

Re-tool
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Residen
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Re-tool ing Residen cies

A Closer Look at the Mobility
of Art Professionals

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One of the peculiar characteristics of the Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) Ujazdowski Castle is the fact that it has a residency programme for artists, which helps to enrich its activities at many levels. As an interdisciplinary structure – in which visual art meets performance and dance, music encounters cinema and theory turns into practice and vice versa – the A-I-R Laboratory allows CCA to welcome one more element into its space: life. The presence of resident artists from around the world not only enriches our exhibition activity and event programme, but, through daily contact, also enlivens the activities of the centre. This constant exchange between different personalities helps to form ways of thinking which define the path taken by CCA. In this sense, the centre becomes something absolutely unique in the contemporary art system – a place of encounter, a place for the elaboration and testing of projects and ideas.

This is not a simple process, and the difficulties are the same as those found in any scenario in which different worlds and cultures meet. As such, the basis of the A-I-R Laboratory can be tested more widely and its usefulness extended beyond the art world. Central to its success is the particular location of CCA in Warsaw, a city that has all the right qualities to become a meeting point. As a place with a difficult past, a present rich in fertile prospects and a future yet to be built, Warsaw can aspire to becoming one of the main places in which the foundations may be laid for creating stable relations between different cultures. Projects like RE-tooling RESIDENCIES are a valuable platform for rehearsing this role.

Fabio Cavallucci
Director
Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle

Acknowledgements

RE-tooling RESIDENCIES: A Closer Look at the Mobility of Art Professionals is the last part of a programme of activities organised under the rubric of RE-tooling RESIDENCIES, between 2009 and 2011, which began with an international conference on artistic residencies, accompanied by the first Eastern European Res Artis Meeting, and was followed by an exchange programme for art professionals and institutions new to the field of residencies. It has been funded with the support of the European Commission within the framework of the Pilot Project for Artist Mobility. The managerial team is indebted to a large number of people for their advice, intellectual input, support and collaboration, without whom this project would not have been possible.

The project in general and this publication in particular are the result of hard work put in by very many people. Anna Ptak worked on RE-tooling RESIDENCIES from the outset, asking the right questions and imbuing our reflections on the subject with direction. Our collaborative partners, who embraced the administrative challenge of participating in a project of European dimensions, provided invaluable help, and our thanks go to them for their genuine partnership at decisive moments: Alessio Antonioli, Amy Walker (Gasworks, London), Angela Butterstein (Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart), Joanna Sandell (Botkyrka konsthall), Ondrej Stupal, Marketa Stara (FUTURA Centre for Contemporary Art, Prague). Our thanks are also due to the many project participants, whose critical approach and words of acknowledgement so greatly enriched our deliberations: Zuzana Bodnárová, Svätopluk Mikyta, Marta Bogdańska, Alena Boika, Lenka Dolanová, Ivars Gravlejs, Petra Petileta, Vyara Mlechevska, Dominik Kuryłek, Ewa Małgorzata Tatar, Wojciech Orlik, Magdalena Ujma. For their part in creating the broad framework for these discussions, we would like to thank all conference participants and invited speakers: Odile Chenal, Monika Fabijańska, Marijke Jansen & Irene Saddal, Aych Naraghi, Dana Pekaríková,

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Bringing the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES concept to life would not have been possible without the support of people who have spent many years working in the field – people like Jean-Baptiste Joly, Irmeli Kokko and Maria Tuerlings. Our encounter with Friedrich Meschede also had a considerable impact on our way of thinking about residencies, shaking us out of the furrows we had been ploughing until then – which were centred on setting up residencies for Polish artists abroad – and serving as an impulse for change, by encouraging us to invite foreign artists to Warsaw, which necessitated improved relations with the local authorities. Ultimately, it is the artists resident at A-I-R Laboratory who have borne the brunt of daily struggles as our curatorial team have striven to establish at least a temporary equilibrium in which their work could flourish. We would like to thank them for support and critical feedback, without which we would not be able to continue.

We would like to express our special gratitude to Rebecca Gordon-Nesbitt for her work as managing editor, carried out with enormous tact and sensitivity, while consistently and purposefully elucidating the texts and the thoughts contained within them. In this role, she was ably supported by colleagues from 100% Proof, who checked both individual texts and the final manuscript. We owe the interesting shape of the book to Krzysztof Bielecki, who elaborated the graphic identity of the whole RE-tooling RESIDENCIES project.

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and support for the conference we are deeply indebted to the City of Warsaw, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, the Swiss Arts Council/Pro Helvetia, Goethe Institut, Instituto Camões, Berliner Künstlerprogramm/DAAD, Polish Cultural Institute in New York, Polish Institute in Madrid, the British Council and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Warsaw.

We wish to express our thanks to all the contributors to this book. Their patience and efforts lie at the core of this publication

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka and Marianna Dobkowska

Preface

The intense development and spread of residency programmes, which encourages face-to-face collaboration and networking, reflects the changing position of art and artists. Residencies provide opportunities for artistic and social practices to intertwine; however, the concept behind them has rarely been the subject of critical investigation. The launch of this book and the related website are a sign that critical and practical investigations are needed in the field. This is especially acute in the countries of Eastern Europe, where the institutionalisation of residency programmes is a relatively new phenomenon that is currently undergoing the process of legitimisation. While this publication suggests several critical approaches to residencies and the broader mobility of cultural producers, the website invites its users to submit their comments, feedback and worldly knowledge in order to create a platform about the theories and practices of residency programmes. Both represent a call for qualitative reflection.

