-de-Calais, Douchy-lesMines, France; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dunkerque, France; Fondation Miro, Barcelona, Spain; Pavillon Vendôme, Clichy, France; Musée d'Art Moderne André Malraux, Le Havre, France, amongst others.

Koropa (2013-2016) **Video, 20'**

Ben is a pilot and repairman of kwassa-kwassa, or the traditional fishing boats of the Comoros, a group of islands in the Indian Ocean that are divided by a violent border drawn by colonization. Like in the Mediterranean Sea, many risk their lives attempting to cross from Anjouan to Mayotte, the archipelago's only island that remains French today. To escape misery, Ben abandoned fishing to become a human smuggler. In this shadowy enterprise, he does his best to uphold his ethics and ensure his passengers' safety. In the dead of night, Ben passes this trade onto the young Patron, who is too young to be sentenced to prison and thus must become "commander" in order to escape conviction.

Koropa (2016) follows this silent rite of passage, solemn apprenticeship, and the transmission of a skill that owes as much to deceit as it does to navigating a hostile ocean. With its short and radical format and portrayal of abstract space, *Koropa* goes beyond documentary to produce a classical drama in which two silent figures, a father and son, share a perilous journey on the brink of the land of the dead, navigating an ocean haunted by those who have drowned. The crossing awakens the memories of many others who came before them, in a world where seas rise as borders and tombs.



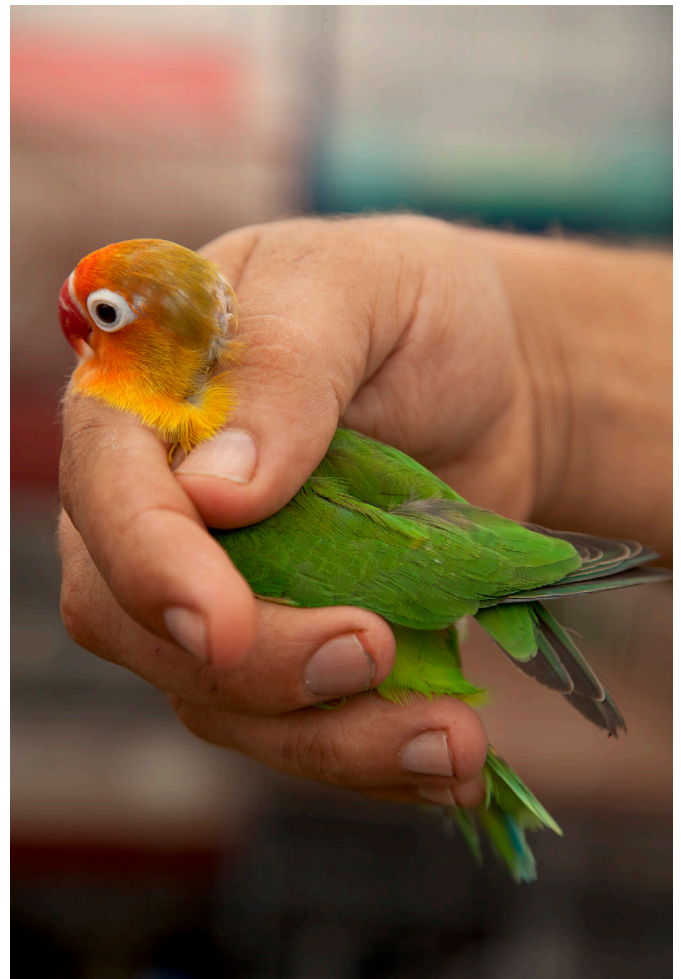
Laura Henno, Koropa (2013-2016)

Mohamed Bourouissa

Mohamed Bourouissa (b.1978, Blida, Algeria) lives and works in Paris. After graduating in Visual Arts from the Sorbonne, Paris I (2004) and the photography department of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs de Paris, he trained at the Studio National des Arts – Le Fresnoy in 2008-2010. Bourouissa's work has been shown in solo and group exhibitions internationally; The Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia (USA); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (Netherlands); Haus der Kunst, Munich (Germany); MAMVP/Palais de Tokyo, Paris (France); The Studio Museum, New York (USA); New York New Museum of Contemporary Art (United States), the Finish Museum of Photography of Helsinki (Finland); Moderna Museet Malmö (Sweden) amongst many others. He has taken part in international biennials such as the 6th Berlin Biennial (Germany), the Architecture and Photography Biennial of La Cambre in Brussels (Belgium), the Algiers Biennial of Contemporary Art (Algeria) or the Rencontres de Bamako (Mali). He has been nominated for the Prix Pictet, London (UK), and was awarded first prize at Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie, Le Off, Arles, France. His work is held in numerous collections including Stedelijk museum, Amsterdam, (2015), Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia (2011), Centre Pompidou, Paris (2011), Fonds National d'art contemporain, France (2009).

Si di kubi (2017) **Installation**

The French/Algerian artist Mohamed Bourouissa has initiated a platform with other artists from Paris and Beirut, including DJ SINA, musician Sharif Sehnaoui, photographer Dorine Potel, architect Tony Chakar and artist Ghida Bahsoun. Together they collaborate on ongoing music compilations that directly question the neoliberal mechanisms behind music production, proposing a more collaborative and open-sourced approach to cultural ownership. Each of the albums has a theme that relates to language, gentrification and the economy, and will be distributed back to the informal circuits of production and exchange. violence and power accentuate the tension between pacifism or love, and the incitement for aggressive rebellion. The language of birds is the contemporary alchemy that transforms words into weapons, transmuting ills into positive energies. as the contemporary consumer's preoccupation with food culture.



Mohamed Bourouissa, Si di Kubi (2017)

Younes Rahmoun

Younes Rahmoun's work draws inspiration from interdisciplinary and complementary sources : from cosmological systems to nomad traditions, supported by careful reading of Su texts. He is equally at ease with installations, drawing and video and uses them to interrogate the boundaries between popular knowledge, scientific knowledge and esoteric knowledge. Rahmoun has close links with the Rif region and its history (he is also involved in artist residency programmes with the Trankat organisation) and his work can as easily involve collaborative constructions, like, for example, his Ghorfas ("small bedrooms"), built in the countryside, as son et lumière environments based on numerology and unrecognisable legends. Younes Rahmoun maintains that the place of the spectator has to be determined from a certain number of cultural and phenomenological factors. His installations, which are sometimes in phase with the Qibla, can also turn out to be visual traps that play on fluctuations of light, volume and geometry.

Jabal-Hajar-Turab #6 (2015)

Stones, photos, drawings on paper, video and drawing on the wall, Variable dimensions

Hijra (meaning migration in Arabic) is a work in which Younes Rahmoun displaces seven stones from Bordeaux in France to the Rif mountains in Morocco and exchanges them for seven other stones that accompany him on his return. It is part of a series of works titled Jabal-Hajar-Turâb (Mountain-Stone-Earth) consisting of drawings, photographs, objects and video. Collectively, the works deal with placement and displacement, location and dislocation, the spiritual and the virtual. Devoid of today's pejorative implications of migration, it connotes the journey of the prophet Mohammed and his followers from Mecca to Medina, the founding moment of Islam and the start of the Islamic calendar. For the artist, Jabal-Hajar-Turâb deals with our relationship to territory and the community in which we find ourselves and live, but sometimes are forced to abandon.



Younes Rahmoun, Jabal-Hajar-Turab (2015)

Pedro Baraterio & Quinn Latimer

Pedro Barateiro (b. 1979, Lisbon) is an artist who often uses writing, film, sculpture and performance in his works. He had solo exhibitions at Kunsthalle Basel, Serralves Museum, Museu Coleção Berardo, Kunsthalle Lissabon, Lumiar Cité among other venues. His work has been included in exhibitions such as 29th Bienal de São Paulo; 16th Sydney Biennale; 5th Berlin Biennale; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Fondazione Giuliani, Rome; ngbk, Berlin; MHKA, Antwerp. His performances were presented at ZHdK, Zurich; 98Weeks, Beirut; Théâtre de la Ville, ENSBA and Fondation Ricard, Paris; M HKA/ Cinema Zuid, Antwerp; Centro Cultural São Paulo and Galeria Vermelho, São Paulo; Teatro São Luiz and Teatro Praga, Lisboa; Teatro Rivoli, Porto. Together with a group of artists, Barateiro was involved in Parkour, a space for exhibitions, screenings and performances that ran from 2012 to 2014, as part of a movement informally named Avenida 211, that occupied and managed a building for artist's studios for 30 artists and 4 art spaces in central Lisbon from 2007 to 2014. Among his collaborations he edited, with Ricardo Valentim, the books *Temporary Collaborations* (self-published, 2008) and *ACTIVITY* (JRP-Ringier, 2011). His self-published artist books include *The Sad Savages*, *The Negative Reader* and *Prova de Resistência*.

Quinn Latimer (b. USA) is a poet and critic from California whose work often explores feminist economies of writing, reading, and image production. Her books include *Like a Woman: Essays, Readings, Poems* (Sternberg Press, 2017); *Stories, Myths, Ironies, and Other Songs: Conceived, Directed, Edited, and Produced by M. Auder, coedited with Adam Szymczyk* (Sternberg Press, 2014); *Sarah Lucas: Describe This Distance* (Mousse Publishing, 2013); *Film as a Form of Writing: Quinn Latimer Talks to Akram Zaatari* (WIELS/Motto Books, 2013); and *Rumored Animals* (Dream Horse Press, 2012). Her writings, readings, and video collaborations have been included in exhibitions such as "6-4-2" (with Paolo Thorsen-Nagel), *LiveInYourHead*, Geneva; "Der Leone Have Sept Cabeças" (with Megan Rooney), CRAC Alsace, Altkirch, France; "Bungalow Germania," German Pavilion, Venice Architecture Biennale, Italy; "Pleasure Principles," Fondation d'Enterprise Galeries Lafayette, Paris; and "Gestures in Time," Qalandia International, Ramallah/Jerusalem. She has taught and lectured at Geneva's Haute école d'art et de design (Geneva University of Art and Design, HEAD); The Banff Centre, Canada; and Institut Kunst, Basel. She is editor in chief of publications for *documenta 14*.

Live from the West (2016-ongoing), Installation/Live Reading

The voice emerges from some city, disembodied; it is speaking to you, a kind of public. The body in the studio: its privacy. The body in the street: its solidarity. Images that project their narrative upon us; poems that call to us like a song or propaganda. The normalization of violence and all its languages. Why do we speak them? *Live from the West* (2016-ongoing), a project by artist Pedro Barateiro and writer Quinn Latimer, is an inquiry into liveness and resistance in the neocolonial present. It asks what it means to live in the so-called West of the world under fabricated, fictional, and sometimes very real crises – economic, ecological, sociopolitical. *Live from the West* broadcasts from the normalized state of exception that exemplifies our present. It narrates the body and the voice in private and public space, center and periphery, and in acts of complicity and protest. This collaborative work is informed by the movement between politics and fiction, the body and the body politic, as manifested in operations of language with concerns for orality, authority, literature and the cinematic soundtrack.

First exhibited at REDCAT in Los Angeles in 2016, this "revised" version of *Live from the West* offers a series of poems broadcast within a setting of freestanding photographs and sculptures. The poetry situates the speaker as both implicated in and resistant to a sequence of geopolitical crises and landscapes, which define the Western imaginary and its reality through issues of austerity, militarism, and terrorism, as well as sexual, racial, and ecological violence. During the opening, a live performance by Barateiro and Latimer will take place within the installation, leaving its traces – via voice and absence – for the remainder of the exhibition.



Pedro Barateiro and Quinn Latimer, Live From the West (2016 - ongoing)

Mostafa Saifi Rahmouni

Mostafa Saifi Rahmouni (b.1991, Rabat, Morocco) trained at Tétouan's Institut national des Beaux-Arts (fine arts institute) before moving to Brussels to complete a Master in Sculpture at the ENSAV La Cambre. Since graduating in 2016, he is in residence at Gent's HISK, within the framework of a post doctorate. He uses photography, installation, video, sculpture and sound to create frank, direct pieces. He is gifted with an instinct for images and forms that suggest more than they reveal through their many layers of interpretations. Far from being illustrative, his intent falls within the scope of a metaphorical relation and broaches universal preoccupations on the world and the obsessions linked to the strong ties binding life and death.

Looking for Truth (2016)
Oak and glass, 93 x 53 x 46 cm

L'intermédiaire (2015)
Wood, 80 x 15 cm

Piece of Bread (2015)
Solid Bronze, 15 x 13 x 4 cm, 10kg

Moroccan artist Mostafa Saifi Rahmouni plays with references to his cultural background in order to investigate the ways in which mankind engages with and overcomes violence. His works stem from personal and collective facts or events, provoked by belligerent social relations and power, in an attempt to translate the violence of our everyday lives into a singular and subtle – yet radical – gesture. Piece of bread (2015), which consists of two pieces of bread cast in bronze, refers to the symbolic value of sharing and prosperity while at the same time acknowledges the potential of necessities such as bread to trigger revolutions when in short supply. Although Looking for Truth (2016) may appear to be a design object, in fact it references a torture technique used in Moroccan prisons. L'Intermédiaire (2015) continues to reveal the subtleties of violence in the everyday use of objects, depicting a ready-made block of wood that has been shaped over several decades by a butcher's meat mallet.



