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From Isolation to Exultation: the Spatial Situation of the Artist's Studio from Industrial Modernity to Financialisation

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Introduction

In 2010, in the wake of the 2007 subprime and 2008 financial crisis we wrote, *No Room to Move: Radical Art in the Regenerate City*, a book which assessed the growing role of public art in urban design in the United Kingdom post-1945 and involved discussions with contemporary artists critical of urban regeneration processes (Berry Slater & Iles, 2010). In that study we anticipated that the cultural benefits promised by regeneration schemes would be progressively dumped in the era of austerity, as the developers' naked profit principle became an acceptable and open objective, positioning artists increasingly as collateral rather than agents of urban change, and art became a vernacular veneer to be cloned by developers and local authority bureaucrats alike:

> Over instrumentalised art may simply fail to be art – what councillors, developers, planners and regeneration agencies want appears to be something which looks like art, and clothes itself in a simulacrum of neutrality and creativity, yet serves their limited ends – producing the 'community cohesion' which the alienating forms of neoliberal governance necessarily destroy. Every city and town cannot become a creative cluster. (Berry Slater & Iles, 2010, 50.)

However, the reignition of the housing market triggered by the subprime crisis blew away even our worst expectations. The wholesale commodification of urban space in the, by now very much global, city of London, which rapidly escalated the economic crisis into the current 'housing crisis', has impacted artists' living conditions, working conditions, art practice and the public display of art more generally.1 Yet how is the spatial precarity that has resulted from this unprecedented transformation of real estate into the main lever of the British economy, and worsened by austerity, made legible in the field of contemporary art? In other words, how does a scarcity of space or spatial scarcity – which, as a fundamental use value necessarily affects all of social production and reproduction – become a directly legible influence on art, both historically and today, and with what effects? The intensifying struggle over housing and workspace, we propose, must be manifesting in art's internal development as much as in the more externally legible forms of social contestation and organisation that involve – but as often implicate – artists. This article begins to engage this hypothesis by building a brief overview of the relationship between the urban mode of production, the studio, the social figure of the artist and the nature of their practice.

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1   Of course, there has been a 'housing crisis' in London and the UK for most of the twentieth century, arguably for the entire course of modernity, and this is directly linked to the capitalisation of land in the United Kingdom which laid the basis for, and is tied up with, London's centrality to the global accumulation of financial, industrial and landed capital. For a series of cogent arguments about the longevity of the British economy's relation to a 'history of residential inflation', questions about the term 'crisis' and the necessity of high land and house prices to the health of UK 'state political authority' see (Hayward, 2018).

In this essay we develop the framework established in our earlier study (Berry Slater & Iles, 2010) by which we understood art developing both in relation to and distinction from capitalism's 'spatial fixes' (Harvey, 1981 and 2001). In Harvey's analysis, capitalism both 'fixes' space for value production, and then later disaggregates it in order to provide for new areas of innovation, opportunity and profit (Harvey, 1981, 25). Capital's needs for transportation, communication and storage (Lefebvre, 1991) structure space and the environment. In the post-war period, particularly under the pressures of reconstruction, this restructuring was undertaken by the state as a unified programme of public works, within which art was integrated, for the first time, as exceptional and autonomous, serving the purpose of no purpose e.g. spiritually edifying public art, albeit within a context tailored to the needs of industrial capitalist development.2 Later, capital's need for 'spatial fixes' become the response to crises of overaccumulation (Lefebvre, 1976) and temporary solutions to the destructive effects of competition – driving the 'annihilation of space by time' (Marx, 1973, 538) – achieved by earlier revolutions in transport and communications. Spatial commodification develops from being a corollary of industrial development with some speculative outcomes (railways and real estate in the 19th century) into a core area of accumulation (Lapavistas, 2009) in the late-20th and early 21st centuries due to the increasing prominence of global finance. It is through this dynamic, according to Michael Hudson (2003) and Loren Goldner (2007), that finance ceases to serve investment in productive industry and becomes the central motor of (and in fact barrier to) development as financialisation determines the form through which first corporations, then almost all enterprises of every form and function, both large and small, reproduce themselves. Within this emergent field of intense global competition between cities, vying to solicit investment from the swarm of 'nomad dollars' (Goldner, 2007) seeking profit worldwide, urbanisation becomes a key mediator (Moreno, 2014), and art is at stake within it because as Harvey (2002, 98) argues , 'claims to uniqueness and authenticity can best be articulated as distinctive and non-replicable cultural claims.' This provides us with the credible linkages between finance and urbanisation which structure our framework, as well as the periodisation of art within capital's self-development. In this essay – which is the outline of a more ambitious research project aiming to understand how financialisation is changing art – we prioritise the studio as a spatial container within which the current production conditions of art are crystallised. The studio offers a window onto the life of the artist in all its distinctness from other working practices in the city which makes it highly desirable to processes of commodification. It is also a spatial frame that allows us to track the totality of the artist's activities. Therefore, the studio presents a surface upon which are etched capitalist financialisation's desires for exemplary creative practices, embodied in artists, and at the same time, the minimum conditions required by artists to actually create work. By tracking the historical transformations of the artist's studio we can illuminate the impact of the changing mode of urban production on the figure and practices of artists and thereby sharpen our reading of the effects of spatial crisis on art today.

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2   See, for example, the debates around the exclusion of industrial art in the post-war formation of the Arts Council of England (Saler, 2001, 167–169). Notable here is John Maynard Keynes dual role in the integration of art into the state as exception to the division of labour in society and his central importance to the economic reform of the post-war State generally.

Much of the activity we charted in our first foray into studying art's role and relation to the neoliberal city has disappeared. The public art bubble that was briefly, and quite spectacularly inflated by the New Labour government (1997-2010), has been rapidly deflating ever since the financial crisis. More imposing than the Tate Modern, that millennial symbol of Creative Britain, is now the rash of glass towers that have grown up around it.3 This image crystallises, at the level of the city skyline, suspicions that art's urban appearances within the late 1990s and 2000's were always just a vanishing mediator between the old, deindustrialised city and its revalorisation as a city of financial speculation. Another key shift has been the 2011 axing of the urban development corporations (initiated under Thatcher's Conservative administration and subsequently expanded by New Labour) which had been crucial to funding the otherwise rather nebulous vision of creative-led regeneration (Sparrow, 2012; Gould 2018, 46-47). As funding has fallen away in the post-crisis period, accompanied by ad hoc suspensions of developers' obligations outside the narrow drive to generate profit (e.g. the relaxing of Section 106 contributions and drastic reduction of affordable housing quotients), art's use in promoting inner cities as ripe for investment has been superseded by a developer's land-grab which, for the most part, only requires the veneer of creativity. This change of tack has coincided with a slashing of central government and local authority funding for art and culture and a retreat of public commissioning.4 We contend that an earlier stage of creative-led regeneration has been superseded by its reverse: *developer-driven art*. Of course, we recognise this is an oxymoron, and although something of this nature might exist, it certainly can't any longer be considered art, but rather an assimilation and imitation of its operations.5

If we want to think about how this post-crisis period of financialised development in London is impacting art we are confronted with several key facts. After its millennial crescendo, newly commissioned art, if it appears at all, is appearing less and less within regeneration zones and the public realm more widely. This is not necessarily a disappearance of art but an eclipse, partial or temporary, of challenging art from public view. The art we see emerging into the public realm is often populist or resolutely formal.6 Increasingly, developers are assimilating the 'creativity code' into their property marketing strategies, dispensing with the necessity of inviting artists to make work in the maelstrom of displacement, demolition and property development. In place of the artist we are seeing hybrid figures of the arts or architecture professional willing to make temporary follies, art without teeth, architecture without people, or

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3   A conflagration explored with aplomb by Andrew Harris in an article which for us has both an allegorical significance in terms of London's housing provision and material consequences for art, see (Harris, 2008).