The basic goals of residency programmes used to be individual artistic development and the pursuit of experimentation. Nowadays, residencies are often incorporated into the core of artistic practice, which allows geographical imbalances to be redressed, signalling an end to artistic discourses based on one-way traffic. This makes it timely to consider the most relevant methods for simultaneously supporting knowledge development and the often hidden work of curators, organisers and artists. This book aims to present some of the possible approaches for effectively analysing the creative and social processes related to mobility in a broader perspective. If residencies are based on an idea of relocation, what kind of consequences do they have in terms of mapping national, global or Eastern European flows of labour, conflict and cooperation? Can experience of the art scene in Eastern Europe be used as a basis for creating unique ways of organising artistic work that are specific to the region? Which methodologies could possibly provide a critical framework for the institution of artistic residencies?

The introduction to this book has been provided by the team of the A-I-R Laboratory, which is in charge of a residency programme based at the Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw. In 2009, together with four other institutions, the A-I-R Laboratory initiated the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES project, embarking on a series of discussions between curators, artists and organisers about the theoretical and practical aspects of residencies. This book is one of the project's manifestations.

The first part of the book, entitled 'Practices', contains contributions dealing with the expanded field of contemporary artistic practice – by Johann Pousette, Hagen Betzwieser and Yeb Wiersma – while Kaja Pawetek considers the field of curatorial work. This section ends with the transcript of a panel discussion hosted by the International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP) and MINI/Goethe-Institut Curatorial Residencies Ludlow 38 in New York City. Together, the texts in this section indicate ways in which residencies respond to the blurred boundaries of artistic production. Their observations demonstrate that this field – characterised by the expansion of both cultural institutions and the practices they support – cannot be contained by the representational logic of exhibitions and the related public consumption of art. Pousette uses the phrase 'happy failure' to describe the experience of artistic work that leads to unexpected outcomes; this is not meant in the sense of mere experimentation, but, rather, responds to the impossibility of attributing results to one particular location. In a bid to encourage this, Pousette pursues the idea of a production-in-residence, while Pawetek perceives a curatorial research trip as both responding to the fragmentation of artists' working processes and the global interconnectedness of their points of reference.

An artwork spans the demands of professionalisation or productivity and deferred action, encompassing time to understand, connect, get inspired and change one's mind. In this first part of the book, a focus on the temporal dimension

of artistic or curatorial labour seems to be at the core of the practices described in the context of different residency models. Sofia Hernández Chong Cuy, one of the discussion participants, aptly mentions that residencies constitute a 'third space'. In that sense, residencies risk aping the dominant hierarchies of the art world, while being imbued with day-to-day routines that are able to productively challenge identification with the discourse of museums or galleries. This third space could have the same relation to artistic manifestations that hybrid cultural space has to knowledge: crises or splitting (as Homi Bhabha calls it), leading to a possible reconfiguration of the language spoken.

The texts gathered in 'Sites' – the second part of this publication – elaborate on the context in which Eastern European residencies and artistic mobility can be considered. Interestingly, we see that, time and again, the term 'residency' recurs in its lexical meaning as an act of dwelling in a place. Viewed from a two-fold localised perspective – as a dwelling in Eastern Europe – the analyses of residencies in this section have recourse to history. Political transition in the countries of Eastern Europe has created a shift away from the dubious situation of artists being sheltered by the state at the expense of their autonomy. This former compromise is invoked in a text by Jakob Racek – in the context of the artistic welfare provided by the Union of Bulgarian Artists – and in Agnieszka Pindera's exploration of plein-air in socialist Poland. Taken together, these authors chart the ways in which the demise of a cultural field dominated by state-controlled enclaves resulted in the decomposition of state-subsidised art institutions. Within this formulation, Racek identifies those strategists of weakness – cultural producers who act as both critics of consecutive forms of incorporation (by the economy or political commissions, which saw presumed freedom being displaced by economic liberalism) and builders of their own sub-structures and networks (allowing for the stability of artistic work within a given community). This is why the topic of hosting – introduced in Racek's essay – is so important. The ability to know oneself only by becoming the Other

in one's own 'residence' reflects the precarity of the position of both the host and the guest. The anxiety, and sense of opportunity, engendered by thinking about the possible directions a residency programme might take permeate the conversation between Rasa Antanavičiūtė and Vytautas Michelkevičius, who analyse the meaning of their own programme, based in Lithuania, in relation to academe, resort, local placement and global art market. The condition of artists' and art's belonging is dealt with in different ways by Ewa Małgorzata Tatar and Maja and Reuben Fowkes. Tatar focuses on a very specific site: the National Museum in Kraków, an institution that encapsulates a highly organised body of employees, collaborators, the public and guardians of the predefined museum's mission, whereby works created by artists-in-residence do not allow for fortification of the institution. In the Fowkes' text, artistic mobility is considered in the broader context of globalisation and is accompanied by an analysis of post-national identity, by referring to examples of foreign artists settling in Budapest.

The last part of the book – 'Networks' – returns to the origins of this publication, the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES project, to focus on the working framework within which networks for supporting residencies and the mobility of art professional are created. It is the most informal part of the book, reflecting a state of affairs in the making. In Odile Chenal's reflection – based on a presentation during the conference held in Warsaw in 2009 which initiated the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES project – residencies are revealed to be less about the geographical movement of art professionals and more about a mesh of interdependencies between bodies and individuals. Subsequent conversations continue along this line. Networking – as a challenge and an opportunity – is a learning tool for institutions working within different agendas and at different levels of formalisation. Expectations differ about the opportunities connected with mobility. Residency organisers – whether institutionalised or not, funding providers or grant recipients – while connected, always re-shape overly localised visions of the kind of support (or burdens) mobility provides. By dealing with worldly

experiences of partnership, the institutions (in these conversations represented by co-organisers of the project) are learning – and possibly changing, in order to accommodate the complexity of the role of the host.

Raumtaktik – a Berlin-based collective of artists and architects focusing on themes like globalisation, migration, ecological transformation, commercialisation, ‘eventisation’ and the activation of urban space – has been asked for another ‘methodology’ that would help to tackle the issues raised in this book. They have invited artists to submit images that indicate the connections between the experience of working as part of a residency and one’s individual artistic practice. These images, collectively entitled *Dream or Nightmare*, appear across later pages of this book. To conclude, it is worth mentioning that, herein, a variety of possible residency formats is presented, as defined and experienced by cultural producers. All the authors speak from a position as practitioners, who either run specific programmes or undertake activity as artists, curators, activists, managers and/or theoreticians, actively reflecting and animating cultural mobility.