Mostafa Saifi Rahmouni, Piece of Bread (2015)

Randa Maroufi

Randa Maroufi (b.1987, Casablanca, Morocco), is a Fine Arts graduate from Tetouan (Morocco), Angers (France) and Le Fresnoy (France). Maroufi belongs to this generation that grew up in an era dominated by images. She collects them with as much eagerness as suspicion, and ceaselessly questions their veracity. She prefers to put her ambiguous fictions in the service of reality, and the field of her experimentation encompasses the occupation of public space and gender issues, of which she highlights the founding mechanisms. Working in photography, installation, performance, sound and video, her work has been presented at major contemporary art events including The Marrakech Biennale (2014), African Photography Meeting in Bamako (2015), Dubai photo exhibition (2016), The Videonale Bonn (2017) and film festivals such as The International Film Festival Rotterdam, Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film festival, New directors / New films at the MOMA in New York, etc. Her film *Le Park* received more than 20 awards and is part of the national French Collection of Le CNAP (Centre National des Arts Plastiques). She is currently living and working in Paris, and will be in the artist residency la Casa de Velazquez in Madrid from September 2017.

Le Park (2015) **Video, 14'**

In *Le Park* (2015), a slow meandering camera moves through an abandoned amusement park in the heart of Casablanca. The film draws a portrait of the youth who frequent this place, exposing snapshots of their life that are meticulously reframed and inspired by images circulated on social media networks. In this work, Maroufi questions various points of view situated at the cusp of immediacy and illusion, by multiplying possibilities, exploiting politically charged moments, and capturing danger in the moments just before aggression. The experience of suspense thus becomes the experience of duration.



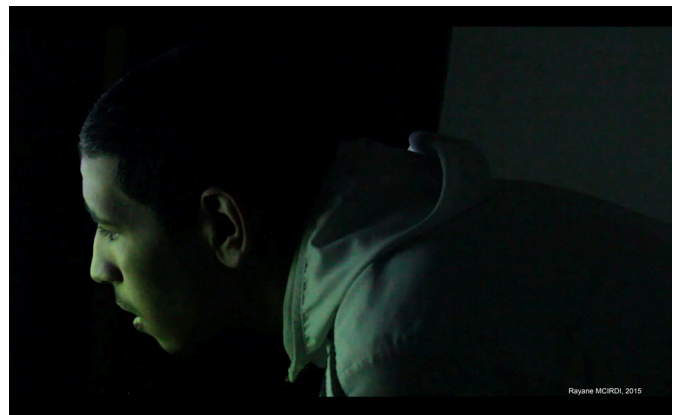
Randa Maroufi, Le Park (2015)

Rayane Mcirdi

Rayane Mcirdi (b.1993, Paris) lives and works in Paris. After studying for four years at l'école supérieure des Beaux-arts d'Angers (2011-2016) is currently studying a masters degree at l'école supérieure des Beaux arts de Paris. Mcirdi has lived, since he was 9 years old, in Gennevilliers, a suburb of Paris, which has inspired his work in video. His work is inspired by entertainment media (from football to American blockbusters). These media really interest Mcirdi in their ability to penetrate a collective unconscious, as much as the possibilities of identification that they can generate in different social environments. All Mcirdi's films are written in collaboration with other people (in this case the protagonists of the films), placing them in scenes, united through common passions. Through the personal stories of each, Mcirdi demonstrates how their imaginations could structure their way of being. Each subject has been able to master their object of devotion, to perfection, from the football fan with an almost scholarly knowledge of football to action movie

You'll Never Walk Alone (2014-2015) **Video, 15'24"**

A Liverpool Football Club fan since childhood, Samir has absorbed the language of football over the years. You'll Never Walk Alone utilizes this lexicon while the documentary follows him playing his favorite online game, FIFA, a bestselling game in both France and the world. With joystick in hand, Samir shatters the boundary between the reality of his room and the virtual field, as he embodies multiple identities of gamer, football player, TV commentator and coach. This quasi-schizophrenic performance brings to attention the multiplicity of roles in the game and the vastness of the virtual space of football in comparison to reality on the field.



Rayane Mcirdi, You'll Never Walk Alone (2014-2015)

Eric Van Hove

Eric van Hove studied at the École de Recherche Graphique in Brussels and received a Master's degree in Traditional Japanese Calligraphy at the Tokyo Gakugei University in Tokyo. He obtained a PhD degree from the Tokyo University of the Arts in 2008. Acknowledging transcendentalist influences throughout his conceptual practice, van Hove's approach often tries to oppose a more spiritual and decentralized approach to the Eurocentric perspective of the Western contemporary art world. Having made site specific works in over 100 countries by the age of 35, van Hove counts among the most travelled artist of his generation. In 2016, his Marrakesh atelier started working on what the artist called The Mahjouba Initiative, a long-term post-Fordist project mixing African craft, 3D printing, and in-

Mahjouba (2016-ongoing) **Video, 44'**

The Mahjouba Initiative is Eric van Hove's long term Post-Fordist project combining African craft, 3D printing, and industrial production. Directed by Moroccan filmmaker Meriem Abid, this film casts the artists' team of craftsmen impersonating themselves in van Hove's atelier in Marrakech. The film aims to give a context and background to the Mahjouba Initiative, by rooting it in a contemporary Moroccan context. The ongoing artistic project aims to reintegrate African craft into mainstream industry by manufacturing electric mopeds for local markets, primarily using materials and techniques from the craft sector. The initiative directly responds to the presence of nearly three million craftsmen in Morocco whose trade is increasingly threatened by globalization, and the Noor Power Station Project that proposes to generate 42 percent of its energy from renewables by 2020.



Eric van Hove, Mahjouba (2016 - ongoing)

Wendelien van Oldenborgh

Wendelien van Oldenborgh (b. Netherlands) develops works, whereby the cinematic format is used as a methodology for production and as the basic language for various forms of presentation. She often uses the format of a public film shoot, collaborating with participants in different scenarios, to co-produce a script and orientate the work towards its final outcome. With these works, which look at the structures that form and hinder us, she participated in various large biennials, and in smaller dedicated shows. Recent presentations include: a solo presentation titled Cinema Olanda at the Dutch Pavilion in the 57th Venice Biennial 2017; .As for the future. (2017) solo At DAAD gallery, Berlin, Prologue: Squat/Anti-Squat (2016) at The Jerusalem Show, Palestine Biennial East Jerusalem; Form Left to Night (2015), solo at The Showroom London. Van Oldenborgh has exhibited widely including in RAW Material Company Dakar (SN), Tate Liverpool (UK), Muhka Antwerp (B), Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven, Generali Foundation Vienna as well as 2nd Biennial of Kochi-Muziris 2014, Danish Pavilion at the Venice Biennial 2011, 4th Moscow Biennial 2011, the 29e Biennial de Sao Paulo 2010 and at the 11th Istanbul Biennial 2009. Van Oldenborgh is a member of the (Dutch) Society for Arts and a recipient of the Dr. A.H. Heineken Prize for Art (2014).

From Left to Night (2015) **Video, 32'**

From Left to Night (2015) is an experimental film production in which a number of seemingly unconnected players, places, events, subjects and histories are drawn from a London neighbourhood – an area of deprivation bordered by the wealthiest sites of the city. Over the course of a two-day film shoot, a meeting occurs between six people, three locations and the various subjects and forms of knowledge that they bring with them. These include urban tensions – such as the unresolved histories of the 2011 London riots – as well as new feminist and racial theories, music, 1960s idealist architecture and the ways in which each of the protagonists relates to these concerns. Shooting locations include the Paddington Green Police Station, where UK terror suspects are detained and questioned; the Joe Strummer Subway that lies beneath the station; and a local recording studio where Duran Duran recorded their hit Girls on Film in the early 1980s.

With: Dean Burke, Denise Ferreira Da Silva, Romeo K. Gambier (Mixmaster Fader), Mehrak Golestan (Reveal), Wanderley Moreira Dos Santos, and Louise Shelley.



Wendelien van Oldenborgh, *From Left to Night* (2015)

Jesse Darling

Jesse Darling (b. 1988, Melbourne) is an artist working in sculpture, installation, video, drawing, text, sound and performance. Their work is broadly concerned with what it means to be a body in the world, though what that means is both politically charged and culturally determined. Their practice draws on their own experience as well as the narratives of history and counterhistory. To be a body is to be inherently vulnerable, which extends to the “mortal” quality of empires and ideas as a form of precarious optimism – nothing and no-one is too big to fail, and this for JD is the starting point for a practice in which fallibility and fungibility are acknowledged as fundamental qualities in living beings, societies and technologies. Their recent project is in trying to ‘denaturalize’ the philosophical ecosystem of capitalist modernity as a moveable or precarious tabernacle in which theology is a technology, object relations a form of syncretic worship and scientific empiricism just another faith-based system. JD has received commissions from MoMA Warsaw, The Serpentine Gallery and the Volksbühne of Berlin among others; recent projects include solo exhibitions *Armes Blanches: History is Other People* at Sultana Galerie in Paris (2017) and *The Great Near* at Arcadia_Missa, London, as well as duo exhibition *Atrophilia* with Phoebe Collings-James at Company Gallery, New York (both 2016). Other projects include the curation of exhibition *Mene Mene Tekel Parsin* at Wysing Arts Centre, performance exhibition ‘Let Them Eat Cake/May One Without Hunger Lift the First Knife’ (in collaboration with Raju Rage at Block Universe Festival, UK (both 2016), and the sound performance *NTGNE* for Serpentine Park Nights in 2015. JD has published texts in print and online including *The Best British Poetry 2015* (Salt Press); *Mass Effect: Art and the Internet in the 21st Century* (MIT Press, 2015); *Art After the Internet* (Cornerhouse Books, 2014). JD lives and works between London and Berlin.

Boundary Boys I (2016)

Polystyrene, plaster, silicon, plastic, cotton, tape, steel, 144.78 x 33.02 x 55.88 cm

Boundary Boys II (Border Sphinxes) (2016)

Foam, cast silicon, spray paint, toilet paper, 144.78 x 33.02 x 55.88 cm

Boundary Boys I and II (Border Sphinxes) formally reference the sphinx and the imperial lion guardians built to secure the mouths of tombs, as well as the contemporary figure of the border guard, or the protector of a shifting boundary. The mutability of the border necessitates a guardian to will it into being, like

the old story of heaven, which states that wherever we are right now, the better place must be just beyond.

This work responds to current conditions and fantasies of permeable borders, “soft power” and economies of exclusion. The masks of lion’s faces are cast in silicon, functioning as a technology of dominance, violence and power. A police thug, poised as a generic young male, appears both abject and subjected when the mask is strapped roughly to his blank face like a gag. The figures perform an enforced masculinity, in which veiled suffering is both afforded and compounded by the real power it entails and allows. Displayed on plinths, it would seem that the boundary boys are merely polystyrene and plaster, just as the border is a mere line in the sand; a space between the ears. The border itself shifts around like a theater set, manned by an unending supply of border agents, whose particularities fade behind their uniforms.

The sphinx was often portrayed as a feminine or androgynous figure, while the Boundary Boys suggest the generic traits of the everyman from anywhere, draped in hoodies and caps. In their precarity and vulnerability they are both victims and perpetrators of the state-enforced violence of the gender production machine.



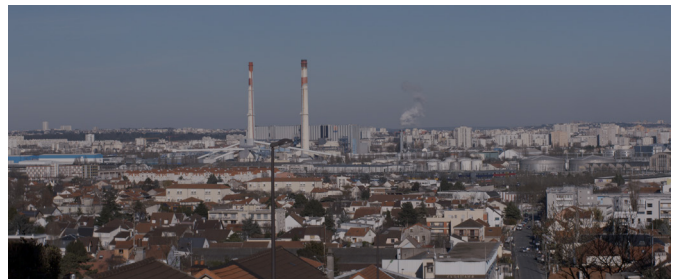
Jesse Darling, Boundary Boys I and II (2016)

Eric Baudelaire

Eric Baudelaire is a visual artist and filmmaker. His films *Letters to Max* (2014), *The Ugly One* (2013), and *The Anabasis of May and Fusako Shigenobu, Masao Adachi, and 27 Years Without Images* (2011) were shown at the FIDMarseille, Locarno, Toronto, New York and Rotterdam film festivals. His research-based practice installations incorporate photography, printmaking, performance, publications and screenings. He has exhibited work in Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Witte de With, Rotterdam; Fridericianum, Kassel; Berkeley Art Museum; Kadist Art Foundation, San Francisco; Bétonsalon, Paris; Bergen Kunsthall; Gasworks, London; and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. His films and installations are in the collections of the Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid; MACBA, Barcelona; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Also Known As Jihadi (2017) **Video, 99'**

Also Known As Jihadi (2017) follows the progress of a young man's journey from France to Syria, and back to France, where he is incarcerated for allegedly joining Daesh. Based on real events and drawn from thousands of pages of judicial documents, the cinematic work employs so-called landscape theory (*fukeiron* in Japanese). The protagonist's path to radicalism is rendered purely through a series of landscape shots filmed at the locations that the subject traversed. This is a biography determined not by what the subject did, but by what the subject saw, and one that questions how these landscapes reflect the social and political structures that underpin a journey of alienation and return.