4   David Pilditch writes, 'Alarming new figures show council spending on museums, galleries, libraries, and local arts has plunged by more than £390million since 2011.' See, '£400m cuts leave museums in crisis', *Daily Express*, 29 January 2019.

5   This thesis was initially explored towards the end of *No Room to Move*, op. cit. Art, according to Kant, must be doubly free: free from wage labour, but also, like labour, free of having a commodity or other service to sell, '[f]ine art must be free art in a double sense: it must be free in the sense of not being a mercenary occupation and hence a kind of labour, whose magnitude can be judged, exacted or paid for according to a certain standard; but fine art must also be free in the sense that, though the mind is occupying itself, yet it feels satisfied and amused (independently of any pay) without looking to some other purpose.' (Kant, 1987, 190).

6   The City of London's Sculpture in the City programme, begun in 2007 and funded by principal landholders and services companies to London's primary financial district, exemplifies this tendency. See: https://www.sculptureinthecity.org.uk/artwork/9th-edition/

depopulated social engagement platforms which tend to hew as closely as possible to developer's agendas and illusory forms of public engagement. Yet the artist's studio continues to be seen as an indispensable element within the development mix, (or at least in pop-up form during the often protracted development stage) for producing the right 'creativity effect' for attracting investors, buyers, renters and shoppers. The tokenistic inclusion of a woefully insufficient number of studios within post-crisis developments should alert our attention to the transformed relationship between art and capital within this period of urban financialisation. The exceptionality of these new studios converts them from real production spaces to fetishised display cases within which the figure of the artist takes on a spectacular and individualised role.

The Situation of the Studio

If, then, the studio is perhaps one of the last vestiges of creative-led regeneration strategies, we want to understand why this is, how the studio has itself changed, what its new functions are and how this transforms artists' lives, artwork and their relationship to the city. If the market seems to exalt artists to the highest degree by subsidising their mere presence within new developments through tokenistic studio provision, this is only then to denigrate them through an almost complete indifference to the art they actually produce. Stripped of all but negligible qualities, artists are rendered sacrificial subjects within the neoliberal city; glorified through their bare embodiment of an unspecified creativity, they are in every practical sense undermined as living beings with material and social needs, above all housing and the need for stable communities (Miller and Yeo, 2017). It's hard to miss the cruel irony of developers' minimal retention of studio complexes, a ghostly remnant of the city's disappearing cultural life, which in every other respect they act to abolish. This is repeated in the gesture of fetishising art while hollowing out its essence, turning 'critique', 'beauty', 'autonomy', 'failure', 'contingency' or 'emergence' into dead ciphers. That studios are at once real estate and a key production condition of art, the space of aesthetic and economic transformations resulting in the antithetical qualities of art *and* 'creative space', affords not only insight into the impact of new urban processes on art, but also allows us to grasp the subject-position into which artists are cast and from which they also resist.

In our wider research plan's framing of the 'studio', we aim to critically follow and model key iterations of artists' working space. These may be identical with the artist's home or totally separate, or alternatively, increasingly hybrid spaces which combine these functions and others. Crucially, home and studio – housing and art – will remain in dialectical tension throughout our future research. Houses and art, in this sense, are both problematic commodities, diametrically opposed in their tendency to associate most closely with 'antithetical' poles of value. On the one hand houses, providing for that basic human need for shelter, should be use values, on the other art tends towards the most seemingly rarefied of capitalist values – pure exchange value. In each case we now see a reversal of this apparently common-sense paradigm. As art's self-evidence wears away, art's 'purposive purposelessness' is increasingly disputed by artist's seeking meaningful activity by making work in environments where it might find new

and challenging 'functionality' – such as in communities facing regeneration.7 On the other hand, in the financialised paradigm sketched below, houses are put to nearly every use but shelter, serving as the central commodity for a whirl of circling efforts to store, preserve and reproduce liquid value. Nevertheless, between these extremes, art is still produced in studios and people still live in houses, the conditions which structure the availability of these resources increasingly forces both a mixing of these two practical functions, but also dramatic changes in their meaning and in the struggle necessary to access them. As a consequence, in limit cases perhaps, *the struggle to make art has become at moments identical with the struggle to preserve access to housing*, and the struggle for housing finds solidarity with the dissatisfaction with the state of things expressed in art. Our research intention is not to ignore art, but to the contrary, to learn to read the impact of the spatial crisis on art by reviewing the spatial relations of its production and how these are in turn remade by art's form-giving impulses.8

Financialisation and Urbanisation

London as a city is more financialised than ever, and its image, both swanky and multicultural, is the paradigm for other 'global' cities increasingly competing to attract the same financial services and 'high net-worth individuals'. The process of financialisation in symbiosis with urbanisation adopts some of the characteristics of the rentier city of the 19th Century, but as Louis Moreno argues, following Costas Lapavitsas, '*this time is different*', we are experiencing not a cyclical condition but a qualitative change in capital's molecular composition, 'an unprecedented transformation in the way capital reproduces itself as a global system' (Lapavitsas in Moreno, 2014, 249). These changes, he argues, arise, 'out of the general entanglement of production and consumption in the sphere of finance. Hence, the causes of transformation of capitalism are to be found at the "molecular" level of the "relations of accumulation, rather than in policy or institutional change."' (Lapavitsas in Moreno, 2014, 253).

This means that finance is now integral to the way that productive capitalism operates, notably with major producers of real goods (e.g. cars) now accruing a significant portion of their profits from using their workers' pensions as speculative capital deployed on open markets and in the sphere of circulation. Crucially too, where property and urbanisation have been safe havens during profits or overaccumulation crises, today, with finance in a leading and constitutive role, urbanisation is a *crucial and constant mediator* within the new shape of capital accumulation:

> 'Real property' (along with construction) is no longer a secondary form of circulation, no longer the auxiliary and balanced branch of industry and financial capitalism that it once was. Instead it has a leading role, albeit it in an uneven way, for its significance is liable to vary according to country, time or circumstance. [...] Policies have been shaped, theories developed, and urban

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7   'The usological turn in creative practice over the past two decades or so has brought with it increasing numbers of such full-scale practices, coterminous with whatever they happen to be grappling. 1:1 practices are both what they are, and propositions of what they are.' (Wright, 2014).

infrastructure laid on the promise that large agglomerations of financial and business services are essential engines of wealth creation and distribution. (Moreno, 2014, 245).

