

## **5. Alternative space in London 2000: counter to what?**

### **Introduction**

To what extent, if any, ‘alternative’ galleries can be defined as anti-establishment has long been in doubt. In this chapter, I consider critical literature on oppositional and critical positions and on the failure to maintain such a position. I show some examples of ephemera that record commentary on these issues. I have grouped these examples thematically under the headings: knowledge economy as context, the question of contingency, opposition to commodification, the questions of politics and protest, and exit. I avoid understanding such references in ephemera as a post-modern emptiness of signs, of cynicism, of ironic acceptance that previous strategies of protest are useless now, that can produce a reading of their visual props as decorative souvenirs,<sup>1</sup> to look at the persistence of oppositional ideas in a complex ‘alternative’, again addressing these questions:

- How has the idea of alternative space remained operative?
- What is artists’ agency directed towards, not only in terms of how alternative and artist-run spaces are set up and run, but in terms of motivations for making an alternative space?
- How is the idea of ‘alternative’ space used, as a different ideological space, as a resource in art practice?
- How do ideas about institutionalization, commodification and the relationship between art and politics, evident in discourse on alternative and artist-run spaces,

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<sup>1</sup> As was celebrated in a British Council exhibition ‘Bad behaviour’ (2003)

cross over to or resurface in art practice and how are artists' attitudes to these themes affected by contingency and complicity?

### **Knowledge economy as context**

During the period covered by this research, government economic policy explicitly included visual art as a constituent of a cultural, or knowledge-based economy. Art was identified as a 'safe risk'. The role of art galleries in urban regeneration and the developing role of the artist as a model cultural worker are the two aspects I will focus on in this chapter, as they are both valued in policy and contended in some art practices<sup>2</sup>.

The artists I will refer to in this chapter all struggle with, criticise, oppose or acknowledge these given roles and their underlying context of the knowledge economy.

The first examples address this context most directly but the knowledge economy is relevant to all the artworks and events I mention throughout the chapter.

In a study of SoHo in New York (Zukin 1982) Sharon Zukin identified the role of that art galleries can play in urban regeneration, and she has since written extensively on the role that art sites can play in the creation of a 'culture capital' (Zukin, 2001). From 'traditional' 'alternative spaces' inhabiting disused industrial buildings, to large scale building conversions such as Tate Modern, art galleries are part of this phenomenon, changing run-down urban areas and contributing to economic regeneration. Zukin's model has often been cited. The *Century city* (2001) exhibition at Tate Modern mentioned in chapter 4, showed selections of art representing revolutionary decades in worldwide cities. Emma Dexter in her essay about London in the 1990s, citing Lefebvre also, says that artists used the city, developed a DIY or everyday aesthetic and a multiple

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<sup>2</sup> The growth of the art market and the role of art in tourism are other recognised economic values.

viewpoint and changed spaces in the city, particularly in run-down areas. She concludes by saying that the result of “the leakage of soft political consciousness into a much wider area of cultural activity” (Dexter, 2001, 93) has been a successful role for art in regenerating the city and its effect has been to promote the commodification of culture. She does not refer to artists' statements as sources for her essay, in contrast to the authors of the New York or Tokyo chapters who refer to artists' writings frequently, acknowledging their part in the discourse.

However, the value of art in a knowledge economy also has another emphasis. In a knowledge economy, creativity at work becomes necessary for the economic success of the nation, and art is recognised as an instrument that can be used to combat ‘social exclusion’. Government policy, as disseminated in reports and policy documents of the Arts Council of England and London Arts Board seeks to encourage citizens to think as creative individuals, and for artists to serve as models and mentors in this process. This is because in a knowledge economy, intellectual and affective labour generates economic capital, for example, in education. Because ‘work’ requires intellectual energy and creativity, but cannot be based on the model of long-term employment, individuals are required to take responsibility for maintaining their own sense of identity, culture becomes the responsibility of the individual, the individual becomes the ‘precarious’ worker. This is a state commemorated in a badge (see Tari & Vanni, 2005) distributed at "Beyond ESF" at Middlesex University (a critical reference to the European Social Forum that was being held in London at the same time.<sup>3</sup> (15-17 October 2004).