Eric Baudelaire, Also Known as Jihadi (2017). Film Stills

هل بإمكان التصميم التنبؤ بالمستقبل؟

1. Can Design Predict the Future?

أ- أهداف هذا التمرين

a. Aims of this exercise

من خلال البحث والتحقيق والمقابلات، سيتم تقسيم الطلاب إلى مجموعات لشرح وتحليل الظروف السابقة والحالية لمناطق مختلفة في بيروت أو لبنان. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، سيحلل الطلاب كيف انخرقت هذه الأحياء عن تصميمها الأصلي والدور الذي تلعبه في نسيج المدينة الحضري.

Through research, investigation as well as interviews, students will be split into groups to annotate and analyze the pasts and present circumstances of different areas of Beirut (or Lebanon) and analyze how these neighborhoods deviated from their intended design and role in the urban fabric of the city. Due to the nature of the exercise, we recommend that quarters and neighborhoods that were designed and executed intentionally for a certain role be the focus and not areas that naturally evolved as a result of urban development; examples of such areas include Badaro, designed by the French, Solidere's Downtown, Saifi Village. Areas that also dramatically deviated from their historical importance also qualify, such as Ouzai.

ونظراً لطبيعة التمرين، نوصي أن يركّز الطلاب على الأحياء التي تم تصميمها وتنفيذها عمداً لدور معين، وليس على مناطق تطورت بشكل طبيعي نتيجة التنمية الحضرية. ومثلاً على هذه المناطق هناك بدارو التي صممها الفرنسيون، وسوليدير في وسط بيروت ومنطقة الصيفي. أمّا المناطق التي انخرقت أيضاً بصورة كبيرة عن أهميتها التاريخية فهي أيضاً مؤهلة، مثل منطقة الأوزاعي.

For older students it would be interesting to take a diversity of locations across the city or country, but for younger students simply fragmenting the districts and neighborhoods of Solidere's Central District Project would be enough.

بالنسبة للطلاب الأكبر سناً، سيكون من المثير العمل على مواقع متنوعة في أنحاء المدينة أو البلد. لكن بالنسبة للطلاب الأصغر سناً، سيكون كافياً أن يعملوا على تجزئة أحياء مشروع سوليدير في وسط بيروت.

Taking inspiration from Christopher Ian Smith's video work that compares the designed expectations and current status of the English new town of Basildon, this exercise aims to have students think critically of people's capability to construct the cities we live in, as well as their incapability to predict how those "designed" cities will change or deviate from their intention.

لهذا التمرين، تم أخذ الإلهام من أعمال فيديو كريستوفر إيان سميث، الذي يقارن التوقعات المصممة والوضع الحالي لبلدة باسيلدون الإنكليزية الجديدة. فهدف هذا التمرين هو أن يفكر الطلاب بشكل نقدي بشأن قدرة الناس على بناء المدن التي نعيش فيها، إضافة إلى عجزهم عن تنبؤ كيف هذه المدن المصممة ستتغير أو تتحرف عن نيتهم.

ج- النشاط

c. Activity

على الطلاب أن يختاروا حيّاً ذات أهمية. وفي غضون بضعة أيام، ننصح بأسبوع أو أسبوعين، ومن خلال الوثائق والمنشورات والمقابلات والنزهات والصور، عليهم القيام ببحث حول تاريخ المنطقة ووضعها الحالي.

Have students choose a neighborhood or quarter of interest and, over the span of a few days (we recommend a week or two), have them research -through documentations and publications, interviews, promenades and photographs - the history and present condition of the area.

على الطلاب مقارنة النتائج التي توصلوا إليها، وتحليل الاختلافات بين هدف المنطقة الأصلي وواقعها الحالي. ثم عليهم اكتشاف لماذا انخرقت عن هدفها الأصلي أو من ماضيها.

Have students compare and contrast their findings and analyze the differences between the designed intent of the area and its current reality, then proceed to uncovering why it deviated from its intention or past.

على الطلاب تقديم ما توصلوا إليه أمام الصف، من خلال مناقشات مائدة مستديرة مع الصف كله. وعليهم مقارنة أوجه التشابه والاختلاف بين تطورات مناطق كل واحد منهم. ومن هنا، سيحاول الطلاب إيجاد عوامل مشتركة ومتغيرة، التي ربما قد شاركت في تطور مناطق متعددة في المدينة.

Students should present their findings to the class and, through a round table discussion with the whole class, have them compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the evolutions of their respective areas. From there attempt to find common factors and variables that could have participated to the evolution of multiple areas within the city.

2. Embodying Another

تجسيد شخص آخر

أ- أهداف هذا التمرين

يستكشف هذا التمرين مفهوم الهوية الفردية، فهو يجعل الطلاب يحللون ويقيمون ويجسدون مثالهم الأعلى. وبإمكان هذا الشخص أن يكون شخصاً حقيقياً، مثل أحد الأقرباء أو شخص مشهور، أو شخصية خيالية أو بطل خارق، مثل سوبرمان أو شخصية لعبة فيديو. ومن خلال دراسة الهوية أو الشخصية التي يمثلها المثال الأعلى، سيطلب من الطلاب تشريح ذلك الشخص ليقيموا بتعداد الخصائص والهويات المتعددة التي يجسدها بشكل كلي. مثلاً، إذا كان المثال الأعلى الأم، يمكن أن تمثل أحد الوالدين والمرأة وربّة المنزل أو المرأة العاملة في آن واحد.

هذا التمرين مستوحى من فيديو رايان مسبردي بعنوان لن تسير أبداً لوحده، والذي يقوم بتوثيق هوس مشجع كرة قدم بلعبة فيديو فيفا لكرة القدم. وسيسمح ذلك للطلاب بإعادة تقييم مفهوم الهوية على أنها تراكم ومجموع صفات وأدوار متعددة، وليس أنها حقيقة فردية كامنة.

ج- النشاط

على الطلاب اختيار شخصاً ينظرون إليه كمثال أعلى. ثم عليهم توثيق لماذا يعتبرونه مثالا أعلى. وعلى الطلاب أيضاً أن يناقشوا ما هي الصفة في الشخص التي يودون تجسيدها في أنفسهم.

على الطلاب، من خلال البحث والتوثيق، تشريح هوية موضوع دراستهم أو علاقتهم به، وتقسيمها في قائمة لهويات وخصائص منفصلة.

على الطلاب اختيار الصفة أو الهوية المعينة التي يريدون تجسيدها في أنفسهم بعد تفكيك موضوع دراستهم. ثم عليهم مقارنة النتيجة بما كتبه في البداية.

على الطلاب العمل في أزواج وأداء لبعضهم البعض الهوية التي اختاروها، مع دمج شخصية المثال الأعلى بشخصيتهم.

a. Aims of this exercise

This exercise explores the concept of individual identity by having students analyze, evaluate and embody their idols. The role model could be an actual person, like a relative or a celebrity, or a fictional character or superhero, like Superman or a video game character. Through studying the identity and/or persona that the role model represents, students are asked to dissect their person of interest and enumerate the multiple characteristics and identities that they embody as a whole (for example, if the role model is the mother, she could represent “the parent”, “the woman”, “the housewife” or “the working woman” all at once).

Inspired by Rayane M’Cirdi’s video “You’ll Never Walk Alone”, which documents a football fan’s obsession and love with FIFA, a football video game, this will allow students to reevaluate the notion of “identity” as being an accumulation and sum of multiple traits and roles, not an inherent individual fact.

c. Activity

Have students choose someone they believe to be a role model to them, then have them document why they perceive that person as a role model and idol. Let them also discuss what about them they would like to embody within themselves.

Through research and documentation, students should dissect either the identity of their subject or their relationship to the subject into a list of separate “identities” and characteristics.

Students should choose what specific characteristic or identity they wish to embody within themselves after having deconstructed the subject, then compare to what they originally wrote down in the first step.

Pair the students up and have them perform the identity of their choosing to each other, incorporating the idol’s persona to their own.

شاعرية المواد

3. Poetics of the Material

أ- أهداف هذا التمرين

يستكشف هذا التمرين كيفية استخدام الوقت كأداة بصرية وفنية فعالة. ومن خلال استكشافات عملية مع وسائل إعلان مؤقتة لابتكار أعمالهم الفنية الثنائية أو الثلاثية الأبعاد، بإمكان التلاميذ التفكير في التغيرات التي تشهدها أعمالهم مع الوقت. كما باستطاعتهم تجربة علاقة الوقت بالأهمية المادية والمعنى. ويمكن إجراء هذا التمرين لطلاب من جميع الأعمار، وقد يتم بشكل فردي أو ضمن مجموعات.

سيتم استخدام أعمال سابرينا بيلوار، حيناء ومات دي بو ومالاكس، التي تم عرضها في بينالي الشارقة، كمرجع وأساس لهذا التمرين. وينبغي إيلاء الاهتمام لاستخدامها لمواد غير تقليدية، مثل الحناء والماكياج، لإكمال أعمالها.

ج- النشاط

على الطلاب جلب مواد غير تقليدية للممارسات الفنية مثلاً، بدلاً من الطلاء والأقلام للرسم والتصوير، يمكنهم استخدام الماكياج والمساحيق والزيوت، وبدلاً من السيراميك والطين والمعادن للمنحوتات، يمكنهم جلب نباتات أو فروع طازجة أو طين ينشف فوراً.

على الطلاب أن يفكروا بالعمل الذي يريدون ابتكاره، ثم رسمه وتصميمه أخذين بعين الاعتبار حدود وإمكانيات المواد المختارة.

على الطلاب ابتكار الأعمال التي فكروا بها وملاحظة سهولة أو صعوبة عملية إنشاء الأعمال.

على الأعمال المصنوعة أن توضع بعيداً من العناصر أو في أماكن معرضة مباشرة للمطر أو الشمس، إذا أرادوا رؤية كيف تتغير أعمالهم عندما تخضع لتغيرات المناخ.

على الطلاب التقاط الصور أو تدوين الملاحظات بشأن كيف تتغير الأعمال مع مرور الوقت، وذلك مرة يومياً، لمدة تتراوح من إلى أيام.

على الطلاب أن يناقشوا معاً كيف تطورت أو تغيرت أعمالهم مع مرور الوقت، إضافة إلى إدخال مفهوم استخدام الوقت كأداة في الممارسة الفنية.

a. Aims of this exercise

This exercise explores the use of time as an active visual and artistic tool. Through practical explorations with impermanent media to create two-dimensional or three-dimensional pieces of their own, students can reflect on the changes their pieces undergo over time and experiment with the relationship of time to materiality and meaning. This exercise can be conducted for students of all ages and can be done either individually or in groups

Using Sabrina Belouaar's pieces for the Sharjah Biennale - "Henna", "Mate de Peau" & "Malaxe" – as the reference and foundation of this exercise. Attention should be given to her use of unorthodox materials such as Henna ink and makeup to complete her work.

c. Activity

Have students bring in materials that are untraditional to artistic practice (for example, instead of paints and pencils for drawing and illustration, they can bring makeup, powders or oils and instead of ceramics clay or metal for sculptures, to bring in fresh plants/branches or instant clay).

Have the students think, draw and design the pieces they want to create, factoring in the limitations and abilities of their materials.

Have students create the pieces they brainstormed and take note of the ease or difficulty of the pieces' creation process.

Let the crafted pieces either sit in place away from the elements, or place them in spaces in direct contact to rain or sun if they wish to see how their pieces can change when subjected to weather changes.

Students should take photos and/or take notes of how the pieces change over time, one entry a day for 3 to 7 days.

Have the students discuss all together how their pieces evolved or morphed over time and introduce the notion of using time as a tool in art practice.



Robert Smithson, Spiral Jetty (1970)



Alexander Calder, Triple Gong (1951)

4. A Day in Their Shoes

يوم في مكانهم

أ- أهداف هذا التمرين

فيديو إريك بودلير بعنوان، المعروف أيضًا بالجهادي، يستكشف رحلة شاب من فرنسا إلى سوريا وعودته إلى فرنسا، حيث سيتم إدانته بالانضمام إلى منظمة إرهابية. إنها قصة خيالية مستندة على أحداث واقعية، والفيديو يتناول الاغتراب والعودة عبر أعين المتجول.