Anna Ptak

Introduction to Re-tooling

There is no single, unfailing recipe for establishing a residency, because a residency responds to a need to connect with art that is different from those met by an exhibition, biennial or festival. It is an outcome of time, place and people and it offers an opportunity for enduring relationships and a profound communion with both art and one's own thoughts.

The RE-tooling RESIDENCIES project was born of necessity, at a moment at which it seemed imperative to reformulate the assumptions of the Artists-in-Residence (A-I-R) Laboratory eight years after it was set up. This residency programme, the first of its kind in Poland and one of the first in Central and Eastern Europe, was established at Warsaw's Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) Ujazdowski Castle in 2003. It was initially conceived as a space in which artists could live and create, providing time for reflection and composed, calm, unharried work over a period of between a month and a year, allowing for exchange across cultural, intellectual and social levels. At that time, the key to the 'residency' concept was the transposition of artists into a cultural context different from their own, bringing about a presence upon which the institution, the local people and the city itself could all draw.

RE-tooling RESIDENCIES came about as a collaborative venture undertaken by CCA, Akademie Schloss Solitude (Stuttgart, Germany), the FUTURA Centre for Contemporary Art (Prague, Czech Republic), Gasworks (London, UK) and Botkyrka konsthall (Stockholm, Sweden). The project was inaugurated in 2009 with an international conference that reflected on topical problems relating to mobility in art. The conference went hand-in-hand with the first Eastern European meeting of the Res Artis network and an exhibition entitled 'Working Title. Tytuł roboczy'.

As the organisers, we at CCA were facing a moment of crucial change, inasmuch as the scale of our activities had increased significantly as the result of acquiring a new building for housing artists. We were confronting a need to subject the model that had

been in operation at the CCA over the preceding years to scrutiny and verification. The convergence in Warsaw of nigh-on two hundred people from various corners of the world – specialists, curators and cultural animators – begged many questions around residencies. It also prompted us to consider whether RE-tooling was only a project title and a descriptor of the dilemmas grappled with or whether it could also act as a catalyst for defining a common language and stimulating further activity.

As well as being built around the burning need for CCA to redefine its activities, the conference programme was directed towards reflection upon the contemporary situation of residency institutions. However, first and foremost, it constituted an endeavour to create a space, a forum for the exchange of experience and knowledge. Conceived as a learning process, it involved a discussion centred on the theoretical and practical aspects of artists' residencies. The curators, artists and institutions invited to take part were selected from among the diverse Eastern European organisations planning to set up their own residency programmes. Regardless of the experience of participating institutions, everyone was asking themselves similar questions: What are residencies? What is their task? Why do they arise? Are they really an alternative to the traditional forms of promoting and presenting art? What purpose should those which occur within the Central European network serve? How can mobility and collaboration within the region be supported?

The topics proposed across five discussion panels were intended to stimulate a dialogue around the most immediate issues. So, for example, the first was devoted to the current motives for advocating investment in the mobility of artists in a situation which has seen an intense growth in residency initiatives over the past twenty years, particularly in the countries of Western Europe and North America. The second panel presented a variety of models for artistic residencies, which ranged from invitations to artists for a year's sojourn to considerably shorter production residencies. It also endeavoured to outline the kind of collaboration with artists that each existing model imposed, while discussing models that

might ensure optimum working conditions, an echo of which could be discerned in a dialogue devoted to the introduction of new disciplines in the third panel. During this third panel, Nathalie Anglès, founder of Residency Unlimited, an organisation operating without permanent premises in New York, drew attention to the dangers inherent in tying oneself to pre-defined schema for running artistic residencies. In this, Residency Unlimited served as an extreme example, stimulating thoughts on whether it would be possible to run a residency programme without a fixed location within the Eastern European context.

The experience of bringing together people who represented very different conceptual and practical approaches in the field of residencies made it possible to evaluate diverse means of supporting mobility. The possibility of collaborations being established between organisations that varied in their levels of institutionalisation also came under the spotlight. As a whole, the project instilled faith in the potential and purpose of collaboration between organisations ranging from public establishments to individuals.

Another key point to emerge was the desire to speak about residencies without reverting to clichés, particularly in relation to the valorisation of East or West. Jean-Baptiste Joly, director of Akademie Schloss Solitude, noted that, in the context of Europe, this terminology fails to adequately convey contemporary inequalities in the distribution of funding; rather than the divide between East and West, he proposed that we should be talking about the gulf between the European Union and the countries beyond it.

The conference also addressed questions around the theme of flexibility that were to recur throughout the project. Does a residency institution need to maintain a fixed programme in a way that constitutes its permanent identity? Could it not, instead, be subject to continual dislocation and change? Could it not be transparent, flexible and adapted to new constellations every time? Participants to the conference recognised that one of the main challenges facing residency centres was the establishment of a structure that would not become restrictive for artists, remaining

sensitised to changes in the art world as they occurred. By the same token, one's own model for residencies should be continually subject to ratification.

The outcome of RE-tooling RESIDENCIES is neither the birth of a new residency programme/network nor a compendium of useful knowledge (a 'How-To' book on setting up such programmes). Rather, the project has been and will continue to be a study of the many and varied problems related to the topic and an endeavour to find a descriptive language for residencies. Originally intended as a forum for sharing knowledge between organisations already active in the field while facilitating the acquisition of practical experience by those who are still planning to organise creative sojourns for artists, the latter parties quickly became important contributors to the dialogue that was being generated.