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<sup>3</sup> Wikipedia contested article on Precarity, August 2007.

## IMAGE MISSING

Figure 1: San Precario. Image by Chainworkers Crew, 2005, badge

This may sound fine, for artists at least in the liberal, pluralist society of London in 2005, just a reflection of the prevalent conditions; some artists' difficulties with the concept arose from their reluctance to perform as the research and development department for the 'knowledge' economy and from inability to believe that creativity is really being encouraged when the information that is also a product of knowledge economy is being used to curtail freedom and control dissent. This is one of the binds that artists who oppose this model find themselves in and one aspect of what I call a complex alternative.

The work 'Inquiry Unit' addressed this problem. Johnny Spencer's *Inquiry Unit*, commissioned as part of the show *Century City At Tate Modern* in 2000 presented an analysis of the show that was deliberately politicised and which employs an ephemeral form critically. The work was made in the form of a set of corporate style information panels that had begun to appear in museums and galleries to mediate or contextualise the art works in an exhibition.

## IMAGE MISSING

Figure 2: Johnny Spencer. *Inquiry Unit*, 2001, freestanding panels.

The text on the panels was the result of an inquiry into the state of current thought on art and its relation to the knowledge economy. The work was not documented as being part of the exhibition at the artist's request, although it was listed in the catalogue, so in the context of the exhibition it appeared at first sight to come from the institution or the sponsors. However, on reading it, it did not have an institutional style, one indication of

this being that rather than adopting an objective stance, the text was far more overtly partisan, and it was used to present a different account of the role of art as a constituent of London in the 1990s, attempting to open a space for argument with Emma Dexter's conclusion that the effect of artist's use of space in the city in the 1990s was to promote the commodification of culture (Dexter, 2000). The unit made the ephemerality of museum information panels apparent; although they are intended to mediate the audience experience of art, such texts are ephemeral. In addition, it was significant, and critical, in this particular exhibition that the unit was produced in a corporate style.

In addressing the problem of how to be critical, in the context I am describing, the form of ephemera itself, as a conveyer of information or knowledge, is sometimes used reflexively. Ephemera are used intentionally to alter the context of an event, to discuss how the particular institutional space affects the art. Sometimes the work itself is concerned with tactical use of informational forms, in which case, the critical context of the 'alternative' is that in a knowledge economy, where creative thought, knowledge and information are commodities that produce yet more knowledge, so the problem of how to be critical becomes more complex. Art ephemera itself is used as a 'critical space'. To use an adapted citation:

[O]n the occasion of what first seems to be an encounter with a flyer, the perceptual categories of the mind itself are flexed, so long as we understand that all we have are material occasions for it, in the form of what used to be thought of as "ephemera"<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> This is a misquotation of Fredric Jameson (1991,156): "Conceptual art may be described as a procedure whereby on the occasion of what first seems to be an encounter with a work of art of some kind, the categories of the mind itself – normally not conscious... are flexed. Conceptual here designates the ultimate subject of the process (in the experimental sense) – namely, the perceptual categories of the mind itself, provided we also understand that these can never become visible as objects in their own right, and that at every stage of the viewing process all we have are material occasions for it, in the form of what used to be thought of as "works of art". "

All of the art practices described in this chapter work in some way with the context of art, trying to find ways to be critical; using parody, détournement, heartfelt idiolectical diatribe, they use ephemera as the carrier of their voice, as artists, to question art's space. In a knowledge economy, creative thought, knowledge and information are resources and their production is an important constituent of a thriving economy. Criticality, argument and dialectic, mapping produce knowledge, so these tools which were developed in opposition to dominant ideology: hegemony, are now useless against it and actually are productive in its terms. This is the critical context of the 'alternative space' here. As Johnny Spencer explains:

It just so happens that for the last decade my art has been a combination of those things that are central to the immaterial worker; knowledge, information, affect, communication, and ideas. Dematerialization is itself now central to the neo liberal/global capitalist vision of the future (Spencer, 2003)

The following is an excerpt from the work *Remarks of Dick Burn, former Medea Group coordinator and advisor, at Marilyn Community College in Calais, France, June 18, 2001*, an information panel shown in the exhibition 'Communications Department'<sup>5</sup>, at Anthony Wilkinson gallery. This work was produced as an ephemeral hand-out on A4 paper, with the same text repeated in the show printed on A1 paper and laminated on foam-board, and hung on the wall. The excerpt cited here reflects upon the value of knowledge:

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<sup>5</sup> . *The Communications Department* exhibition took place at Anthony Wilkinson Gallery, London, June 2001 and was curated by Alex Farquharson. There was no catalogue.