يتم استخدام ذلك كأساس للتمرين، وعلى المشتركين والطلاب اختيار شخصًا يهمهم، ومن المفضل أن يكون شخصًا لا يعرفونه جيدًا لكي يوثقوا بتوثيق، في الخلفية، نمط وأسلوب حياة الشخص، بالإضافة إلى التفكير في حياتهم الخاصة عبر البقاء في ظل شخص آخر. ومن خلال اتباع نهج ممتع وحميم، هذا التمرين يسمح للطلاب باستكشاف الغريبة والتماثل بين أنفسهم وموضوع عملهم.

ج- النشاط

على الطلاب اختيار شخص يهمهم. بإمكان الطلاب الأصغر سنًا اختيار أحد أقربائهم، وبإمكان الطلاب الأكبر سنًا توسيع ذلك النطاق إلى أصدقائهم والأقارب غير المباشرين.

على الطلاب توثيق ما يعتقدون أنهم يعرفونه بشأن أسلوب ونمط حياة الشخص وطابعه، قبل توثيقها بالتفصيل.

على الطلاب، وفي غضون اسبوع، البقاء بالقرب من موضوع دراستهم لتوثيق كل خطوة يقوم بها. ونوصي أيضًا أن يفكر الطلاب ببعض الأسئلة إذا أرادوا التحدث عن مواضيع معينة مع الشخص. لكن من المفترض أن تكون إضافة الأسئلة تمرين استماع فعال، وليس نقاش أو جدال.

على الطلاب، في نهاية كل يوم، أن يكتبوا بعض المقاطع الإضافية في دفاترهم ليفكروا بأسلوب ونمط حياتهم الخاصة، ويتصوروا كيف ولماذا يختلفون أو يشبهون موضوع دراستهم.

على الطلاب مناقشة خبراتهم وتأملاتهم في مجموعات أو أزواج.

a. Aims of this exercise

Eric Baudelaire's video, entitled "Also Known as Jihadi", explores the journey of a young man from France to Syria and back to France, where he would be convicted of joining a terrorist organization. A fiction based on true events, the video tackles alienation and return through the eyes of the wanderer.

Using this as a foundation, this exercise asks participants and students to choose a person of interest to them, preferably one who they don't know all too well, to document their routines and lifestyles in the background as well as reflecting on their own lives through lying in the shadow of another. A playful and intimate approach, the exercise allows students to explore "otherness" and "sameness" between themselves and their subjects.

c. Activity

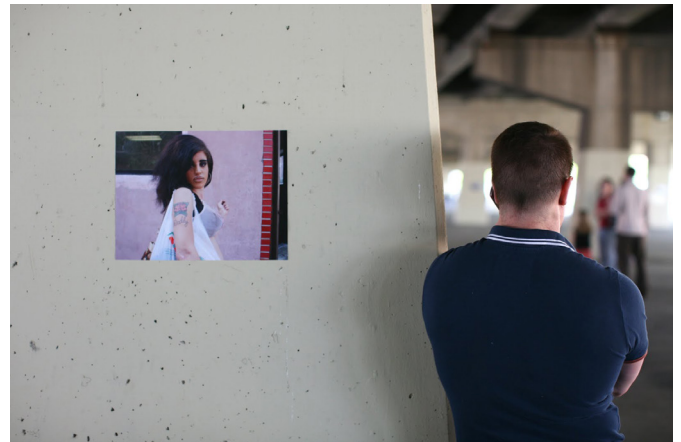
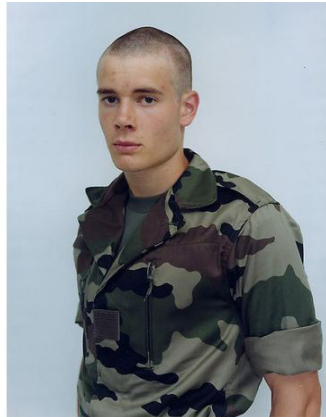
Have students choose a person of interest; for younger students it could be a close relative, for older students this could be expanded to friends and indirect relatives.

Students should document what they believe they know about the person's lifestyle, routine and character before documenting them in detail.

Have students, over the course of a weekend, remain close to their subject and document their every move. We also recommend that students devise a few questions for their subject in case they want to engage in certain topics with them, but adding questions should be an active listening exercise not a debate or argument.

At the end of each day, students should write a few extra passages in their journal where they reflect on their own lifestyles and routines and visualize how and why they are different or similar to their subjects'.

Have students discuss their experience and reflections in groups or pairs.



Zoe Strauss, 10 Years Under I-95 (2001-2010)

She spend 10 years photographing and documenting her community in a Southern Philadelphia neighborhood and exhibiting their portraits in public under the I-95 highway.

Rineke Dijkstra, Olivier Series (2000-2003)

Photographic artist Rineke Dijkstra follows a young man, Olivier Silva,[18] from his enlistment with the French Foreign Legion through the years of his service in Corsica, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire and Djibouti,[17] showing his development, both physically and psychologically, into a soldier.

يوم في مكانهم

5. Thresholds of the City

أ- أهداف هذا التمرين

يبدأ هذا التمرين كتمرين جماعي ليتحول بعد ذلك إلى مشروع الصف بكامله لرسم خرائط. تجدر الإشارة إلى أن هذا التمرين يأخذ الإلهام من عملي جيسي دارلينغ، بعنوان فتيان الحدود. وتستخدم في عملها رمز أبو الهول الذي تم استخدامه تاريخياً لتزيين عتبات البوابات والمعابد. إضافة إلى ذلك، إنها تُخصص في عملها هذه الرمزية بالمسألة المعاصرة المتعلقة بالتهميش الحضري، الذي يأخذ الآن دور العتبات الحضرية.

ومع أخذ ما سبق في عين الاعتبار، يسمح هذا التمرين الطلاب بإعادة النظر في كيفية فهمهم للبوابات والحواجز والمعالم في المدينة، لكي يتمكنوا من فهم كيف أحياء بيروت المتعددة تبني حدوداً داخل أنفسها وحول أنفسها. وقد تكون هذه البوابات منشآت مبنية أو أشياء جامدة مثل الأسوار والبوابات والحواجز الخرسانية، أو حتى الأواني والنباتات المستخدمة لحجز أماكن وقوف السيارات. ويمكن لهذه البوابات أن تكون أيضاً مجسدة من خلال أشخاص، مثل الحواجز العسكرية. إن هذا التمرين أولاً تمرين رسم خرائط، لكن يمكن استخدام التصوير والشروحات كمعلومات وأدلة إضافية.

ج- النشاط

على الطلاب العمل ضمن مجموعات مؤلفة من شخصين أو ثلاثة. ويجب أن تختار كل مجموعة حي من المدينة للتجول فيه ورسم خريطته. يمكن أن تكون المنطقة كبيرة كجميع دوائر بلدية بيروت، راس بيروت والمزرعة والمصيطبة، إلخ، أو أن يتم تقسيمها إلى المزيد من المناطق والأحياء كالحمر والسيفي والطريق الجديدة، إلخ.

على الطلاب القيام بجولة في المنطقة التي اختاروها وتوثيق أكبر عدد ممكن من البوابات والحواجز الحضرية. ويجب أن يكون معهم أيضاً خريطة للتوثيق بينما يسيرون، وأن يقوموا بالتقاط الصور وتدوين الملاحظات حيثما أمكن الأمر. ونوصي اختيار عطلة نهاية أسبوع، ليكون للطلاب بضعة أيام لإنجاز الأمر.

على الطلاب، بعد العودة إلى الصف، تحديد البوابات والحواجز المختلفة التي قاموا بتوثيقها في الموقع الذي اختاروه، وذلك على خريطة كبيرة لكل بيروت.

على الطلاب، بعد إكمال خريطة بيروت كلها، التفكير في عدد الحواجز وما يمثله كل واحد منها مثل حدود الأحزاب السياسية أو حدود مؤسسة دينية أو الانفصال بين العام والخاص، إلخ.

a. Aims of this exercise

Starting off as a group exercise and culminating to a full class mapping project, the exercise takes inspiration from Jesse Darling's "Boundary Boys I" and "Boundary Boys II". Her pieces use the allegory of the sphinx, historically used to ornament the thresholds of gates and temples, and appropriate the symbolism to the contemporary issue of urban marginalization, now acting as contemporary thresholds.

Taking this into account, the exercise allows students to revisit how they understand gateways, barriers and landmarks in the city to understand how Beirut's multiple neighborhoods construct borders within themselves and around themselves. These "gateways" can be built structures or inanimate objects (such as fences, gates, concrete barriers or the pots and plants used to reserve parking spots) or embodied through people such as military checkpoints ("hawajiz"). The exercise is primarily a mapping exercise but photography and annotations can also apply as additional information or evidence.

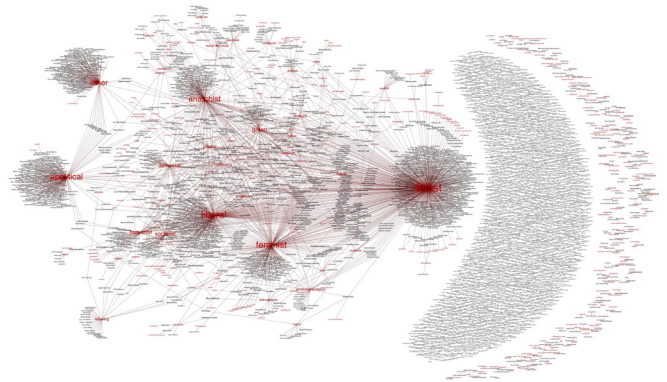
c. Activity

Groups students together to teams 2 or 3, have each group choose a quarter or neighborhood of the city to walk around and map. The area can be as large as the whole of Beirut's municipal districts (Ras Beirut, Mazraa, Moussaitbê, etc.) or split up to more areas and neighborhoods (Hamra, Sioufi, Tariq Jdideh, etc.).

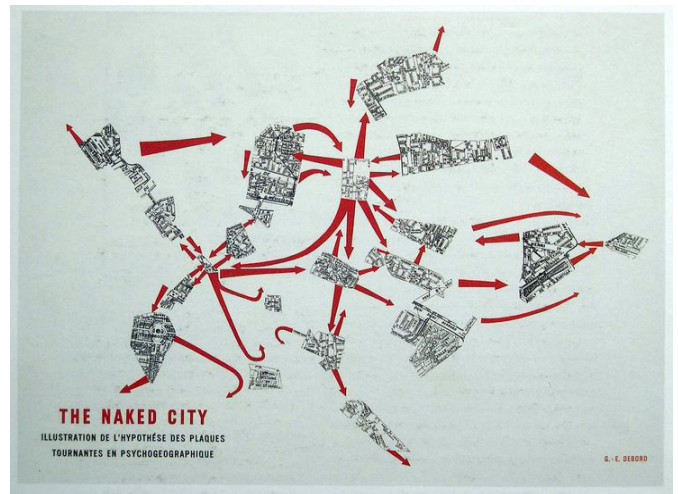
Students should take a promenade around the area of their choosing and document as many "urban thresholds and obstacles" as possible. They should have a map with them to document them as they walk and can take photos and notes whenever applicable. We recommend a weekend to allow them a few days to do so.

Upon returning to class, students should pin and point the multiple thresholds and barriers they documented in their space of interest on a large map of the whole of Beirut.

Upon completing the whole Beirut Map, students should reflect on the number of barriers and what each kind of barrier or boundary represents (political party thresholds, religious institutional boundaries, separation between public and private, etc.)



Burak Arikan, Network Map of Artists and Political Inclinations (2012)
 Turkish artist Burak Arikan works dominantly with mapping art and constructs diagrammatic maps that represent social concepts through geography such as this one.



Guy Debord and Asger Jorn, Memories (1959).
 Within their artist's book entitled "Memories", Guy Debord and Asger Jorn revisit mapping strategies through artistic and social strategies. Documenting the daily pedestrian routine of an individual in Paris, they construct the mental map of the city of that individual and showcase how little of the city one truly explores and is familiar with.

IV. Additional Readings

Joshua Rothman's text, entitled "The Meaning of Culture", not only dissects the definition and value of the term "culture", but also discusses the evolution of how society perceives the term. Especially now in our contemporary society, the term "culture" is attributed to such a wide variety of negative, positive and commercial elements; from the coinage of "rape culture" by the media to advertisements of "coffee culture" and "art culture". What the author sheds light on is the diversity of consequential effects such a broadening of the term "culture" can cause, while at the same time retaining his claim of the term's actual significance and why we must keep it as a key notion in our thoughts.

In "Youth and Culture Practices", Mary Bucholtz strongly differentiates between the concepts of "adolescence", understood as a transitional stage on the way to adulthood, and "youth", which she argues can be a manifested form of identity on its own. By doing so, she is distancing herself from the argument that adolescents and younger people are still individuals undergoing development, and are therefore incomplete in their socio-psychological growth, and instead recognizes the youth's ability to not only react to social circumstances but to also act upon their environment, adapt to it and manipulate it to their own means. A study of the culture of youth here no longer limits itself by the perception of youth as an age interval but as a state of mind that can materialize itself in the human environment.