Arguably, Moreno's vision indicates that there is no real city beneath the parasitical suction mechanisms of finance, but rather that finance is the fabric, force and substance flowing between the city's bricks and surfaces. With the enormous public bailouts of 2008 this has become *de facto* true. The entire economy is ransomed to the fortunes of finance, which provides higher returns than production, making production increasingly impossible. The consequence is both continuing deindustrialisation of sites of production and an increasing 'industrialisation' of service work, including art.

Finance makes space more expensive because it annexes it with time – if the value of every commodity in capitalist society is based on labour time (how long it takes to produce something and how much that labour costs as an average), built space has an additional pressure on it because its price is not only dictated by what it cost to build it, but also what the current earnings of the person who will dwell in it are, because built space is not only built and restored many times but it is also sold and rented many times over which intensifies space's exposure to time, and thereby multiplies the claims on it. If space becomes more expensive than (labour) time, space shrinks. The studio remains (apparently) the same but the relations around and inside it are changed. If it has been possible to relate the dominant mode of production to the nature of the artist's studio across history, this is in part because the studio – as with art itself – is related to the social division of labour through its exception to it, its relation of distance. What then can we say about the relationship between financialisation and the contemporary studio when we increasingly find them in close proximity? How does it reflect and construct the contemporary artist, how does it facilitate production, and how is art housed within it? What does the impossibility of classical isolation within the studio tell us about today? What do these new social, mediatic and economic proximities bring?

Reinhold Martin (2015), in an introduction to an exhibition entitled 'House Housing' discusses some of the basic relations between architecture and economics upon which this complex set of relationships are built.

> With architecture, economics begins from the ground up. The laws of real estate – relating to the acquisition of land, the financing of construction, the cost of building maintenance and services, profit from rent or resale, the value of equity, or the price of credit – inexorably constrain any building component (like a window) or any building type (like a house). […] But look closely and you will see that what seems fundamental, basic, or natural is, like any other law, a historical artifact subject to change. [...] the economic infrastructures upon which architecture rests are the outcome of [...] repetitions, rather than an *a priori*, natural ground. (Martin, 2015, n.p)

Understanding the molecular developments described by Moreno and Lapavistas in terms by which what appears as a natural arrangement of space and spatial possibilities emerges as historical substantially alters the dynamics through which we study social

phenomena. Therefore, while we foreground the spatial implications of art, we retain in view the structural changes moderating its concept, its relations to modernity and capitalism. If financialisation structures the physiognomy of things at a molecular level and the city becomes more fluid and mutable, how does this transform the characteristics of the 'bearers' of capital (people), and how does this transform the use values or fixed capital of built space – in our case the artist's studio? Finance and art seem to open up the realm of the possible to new inputs, yet in London's current configuration we experience so many injunctions and fewer and fewer possibilities for true creativity! In light of the fact that, by the early 21st century, it 'is self-evident that nothing concerning art is self-evident anymore' (Adorno, 1997, 1), we can trace the emergence of art's dramatic volatility back to the advent of finance's leading economic role in the late-1960s and early 1970s (Iles & Vishmidt, 2011, 54-59). At the same time, art remains the very site of mutability and potentiality in the social order, and its advanced artificiality, which opens up social phenomena to critical thought, poses the possibility that things can be different again.

Five Stages in the Studio's Genealogy

In order to set art's defining relationship to finance in a broader historical context and to tease out this and other factors structuring its relationship to space and the city, we have prepared a comparative genealogy of the artist's studio in modernity. As Daniel Buren commented in 1979: 'Analysis of the art system must inevitably be carried on in terms of the studio as the unique space of production and the museum as the unique space of exposition.' (Buren, 1979, 51). If, as a man of his institution-critical times, Buren focused on exposing the studio's continuity with the museum as the artwork's intended destination and implicit limit condition, we will adapt this connective approach to our own times, replacing the museum with the city. The museum, as a space apart, functioned as a laboratory for concentrating knowledge during the Enlightenment as well as reflecting the rigid divisions of production within the first phase of capitalism. But within post-Fordism, the city becomes the factory (of creative labour and financial self-valorisation) and the crucible of knowledge production which, like the brain itself, thrives on its multiplicity of interactions (Jacobs, 1993). If we want to read the studio as a vessel connecting the (financialised) transformation in shifting production conditions to changing and conceptions of art and its exhibition which accompany this process, it then becomes necessary to formulate a genealogy in keeping with Michel Foucault's epistemological strategy. Drawing histories is emphatically not, he argued, about creating 'consoling' continuities between the past and the present moment wherein we 'rediscover' ourselves, but rather a way to 'introduce discontinuity into our very being', to uproot our presuppositions. 'This', he concludes, 'is because knowledge is not made for understanding; it is made for cutting.' (Foucault, 1984, p.88) By returning to the past we want to emphasise that history is not only a knife to cut backwards through time, but also forwards into the virtual futures stored in the present. In presenting the following brief genealogy of historical models of the studio, we want to emphasise not only what has changed, but also the many historical elements which persist within current studio culture and architecture. While these presiding elements inform the condition of the contemporary studio, they gain a new function and meaning under present conditions, bearing only a resemblance to their former identity.

[Image: Rossetti in his studio]

The Isolated Studio (c.1800 – 1950)

The isolated studio arises with the modern metropolis and the solidification of capitalist society with processes of urbanisation. It is a cell, withdrawn from but surrounded by the bustle of the city. Often situated at the city's fringes or derelict zones, partially rural or pastoral in character, it is the situation of the existential artist, labouring over their metier in retreat (Buren, 1979, 51).9 Yet, though the studio may contain a particle of the pastoral, its eyrie-like remove from the city also provided a vantage point from which to reflect upon and unveil its mysteries. The studio exacts its charge precisely from its *distant proximity* to the people and things that bustle and bristle past. From it, art springs out to bring revelations about urban life into appearance. In early post-studio artist Daniel Buren's condensation:

> 1. It is the place where the work originates.
> 2. It is generally a private place, an ivory tower perhaps.
> 3. It is a stationary place where portable objects are produced.
> [...] the studio is a place of multiple activities: production, storage, and finally, if all goes well, distribution. It is a kind of commercial depot. (Buren, 1979, 51)