In the globalised reality of today's world, with its 'google curating' and superficial, interpersonal contacts, the residency represents *time bestowed*, inasmuch as it constitutes an opportunity to preserve individuality and forge rich, enduring relationships, which may then become manifest in the form of new projects or collaborations that continue for many years. Indeed, under the auspices of RE-tooling RESIDENCIES, new projects, collaborations between participant and participant, participant and organiser, have been and are being established.

A vital part of RE-tooling RESIDENCIES has been this publication, which brings together many of the ideas discussed during the project. On the one hand, this book relates to a specific geographical context, given that many of its authors come from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and their texts call upon their specific, culturally-determined experience. On the other hand, there are also themes that are more universal, as in, for instance, questions around what differentiates the work of a residency curator from that of an exhibition curator, with the residency curator's work being understood in myriad ways, ranging from the selection of artists invited to take up residencies to work undertaken with the artist during their sojourn.

During the opening of the 'Working Title. Tytuł roboczy' exhibition that accompanied the conference, the US artist, Michael Cavayero, undertook a performance in which he laid out everything he had brought with him when he arrived for a three-month residency in Warsaw. Several pairs of shoes were tidily arranged side by side, shirts and sweatshirts neatly folded and stacked in a pile with geometric precision; notebooks, larger bags, smaller bags, ballpoint pens, a telephone, toiletries and many everyday items were all laid on the floor of the Laboratory Gallery at CCA, pedantically ordered to create an installation. The artist himself sat completely naked and curled in on himself in a corner of the gallery, reminding the viewer of the fact that a residency is closer to 'being on the road' than it is to 'feeling at home' and that every artist-in-residence must strive to 'take possession' of a space for themselves, a space within which they will be spending the forthcoming months. At the same time, the installation-performance provoked questions as to the role of the host institution in this process of familiarisation.

Given that the artist stays in an environment wholly unfamiliar to them, the residency curator takes on the role of being their guide in a new situation. Time spent together is not the week or two of the high-voltage contact that occurs when an exhibition is being mounted after a previous exchange of e-mails or, perhaps, a brief visit to the artist's studio. The curator of a residency often proffers support in providing for the artist's day-to-day needs – racing about to bring their guest a quilt, or some soup or taking them home for a family meal. Spending time together on a longer-term basis creates the conditions for establishing a highly individual relationship, a friendship which often extends beyond the framework of artist-curator relations and beyond the time span of the residency. This kind of relationship is a demanding one, because, on the one hand, how is one to remain objective about an artist's merits when one has forged a parallel personal relationship with them and, conversely, how is one to work with someone whose creativity one esteems, but with whom, for some reason, the personal relationship fails to work?

In summary, in the contemporary art world, the residency can be treated as an alternative form of working with an artist. Flexibility and sensitisation to the specific context or situation within which artists find themselves are inscribed into its very bones. We hope that this book will become an important reference point for cultural operators who are supporting artists' mobility within the field of residencies, as well for the authorities to which we would like to demonstrate the importance of supporting residencies.

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka, Agnieszka Sosnowska

Dream or Nightmare?

Dream or Nightmare started before the first residents arrived at the new premises of A-I-R Laboratory. This provided a rare opportunity to reveal these private spaces to the public. Artworks were shown in studios, and future beds were placed in the exhibition space with the aim of provoking questions such as: What will happen here in the future? What kind of ideas will be generated? Which dreams will be realised? Of course, it is a dream to have an opportunity to stay at such a great place, with the time, solitude and concentration necessary for one's work. However, some people might, unexpectedly, find it a nightmare, wondering: Am I in the right place? Will I be lonely? Am I wasting my time? What is happening to my friends and work at home?

With *Dream or Nightmare*, we began by asking ourselves: What signifies an artists' residency – a studio, a workshop, a place of study? Beds are a key component that makes a residency stand apart from other places of artistic work. Beds also incorporate facets of the history of this particular building, as it was once part of a military hospital. We arranged the beds in a similar fashion to a hospital ward. They emitted a glowing light, communicating the brilliance, and perhaps transcendence, that one aspires to achieve during a residency. What are you hiding under the bed? In your closet? Dreams? Nightmares?

We took the fundamental objects that await each resident – objects that do not discriminate but which are the same for everyone. For this first exhibition within the new space, entitled 'Working Title. Tytuł roboczy', we assembled the beds. These are the beds awaiting residents at the A-I-R Laboratory at CCA Ujazdowski Castle. These are the beds to which residents will turn for rest, inspiration or possibly escape from their work. They also played into the second part of *Dream or Nightmare*. Reflecting upon beds, residencies, artists and the history of the site of A-I-R Laboratory, we turned towards dreams, ideas, problems and nightmares. We wanted to know about the experiences artists have had with

residencies, so we sent out an e-mail, asking former and present residents to submit their experience in a visual or written form of their choice. These thoughts were traced onto cushions and spread over the beds and the following pages of this book.

Matthias Böttger and Jennifer Morone – raumtaktik



Matthias Böttger, Jennifer Morone – raumtaktik
Dream or Nightmare, 2009, installation view from the exhibition 'Working Title. Tytuł roboczy'.

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Iñaki Garmendia, *Tigreserpiente*
Residency: A-I-R Laboratory,
Warsaw, 2006.

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Max Schumacher, *Untitled*
Residency: Akademie Schloss
Solitude, Stuttgart, 2001.

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Ariel Reichman
Self Portrait as Warsaw
Residency: A-I-R Laboratory,
Warsaw, 2011.

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Júlia Vécsei, *Untitled*
Residency: FUTURA,
Prague, 2008.

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Tamàs Kaszàs, *Untitled*
Residency: FUTURA,
Prague, 2009.

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Patricia Reed, *Outlines*
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Rudolf Steiner, *Untitled*
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Harald Falkenhagen, *Untitled*
Residency: Akademie Schloss
Solitude, Stuttgart, 1991.

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Pei-Wen Liu, *All Knowledges
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Residency: Akademie Schloss
Solitude, Stuttgart, 2009.