Elizabeth F. Vann's chapter on "Culture", in "The Handbook of Sociocultural Anthropology", investigates the history of culture research in anthropology through the lens of the Boasians and the Neo-Boasians, anthropologists who follow the teachings of Franz Boas. Though the inclusion of culture research was highly criticized for possibly "othering" and ahistoricizing anthropological research as it clusters community groups into wide categories and disregards cultural exchange or colonialism as factors that can shift social behavior, the author showcases the Neo-Boasians' arguments that prove that detailed investigation can put into consideration these factors and in turn expand the anthropological understanding of the concept of "culture".

Richard Dyer's text entitled "The Matter of Whiteness" sheds light on a major issue that has been constructed in social perception; how people of all races, even white people themselves, perceive other white people as defaulted norm of the human condition.

As such, while non-white people have their race labeled upon them as a major identifier, and while they accept their race as a major contributor to the construction of their social identity, white people do not. They are simply "just people". By perceiving themselves as simply human beings, they attain the power and ability to speak for the voices of all other human beings, and thus for all other races. To deconstruct this ability, the first step consists of racializing white people as white and recognizing their race as an independent race of its own that does not speak for or represent all other people, and especially those of different races.

During the mid-1990s, the subject of materiality has emerged as a new focus in the art, design and architectural practices. Presented under the name "New Materialism" or "Neo-Materialism", these topics assert the agency of material within the artistic process. In doing so, New Materialism becomes described as new metaphysics or ontology, and is not considered as a mere actor giving disciplinary order of the world. In her introduction to the book *Power of Materials/Politics of Materiality*, Suzan Witzgall clarifies how these processes are tightly enmeshed and entangled within a web of relationships. Moreover, how the articulation of this new emerged topic is deeply intrinsic with multiple disciplines such as the physics, cognitive sciences, political sciences, anthropology, feminist theory, literary studies, arts. Also, she explicits how New Materialism's goal is not only to place the "dualism of form and matter into question", rather it is an attempt to scatter other persistent dichotomies, such as between the mind and the body, culture and nature.

In her introductory text to the exhibition *Poetiken des Materials*, held at the Leopold Museum Vienna in 2016-2017, Stéphanie Damianitsch argues that while previous artistic movements such as Minimalism, Post-Minimalism, Land Art and Arte povera, focused on the materiality of artworks as an autonomous aesthetic category already in the 1960s, they drew their subversive powers from the retention of the essential differentiation between materiality and immateriality, later between materiality and matter. Furthermore, her essay reflects on the current development of "New Materiality" within contemporary art, insisting on materiality as being a beholder of reality. Throughout a reading of the exhibited works, she explicits how everyday items and "non-art" materials, are called into question as bearers of cultural meaning.

The Meaning of “Culture”

Joshua Rothman

Cultural Comment, December 26, 2014

Joshua Rothman’s text, entitled “The Meaning of Culture”, not only dissects the definition and value of the term “culture”, but also discusses the evolution of how society perceives the term. Especially now in our contemporary society, the term “culture” is attributed to such a wide variety of negative, positive and commercial elements; from the coinage of “rape culture” by the media to advertisements of “coffee culture” and “art culture”. What the author sheds light on is the diversity of consequential effects such a broadening of the term “culture” can cause, while at the same time retaining his claim of the term’s actual significance and why we must keep it as a key notion in our thoughts.

There’s something innately funny about Merriam-Webster’s announcement, earlier this month, that “culture” is their 2014 Word of the Year. “Culture” is the “Scary Movie” of words of the year, which, ordinarily, are supposed to reflect culture (“vape,” “selfie”) without actually being “culture.” Merriam-Webster’s editors are at pains to clarify that they weren’t trying to be meta. The word “culture,” they explain, was simply the word that saw the biggest spike in look-ups on their Web site. Confusion about culture was just part of the culture this year. People were desperate to know what “culture” meant.

It goes without saying that “culture” is a confusing word, this year or any year. Merriam-Webster offers six definitions for it (including the biological one, as in “bacterial culture”). The problem is that “culture” is more than the sum of its definitions. If anything, its value as a word depends on the tension between them. The critic Raymond Williams, in his souped-up dictionary, “Keywords,” writes that “culture” has three divergent meanings: there’s culture as a process of individual enrichment, as when we say that someone is “cultured”; culture as a group’s “particular way of life,” as when we talk about French culture, company culture, or multiculturalism; and culture as an activity, pursued by means of the museums, concerts, books, and movies that might be encouraged by a Ministry of Culture (or covered on a blog like this one). These three senses of culture are actually quite different, and, Williams writes, they compete with one another. Each time we use the word “culture,” we incline toward one or another of its aspects.

There’s a historical sense, too, in which “culture” is a polemical word. In the nineteenth century, Williams explains, “culture” was often opposed to “civilization.” Civilization, the thinking went, was a homogenizing system of efficient, rational rules, designed to encourage discipline and “progress.” Culture was the opposite: an unpredictable expression of human potential for its own sake. Today, we don’t often use the word “civilization” — we prefer to talk, more democratically, in terms of culture—but we’re still conflicted. We can’t help but notice how

“civilized” life seems both to facilitate culture and to deaden it.

These are solid, perennial reasons to look up “culture” in the dictionary. But why did more people than usual look it up this year? Here’s my theory: more people looked up “culture” this year because it’s become an unsettling word. “Culture” used to be a good thing. Now it’s not. The most positive aspect of “culture” — the idea of personal, humane enrichment — now seems especially remote. In its place, the idea of culture as unconscious groupthink is ascendant.

In the postwar decades, “culture” was associated with the quest for personal growth: even if you rejected “establishment” culture, you could turn to “the counterculture.” In the eighties, nineties, and aughts, it was a source of pride: the multiculturalist ethos had us identifying with our cultures. But today, “culture” has a furtive, shady, ridiculous aspect. Often, when we attach the word “culture” to something, it’s to suggest that it has a pervasive, pernicious influence (as in “celebrity culture”). At other times, “culture” is used in an aspirational way that’s obviously counterfactual: institutions that drone on about their “culture of transparency” or “culture of accountability” often have neither. On all sides, “culture” is used in a trivializing way: there’s no real culture in “coffee culture”

But, at the same time, it’s hard to imagine applying the word “culture” to even the most bona-fide “cultural institutions.” We don’t say that fosters “art culture,” because to describe art as a “culture” is, subtly, to denigrate it.

This year, there was the rise of the powerful term “rape culture.” The spread of the idea of “rape culture” hasn’t just changed how we think about rape; it’s changed how we think about culture. Among other things, “rape culture” uses the word “culture” in a way that doesn’t involve, on any level, the idea of personal enrichment. Instead, the term’s weight is placed, fully and specifically, on Williams’s other two aspects of culture. You can’t see the word “culture” next to the word “rape” without revising your ideas about what “culture” means.

It's our sense of the word "culture" that has grown darker, sharper, more skeptical. But, if words are tools for thinking, then this year "culture" has been used to think about the parts of our society that function poorly. That may even be a sign, in a way, of an improvement in our culture. If our increasingly analytical, sociological way of thinking about "culture" is helping us to improve the culture, that's a positive development. Confusion over its evolving meaning is a good reason to look up "culture" in the dictionary, but so is an interest in understanding the world and making it better.

All this might make you wonder: Does it even make sense to have a single word, "culture," with such divergent uses? Maybe not; many people, Williams writes, have called "culture" a "loose or confused" term. It's possible to imagine a more rational system, in which one word describes the activities of artistic and intellectual life, another our group identity, and a third our implicit norms and ways of living. Those terms, whatever they might be, would be narrower and simpler—but they'd also be less accurate. They would obscure the overlap between life, art, and politics.

And they'd be less meaningful, too. "Culture" may be pulling itself apart from the inside, but it represents, in its way, a wish. The wish is that a group of people might discover, together, a good way of life; that their good way of life might express itself in their habits, institutions, and activities; and that those, in turn, might help individuals flourish in their own ways. The best culture would be one in which the three meanings of "culture" weren't at odds with one another. That's not the culture we have at the moment; our culture is fractured, and so our sense of the word "culture" is, too. But it's possible to imagine a world in which our collective attitudes and institutions further everyone's individual growth. Maybe, in such a world, the meaning of "culture" would be more obvious; we wouldn't have to look it up.

Youth and Cultural Practice

Mary Bucholtz

Annual Review of Anthropology, Vol. 31 (2002), pp. 525-552

In "Youth and Culture Practices", Mary Bucholtz strongly differentiates between the concepts of "adolescence", understood as a transitional stage on the way to adulthood, and "youth", which she argues can be a manifested form of identity on its own. By doing so, she is distancing herself from the argument that adolescents and younger people are still individuals undergoing development, and are therefore incomplete in their socio-psychological growth, and instead recognizes the youth's ability to not only react to social circumstances but to also act upon their environment, adapt to it and manipulate it to their own means. A study of the culture of youth here no longer limits itself by the perception of youth as an age interval but as a state of mind that can materialize itself in the human environment.

Despite a vast literature on youth cultures spanning many decades and disciplines, surprisingly little of this research was informed by anthropology until recently. To be sure, foundational ethnographies by Mead (1928) and Malinowski ([1929] 1987) established adolescence early on as a crucial topic of anthropological investigation, and as a result, issues closely associated with this life stage have long been a focus of anthropological inquiry. But such research has usually approached adolescence from the perspective of adulthood, downplaying youth-centered interaction and cultural production in favor of an emphasis on the transition to adulthood. Now, however, shifts both in the discipline and in the world's cultures have expanded the range of anthropological inquiry, and as a result the field has seen much more investigation of youth cultural practices.

The anthropology of youth has been overshadowed by the much larger and more visible project of the sociology of youth. It is here that youth cultures and practices are most widely studied, albeit only within late modern Western societies, particularly Britain and the United States. But if adolescence as the central concept for anthropological research on young people is at once too broad (because universalized) and too narrow (because psychologized), then youth culture is too burdened by its historical ties to particular theoretical positions. The anthropology of youth now emerging concerns itself not with the restrictive notion of culture that dominated early work in cultural studies but with the practices through which culture is produced. This formulation includes practices associated with age-based cultures, but also those that locate young people as other kinds of cultural agents.

Defining Youth

It is a common place of much research on youth cultures and identities that the youth category lacks clear definition and in some situations may be based on one's social circumstances rather than chronological age or cultural position. And youth as

a cultural stage often marks the beginning of a long-term, even lifelong, engagement in particular cultural practices, whether its practitioners continue to be included in the youth category or not. Youth or adolescence is not a highly salient life stage in all cultures, although this is changing in many societies.

Given these difficulties in defining youth in any general way, Durham (2000) proposes applying the linguistic concept of a shifter (Jakobson [1957] 1971, Silverstein 1976) to the category of youth. A shifter is a word that is tied directly to the context of speaking and hence takes much of its meaning from situated use, such as the deictics I, here, and now. Likewise, the referential function of youth cannot be determined in advance of its use in a particular cultural context, and its use indexes the nature of the context in which it is invoked. As a shifter, then, youth is a context-renewing and a context-creating sign where by social relations are both (and often simultaneously) reproduced and contested.

Adolescence as a Life Stage

The emphasis on adolescence as a universal stage in the biological and psychological development of the individual usefully highlights selfhood as a process rather than a state, but it also inevitably frames young people primarily as not-yet-finished human beings. Indeed, for many years anthropologists studied adolescence almost exclusively as a liminal position between childhood and adulthood that is marked in many (but not most) cultures through some type of initiation ceremony (Schlegel&Barry 1979).

The role of adults in the process of socialization is unquestionably a central element in the understanding of youth, yet the study of how adults guide adolescents into full cultural membership obscures the more informal ways in which young people socialize themselves and one another as they enter adolescence (e.g., Merten 1999).

Developmental Crises: Youth and Modernity

If many anthropologists of adolescence in previous decades concentrated on how adolescents around the world assumed new, culturally recognized roles through ritual activities that dramatized the liminality of youth (Turner 1969), the disappearance or alteration of these and other age-graded practices in the face of cultural pressures from without has raised a new question: What are the consequences of large-scale social and cultural transformations that disproportionately affect the lives of young people? This question continues to draw on the psychological foundation laid by earlier researchers, while emphasizing that cultural shifts are drastically revising the meaning of youth in many societies. The impact of modernity and economic restructuring ("development") on youth in societies previously organized in other ways is often thought to give rise to psychological stress of a kind not unlike that associated with youth in industrialized societies, who are claimed to undergo "identity crises" as they resolve psychic conflicts with their adult roles (Erikson 1968). The difficulties believed to be endemic to this stage of life, however, may appear to be compounded among adolescents in societies undergoing rapid cultural change because such young people also face tensions between tradition and innovation.