Although modern artists, such as Edouard Manet and Claude Monet, made forays into the city and country, to paint *en plein air,* they set out from the studio or reassembled it outdoors (Monet had his *Bateau Atelier* so he could paint the light-industrial river life at Argenteuil), returning there to complete their work. By the mid-19th century, the artist's studio perhaps already begins to seem like a colonial outpost or hunting hide from which to launch explorations into the unknown and increasingly far-flung territories generated by the dynamic forces of finance's first urban transformations. Indeed, it was Baron von Haussmann's credit-fuelled redevelopment of Paris (1853-1870) that pushed out manufacturing and the working classes from the city centre, creating industrial suburbs such as Argenteuil (where Monet lived and worked), Courbevoie, and Asnières-sur-Seine (where Seurat painted factory workers relaxing) whose hybridisation of gritty industrial production and pleasure seeking fascinated the

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9   Honoré De Balzac immortalised the archetypal inwardness and nobility of the artist's studio in his 1845 short story, 'The Unknown Masterpiece'. Here is the scene where the young painter Nicolas Poussin first encounters Master Porbus's studio: 'All the light in the studio came from a window in the roof, and was concentrated upon an easel, where a canvas stood untouched as yet save for three or four outlines in chalk. The daylight scarcely reached the remoter angles and corners of the vast room; they were as dark as night, but the silver ornamented breastplate of a Reiter's corselet, that hung upon the wall, attracted a stray gleam to its dim abiding-place among the brown shadows. […]

The walls were covered, from floor to ceiling, with countless sketches in charcoal, red chalk, or pen and ink. Amid the litter and confusion of color boxes, overturned stools, flasks of oil, and essences, there was just room to move so as to reach the illuminated circular space where the easel stood. The light from the window in the roof fell full upon Porbus's pale face and on the ivory-tinted forehead of his strange visitor.' (Balzac, 1845)

Impressionists. As the old artisanal quarters were dismantled, where housing and manufacture had mixed and self-organised along with the classes, they were replaced by the repetitive uniformity of the new Paris – kiosk, bench, street-lamp, kiosk, bench, street-lamp – ubiquitously evoking industrial standardisation and efficiency, not to mention a more rigid spatial division of classes. We can trace the consequences of early financialisation's spatialising effects in the siting of the Impressionist studio within the new suburban peripheries, the intensification of speed and mobility, and the attention to the drama of class differences in their paintings.

With the old quarters and lifestyles gone, there was a brash proletarianisation of the freshly built public sphere producing a caustic shock to bourgeois sensibilities and, it should be added, creating perhaps the most important subject of 19th century painting and writing. The shock is tangible in the following diary entry by the bohemian bourgeois Goncourt brothers of 18 November 1860:

> Our Paris, the Paris where we were born, the Paris of the way of life of 1830 to 1848, is passing away. Its passing is not material but moral. Social life is going through a great evolution, which is beginning. I see women, children, households, families in this café. The interior is passing away. Life turns back to become public. The club for those on high, the café for those below, that is what society and the people are come to. (Edmond and Jules Goncourt in Clark, 1999, 34)

The first speculative housing boom was paid at the cost of the displacement and broken autonomy of the city's working class, but it also unleashed the anomic bacchanal of mass leisure, giving the petit bourgeois new standing in a reborn public realm. While this mass appearance certainly led to the temporally disjointed flâneur and the probing *bateau atelier*,10 it caused an equal and opposite reaction, necessitating the romantic retreat into the existential gloom of the studio in which modernity's headlong transformations could be sifted and digested as art. If artists could be existentially gloomy, however, it was because their studios afforded at least some privacy; the very thing that will become unavailable in the neoliberal city's cloning of the artist's *atelier* and developers' penchant for large glazed facades behind which there is no place to hide and for which there are no curtains big enough! But 19th century Parisian gloom was perhaps more psychological than architectural since it was there, between 1900 and the 1930s, that the *maison atelier* or studio-house11 was invented with its top-floor studios and large windows with living quarters below (Zukin, 1982, 80-81). The atelier model of light, spacious and multipurpose living spaces would be integrated into modernist open-plan principles of design (e.g. Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation, 1947-1952), driving a reimagination of lifestyle that has underwritten middle class appropriations of loft living from the 1970s until today.

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10   Monet had a bateau atelier or studio boat at Argenteuil in which Édouard Manet famously painted a portrait of him working accompanied by his wife, *Claude Monet peignant dans son atelier.* (1874)
11   The modernist studio-house Zukin refers to is Le Corbusier's Maison-atelier du peintre Amédée Ozenfant, Paris, France, 1922. This itself is a significant upscaling of features drawn from 19th century light-industrial artisans' workshops, often located in the suburbs and working class areas of Paris, used as live-work studio spaces by modernist artists such as Alberto Giacometti, Amadeo Modigliani and Pablo Picasso.

[Image: Warhol's Factory, Warhol on the phone and Image: FluxHousing Cooperative]

The Factory Studio (1962-1989)

Warhol's Factory studio pioneered the appropriation of former industrial space by artists in Manhattan as the city stepped up its planned displacement of industry. The studio as factory expresses a dual process of the western city's deindustrialisation and art's experimental reimagination of itself as participating in general production: collective, industrial, site-sensitive, gendered, prototyped, banalised, libidinal, democratic and mediatised. The factory studio was a space for collapsing distinctions between art and production, art and life, art and technological reproduction – a laboratory for the contestation of art's distinction per se and the creation of large-scale, dirty, genre shifting, commerce courting, performative and 'intermedia' works. For the generation that followed the Abstract Expressionists, the factory studio became a space not only for the reinvention of art, but for the reinvention of the self, which in turn was framed as art and put on display: 'In the mid- to late sixties, for example, the Conceptualists presented the process of making art as a work of art in itself.' (Zukin, 1982, 80). In this phase, the neo-avant-garde renewed art by challenging its originality, individualism, sexism and class elitism. The factory was therefore a space of liberated production in which to launch attacks on the lazy presumptions of an art system that had been embalmed within the museum and bourgeois class interests. The bones of working-class production were danced on, not in the sense that artists directly displaced industrial labour, but rather that their joyful occupation of these decommissioned spaces examined and overturned many of the social divisions that industrial production presupposes.

Artists also organised, as 'Art Workers', on the model of industrial labour but not to 'campaign about wages or working conditions' (Bryan-Wilson, 2009, 114), but instead to radically contest the disaster of bourgeois capitalism, racism, war and technocracy.12 From Pop, to Performance and Land Art, artists were at pains to make explicit the relationships between art and commodification, art and the forces of production (industrial, administrative, cybernetic, heteropatriarchal). Like a can of soup, artworks could be generated by the dozen, sold by the yard, and everyone could be a celebrity for 15 minutes. Equally, the productive power of the factory could be desublimated, its repetitions and intense energies hijacked to produce new experimental gyrations of thought, sex, art, music and performance. Its expanse of largely unarticulated space provided an (almost) blank sheet for rearranging the conventions of living, working and creating (live/work).