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Mariko Nagai, *Morpheus*
Residency: Civitella Ranieri
Foundation, Umbertide, 2007.

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Farzaneh Ghane, *Womanly Sleep*
Residency: Akademie Schloss
Solitude, Stuttgart, 2011.

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Idetsuki Hideaki, *Untitled*
Residency: Irish Museum of Modern
Art, Dublin, 2009.

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Joanna Pawlik, *Untitled (Rodney)*
Residency: 18th Street Art Center,
Santa Monica, 2011.

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Tzveta Sofronieva, *Untitled*
Residency: Kulturkontakt,
Vienna, 2003.

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Raumtaktik's vignette for
Dream or Nightmare images.

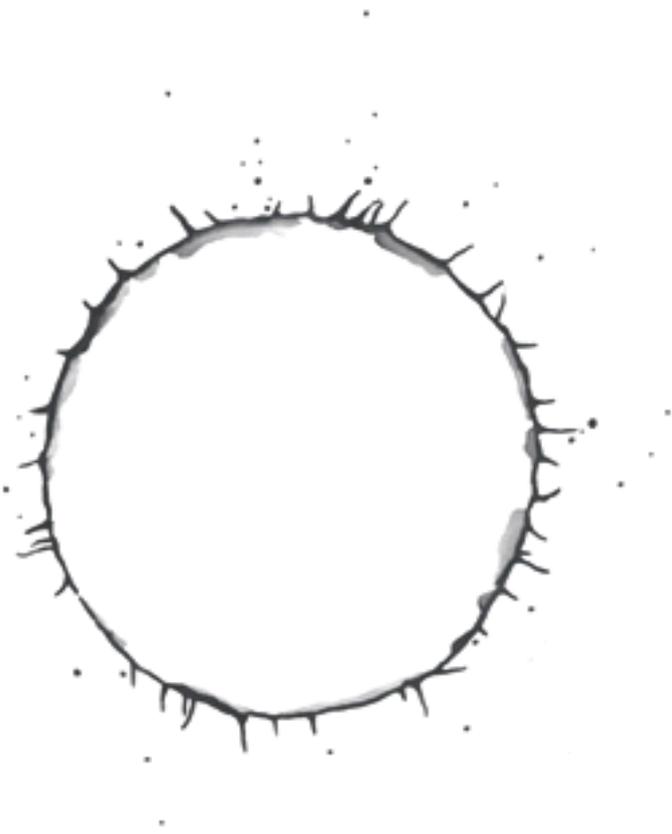


a) un tigre
b) una serpiente
c) una serpiente que se enrosca
d) un cuchillo (el acto de cortar)
e) un hacha (partir algo a hachazos)



MY RESIDENCY AT SOLITUDE
MADE ME DREAM
OF A CAREER AS
A PROFESSIONAL ARTIST.

EVER SINCE I KEPT
DREAMING - SUCCESSFULLY.



- > Dear Tamás,
- >
- > Pxxxx has been at Karlin Studios today and there was someone sleeping under
- > your studio. Do you by any chance know who it was?
- >
- > Thanks a lot!
- >
- > Wishing you a lovely weekend
- >
- > Mxxxx
- >



Tamás Karlin

Futura Praha 2005

Statements on/from Residencies

Patricia Reed

1. “Learn to like what you dislike.” (A.M.)

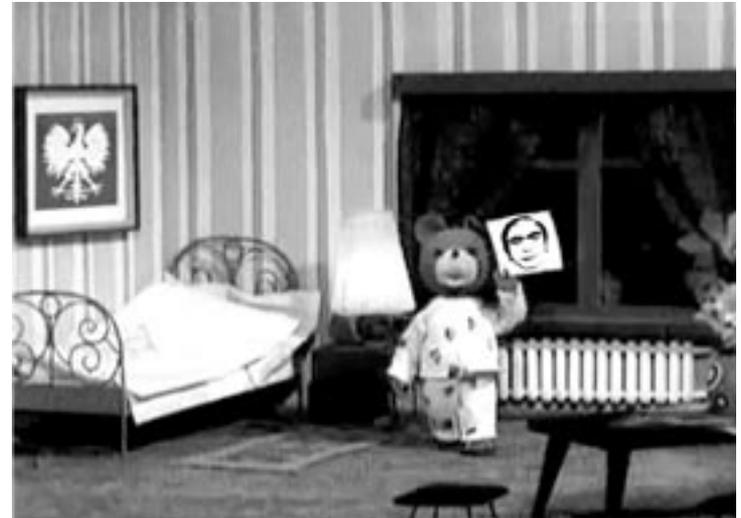
Persistent production of
miscommunication ^(Sentiment)
- CCA Kitakyushu, Japan ^(1 year, 2001-02)

2. Aural & imageless shadow of war. ^(Sentiment)
- FCCA Prague, Czech Republic ^(3 months, 2003)

3. “The mode of existence present in this silent dialogue of myself with myself, I now shall call solitude. Hence, solitude is more than, and different from, other modes of being alone, particularly and most importantly loneliness and isolation. Solitude means that though alone, I am together with somebody (myself, that is). It means that I am two-in-one...” ^(Hannah Arendt: Responsibility and Judgment)
- Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, Germany ^(9 months, 2003-4, 2005)

4. Paris is burning, Sister George is dead, cacophony of difference, epistemic violence, ice-skating the glaciers, moose burgers & Chinese lobster. ^(with Ken Lum)
- Banff Centre for the Arts, Canada ^(2 months, 2009)

5. Formal logic, corrosive paper, obsessive labour, showboating-peacocks, dobrze-dobrze, murmuring crowds, see-through libations, universality & the poetry of sounds without signal. ^(Sentiment)
- A-I-R Laboratory, CCA Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, Poland ^(2 months, 2011)



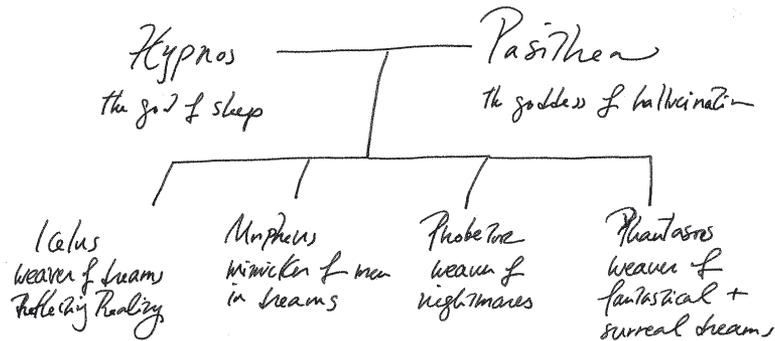


Da war ich mal zu Besuch.