*One problem with knowledge is that it can get obsolete quickly. Here again, groups like Medea look to partners like Marilyn Community College to remain vigilant in keeping students abreast of changing trends and developments.*

*We need people that can quickly take inventory of what they know and see the strategic landscape as well as the details. They can jump on something and withhold it, gaining substantial political advantage. (Medea Group, 2001)*

The meaning of the text in the copy in the library collection is changed in this example by its de-contextualisation and re-contextualisation, rather than by the physical differences (in size, position etc.). The text does not contain a reference to that particular show to carry its context with it, neither is the artist identified, so in this case the dynamic of the particular event is lost, because in its use of ‘détournement’ (it détournes a text on the reverse of the hand-out *Remarks by G. Richard Thomas, former Xerox President & CEO* that states that it is imperative to capitalise on knowledge), it depended on the knowledge of its readers of the brief and

IMAGE MISSING

Figure 3: Anthony Wilkinson Gallery, 2003

circumstances for the exhibition. What does remain though in this case is that the text points out how criticality, argument, dialectic, mapping produce knowledge; and how these tools which were developed in opposition to dominant ideology are now useless against it and actually are productive in its terms. However, my reading of this ephemeron as deposited in the library works tautologically with the text, as a withholding of knowledge, a complex alternative strategy.

### **The question of contingency**

I am looking for kinds of activity which subvert, which may work alongside, in complicity with but against the dominant order or which may just present things another

way. It has been suggested that both strategies and tactics are likely to be contingent, in this kind of practice. Josephine Berry (2001) gives examples of contingent tactics in her PhD on the thematics of site-specific net-art which, views its critique of corporate culture easily becoming subsumed but temporarily effective, event by event. Berry uses Michel de Certeau's terms 'tactics' which is the opportunistic, reflexive and adaptive method of getting what you want or making a different meaning as a form of resistance, in contrast to his definition of 'strategies' which are methods available to those who have access to the existing structure (of the dominant order) (de Certeau, 1984, 36-7), to describe contingent critical positions. The artist who made *Inquiry Unit* above cannot be said not to have access to the structures of power; the work made use of those parts of the structure to which he had access, but once an 'information panel' becomes a standard art object, the effectiveness of this strategy evaporates, he loses his 'voice'. What might appear to be tactics are used repeatedly and are theorised by artists who deploy them, such as Inventory and Info Centre and in that way appear less contingent.

## **The question of commodification**

### ***Mixed models***

Recognition of the role of artists in the cultural economy problematises the possibility of finding a position which is outside, or counter to, mercantile circuits. The not-for-profit gallery is one example of an established non-commercial model, but by the end of the 1990s in a milieu which was habitually self-critical, it was scarcely question for debate in art criticism to what extent 'alternative' galleries could be defined by a refusal of commodification: and how much that could be equivocated with what Julie Ault (2002b) called the 'status quo of mercantile circuits', with Althusser's 'Ideological state



apparatus' (2001), what Guy Debord (2002) described as the 'spectacle' (Fredric Jameson (1991) called 'an explosion: a prodigious expansion of culture throughout the social realm' into 'global space' that subverts 'critical distance', what Hardt and Negri (2000) described as the conditions of artists and 'immaterial labour' which have developed into 'late capitalism' or what Critical Art Ensemble described as the 'sight-machine' of 'pancapitalism:

The two key machinic schemata (control) that have captivated the minds of resistant cultural producers are the war machine and the sight machine ...used to build an understanding of the structure and dynamics of the current socio-political management apparatuses and in the best of circumstances have been used to develop strategies to resist the hyper-rationalized state of pancapitalism. (Critical Art Ensemble, 1998, 4)

In this thesis, I assert that one of these strategies of resistance continues sometimes to be art, however the 'alternative' gallery is no longer 'alternative space' For this reason I have looked for paths which lead away from the standard definition of alternative galleries as artist-run and not-for-profit (Atkins, 1997) or providing a space for revolutionary political art.