One of the most ambitious artists' housing projects, George Macunius' Fluxhouse Cooperatives (1966 to 1975), crosses over with Warhol's Factory, sharing the conditions of New York's deindustrialisation in the late '60s and early '70s, but put them to use under a very different model. Whilst Warhol's Factory has latterly been celebrated as a living artwork and business model, Fluxhouse Cooperatives were conceived as a

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12   Julia Bryan-Wilson's book cogently and sensitively discusses the formation of the Art Workers Coalition and its offshoot, The New York Art Strike against Racism, War and Repression, during the early 1970s in terms which bring the politics of labour and art-labour to the fore in their complex and contradictory web of associations, identifications and disidentifications.

multiple from the beginning. They were a bohemian capitalist fantasy of a communist cooperative trading under the name Fluxus Cooperative Inc.13 Maciunas imagined Fluxhouses or the Fluxcity (of which the coops were the basic building blocks to be multiplied and scaled-up) as a *Kolkhoz* (collective estate). Yet the pragmatism of negotiating New York's zoning laws and the difficulty of raising finance meant this was to become only replicable on an individualist and increasingly capitalised basis by an incoming middle class and the developers that followed hard on their heels.

For a short period during the 1960s and early 1970s then, *Loft Living*, (Zukin, 1982) was a cheap fix for artists *and* a radical new way to think about creating and living in the city – one that inspired many imitators. Zukin argues, however, that through the growing willingness of artists to present their work in their place of both living and work, 'consumption of art in the artists' studio developed into a consumption of the studio too.' (Zukin, 1982, 80) This 'appropriation' of the studio by the middle class meant that an inadvertent outcome of performance and conceptual art was 'the success of the studio' itself. The studio became a coveted model for metropolitan living. After artists had appropriated the spaces freed up by displaced industrial work, a new middle class in turn struggled for the same spaces, turning the ex-industrial into a booming property category. The studio loft has become a key urban trope, reappearing in modulated form in all subsequent cycles of post-industrial real estate boom and bust (1980s, 1990s and 2000s). On the other hand the gentrification process that ensued produced shared conditions between artists and low income residents in the fallout zones of capital's reoccupation of the inner city and this was generative of new struggles and solidarities around housing and space, notably in NYC's Lower East Side (Smith, 1996; Sholette et al, 1983).

[Here we would like an image of Huit_Facettes-Huit Facettes-Interaction, workshop in Hamdallaye Samba M'baye, Senegal-February_1996 source is *Collectivism After Modernism*]

Open or Community Studio (1966-Now)

Open or community studios took hold where the concentration of subaltern (classed and raced) people met with conditions of economic decline and urban dilapidation. A phenomenon known as 'spatial concentration' whose crisis point was reached in the

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13   Revisiting Macunias's projects in the long recession of the 2010s, Florian Cramer and Renee Ridgeway discuss how 'Fluxus was just as much an economic as it was an artistic project' and in Macunias's ambitious projects 'its performativity and processuality were not merely aesthetic but also biopolitical and bioeconomic choices that resulted in manic-depressive business cycles.' (Cramer, 2016, 87) Macunias may be known as the 'father of SoHo' i.e. gentrification, or one of a handful of artists who halted Robert Moses's expressway from destroying swathes of Lower Manhattan, or the progenitor of small but beautiful artists' cooperative housing projects thriving in post-crisis USA presently; what is clear is that his successes were not the ones he had intended:

'Maciunas may be seen as an artist whose primary works were economic experiments, the lifelong endeavor of translating a communist concept of political (= macro) economy into viable micro-economies. Projects that boomed and busted, running in perpetual bipolar cycles of euphoria and depression. In this sense, Maciunas did not only pioneer gentrification but he also preempted the creative dotcom economy with its manic-depressive model of incubators and startups.' (Cramer, 2016, 92)

1950s in western cities and which would quickly reverse into 'spatial deconcentration' (Ward, 1981); a term which we use here to describe complex migratory processes such as white middle class suburbanisation in the US and, in the UK, the planned working class displacement from major cities to new towns. The open studio registers and responds to the assault on and abandonment of urban communities left in the wake of these processes. In the US the Black Arts Movement built on the radical political premise that the 'ghetto itself is the gallery' (Emory Douglas quoted in Thrasher, 2017) by establishing theatres, concert halls, rehearsal spaces, exhibition spaces, art and music studios in largely black and poor areas of the inner city.14 The venues generated served as the platform for a rapidly developing ethos of community arts, characterised by the attempt to deflect specialist audiences in favour of direct and immediate community provision. In the UK such spaces and the 'community arts' they supported 'dated back to the 1960s and were associated with alternative bookshops, theatre groups and the so-called Arts Laboratories that had succeeded in attracting new, younger audiences.' (Walker, 2002, 130) But after an Arts Council report (1974) the logic of community arts was formalised and increasingly attracted fine artists and professional protagonists together with an expanding list of media artists (Walker, 2002, 130). These arts 'spaces' were often open air, flexible, temporary or mobile, and more informal than the traditional studio or gallery.

> Most community artists had a base or 'resource centre' for their operations (sometimes a mobile one) and employed a variety of facilities, media and techniques – dance, drama and writing classes, festivals, inflatables, murals, performance, photography, printing presses, play structures, video – which they used to foster public participation and to teach skills. (Walker, 2002, 131)

[IMAGE: If possible we would like to use both David Hammons, *Bliz-aard Ball Sale*, (1983) and Lorraine O'Grady, *Art Is... ,* 1983 as images here.]

In the UK, as the attempt to take art to the people faltered (arguably a strategy derived from the Russian avant-garde) alongside post-war optimism, the modus operandum of community arts increasingly fused with engaged and post-conceptual art taking it into the classroom (as in Central St. Martin's 'A' Class), the hospital (Loraine Leeson & Peter Dunn) as well as the factory and prison (Artist Placement Group) (Walker, 2002 and Vishmidt, 2010). Later, during the 1980s, a period of austerity, cutbacks to welfare provision and state retrenchment, the same inner-city areas where community arts had become integrated into local state service provision and funding became sites of spatial deconcentration, i.e. the breaking up of the ghetto and gentrification of working class areas (Ward, 1981). In Africa, group practices such as Laboratoire AGIT Art in Senegal and Huit Facettes established community studio projects in both urban and rural situations as responses to the harsher social climate and degenerating prospects for critical art created by Structural Adjustment Programmes (Enwezor, 2007). The community or open studio tends then to respond to and encompass a situation of actual or perceived spatial dispersion. Whilst poor or poorly maintained housing would be a central theme throughout this moment, the exhibition, display, performance or presentation of art tends towards the street or local public realm. In the West, as

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14   Notably focused on large experimental music ensembles formed by black artists, two recent studies (Lewis, 2008 and Looker, 2004) emphasise community spaces in the development of radical black art   .

working class people began to be displaced from areas where community resources (buildings, squats, social centres) had helped develop their autonomy, community arts took to the street, often framing the struggles for self-determination and the bathos of economic survival on the breadline as resistant creativity. The community studio's spirit of improvisation and spatial repurposing was gradually incorporated into the governmental push for a non-stop programme of visitor-friendly arts festivals whose presence marks a wider geopolitical competition over place making, cultural tourism and inward investment. For those communities who initiated these participatory practices, the managerial turn in cultural commissioning replicates a more widespread shift in the nature of power which claims to speak in the name of the voiceless, vapidly invoking 'communities' while divesting them as a source of meaning making from their own representations (Walker, 2002; Bishop, 2012) The authentic community studio lives and dies in inverse relation to the rise of built space as private property. With waning social tenure and public ownership tracking an exponential rise of 'community' arts, the community studio has all but disappeared, retreating to bedroom production and the corporate ghettos of social media.