一切智統攝於自證
一切境歸根於自相

A pair of sentence often engulfed my day dreaming,
and yet I can say that I do have a clue of what these
two sentences mean for a temporary situation that one
is participated at a place for knowledge sharing.
An uncompleted translation of first sentence would be
"All situations are rooted in self-realisation," I picked dry, free fallen
branches of tree as strokes to write this sentence.
The second sentence's translation could be
"All knowledges captured by self-evidence."
Autumn 08 had passed, I did not pick enough branches to write.
White covered everything inside of the forest near by.
I typed here the second sentence, not writing it.

the family tree of dreams & sleep



Morpheus sleeps in a dark cave
decorated with poppy flowers.

Icelus, Morpheus, Phobetor & Phantasos, four brothers
& all siblings for the same. They are
part of the Oneiroi, four as one, dream, + nightmare.

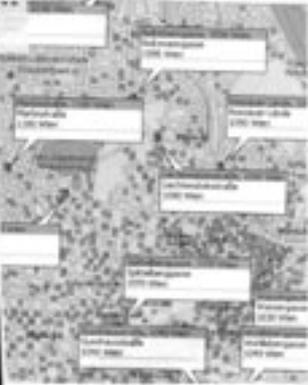
name: *Hinata Nagai*

residency:
 Civitella Ranieri 6 weeks
 Headlands 6 weeks
 Chateau Langry 2 1/2 weeks
 the Eschscholzer Foundation Ballinger Center 4 weeks
 Yaboto 4 weeks



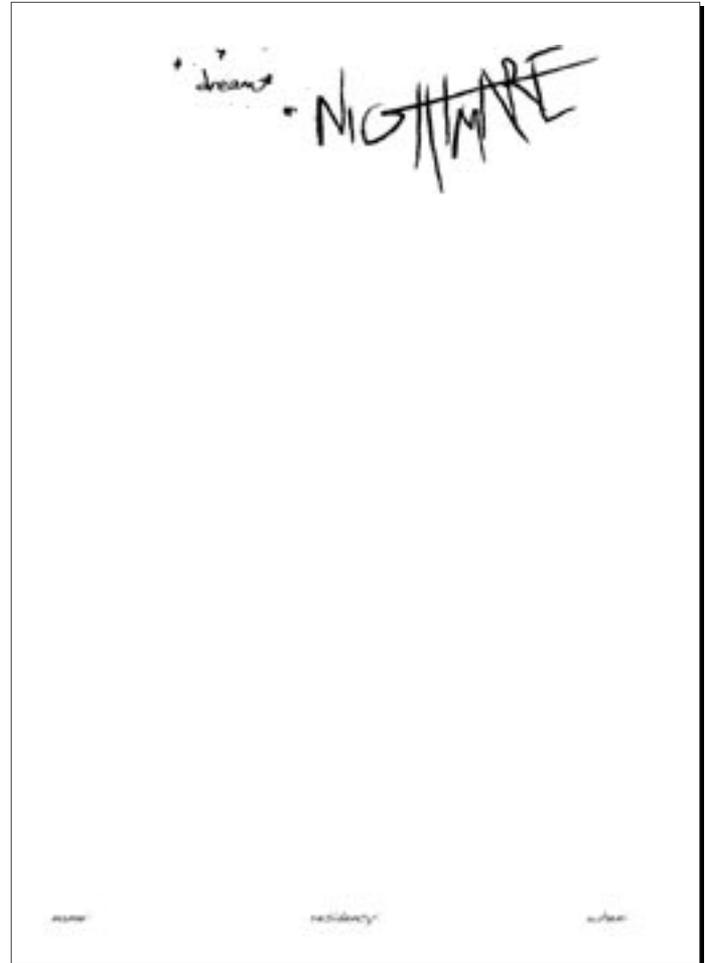
Elektrische Figuren auf verschiedenen Materialien

insbesondere auf Kristallen.



Milk and cereflakes for supper in December (in Vienna). Klimt and Schiele, their drawings and CultureContact(artists) trying to top them (with no success). And the addresses for which I came, with the dream of finding out more about a character in my novel and the nightmare of the same.

name: *tzveta safroniewa* residence: *Kulturkontakt Wien 2003*



ARTISTS IN FLUX

Johan Pousette

Re-tooling

In her book, *From Studio to Situation*, Claire Doherty describes the ambition 'To draw out some of the tendencies and implications of the shift from studio to situation'. She continues:

Situations describe the conditions under which many contemporary artworks now come into being. By situated we refer to those artistic practices for which the situation or context is often the starting point. [...] As practitioners, commissioners, participants and viewers we need to understand the complex processes of initiation, development and mediation of this work. We need to question what levels of support this work needs (information, time, technical resources, distribution mechanisms and personnel).

This text refers to my talk at the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES conference, a presentation that reflected on traditional residency activities in relation to the changing working practices of artists and the consequent need for increased flexibility in the nature of residencies. It relies on my experience of setting up and running a new artist-in-residence programme at BAC (Baltic Art Center) on the Island of Gotland in Sweden, confining itself to the period of my involvement between 2004 and 2007.