If alternative galleries were 'alternative' to market led, commodity based galleries whose purpose was to support the art market then Stallabrass thinks that yBa artists of the 90s were affected too much by the market (1996) to be alternative. These artists are frequently criticised for 'selling out.' Mark Harris (1997) looks at the generally accepted position that 'alternative' represents a position in opposition to commodification. He says that if the art could work as a commodity does, to create desire and value and yet not be one, it would succeed in being 'alternative'. If it becomes an art object in an exhibition, then no real alternative is produced. However, Bauman (1998) says that commodification of experience in the post-modern culture means that the event of the

exhibition has become a commodity as well as the art-work. It may be because *Freez'* fits this pattern that it is identified so often as a new kind of event, although not an alternative one. Despite there being far more commentary on the lack of an alternative position, there are some who warn that if all art of the 1990s is homogenised as being uncritical then it becomes difficult to get any other message across (Siderfin, 1998).

In the review of residues of the historical avant-gardes and their failure in chapter 2, I referred to superceded avant-garde positions, and assimilation of transgression. The discourse of Marxian theories of dominant culture and ways of being radical to it, to 'resist the present' permeates critical literature as I showed in that chapter. Other discourses cited are from counter-culture and of identity politics, cited with varying amounts of historical allegiance. Rebecca Gordon Nesbit observed that the contemporary alternatives operate "outside but not counter to extant culture" (Nesbit, 1996, 150) because they rely on systems of art-world patronage and art is usually for sale but on the other hand, they are often temporary, with charitable status, their organisation reflects public funders' preference for funding groups. This is one example of a mixed model, but symbiotic relationships, such as that used by Carey Young, in for example *Communications department* for which she facilitated a business development consultancy for the Anthony Wilkinson Gallery; collaboration, and liaison being also part of the picture. Changing the language used to describe positions, for example drawing from the discourse of business, to describe art as a 'safe risk' is a way of describing such mixed models and noting their implicit contradictions.

### *Mercantile circuits*

Some alternative spaces had historically, as I reviewed in chapter 2, been set up as an alternative to “mercantile circuits”. However, mercantile circuits themselves have been used as a host site. I will show some examples, firstly in some art ephemera relating to shopping.

#### IMAGE MISSING

Figure 4: Bojan Sarcevic. 'Irrigation-fertilisation', Salon3, 2001, flyer/poster [detail]

This leaflet is an A2 sheet of paper, posted folded to A4, with an image covering one side, with text in a band along the bottom that gives information about the exhibition. The leaflet is cheaply produced, one colour printing, thin paper, combining exhibition announcement and a representation of the work in one piece.

Salon3 was a gallery run by Rebecca Gordon Nesbit and Hans Ulrich Obrist in unit 318 in the Elephant and Castle shopping centre. It was a non-commercial gallery run by professional curators, funded with grants from public funding bodies. It was in an alternative location where few other galleries and art projects were. The shopping centre was not thriving, and the shops there were very low budget. Many units were empty, which is why the gallery could exist there on low rent. The Elephant and Castle is not a successful spectacle, unlikely to inspire overpowering desire to consume. The shops in the centre sold substitutes and cheap goods, it was maintained by the local council and at that time painted pink outside. The art installation shown has little directly to do with shopping. It brings water into the picture, this natural substance usually here as part of the services that sustain the architectural environment, rather than as a natural element. Shopping centres are sheltered and warm, to make spending time in them more pleasant.

The water is still controlled, or it would damage the shops. This image makes the space appear desolate and decaying, but the shiny rivulets are pretty, the aesthetics of the work make me think about what kind of shopping centre this is, why it is here, by reusing elements that exist in the situation it geographically investigates the environment, the way it affects the behaviour of people and the way people alter it. The artist's opinion of commercialism and commodification as such are not spelled out, it is an experimental rather than a didactic work, although it temporarily takes over the space for a different purpose.