[IMAGE: If possible we would like to use both David Hammons, *Bliz-aard Ball Sale*, (1983) and Lorraine O'Grady, *Art Is...* , 1983 as images here.]

[Image: Makrolab]

The Networked Studio (1989 – present)

The administrative and informational aesthetics pioneered by 1960s factory-based conceptual artists and inspired by cybernetics and communication technologies (Buchloh, 1990), would reemerge in the ubiquitous 'office' metaphor that was incorporated into the computer desktop and popularised by the Apple Macintosh from 1984. Turing's 'universal machine' was to produce a new spatial topology in which art can pass as – and be mistaken for – generic labour within the cybernetic society. To the casual observer, computer use by artists is largely indistinguishable from that of a service worker, journalist, architect or engineer. The conceptual techniques of the 1960s were eventually reassembled and compacted in the 1990s network studio and the figure of the immaterial labourer (Lazarrato, 1996). The isolated studio does not necessarily move position but becomes increasingly networked by communications technologies, services, changing terms of building insurance, health & safety specifications, and the further development of financial claims which feed the growth of tertiary industries and bureaucracies. The artist in the networked studio responds to the limits breached by their precursors who collapsed the divisions active in wider society and, in the first wave, overlapped significantly with the DIY community spirit of the open studio artist. The network studio camouflages itself in a number of guises be that the office, the artist's loft, the hacklab, social centre, cybercafé or simply the portable laptop. We can therefore position the network studio as having an undecided, deceptive and possibly anxious relationship to built space. This can be connected to a double movement, identifiable within its brief history, of artists occupying spaces that advertise their networked infrastructures and those that dissemble them within the shell of the old city.

The networked studio in its most extreme form is the mobile home that the 'infonaut' carries with them through their connection to the network. The early network artist affirmed spatial precarity as digital nomadism as if it were a blessing. This 1990s affirmation of the network as a replacement of fixed spatial relations tended towards the production of singular, albeit hybrid spaces (eg. London's Bakspace, Ljubljana's Ljudmila, New York's Rhizome, and Zagreb's MaMa), in which artists built assemblages of hard- and software to explore and magnify the dawning 'universal' space/time of the internet. The network studio provides a place to tune into and amplify an increasingly chaotic 'out there'. The most iconic example of this was perhaps the Makrolab (1994-2007), devised by the Slovenian artist Marko Peljhan, who had grown up behind the iron curtain listening to CB radio and transposed the socialist experience of isolated listening to the noise of the information age.15 The Makrolab was a *mobile* communications monitoring hub that looked like a space-pod and moved between ever more isolated places gathering the public and secret telecommunications exchanges of incipient global capitalism.

This mobility, however, also presages the impending spatial precarity of the millennium in which to survive is to keep moving on. It is striking that the isolation Makrolab achieved was underwritten by the same forces of globalisation that its periscopes peered at; not only satellites, cables, deep dishes, antennas and data flows but, indirectly at least, the transnational investment strategies of George Soros and his Open Society Institute.16 Thus, the networked utopia of the artist-infonaut dovetailed beautifully with the migratory practices that would be the prerequisite of globalisation's 'race to the bottom', and in this sense the mobile isolation of the studio can be seen as an analogue to the precarious and alienated status of the worker within the new world order, the so-called 'digital nomad' (Makimoto & Manners, 1997).

The appearance of the digital avant-garde also coincides with the advent of the last great real estate boom, (in the UK and US), of which we are yet to see the end. In this moment artists, often collectively, obtained workspace in the inner city if only for a brief while. These digital artisans were often artists who moonlighted as web designers and could be found producing artistic and commercial work on the same machine at the same desk. To the office workers next door, their activity was indistinguishable from white-collar work. While at first the network studio had projected itself as an anomaly amidst the commercial zones of the city, this possibility was rapidly eradicated by rising rents based upon projections of burgeoning commercial demand. The network studio was soon to give way to businesses that understood themselves as creative in themselves. Characteristic of the new format of businesses moving into fill these spaces were built-in signifiers of leisure (ping pong tables, bean bags, office pets, drinks trolleys, beer taps, house plants) incorporated into the new business aesthetic. The

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15   'One of the current projects I am doing for Documenta is called Makrolab. It is a project that will research isolation strategies: how to isolate oneself from society to reflect and see this society better. It is an opposite of the usual going into the society and trying to change or make things. My thesis is that a small amount of people in an isolated and insulated environment with completely open possibilities of communication and monitoring of social events, but physically isolated, can provide a much faster, further and more efficient 'call' (?) for social evolution. It is my thesis, not just an idea, and I am going to prove it.' (Peljhan quoted in Bosma, 2011)

16   The Open Foundation attempted the cultural integration of eastern with western Europe invaluable to the creation of the 'smooth space' required by the transnational movement of capital, (Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Culture, nd.).

technology which denizens of the networked studio had experimented with swiftly began to reconfigure the space between previously separated entities, not least labour and creativity. The playful 'hacking' of the social outcomes of computer technologies, now incorporated into a host of new business models, gave way to a calculative logic bearing down on what had previously remained uncalculated, profoundly disrupting the social through understanding it as a field of continuous commercial speculation. Now profits could be sought through the elimination of space/time between those previously discreet social forms, objects, sites and resources within a 'becoming topological of culture' in which any data point can be connected to any other (Lury, Parisi & Terranova, 2012). The integration of cybernetics with a competitive and reifying economic logic (sorting, ranking, banking, locating, connecting) unleashes a ubiquitous entrepreneurialism based on processes of 'disintermediation'. Through disintermediation, points in space, along with buyers and sellers, can be connected in new ways that undermine older spatio-temporal exclusivities. This opening of the social field to disruptive reconfigurations fed into the emergence, in the late 1990s, of an entrepreneurial subject constantly on the look-out for commercial opportunities (and venture capital) within new and unstable proximities, be that physical and resource-based or both.17 Within this new paradigm, the operator of the network studio, who had up to this point sought to dissolve their distinction in the hybrid commercial-cultural spaces of the city and the internet,18 made a counter-movement, seeking instead, against the creeping 'creative' branding of the dot com economy to claim the distinction of art and the activity of the artist. The networked studio began to disappear as all studios became technologically networked-by-default. The chaos that deregulated transnational capitalism unleashed in the form of financialisation and labour force restructuring would be converted, at an urban scale, into the blow-down of social housing estates and the vertical eruption of steel and glass office blocks in which there is no longer hope of stable and affordable studio space. The networked studio can be seen as the early warning signal for the studio's permanent ungrounding.