As a member of the board of Res Artis Worldwide Network of Artist Residencies between 2001 and 2004, I gained valuable insight into international residency practice. Something I found striking at that time was the fact that so many residency centres clung to a romantic idea about artists, their inspiration and relationship to nature. At the risk of stating the obvious, we live in an ever-changing reality, and, if

artist-in-residence centres are to realise their full potential in the development of both art and society, it is important to be open to change in both fields. In this task, we do not need to be populist, but rather to offer time and the practical possibility for artists to deepen their practice within a fully contemporary context. Mindful of the tendency to revert to nature and romanticism, I would like to discuss how difficult change can be, how our baggage of received ideas can become the platform from which we perceive the world and how executing change involves being ready to change our minds, both in our everyday decisions and on a more profound personal level.

It might be interesting to take a brief look back in time in order to add one or two historical references that still affect us and examples of how we perceive the artist's role. One important person in this context was Immanuel Kant. In his *Critiques* of 1781 and 1790, he described the artist as a genius, which inspired the Romantics of the nineteenth century to believe that the contemplation of nature could lead us to understand the deeper meaning of things. A leading artist in this movement, Caspar David Friedrich, found comfort and inspiration in the solitary beauty of the landscape. According to him, all authentic art is conceived at a sacred moment and nourished in a blessed hour; an inner impulse creates it, often without the artist being aware of it. As we have seen, today's artists deploy a different approach, but isn't it surprising that this is often not reflected in the thinking around residency programmes? It is not that landscape painting has ceased to exist, but rather that the development of new artistic movements points to another attitude. Thinking about the potential of residencies to support artists with an interest in interactivity, social and political engagement and working within social networks, it may be that a remote cottage is not always the most appropriate residency situation.



1. Alexander Gutke, *Exploded View*, 2005.

Some years ago, Boris Groys predicted a growing polarisation within the art world, with blockbuster exhibitions in private or commercially run art institutions at one end and groundbreaking, experimental art being undertaken within the framework of the universities (which we see today as a growing interest in artistic research) at the other. This meant that the middle ground – which is the art world as we know it today, with publicly funded institutions – would gradually disappear. Perhaps we are not there yet, and perhaps we will never be, but we can turn to the increasing demand for inflated visitor numbers and media success – both to satisfy populist politicians and to increase the income from entrance fees – as evidence that public funding is decreasing. As art institutions increasingly become part of the entertainment industry, there are few free zones left for trial and error, development and research. As Groys predicted, artistic research within universities is one such area in which projects can be developed outside of the commercial market and wider neoliberal logic.

Definitions and Thoughts

The theme of the conference, RE-tooling RESIDENCIES, raises the need to address the following questions: To which tools are we referring? What is a residency? What is an artist? and How has the role of the artist developed until today?

In general, residency programmes aim to provide what Jean-Baptiste Joly, in his talk at the same conference, called ‘time without quality’ (referring to Musil’s novel). We could also define this as ‘unconditional time’, and divide residency centres into several categories according to their approach. Firstly, there is the traditional model, with guest studios, which are mainly focused on providing a retreat.

These can be compared to process- or production-focused residences which, in turn, can be divided into those that encourage more traditional artistic production and those new, ground-breaking residencies which also experiment with their own role. As will be expanded below, each of these models serves its purpose in relation to the artist, the artwork, the surrounding local art scene, the wider art world and the community/society at large.

The more traditional type of residency offers a studio and provides time and space away from everyday life. The process or objective of the stay is not defined, and the artist works during a certain period with his/her own art. The main focus of this activity is to provide work space and lodging.

Process-orientated residency programmes are designed to offer artists their own time to develop, to undertake artistic research and to network. In comparison with the first kind, these residencies demand a more active staff and more substantial support. For the artist, participation in this type of residency is likely to develop artistic practice if the stay at the residency can facilitate an open-minded and experimental process. Such a residency may offer time for individual reflection, a re-evaluation of artistic expression and/or exploring new ground for upcoming projects or site-specific work. Relationships to the local context tend to work best when the centre acts as a broker, helping artists to establish contacts with the local artistic field, creating mutual exchanges. In addition to this, the residency may include a public component including lectures, open studio events, presentations of ongoing projects or exhibitions.

The notion of process, embedded in this kind of residency, also refers to artistic practice and its content. This

prioritises the conceptual element of the creative process in relation to the artist's own development of ideas, and an interest in sharing this with an audience as a part of the working practice. In the 1960s and 1970s, artistic research became an important part of the creation of an artwork. During the same period, as Doherty's book suggests, the creative process changed from being an activity confined to the artist's studio (the private sphere) and moved towards the public domain. Since the 1990s, the prevailing practice has been that which emphasises both the underlying idea and the process of the artwork, which stimulated new thinking around residency activity. In this context, process both describes traditional methods, leading to the birth of a new artwork, and includes artistic research, experimentation and development. In the twenty-first century, the key words around residencies in contemporary art have become: process, innovation, networking, research, time and experimentation, emphasising that the artist's work can be undertaken either inside or outside of the studio.

A production residency necessitates a residence centre that can offer artists time and space, support from professional staff and funding to create a new work of art. The residency may encompass an entire project – from conceptual development to research, planning, fundraising and the production of finished work – or it may be confined to the initial phase or overseeing the final realisation of the artwork. The personnel at a production residency tend to consist of professionals who contribute their theoretical, technical and financial expertise to the project. Production residencies ought to act as a complement to local production, by adding an international dimension and an opportunity to produce with a degree of risk-taking, which most institutions

don't dare to involve as part of an exhibition programme. A residency can, for instance, embark on open-ended processes without demanding a certain outcome, or take on talented, but as yet unknown, artists. For the local public, new players and artworks mean a greater diversity of cultural offerings. A residency can also be involved in distribution, which, in our experience, requires a very extensive commitment and is best undertaken in close collaboration with the network of galleries, curators and art centres surrounding the artist.