Most shopping centres contain department stores, chain stores and big supermarkets. The only big name tenant here at this time was Tesco. For her exhibition at Salon3, Gunilla Klingberg produced two carrier bags, printed with "special offer" and "TESCO". The Tesco logo has been converted into an image reminiscent of a mandala, a ritualistic geometric design symbolic of the universe, often four or eight circles, here formed of four interlocking circles. The centre of a mandala is often significant: some city plans are based on a mandala with a church as the block at the centre.

#### IMAGE MISSING

Figure 5: Gunilla Klingberg, 'Tesco bag', 1999

This bag image has a vanishing point as a centre, represented by infinite repetition to a single perspectival point, invisibility caused by a failure of detail because of the quality of the printing: there is no visible space that is not named "Tesco"<sup>6</sup>. The image is printed on a paper carrier bag, which folds out to make a three-dimensional object on a

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<sup>6</sup> Klingberg has remodelled other supermarket logos ;Sparspace, Sparloop (video) see Velthuis (2005, 22-4) and [www.gunillaklingberg.com/](http://www.gunillaklingberg.com/) 'Mantric manipulation'.

rectangular base. I think Tesco used to make paper bags like that but at this time they were giving out plastic ones, so this bag was nostalgic as an object. The special offer bag had those words printed in fluorescent orange with a pinked line around like the edge of a sticker, again looking nostalgic, or cheap because markets still used those stickers for their prices but supermarkets did not.

Sarah Staton's *Supastore* project was an artist-run art-merchandising project. In interviews she has referred to Claus Oldenburg's multiples store as a precedent or model for her project (Audio Arts, 1997<sup>7</sup>). *Supastore* ran first in Posterstudio, an artist-run space, and then in Laure Genillard, which was a commercial gallery. Originally the store was intended to contrast with supermarkets, by selling artists' multiples, small-scale productions by artists, made with evident care or ideas, and retaining a link to their creator, as affordable art. In the commercial gallery the installation looked like a shop. Later installations of the project, for example in SE1 showed the wares in their own travelling case.

IMAGE MISSING

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<sup>7</sup> and in interview with the author, 2001

Figure 6: Sarah Staton. *Supastore flyer*, 1998

By contrasting different presentations of art objects for sale, the project provokes thought about what kind of commodity art is, how like a shop the gallery is, whilst promoting multiples as affordable commodities. The ephemera announce the event.



Figure 7: Cummings & Lewandowska  
*Browse* 1997, leaflet

Neil Cummings and Marysia

Lewandowska's leaflet 'Browse'

(1997) is another example of a work in context, the leaflet identifying items in a shop, as though they are art objects. In contrast, art merchandising projects Eyestorm and Counter-productions which developed later also selling artists' multiples, did not have this interest in context, or positionality, and the ephemera produced by them is more closely allied to trade literature.

These shopping-themed works inhabit existing types of venue, the 'alternative' quality that they have is that they are concerned with a complex understanding of both the position of the art in the specific context, and of the experience of shopping.

## **The questions of politics and protest**

The legacy of the ‘avant-garde’ in the critical literature is a concern with the relation of art to politics and society. Political aspects, usually the lack of radical aims as I have cited above, are frequently the focus of critical literature about London-based organisations. In Ault (2002a), in both the documentation and essays, there are many political claims and statements, both in the art discussed and in the accounts of intentions. Such overtly political claims are not found in the documentation of London spaces,<sup>8</sup> but political forms are cited, or appropriated, diffidently, or humorously, and some of the art deals with the politics of information.

The alternative spaces in London had appeared surprisingly parochial and concerned with traditional avant-garde political issues, to Mark Harris (1998). At the time, Harris had recently returned to London from New York and the essay contains his assessment of what was going on in London. He says that in the British scene “artists’ manifestos and polemical writings are rare.” His selection of examples indicate that his is a partial view, manifestos or statements of intention may often be brief but do appear quite frequently in my collection, particularly from new galleries, e.g. Beaconsfield’s first exhibition catalogue. Harris identifies some issues raised in recent examples of press releases, in the period preceding that of my research:

the challenge to the exhibition venue; the encounter between artist and audience; the critical relationship of art to its surroundings; the engagement of art with everyday life; the implications of a diverse selection and, occasionally, the role of humour. More rare, but still occurring, are references to subversive practice, the democratisation of art, and to commodification. (Harris, 1998, 64)

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<sup>8</sup> However, note that Bank cite a rhetoric of class struggle.