[Image: Ben Palmer Fry in his studio, source: Guardian]

The Pop-up Studio (2000 to 2018)

The post-conceptual artist doesn't need a studio just as much as they can no longer have a studio. Nonetheless the studio picks itself up and walks on its own two feet, apparently 'popping-up' in new and pre-fabricated pseudo-public spaces. It is a creature of municipally-led regeneration schemes that imitates and fuses with a prior moment of artist's self-organised exploitation of tenancy breaks in commercial properties, such as Tracy Emin and Sarah Lucas' *The Shop* on Brick Lane (1993). By this point, the isolated studio is not just surrounded by the networks of urban financialisation, but directly integrated into their centres of development.

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17   Airbnb has come to epitomise such a topologisation of culture and the networking of social and physical relationships which intensifies a reifying logic throughout the social field.

18   Net artists Heath Bunting and Rachel Baker, for instance, liked to work in Easyeverything cafés among casual surfers: 'I like it there', Bunting has remarked, 'as most people are checking hotmail while I am doing programming – it's a good disguise.' (Berry, 2001, 81)

The pop-up studio is now a developer-led must-have for any land subject to speculative investment or seeking it. This speculative function of the studio is symptomised in the highly visible nature of these spaces of exception in which, regardless of actual requirements, glazed shop-fronts are installed, flashy signage and bright colours deployed, and artists expected to charismatically perform *like artists* no matter how dryly conceptual, computer based, post-studio or socially engaged their practice might be. In actuality, the pop-up studio is so integrated into the endo-colonial process of urban transformation that it is more isolated from both the artist's own agency and the social than ever. It comprises a significant push for art's role in incubating obsolescent spaces driven by both small arts organisations (or the microentrepreneurs steering them) and government policy. Pop-ups, 'meanwhile spaces', 'space ache', 'pop-up retail', 'interim spaces', 'slack spaces' emerge as a new language directly after the 2007/8 financial crisis. The group Meanwhile Space pioneered the mediation between 'empty spaces', money-saving councils and investors on the prowl (Ferreri, 2013). 'Empty spaces are a blight to communities, a financial drain to owners and stimulate wider civic problems. To us they are an opportunity' (Meanwhile Space CIC promotional postcard 2011 quoted in Ferreri, 2013, 129). The pop-up has a specific temporality, its presuppositions are set by the speculative proposition that 'empty space' will become realisable value and in turn it assists this prediction into becoming reality. Realising the age-old logic of crisis as an opportunity, the pop-up also operates through art-without-qualities to arrive at the consensus that anything can pop-up but, as the rents rise, *anything* increasingly tends to look like some form of commerce. This may be the first time that the studio as form fully precedes, presupposes and overcodes the activities of artists.

The pop-up is shot through with contingencies, requirements and conditions: a fixed creativity ratio prescribed in the developer's plan with the space allocated through competition. Its exceptionality provides the necessary association with 'excellence' its commercial sponsors require.19 Practice in the pop-up studio is transparent like a fish bowl, intended to be viewed, visited and displayed. A space in which artistic labour is as performative as it is absorptive. Whether it's filled with cupcakes or high-end abstraction this will be a conspicuously ethical performance, in which the performer fails to notice the conditionality their striving imposes on everyone else. What masquerades as inclusivity is in fact the conduit to exclusivity. But, given there is no specifically identifiable characteristic of 'pop-up art', who is the pop-up practitioner?

> The Pop Up People report published in February 2012 by the Empty Shop Network, for example, offers a depiction of the personal and professional characteristics required to become a pop-up shop practitioner, and begins with the line 'Pop Up People: are truly entrepreneurial, even if their project is more about community than commerce'. (Thompson, quoted in Ferreri, 2013, 133)

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19   An example of this is the Alumno / SPACE Studios / Goldsmiths University of London bursary in which 'one graduate receives one years [sic] rent free studio space in the artists [sic] studios Alumno developed and which are operated by SPACE in the former Southwark Town Hall Building which also houses Goldsmiths students.' http://alumnogroup.com/alumno-space-studios-goldsmiths-bursary-winner-2019/

The pop-up studio is therefore: 'a very vexatious thing full of metaphorical subtlety and theological perversity' (Marx, 1990). Behind a smokescreen of 'community' it puts a young, precarious, flexible demographic to work as quisling managers, 'trusted middle persons' (Ferreri, 2013, 133). Their agency from the point of view of local government is that they stage a 'public' which isn't the public local government is usually bound to provide services to. This 'trusted middle' mediates interests which are closer to those of developers and international investors than those of artists or the community in whose name the spaces are contrived.20 The pop-up people then are the front of house and community liaison for a back room which is in fact selling off the entire house.

Now that 'pop-up retail' is the norm, it is easy to forget the form's origins as a local authority strategy of allocating properties managed by them to temporary housing or community use. Throughout the 1970s 'short life housing' had been both a means of alleviating housing need, and meeting demands for space for a wide range of emergent community needs in the face of local authorities' squandering of empty and decaying public property (Bowman, 2010, 99-100). The pop-up has represented some sort of survival of the studio situation for artists and therefore also the short-life strategy, (even for those who end up refusing the instrumental roles imposed upon them in situ (Whitby, 2011)). Through the intensification of property guardianship schemes after the 2008 property market crash many artists obtained live/work studios in former local authority housing. It is in just such a situation that photographer, Rab Harling, property guardian for Bow Arts Trust, turned his lens on the estate and his activist proclivities towards the peculiar public-private arrangements which had led to the eviction of both tenants and leaseholders previously living on the estate. At the Balfron Tower, artists and residents worked together to expose and block two particularly offensive public art works synonymous with the excesses of public art in regeneration (Christie, 2014, Ellis-Petersen, 2014). Public art commissioning agency, Artangel, who site new major commissions in 'edgy' locations, may be considered pioneers of pop-up art which parasites off and re-encodes blighted spaces. The resulting temporary artworks often function to rebrand an area or iconic building by socialising the site differently, drawing the attention of those deemed most likely to invest in its future. With artists often working in situ, such commissioning approaches have arguably prepared the ground for the pop-up studio sited temporarily in the midst of development zones, whose users are encouraged to make work as visibly as possible and regularly offered ad-hoc exhibition opportunities until the available space dries up.