As O'Neil (1986) points out, social change in itself is an inadequate explanation for adolescent stress, which in turn is usually invoked to account for behavior perceived as problematic. But rapid social change need not be experienced as dramatic or unsettling by the young people living through it. Moreover, it is important to bear in mind that youth are as often the agents as the experiencers of cultural change. Thus although young people's experiences of potentially socially threatening phenomena are thought to be the result of dramatic cultural changes that create unprecedented psychological pressure, there is another, creative dimension to these responses to new cultural circumstances. It is in this sense that youths' socially transgressive actions may be understood not simply as culture-specific manifestations of psychological distress but more importantly as critical cultural practices through which young people display agency. In accounts of such phenomena, a number of researchers in fact foreground the tension between young people's agency and the structural power of social institutions, thereby complicating the view of stress as an individual psychological state to which the young, with their age-based psychic fragility, are unusually susceptible.

The anthropology of adolescence thus considers development and change at two levels: individual and cultural. These levels interact analytically in the social staging of adolescence in par-

ticular cultural contexts in which the universal developmental arc of adolescence is shaped by historically specific processes of social, and economic as well as cultural transformation, by existing practices. The lived experience of young people is not limited to the uneasy occupation of a developmental way station en route to full-fledged cultural standing. It also involves its own distinctive identities and practices, which are neither rehearsals for the adult "real thing" nor even necessarily oriented to adults at all. These practices and identities, which might be classified as the concerns of youth rather than simply of adolescence, provide a firmer cultural ground on which to conduct research than the definitionally unstable terrain of adolescence alone.

From Adolescence to Youth

In urging a scholarly shift from adolescence to youth, I am not simply calling for researchers to expand their scope from the teen years, puberty, or other chronological or biological measures of adolescence in order to incorporate the full range of ways that youth may be defined socioculturally. Just as importantly however, I want to interrogate the concept of adolescence itself, which contrasts and connects – etymologically as well as socially – with adulthood. Youth foregrounds age not as trajectory, but as identity, where identity is intended to invoke neither the familiar psychological formulation of adolescence as a prolonged "search for identity," nor the rigid and essentialized concept that has been the target of a great deal of recent critique. Rather, identity is agentive, flexible, and ever changing but no more for youth than for people of any age.

The problem-based perspective on youth focuses on young people's actions as social violations rather than agentive interventions into ongoing sociocultural change. By contrast, the best work on the challenges facing youth emphasizes their own acts of cultural critique and cultural production in the face of often untenable situations. This view has also been instrumental in developing alternatives to theories of sociology that define youth practices solely in terms of their deviation from adult social norms.

Culture

Elizabeth F. Vann

The Handbook of Sociocultural Anthropology (2013), pp. 30-35

In "Youth and Culture Practices", Mary Bucholtz strongly differentiates between the concepts of "adolescence", understood as a transitional stage on the way to adulthood, and "youth", which she argues can be a manifested form of identity on its own. By doing so, she is distancing herself from the argument that adolescents and younger people are still individuals undergoing development, and are therefore incomplete in their socio-psychological growth, and instead recognizes the youth's ability to not only react to social circumstances but to also act upon their environment, adapt to it and manipulate it to their own means. A study of the culture of youth here no longer limits itself by the perception of youth as an age interval but as a state of mind that can materialize itself in the human environment.

It could be argued that an essay about the place of culture in the discipline of anthropology is an essay about the past; that culture is a matter about which anthropologists are no longer concerned or, alternatively, have decided never really meant anything in the first place. But culture in anthropology has long been a concern. Not only does the culture concept have a deep and complicated past, that history has served as a basis for arguments for and against certain disciplinary presents and futures. Thus, while Michael Lambek and Janice Boddy (1997:4) have written that "culture ... is constituted through the history of the claims people make through its means," I would add that culture is also constituted through the claims that anthropologists make about its history.

Ulf Hannerz (1999) has described the contemporary relationship of anthropologists to culture as a debate between "abolitionists" and "reformists," suggesting a divide between those who would expel culture from the disciplinary repertoire on the one hand, and on the other, those who think that the concept might be worth salvaging if it is qualified and modified, often using resources from other disciplines. However, and in the spirit of Hannerz's position, we might broaden that categorization to include "revisionists," as a number of anthropologists have argued for the reclamation of a past culture concept rather than the reformation of a more contemporary one. While the authors of these revisionist culture theories have been explicit about their intentions, their efforts to write theory as history are by no means exceptional.

I begin with the neo-Boasians, who have offered the most recent and most self-reflexive presentist accounts of the culture concept in anthropology. Interestingly, neo-Boasian theory largely sidesteps what many would take to be culture's heyday in anthropology, which coincided with the success of symbolic-interpretive theory in the 1970s and 1980s.

Recovering Culture

Following voluminous critiques of the culture concept, including reluctant arguments for its purpose, calls to severely limit its use, or to abandon the term altogether, there is currently a call for its return. This is an effort, led primarily by students of Stocking, to reclaim what they take to be an earlier, but presently underemployed, concept of culture. In some of his earliest work, Stocking (1968) distinguished between the historian's attempt to understand "the past for the sake of the past" (historicism) and "the past for the sake of the present" (presentism).

This effort to ground current anthropological work in a Boasian past has proceeded on the following premises: that critics of culture have relied on simplified, narrow, and "hardened" (Orta 2004) definitions of the term that are not representative of its disciplinary breath of meaning and use; and that a neo-Boasian approach to culture avoids the pitfalls typically associated with a culture-based anthropology and with popular, political, and other uses of the concept.

In making these claims, neo-Boasians confront well-established criticism of the culture concept from political-economic, postcolonial, feminist, and postmodern scholarship. The list of complaints is long (Brightman 1995), with accusations that the anthropological concept of culture is Othering, essentializing, and ahistorical. Many have criticized the culture concept for bounding people and places artificially and in ways that deny transnational connections while supporting colonial ideologies, nationalism, racism, and ethnic separatism. Political economists insisted that global interconnectedness has a long history, and that anthropological notions like "culture" and "society" drew artificial boundaries around people and places, much like, as Eric Wolf (1982) put it, bails on a billiard table. Others argued that the postcolonial world was qualitatively different from that encountered by earlier anthropologists, and thus required an

equally radical reorientation of anthropological work to account for those changes, including the acknowledgement that cultural holism was a literary device that enabled ethnographers to produce what James Clifford has called “serious fictions” (Clifford 1986; 7; see also Marcus and Cushman 1982; Clifford 1988; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Marcus and Fischer 1986).

Advocates of all these positions agreed that the culture concept falsely presumed a world of discrete cultural wholes, in which cultural boundaries demarcated and contained cultures. In this anthropological history, the Boasians were guilty of promulgating two, related notions of culture: a plural one in which the world contained many different cultures, and a differentiating and demarcating one that drew boundaries around certain people and spaces.

Neo-Boasian theorists acknowledge these criticisms; indeed, some have been central to their formulation (e.g. Handler 1988). However, they insist that they do not apply to the Boasian approach to culture (Bashkow 2004; Orta 2004). Through a competing disciplinary history, they argue that Boas and his students laid the groundwork for an understanding of cultural boundaries that is superior to any currently in use among anthropologists (Bashkow 2004:445).

Fundamental to their efforts is a rereading of Boasian culture theory, especially regarding what is often taken as a contradiction or intellectual split (e.g., Kuper 1999) between Boas’s concern with history, culture traits, and diffusion on the one hand, and on the other, Ruth Benedict’s, Margaret Mead’s, and Edward Sapir’s focus on questions of cultural integration, patterning, and holism. For the neo-Boasians, Boasian theories of cultural diffusion and cultural integration were not contradictory, nor was the latter intended to supersede the former; rather, they represented two, complementary characteristics or processes of culture. This approach challenges disciplinary memory of, for example, Benedict’s comparison of Native American “cultures” in terms of “psychological types” in *Patterns of Culture* as an argument for essentialized cultural difference, by reminding us that her concern with how cultures were patterned and integrated pre-supposed the accidental and historical accretion of cultural traits (Bashkow 2004:445; Rosenblatt 2004:460-61). With this in mind, neo-Boasians argue that Boasian historical particularism was not challenged or abandoned by Benedict and others associated with culture and personality studies but was, rather, the assumption from which such work proceeded.

Both of these aspects of culture, that it was the product of historical

diffusion and borrowing and that those disparate elements were arranged into some sort of coherent whole, were indeed present in Boas’s work (Boas 1887, 1889, 1911, [1896] 1940; Stocking 1974), and were also found in Benedict’s (Benedict 1934:226; Manganaro 2002:151; Rosenblatt 2004). Further, Boas, Mead, Sapir, and others acknowledged the presence of these two “sides” of culture, although not always with the ease and flexibility of the neo-Boasians. But by highlighting a productive, but largely implicit, relation in Boasian culture theory between diffusion and integration, neo-Boasians broaden the potential for a contemporary, Boasian-based approach to culture that can attend to many of the criticisms leveled at the culture concept, especially in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

Handler reminds us that Boas took the anthropological study of people deemed Other to be a “historical accident of disciplinary history,” rather than the discipline’s defining trait, and that Boas refused Self-Other dichotomies because he recognized that “humans everywhere face the same epistemological dilemmas” (Handler 2004:489). However, he also recalls that the Boasians made use of cultural juxtaposition. Boasian comparisons, he argues, were not intended to objectify cultural difference, but to provoke self-reflection (Handler 2004; 489; see also Wagner 1975; Marcus and Fischer 1986). The Boasians recognized that “cross-cultural ‘distance’ is always relative,” thus denying the existence of determined “Others” out “there” (Handler 2004:489). Thus, while the neo-Boasians are critical of certain aspects and applications of Boasian anthropology, they argue for the contemporary value of its foundational tenets. They posit a coherent and complex Boasian concept of culture that is grounded in a fundamental tension between accidental history and purposeful patterning.

For example, Ira Bashkow (2004) has argued that a Boasian-based notion of cultural boundaries as open and permeable, plural and interested, and different for analysts and natives, provides insight that would otherwise be ignored by those who deny cultural boundaries outright, on the basis that they are constructed and therefore artificial. As Bashkow argues, anthropologists and the people they study regularly employ cultural boundaries, and not always to negative effect (2004:453; but see Handler 1988, 1997; Stolke 1995; Wright 1998). As he shows, the Orokaiva, in Papua New Guinea, employ the term “whitemen” in their construction of cultural boundaries between “own” and “other”; “it is a cultural category they conventionally contrast with themselves in various contexts of indigenous life” (Bashkow 2004:449). Using a neo-Boasian approach, Bashkow chooses not to ignore or deny this term and the boundaries it helps to mark, but instead chooses

to pay attention to its historical development and contemporary uses. In this way, a neo-Boasian approach to cultural boundaries avoids reifying the Orokaiva in the ways often associated with the “peoples and cultures” approach to the world (Wolf 1982; Gupta and Ferguson 1997a). As Bashkow (2004:449) notes, the categories and terms “Orokaiva” and “whitemen” are both products of colonial encounter. Further, the category of “whitemen” serves not only to divide and separate, but also to include and connect (2004: 449). Finally, “whitemen” is a relative term that the Orokaiva employ strategically toward certain political, social, and economic ends (2004; 449-500). Thus, rather than portraying “Orokaiva culture” as timeless, bounded, and homogenous, Bashkow’s focus on Orokaiva cultural boundaries highlights the ways in which they are historically constructed and given contemporary significance (see also Orta 2004).

Through their nonlinear intellectual genealogy, then, neo-Boasians present Boasian culture theory as already aware of and capable of avoiding the problems of Othering, cultural boundedness, and ahistoricity, that many have attributed to the anthropological culture concept. From this neo-Boasian vantage point, the solution to the problem is not emancipation from culture, but the application of the Boasian understanding of culture and difference as historically contingent and meaningful in the present.

The Matter of Whiteness

Richard Dyer

White Privilege: Essential Readings on the Other Side of Racism (2013), pp. 9-14

Richard Dyer's text entitled "The Matter of Whiteness" sheds light on a major issue that has been constructed in social perception; how people of all races, even white people themselves, perceive other white people as defaulted norm of the human condition. As such, while non-white people have their race labeled upon them as a major identifier, and while they accept their race as a major contributor to the construction of their social identity, white people do not. They are simply "just people". By perceiving themselves as simply human beings, they attain the power and ability to speak for the voices of all other human beings, and thus for all other races. To deconstruct this ability, the first step consists of racializing white people as white and recognizing their race as an independent race of its own that does not speak for or represent all other people, and especially those of different races.

Racial imagery is central to the organization of the modern world. At what cost regions and countries export their goods, whose voices are listened to at international gatherings, whose bombs and who is bombed, who gets what jobs, housing, access to health care and education, what cultural activities are subsidized and sold, in what terms they are validated – these are all largely inextricable from racial imagery. The myriad minute decisions that constitute the practices of the world are at every point informed by judgments about people's capacities and worth, judgments based on what they look like, where they come from, how they speak, even what they eat, that is, racial judgments. Race is not the only factor governing these things and people of goodwill everywhere struggle to overcome the prejudices and barriers of race, but it is never not a factor, never not in play. And since race in itself – insofar as it is anything in itself – refers to some intrinsically insignificant geographical/physical differences between people, it is the imagery of race that is in play.