He comments on his analysis saying “surprisingly, this list of issues suggests that some of the historical avant-garde antagonisms are still unresolved and thus valid for a number of British artists” (64). To find this surprising is to underestimate the continuing importance of class-based politics in this context.

#### IMAGE MISSING

Figure 8: Bank. 'Bonkers bird etc.', 1996, poster, limited ed. no. 965

Bank's poster uses a traditional format. Humour makes it difficult to read art ephemera literally as evidence; so I am interpreting Bank's poster formally in its reference to subversive traditions of mocking conventional forms and the polemic or rhetorical use of text to address people. They worked as a group, and in the text here, I interpret their “we” as their small group, rather than the almost implied group of the ‘working-class’. This interpretation leads me to wonder if I hate them and if they are working-class, but also about the relationship between this statement and the polemical title of the show *Bonkers bird*. Grant Kester (1993) had pointed out that “in art the most revolutionary rhetoric mixes unashamedly with the most blatant displays of cultural and economic privilege” whilst artists identified with the oppressed and powerless in society. Chin Tao Wu's criticism of this inconsistency is less severe, that the belief could be seen as naïve, as being an artist was a matter of extended education and choice, which is what truly powerless groups or individuals do not have. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when it seemed that collective action should fulfil the practical needs of the people and the arts could be practised by individuals to improve their quality of life, it was not anticipated that the qualities life would lack would not be recreational but issues of ethics, knowledge and empowerment. Artists are not alienated in their work, possibly this is why they are useful role models. The repetition of traditional class-based criticism can be seen

seen in the contemporary literature reviewed in chapter 2, and in (Beech and Hutchinson, 2005) cited in chapter 4. Whilst claiming “Alternatives are partisan and partial” the authors separate their version, their “constellation” of political artists from an alternative defined by identity politics. They describe an ideological position, in opposition to “hegemonic power” of Capitalism, as based on a working class position that makes radical opposition possible, when most other positions are susceptible to recuperation. This position is often criticised as not taking account of contemporary conditions. LeFeuvre (2005), for example, says that art has not been and cannot be autonomous from the institution and that “a counter position underlines the power and success of the state by providing a harmless outlet for radical ideas”.

There are other items which cite the appearance of documentation of protest, in language and imagery. The *xpo destructo* was an event that included stalls and talks from digital media artists, critical activists and producers of publications such as *Everything* magazine, in a temporary space in Charing Cross Road. Many of the participants were associated with Backspace, a space that provided computer facilities and mutual support for digital art and the event provided the possibility to network and collect a lot of ephemera.

IMAGE MISSING

Figure 9: xpo destructo, 1999, flyer

IMAGE MISSING

The ticket is printed on unfinished cardboard, and suggests the dissemination of destructive pressure passing through a symbol that looks like a Euro sign. The style

seems to reference Russian Constructivism, as does the card for a similar event held in 2003, which included some of the same participants: *DMZ*.

Figure 10: DMZ Media Arts Festival, 2003, flyer

The leaflet *Work* by Fat (Fashion Architecture Taste) was distributed by Fat, at that time a new architectural partnership, in 1994. It invites participation in ‘Work’; which was to “involve over 100 artists, designers and architects ‘picketing’ the Tate Gallery on the night of the presentation of the Turner Prize, November 22<sup>nd</sup> 1994”. The text reads: “The project appropriates a faintly absurd method of political protest – each participant will carry a placard bearing one of their own original artworks” and was “intended to demonstrate frustration with the ways in which culture is administered and promoted”. In August 1994, the trustees of the K Foundation, Jimmy Cauty and Bill Drummond, burned 1 million pounds in cash--money from a previous Cauty and Drummond project, the KLF, following a demonstration which had taken place at the Turner prize 1993 (K Foundation, 1994).