Viewed retrospectively, after the cycle beginning with the financial crisis of 2007-2008, the pop-up was a *moment* in these former places' violent transport onto the open market. Striking here is how it is now the council flat or residential estate that has become newly designated as a (temporary) site of studio production or artistic intervention. In the same way that industrial spaces were planned out of the city in the

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20   'In examining failures in democratic representation, it is also relevant to look at the professional background of elected members themselves. According to Minton (2013), in 2013 just under 20% of Southwark's 63 councillors worked as lobbyists, while the former leader of the council, Jeremy Fraser, went on to found lobbying firm Four Communications, where he was joined by former councillor and cabinet member for regeneration Steve Lancashire. Equally concerning is the 'revolving door' between council employees and elected members and developers. For example, Tom Branton was Southwark Council's project manager for the Elephant & Castle Regeneration Project until 2011, when he left the Council to work for Lend Lease, the lead developer on the project (Minton and Watt, 2013).' (Watt & Minton, 2016, 214)

1960s, curtailing their actual utility, financialised urban development's need for new sites of value extraction chaotically inflicts long-term obsolescence on entire communities and their homes producing only short-lived opportunities for artists. This constitutes a total inversion of avant-garde modernism's dreams of masterplanning the city, with artists no longer employed as visionaries but rather encouraged to pick over the bones of social housing provision.

The house, whether in the form of the evacuated single terraced British *House* (Rachel Whiteread, 1993) or the housing estate maps refined through painterly abstraction, as *Estate Maps* (Keith Coventry, 1991-1995), became a central motif of art in the UK at a moment when the model of habitation seemed at once connected to geopolitical change and reflective of the waning of artistic modernism and a microcosm of wider social antagonisms. If 1990s houses in art were ciphers for a mourning of the past or for socialism, the late-2000s placement of artists in former local authority housing would produce critical meditations on the image of the house and the social question of housing (Jessie Brennan, 2015-ongoing and Laura Oldfield Ford, 2008-ongoing) as well as some very public moments of hubris as artistic ambition met with raw discontent over housing poverty and the mistreatment of tenants facing 'estate regeneration' (Mike Nelson, 2013). The small number of artists who revolted against these grotesque conditions from inside them to expose exactly how they were not inevitable or natural, were making and inventing politics where they had been effaced as much as a critical art where a feebler sibling was intended to emerge (Romer, 2017). Looking back from 2009 to the present, this is one of the few perspectives from which housing privatisation, art, space and property enter into a fully antagonistic and dynamic entanglement by which art's critical relationship to society is exercised and developed.

Conclusions

Shortly after New York's 1975 debt crisis in which the banks refused to roll over the city's loans until it implemented a programme of neoliberalisation (privatisation of municipal services, layoffs, pay freezes, speculative investment of pension funds etc.), Victor Gotbaum of the Municipal Workers union spat: 'Just by shifting paper around these slobs can make $60, $65 million dollars in a single transaction. That would take care of all of the layoffs in the city. So, it's reckless, it's cruel and it's a disgrace.' (Curtis, 2016)21 This poignant reversal of the accusation of laziness, so often aimed at workers by bosses imagining that their entrepreneurship is the sole source of profit, could do to be levelled more often – and as bluntly. Such accusations aren't necessarily believed by workers, but the ratchet of low-paid precarious work, austerity and unaffordable rents has the same effect: the competitive self-exploitation of workers struggling to avert a personal debt crisis. The insistence that people's private, often shaming experience of debt be publicly shared and understood as structural to crisis capitalism was one of the PAH's – Barcelona's housing movement – crucial tactics which helped galvanise those facing foreclosure and homelessness to take militant action against banks. Yet far more common is a hopeless compliance with the intensity of a non-stop work culture in which competitive self-promotion and a self-harmful striving to approximate the total-speed of global capitalism becomes the flipside of private despair. The rebuke of 'slob!'

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21   Gotbaum made this comment in a mid-70s news interview included in Adam Curtis's ultimately incoherent documentary about the rise of global finance and terrorism, *HyperNormalisation*, 2016.

is turned inwards, as the property guardian learns to live with all their possessions packed away in boxes on the off-chance the landlord may spring a visit or demand they move, and the art student goes to yet another useless Frieze Academy event, hoping this one will somehow yield a commission.

If, throughout modernity, succeeding generations of artists dreamed of accelerating both thought and creation to the tempo of technological production they could not but fail. The paintbrush's pursuit of fugitivity moved at a slower pace than the steam age, while the Futurists' ecstatic white-heat left the terrestrial assembly line in the dust. Temporal non-coincidence with prosaic production has been inherent to art, whether intentionally or not, for centuries. Yet the artist's requirement to pop-up, fill-in, engage and performatively *be there*, evidences an inescapable synchrony with the accelerated and aimless cycles of creation and destruction, bubble and burst, borne of financialisation. As the leader of the Artists Union England founder Katriona Beales retorts to the disparagement of artists for their millennial professionalisation, emerging artists 'can't afford to be unprofessional' (2018, Ana Torok in Harding, p.141). If we thought austerity was going to result in resistance, the results have been pathetic because the crisis has lessened the distance achievable from the tempo of (non)production. Financialisation's bypassing of labour time, while ultimately acting to proliferate unrealisable claims on future value and hence storing up more crises, results in a generalised imposition of labour time across all of life to which artistic creation is no longer an exception, or rather its exceptionality makes its integration even more complete.

That Mayor Sadiq Khan's London Plan is calling for the provision of permanent spaces for artists is more an indication of the problem than a sign of its solution.22 The pecuniary provision of such spaces echoes the exceptionality that art still monopolises while in practice poisoning it at the roots, since it entails the creation of special protections for existing studio spaces and thereby imposes requirements on art to do *something* in return for its permission to exist. The studio as the space of a practice distanced from the rest of life seems to be facing extinction, either because it's unaffordable, it now lies too far from home, or its occasional possibility of fulfilling the terms of its conditions overwhelms practice altogether. But if the gulf between an earlier womb-like isolation and today's developer-fantasised spectacular creative performances seems too great to retain art as their common denominator or outcome, there is inevitably a secession from both these models that is where whatever might actually feel like art is taking place. This truth is as likely to entail the total obsolescence of the, in historical terms, relatively short-lived model of autonomous art as to relocate it safely elsewhere. Capitalism's unending production and destruction of space has mutated the physical auspices of art's production, and those spatial evolutions have likewise driven a transformation of artistic practices and vice versa. The inhabitation of available spaces or conduits of production can be said to condition the dialectic of art's relationship to the social world as well as artists' opportunistic infestation of niches of survival. That this process has itself been converted into the paradigm and lubricant of spatial prospecting may finally mean that, as with the burning of the earth's carbon resources, like life new art is ever more unsustainable. Yet as we are starting to see, the cannibalisation of art by capitalism engenders encounters between vagrant aesthetics

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22   https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/draft_london_plan_chapter_7.pdf

and planetary dispossession that cannot but unite against the very forces that condemn them to a plodding nomadism or show pony servitude.

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END

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