There has been an enormous amount of analysis of racial imagery in the past decades. Yet until recently a notable absence from such work has been the study of images of white people. Indeed, to say that is interested in race has come to mean that one is interested in any racial imagery other than that of white people. Yet race is not only attributable to people who are not white, nor is imagery of non-white people the only racial imagery.

This essay is about the racial imagery of white people – not the images of other races in white cultural production, but the latter's imagery of white people themselves. This is not done merely to fill a gap in the analytic literature but because there is something at stake in looking at, or continuing to ignore, white racial imagery. As long as race is something only applied to non-white peoples, as long as white people are not racially seen and named, they/we function as a human norm. Other people are races, we are just people.

There is no more powerful position than that of being "just" human. The claim to power is the claim to speak for the commonality of humanity. Raced people can't do that – they can only speak for their race. But non-raced people can, for they do not represent the interests of a race. The point of seeing the racing of whites is to dislodge them/us from the position of power, with all the inequities, oppression, privileges and sufferings in its train, dislodging them/us by undercutting the authority with which they/we speak and act in and on the world.

The sense of whites as non-raced is most evident in the absence of reference to whiteness in the habitual speech and writing of white people in the West.

This assumption that white people are just people, which is not far off saying that whites are people whereas other colors are something else, is endemic to white culture. Some of the sharpest criticism of it has been aimed at those who would think themselves the least racist or white supremacists. Bell Hooks, for instance, has noted how amazed and angry white liberals become attention is drawn to their whiteness, when they are seen by non-white people as white.

Similarly, Hazel Carby discusses the use of black texts in white classrooms, under the sign of multiculturalism, in a way that winds up focusing "on the complexity of response in the (white) reader/student's construction of self in relation to a (black) perceived 'other'". We should, she argues, recognize that "everyone in this social order has been constructed in our political imagination as a racialised subject" and thus that we should consider whiteness as well as blackness, in order "to make visible what is rendered invisible when viewed as the normative state of existence: the (white) point in space from which we tend to identify difference" (Carby 1992: 193).

The invisibility of whiteness as a racial position in white (which is

to say dominant) discourse is of a piece with its ubiquity. When I said above that I wasn't merely seeking to fill a gap in the analysis of racial imagery, I reproduced the idea that there is no discussion of white people. In fact for most of the time white people speak about nothing but white people, it's just that we couch it in terms of "people" in general. Research – into books, museums, the press, advertising, films, television, software – repeatedly shows that in Western representation whites are overwhelmingly and disproportionately predominant, have the central and elaborated roles, and above all are placed as the norm, the ordinary, the standard. Whites are everywhere in representation. Yet precisely because of this and their placing as norm they seem not to be represented to themselves as whites but as people who are variously gendered, classed, sexualized and abled. At the level of racial representation, in other words, whites are not of a certain race, they're just the human race.

We are often told that we are living now in a world of multiple identities, of hybridity, of decentredness and fragmentation. The old illusory unified identities of class, gender, race, sexuality are breaking up. Yet we have not yet reached a situation in which white people and white cultural agendas are no longer in the ascendant. The media, politics, education are still in the hands of white people, still speak for humanity. Against the flowering of a myriad of postmodern voices, we must also see the countervailing tendency towards a homogenization of world culture, in the continued dominance of US news dissemination, popular TV programs and Hollywood movies. Postmodern multiculturalism may have genuinely opened up a space for the voices of the other, challenging the authority of the white West (cf. Owens 1983), but it may also simultaneously function as a side-show for white people who look on with delight at all the differences that surround them. We may be on our way to genuine hybridity, multiplicity without (white) hegemony, and it may be where we want to get to – but we aren't there yet, and we won't get there until we see whiteness, see its power, its particularity and limitedness, put it in its place and end its rule. This is why studying whiteness matters.

It is studying whiteness qua whiteness. Attention is sometimes paid to "white ethnicity" (e.g. Alba 1990), but this always means an identity based on cultural origins such as British, Italian or Polish, or Catholic or Jewish, or Polish-American, Irish-American, Catholic-American and so on.

The Poetics of The Material

Stephanie Damianitsch

The Poetics of The Material, Poetiken Des Materials, 2016, Leopold Museum, pp. 11-25.

In her introductory text to the exhibition *Poetiken des Materials*, held at the Leopold Museum Vienna in 2016-2017, Stéphanie Damianitsch argues that while previous artistic movements such as Minimalism, Post-Minimalism, Land Art and *Arte povera*, focused on the materiality of artworks as an autonomous aesthetic category already in the 1960s, they drew their subversive powers from the retention of the essential differentiation between materiality and immateriality, later between materiality and matter.

Furthermore, her essay reflects on the current development of “New Materiality” within contemporary art, insisting on materiality as being a beholder of reality. Throughout a reading of the exhibited works, she explicits how everyday items and “non-art” materials, are called into question as bearers of cultural meaning.

In the current fields of science and art a growing interest can be observed in material and the material aspects of reality — a development that has been termed in the “material turn”. As Suzanne Witzgall notes, it is almost as if “we had only recently discovered that we are matter and live admit matter, materials, and materialities — and that these aren’t simply carriers of signs and meanings, or first come into being through these signs and meanings, but instead themselves play a role in the generation of meanings and the constitution of reality.” As it relates to the field of art, this “new” tendency seems doubly surprising. On the one hand, according to Barbara Bolt, the “material facts of artistic practice appear so self-evident and integral to our understanding of art that it may seem unremarkable to frame them in terms of the material turn”; on the other, a great number of modern-day artists have already focused their attention on the materiality of the artwork as a distinct aesthetic category.

As examples, we can mention here Minimal art, one of whose characteristic features was the conscious use of industrially produced materials; as well as the subsequent trends of Post-Minimalism, Land art and *Arte Povera*. In the mid-1960s the latter three emphasized the quality and inherent dynamic of the material — under the titles of processuality, chance and alterability — by allowing flexible, instable materials such as textiles, foam plastics, sand or dirt to flow and spread uncontrolled in order to subvert the primacy of the fixed form. In line with this, Robert Morris argued in his manifest-like say “*Anti-Form*” (1968) for the liberation of material from the dominion of form, asserting that the “perpetuation of form is functioning idealism.”

This makes it clear that the efforts of Post-Minimalism were aimed specifically against a specific idea that had prevailed since classical antiquity and was passed down through the ages through aesthetic discourse. This belief held that material was a “lower” substance

that through form and content — regarded as the paragons of the creation of art — must be transformed, sublimated and made to disappear. But also in 1968, and representing the other side of the coin, the art critics Lucy R. Lippard and John Chandler put forward the thesis of the “dematerialization of art” to address the artistic practices and ephemeral representational means of the Fluxus movement and of conceptual art. While their remarks with regard to these investigated art forms — which are characterized by their rejection of a material-centered type of art production and their emphasis on the primacy of language — are quite plausible, as Pamela M. Lee notes, every “intellectual retreat from the material conditions of art production” represents a perpetuation of the very idealism the Morris criticized.

Although for the increasing digitization of our environment the question of the dematerialization of art currently seems to pose itself again from a different perspective, the “new” interest in material in contemporary art shows itself to be only a backlash against it. The intention is not to return to a form of essentialism, such as was associated with Post-Minimalism. Rather, it is apparent that the aim is to overcome the binary categories of material and form, which modern art overdetermined, in order to find another “conception and use of material which exists outside of the dualism of form and matter, of idea and matter.”

When one begins investigating this other conception it becomes clear that for theorists of the so-called “new materialism”, material is no longer something passive “that waits for the intellect or spirit to provide an additional formative force or animating spark.” Rather, materials and things are perceived as co-actors in historic processes and as the products of these processes. They thus function — comparable to language — as a vehicle of the discursive constitution of reality. Involved in equal terms in those practices of thinking, writing, speaking or acting that not only

generate meanings but also constitute reality itself, material and material phenomena participate “in the (re)configuration of the interweaving of assemblages and networks of reality as well as in epistemic processes.”

For artists who are now increasingly turning their attention to material, the question therefore seems to be how to adequately address the material qualities of artworks and reality without losing sign of the discursive dimensions of them in the process. Or as Susan Hekman puts it: “How do we bring the material back into the equation without losing the insights of the linguistic turn [...]?” The insights of the linguistic turn — that language is not only a conveyor of reality but also a generator of the perception of reality — are accompanied by the tendency to interpret social practices and manifestations as codings of meanings and to treat and read them as texts. The structure of numerous contemporary artworks corresponds to this, works that — analogous to Roland Barthe’s definition of texts — resemble “a fabric of quotations, resulting from a thousand sources of culture, [...] entering into dialogue with each other, into parody, into contestation.” The process of working with and reinterpreting the cultural codes that are brought to light, superimposed and called into question is accordingly at the heart of artistic activity. If material is now understood as part and product of historic processes and thus as a contorted carrier of meaning, it can be introduced into this “intertextual” network of sources.

If poetics in its conventional meaning denotes the examination of the linguistic structures of literary works, the “poetics of the material” poses the question of how material and material phenomena are approached in conceptual terms by the artists presented here, how they are incorporated into the structure of artworks, to what extent they are seen as corresponding to language or to cultural narrations and what expressive power of the material is thus revealed.

In its incorporation of brittle substances such as concrete and metal as well as soft materials like wax, jute and other textiles, the art of Anne Schneider seems to have an affinity with Post-Minimalism. But even if the inherent dynamic of her chosen materials plays a decisive role in Schneider’s works, her art cannot be reduced merely to this element. Rather, the artist is concerned with expressing through her works the web of relationships in which human existence is entwined. In the foreground is the relation of humans to the material environment surrounding them. Using materials with correspondingly social connotations, she focuses her attention on those shells and layers — clothing, furniture, spaces and architecture — that surrounded the body like a second skin

or are in direct contact with it. Analogous to a phenomenological understanding of the body as a permeable membrane between the external and internal experience, the boundary between self and world is seen not as rigid but rather as being in flow.

The play with the opposing elements of interior and exterior thus has great importance in Schneider’s work. This is particularly evident in her concrete sculptures which are given form as negatives of textile casting molds, thus turning their inner empty space outward. The marks, folds and dents resulting from this procedure and form the subsequent processing, as well as the coloring of the statues, can again be seen as corresponding to the surface of the body as the permeable boundary between the physical and psychological space. Using this and similar strategies, Schneider counters the binary, the linguistic logic based on pairs of opposites — as it determines our thinking and the conventional way of perceiving reality.

It is not the “topography of our intimate being” but rather that of urban space that is at the center of many of Sonia Leimer’s works. The artist regards these city areas as places of cultural memory and strives to reveal the codings imbedded in them. Her interest lies in the architecture, street networks and other forms of the urban “syntax” with their markings, spatial interruptions and “construction zones.” With her works she draws attention to the indicators of this spatial syntax and the residue of time visible on them. She makes use, for example, of architectural set pieces and fragments of city spaces — the punctuation marks of urban textures — such as marked sheets of asphalt from building sites or bollards dented by cars, which she detaches from their original context. Through their arrangement as new constellations, they are given a kind of allegorical notational iconicity. They emerge as abstract sculptures and simultaneously as Platzhalter [placeholders] for the cultural horizons of meaning that can be associated with them.

In her silk screens, Leimer uses photographs of the Earth taken from satellites and space probes, revealing these images to be media-dependent constructs. As the photographs are blurry and abstract due to limited technical possibilities, they have no clear representational function; rather, they reflect the desire for a distant, disassociated viewing position as well as the codes and values of the positivist worldview. The foils that the artist uses as the printing foundation, however, which were developed for space travel emancipate themselves in Leimer’s reverse argument from pure “image carriers” to material placeholders of these cultural narratives.

The intensive investigation of the historic imaginary — and thus those stories that a society constructs about itself — and the question of what significance is assigned to material phenomena in this context are what informs the works of Christian Kosmas Mayer as well. Their point of departure is often to be found in stories and functions of specific places and objects, which Mayer researches, appropriates, involves in dialogues, superimposes and recontextualizes.

The notational iconicity of poetry, in which the meaning of words and their appearance are accorded the same significance, is the point of departure for many of Benjamin Hirte's works. They balance on a fine line that causes the script to tilt into pure visuality and transforms sculptures into (written) characters. The material he utilizes assume a crucial role in the way he plays with these subtle shifts. The most powerful example of this is the alphabet design by the artist himself, whose letters A and E are executed as floor sculptures in his installation for the exhibition *The Poetics of the Material*, at the Leopold Museum, Vienna 2016. The elementary forms, made of industrial materials, suggest an iconic reference to the "literalness" of Minimal art. Instead of placing the emphasis on the pure self-referentiality of the artistic material, objects such as the PVC film and the aluminum panels evoke commonplace things like a swimming pool. These objects are in turn intended as an analogy to the linguistic function of Hirte's letters, which the artist regards as a collection tank of various levels of meaning. [The letters A and E,] in their spatial arrangement could be read as AE and therefore refer to the German umlaut "ä", which is alternatively written as "æ" on the Internet when the German language set is missing. So on the one hand, Hirte refers to medial translation problems in written language, while on the other hand the sound "ä" in the spoken German language is often an expression of uncertainty.