IMAGE MISSING

Figure 11: fat, ‘Work’ demonstration announcement, 1994, flyer

The Fat project is appropriating the idea of protest on the Turner prize, as well as its method. The larger text gives information about the party to follow and TV, press coverage and credits the promoters, while the picture shows what is presumably a pre-staged picture of how the demonstration might look.

Roman Vasseur's poster protesting about a mural is a political document in its own right, referring to a campaign about the state of St. George's Estate, Shadwell, and citing of 'Murder as one of the Fine Arts' as well.

IMAGE MISSING

Figure 12: Roman Vasseur, *St George's Estate, Shadwell*, 2004, poster

### *Exit*

The term ‘exit’ is used to introduce a range of impulses and strategies indicating an idea, need or intention to leave the current conditions (of art) without a need to define an alternative. Exit may be an urge similar to the “lines of flight” from global capitalism described by Hardt and Negri (2001) in ‘exodus’ from increasing control of information and legislation in areas of the personal and social sphere. An example from the past is Gustav Metzger’s Art Strike Bed, recent reconsiderations of this idea of strike are documented in the book published to accompany the exhibition *Strike* curated by Gavin Wade at Wolverhampton Art Gallery in 2002, which contains a variety of answers to the questions “1. How does/would/could the withdrawal of art affect the world? 2. Does the answer to the first question reveal ways in which art can affect the world or strike a blow upon the structures of the world? (Wade, 2002, 1). However, the theme ‘exit’ also evokes the ideas of flight (Deleuze) and of withdrawal, disappearance, of vanished paths.



Figure 13: INS. Sic transit pass, 2001, ticket

Exit to another place, a named place which is impossible to visit, is shown in the International Necronautical Society’s (INS) ticket for *Sic transit pass* which suggests a

leaving for death, and the flyer of the Association of Autonomous Astronauts (AAA), who in the Extra Terrestrial Cinema withdraw to outer space.

### IMAGE MISSING

Figure 14: AAA. 'Extra terrestrial cinema', 1999, flyer

The final illustration or citation here is from the final phase of Info Centre, an institution planned as a year-long project. An extract from the Info Centre's journal Infotainment, no. 6 explains their exit. This desire for exit remained, after leaving that space, as described by Jakobsen (2001).

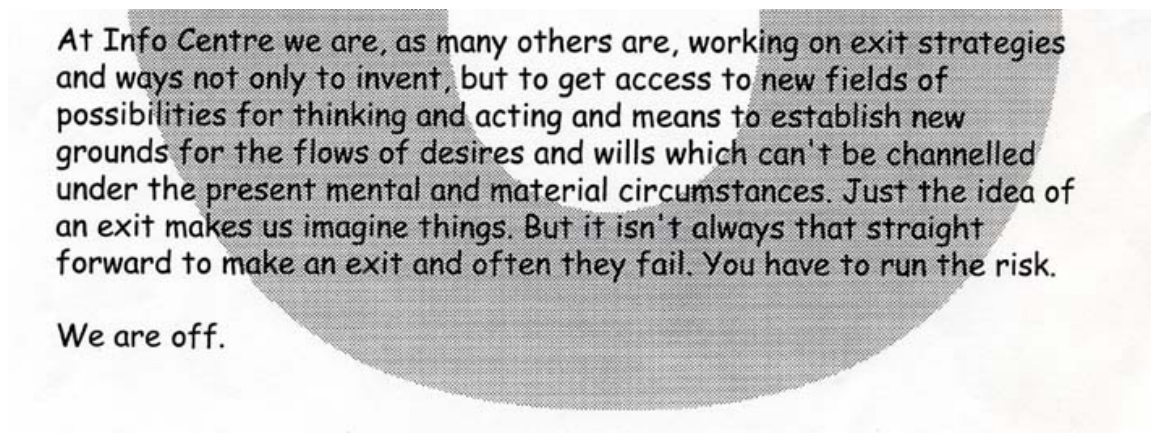


Figure 15:Info Centre. Newsletter no. 6, 2000 [extract]

I cite this as the conclusion of this chapter and of this section of the thesis, expressing both hope and failure.