In superimposing the connotated initials to make a single terry-cloth surface, the artist transforms the letters into a new glyph which — similar to the letters of his alphabet — is charged with various levels of meaning. These meanings, however, are conveyed primarily by way of the materiality itself, while the work — from a purely visual perspective — resembles an arbitrary character.

References to Minimal art can be found on a formal level in the works of Mathias Pöschl as well. The aesthetic of Minimal art, however, which completely detached from social issues, is of interest to the artist primarily as a cultural parallel phenomenon to the Black Aesthetic, which was closely tied to the black nationalist political movement in the US in the 1960s. References to Bertolt Brecht's epic theater, which influenced the plays of the

African-American writer Amiri Baraka — a key figure of the Black Aesthetic — assume a significant role in Pöschl's installation, untitled (abandoned stage set for a black mass), as does Michael Fried's definition of Minimal art's "stage presence" — which Fried recognized in the inclusion of the position and movement of the beholder — by lending his installation the character of a theatrical setting with a stage and seating area, using objects that appear to be related to a minimalist aesthetic. The title of the installation suggests that this is a stage on which Baraka's one-act play *A Black Mass* is to be performed. In this work Baraka used the inversion of the symbolism of black and white — which Pöschl references on a material level — to stress the divinity and superiority to the "black race".

But the play is "staged" only to the extent that it serves as one of the sources and reference levels for the political and aesthetic ideas and theories passed down in history, to which the artist gives expression by way of a complex juxtaposition of the variously connoted everyday objects, materials and media. In this way, the traditional dualism of content and form as well as the utilized material is subtly subverted in Pöschl's installation.

Power of Material/Politics of Materiality — an Introduction

Susanne Witzgall

Introduction, *Power of Material/Politics of Materiality*, Diaphanes, Zurich/Berlin, 2014, pp. 13-26.

During the mid-1990s, the subject of materiality has emerged as a new focus in the art, design and architectural practices. Presented under the name “New Materialism” or “Neo-Materialism”, these topics assert the agency of material within the artistic process. In doing so, New Materialism becomes described as new metaphysics or ontology, and is not considered as a mere actor giving disciplinary order of the world. In her introduction to the book *Power of Materials/Politics of Materiality*, Susann Witzgall clarifies how these processes are tightly enmeshed and entangled within a web of relationships. Moreover, how the articulation of this new emerged topic is deeply intrinsic with multiple disciplines such as the physics, cognitive sciences, political sciences, anthropology, feminist theory, literary studies, arts. Also, she explicates how New Materialism’s goal is not only to place the “dualism of form and matter into question”, rather it is an attempt to scatter other persistent dichotomies, such as between the mind and the body, culture and nature.

The current scientific, artistic, and design interest in the material aspects of our reality is considerable. It is almost as if we have only recently discovered that we are matter and live amidst matter, materials, and materialities – and that these aren’t simply carriers of signs and meanings, or first come into being through these signs and meanings, but instead themselves play a role in the generation of meanings and the constitution of reality.

The new focus on the material that has surged over the last two decades cuts across vastly different disciplines. This encompasses approaches that thematize “the appearance, presentation, and contemplation of the material,” rediscover the “qualities of materials,” or describe the “hierarchies and semantics of the materialities,” which includes Monika Wagner and Dietmar Rübels’ predominantly material iconographic-directed art historical perspective. This new focus on the material finds its expression in an explosion of approaches that emerge out of different fields, ranging from the arts, literary studies, sociology, anthropology, feminist theory, and the political sciences to human geography and the cognitive sciences. Beyond a simple thematisation of material(ity), these approaches demand a “new understanding of material,” a reformulation of matter or an “other conception and use of material” which exists “outside of the dualism of form and matter, of idea and matter,” and brings among other things, the momentum and “efficacy” of material phenomenon into account.

A New Ontology ?

These approaches operate – albeit at the moment primarily in English speaking fields – under the name “New Materialism” or “Neo-Materialism,” a concept developed by the Mexican author, artist, and philosopher Manuel DeLanda and the Italian-Australian philosopher and feminist theoretician Rosi Braidotti in the second half of the 1990s. According to Dolphijn Und Van Der Tuin, New

Materialism is marked through a “nomadic crossing of territories of nature and sciences,” which demonstrates the agential character of matter, and shouldn’t be understood as an “add-on,” simply a further (material) facet that a specialized discourse appends. New Materialism doesn’t just assemble an established disciplinary vision of the world, which appears to have lost traction, with new material weight, but is instead described much more as a new metaphysics or ontology that should lead to a completely new view and conception of the world. The basis for this is the aforementioned new understanding of matter, which is no longer considered as something solid and passive that waits for the intellect or spirit to provide an additional formative force or animating spark, but rather possesses intrinsically self-transformative potentials and regularly finds itself in a state of ongoing metamorphosis and morphogenesis. Influenced by chaos and complexity theories, quantum theories, and current theories of elementary particle physics, “as an ongoing play of determinacies,” as active principle, or even as vibrant matter with “intrinsic vitality.”

This conception of matter and materiality doesn’t only place the dualism of form and matter into question, but in New Materialism, it goes along with the attempt to dissolve other long-standing dichotomies, such as between mind and the body or culture and nature. As DeLanda stressed again recently, it can’t simply be about an avoidance of these dualities, but rather its “reified generalities” must be replaced through “concrete assemblages. With the help of Deleuze’s concept of assemblage, DeLanda alludes to the process that Bruno Latour called “the work of purification” and considered a characteristic of the modern. According to Latour, the modern work of purification divides the world’s fabrics and networks into clearly separated fields of artefacts, people, signs, norms, organisations, texts, hybrids between nature and culture, and subjects and objects, thus producing sanitised entities that

are not conceded any mixed forms and middle positions. For New Materialists, on the other hand, the world consists of concrete assemblages, of networks or meshworks, out of contingent structures of all kinds of heterogeneous materials, from semiotic and pragmatic elements, from the human and the non-human. All of the elements, or rather the phenomena, of these assemblages and networks are closely related and partially appear to only unfold their efficacy in this way. Following Karen Barad, matter is “condensations of response-ability.”

Assemblages and Material-Semiotic Actors

In her conception of “Agential Realism,” Karen Barad refers to the Danish physicist Niels Bohr, defining phenomenon as “ontologically primitive relations” – “relations without preexisting relata,” by which she negates the existence of previously existing isolated entities.

According to Barad, it is through “specific agential intra-actions” that the “boundaries and properties of the components of phenomena become determinate and that particular concepts (that is, particular material articulations of the world) become meaningful.” The concept of intra-action explicitly emphasises a procedure that occurs within phenomena and first materialises and gains relevance through this – as opposed to interaction, which occurs between phenomena, and assumes that entities are already clearly defined and separated.

Barad claims that the intra-action of phenomenon and apparatus plays a central role in the determination of their precise qualities and boundaries in the field of scientific research. It’s not only an object that existed prior to an experiment that is observed in an experiment, but the entanglement and inseparability of the apparatus and the object under examination. Referring to Bohr, Barad explains, “there are no things before the measurement, the very act of measurement produces the determinate boundaries and properties of things.” In doing so, she completely turns against an essentialist naturalism, which believes that material phenomena must only be discovered through the sciences (as well as the arts) and revealed through their praxis.

This correlates, as I would like to emphasise here, with the views of Bruno Latour and Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, who in their investigations of scientific practice and knowledge production — even if with another terminology — have observed a similar interconnection of apparatus and objects of investigation, from human and non-human beings, from scientists, previous knowledge, values,

institutions, systems of signification and objects of research. In his essay *Do Objects Have a History? Pasteur and Whitehead in a Bath of Lactic Acid*, Latour analyses, among other things, Pasteur’s final report about the discovery of an innate enzyme of lactic acid fermentation in 1857. He demonstrates how the enzymes manifest themselves as actors in test assemblies – Latour speaks of “programs of action” – and build networks with other human and non-human actors by means of interactions, transactions, negotiations, and mediations. The enzymes and their programs of action are themselves the result of these actions, displacements, and adaptations, insofar they more or less consist of different elements of these networks – they are (material-semiotic) hybrids. As Latour explains, Pasteur does not dictate “to the facts how they should speak. He intervenes in them, he shares with the ferments, which he offers a new chance – his history, his body, his laboratory, the company of his colleagues. He neither merely discovers the ferments, nor does he model them. With this opportunity, everything merges, everything is reciprocally form and material.”

According to Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, scientific experimental systems consist of epistemic things and technical conditions. Epistemic things – things that pertain to the “endeavour of knowledge” within scientific systems, the things that should be researched – are initially located in a condition of vagueness and precariousness, of provisionality and indefiniteness. For (re)defining it and giving it a new shape, or rather producing it, the appropriate technical conditions (instruments, recording apparatus, model organisms...) are required. In doing so he emphasises, similar to Karen Barad and Bruno Latour, the “indissoluble amalgamation” of apparatus (technical conditions) and objects of enquiry (epistemic things). According to Rheinberger, in their combination they co-generate “the material entities and concepts they come to embody.”

Representatives of New Materialism – among whom we can definitely count Braidotti, DeLanda, Barad, Latour, and Rheinberger – thus describe matter and material phenomenon as actors that participate in the (re)configuration of the entanglements of assemblages and networks of reality, as well as epistemic processes. But they also emphasise – often equally based on the concepts of assemblage, networks, or meshwork – that matter and materiality are hybrid phenomenon and also consist of immaterial and semantic components. New Materialists pledge allegiance to a “real world” but refuse any form of essentialism.

Manuel DeLanda also believes in the existence of a material world that exists independent of our consciousness, yet at the same time considers “all objective entities” as “products of a historical

process,” which means, according to DeLanda, that their identity is “synthesized or produced as part of cosmological, geological, biological, or social history.”

Entanglements of Minds, Bodies, and Things

Over the course of the last two decades, the materialism described here has brought the materiality of human (and non-human) bodies to the forefront once again.

Above all, science and technology researchers, as well as gender studies and feminist theorists criticise the status of the body as “passive object of knowledge or matter and appropriated resource,” and define it – again, mostly in another reference to Donna Haraway and Latour’s network theories – as a “situated actor” that constantly alters and relocates itself in the synergies of materiality and meaning, of matter and discourse. “Embodiment” is the buzzword that’s often used in this context. Even if it takes on the most iridescent meanings according to each discipline, the term emphasises the long neglected role of bodily materialities, ranging from social actions to cognitive processes. It equally cuts across the humanities and natural sciences and led to a fundamental paradigm shift in robotic, artificial intelligence, and the cognitive sciences, for example. While artificial intelligence research has long investigated mental processes as computational power, today more and more researchers emphasize “the importance of the construction of embodied agents and artefacts and deem simulation limited to the computer insufficient to create truly flexible and intelligent artefacts. According to the new logic, agents and artefacts should interact with their ‘real’ environment in order to become intelligent,” explains media theorist and technology researcher Jutta Weber. This also complies with new convictions in the cognitive sciences: that an organism’s cognitive processes cannot be understood as detached from its physical condition and its situational embeddedness in the environment and its interaction with it – that one has to assume an embodied cognition.

It should already be clear in this provisional summary why there has been talk for several years of a “material turn” —or a “materialist turn” as Diana Coole writes – that extends across disciplines, and what fundamental materialistic sweeping changes the “new understanding of materials” and “reformulation of matter” mentioned at the opening of this essay have accomplished. An exhaustion of linguistic and (social) constructivist approaches of the past is frequently cited as a reason for this sweeping turnaround, ever more frequently considered inadequate to describe, understand, and recognise contemporary society. For example,

Karen Barad speaks of a “representationalist trap” of the social constructivist approaches, a “geometrical optics of reflection where, much like the infinite play of images between two facing mirrors, the epistemological gets bounced back and forth, but nothing more is seen.” Diana Coole and Samantha Frost refer to pressing ecological, demographic, geographical, and economic challenges faced by contemporary society for which pure textual approaches can only bring little understanding. Instead, they think “foregrounding material factors and reconfiguring our very understanding of matter are prerequisites for any plausible account of coexistence and its conditions in the twenty-first century.” However, it largely appears to not only be about an adequate description of the world. With its emphasis on the agential status of matter and the non-anthropocentric, flat ontology of its networks and assemblages, New Materialism shakes the basic tenants of humanism, on which the various exploitations of the contemporary world are based and appears, not least, to demand normative consequences.