Today, focusing on artistic production can easily lead to extensive projects that are greatly in need of collaborative partners with different competences. This, therefore, creates networks and local/international partnerships that can stimulate the regional art field in many different creative disciplines. Keeping the production process at a local level can benefit the local economy, regional development, create new contacts and, last but not least, create a local base for the residency programme.

Residencies supporting production can engage in facilitating open-ended processes that allow 'happy failure' – an unexpected result that can be regarded as the successful outcome of an artistic process even if this may not yield a physical result until years later. Rather than acting as an instrument for the ordering of new artworks, the aim of production residencies could be to combine artistic research, innovation and production. The opportunity for innovation arises when the core business remains the artist's own development, freedom and experimentation. When a residency centre succeeds to facilitate open-ended processes and – where needed – allow them to stretch out in time, this can, at best, lead to an innovative advance in contemporary art that few other kinds of institution can bring out.

2. William Kentridge, *Seven fragments for George Méliès*, 2003, below: installation view, right: detail.



Baltic Art Center (BAC)

BAC began life by commissioning new works for its exhibition programme in 2001. With a gallery space in a former warehouse building dating from 1850, its beautiful but powerful character generally required site-specific installations. When BAC commissioned artists like Jessica Stockholder, Jan Häfström and William Kentridge to create new works, this resulted in collaborations which, for the institution, stimulated a learning process around production. For example, the invitation to Kentridge was formulated as a rare opportunity to attempt an experiment, to try something new in his practice. Thinking about the exhibition space as a studio and showing all the sketches and drawings from the process, this resulted in nine new films across three works – entitled *Seven fragments for Georges Méliès*, *Journey to the Moon* and *Night for Day* – which have since been extensively shown around the world.

Within a year, this 2003 collaboration would give rise to a process-orientated production programme at BAC. Although modest in size, this production-in-residence programme became one of the models for both the planned development of HIAP (Helsinki International Artist-in-Residence programme) and the proposal for a new artist-in-production programme, commissioned by the Nordic Council of Ministers across the wider Nordic region. When we initiated the artist-in-residence programme at BAC in 2004, we decided to introduce the definition of production-in-residence (PIR) as a way of signalling that this programme had been conceived in close relation to the requirements of today's artists. The PIR programme began as an institutional experiment within the framework of a three-year assignment from the Swedish Government to develop contemporary art in Sweden. This

commission encouraged us to think freely and to initiate new ways of working. Taking diminishing room for experimentation into consideration, we wanted to attempt a new format for providing adequate support to process-based artistic work. This caters to the needs of not only upcoming but also established artists, since the latter require an opportunity to develop their work independently of the branding that is constructed around them by galleries, critics and collectors.

At that time, the development of residencies had already started to expand internationally. Instead of adding another similar programme to a growing list, we decided that it would be more interesting to try and contribute to the development of the field by devising a kind of pilot project. Our ambition, therefore, was to launch a programme that could complement existing programmes. As a new alternative that would operate alongside the possibilities already facilitated by other bodies, such as exhibition commissions and public art commissions, we sought to provide an opportunity for artists to produce new works by offering them unconditional time. Our ambition was to initiate the process with the fewest possible limitations and to offer all the support that would be relevant in realising a production.

BAC decided not to build a structure with permanent workshops and technical equipment as we realised that we could never manage to update this fast enough to respond to the changing demands of artists. Instead, we built personal connections to a professional production network – including construction workers, architects, software programmers, mechanical workshops, tailors and pilots – which could meet the most diverse needs. We also built artists' studios – each having adequate space, good height and light coming from the north – only to discover that the majority of the artists did



3. Fiona Tan, *Diptych*, video installation, 2006-2011 (work in progress)

not need a studio; they preferred to bring their laptops and to hang out with us in the BAC office.

During the time I was involved with it, the PIR programme was by invitation only, and we established a jury selection process that we modelled on DAAD in Berlin. The jury nominated artists and the final selection was made by the director, the chair of the board and the jury members. This conscious way of selecting and inviting influenced the ongoing relationship between the artist and the institution in a very positive way, because, when the institution expresses a strong interest in collaborating, this affects the traditional hierarchy and puts the working process on a much more equal footing than is normally the case.

From 2001-04, the programme operated on a one-year cycle. When an artist was first invited for a visit, we embarked on a dialogue that would last until s/he came back a year later to produce the work. This longer timeframe and the idea of maintaining a production-in-residence throughout the creative process was integral to the PIR programme, even though artists could come and go. This allowed for the fact that practical arrangements, fundraising and many other things could be carried out by staff at BAC even when the artist was not physically present. This was also regarded as an understanding of, and an adaptation to, the reality that, nowadays, many international artists have careers that don't allow them to spend too long in one place. The programme had limited funding, but, by focusing on one thing and also choosing what not to do, the available resources could be concentrated on fewer projects.

The first artist to be invited was Yane Calovski from Macedonia, who, among other projects, transformed a conceptual text piece by Robert Barry into a performance

FIONA TAN

Photo



Alejandro



Erik

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Identical Y/N Y

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Other same clothes as child

diferents rooms

good relationship

Think the same thought almost at the same time and sometimes tell the mother

the same things without knowing of each other

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Occupation student

Other

4. Fiona Tan, *Diptych*, 2006-2011 (work in progress)

by a young pop band. Without any limitations, without a deadline and with no demand for a final result, he exhibited the process at BAC as a work-in-progress. Although this open-ended presentation was very compelling, we realised that some limitations or framework actually could benefit the creative process. PIR and the exhibition programme at BAC initially ran separately, but gradually became increasingly interconnected.

Today, when many artists work with ambitious, conceptually-derived projects that demand much more than a studio and time alone, collaborative solutions become necessary. Swedish artist, Henrik Andersson, incorporated the local community when he collaborated with the Cathedral in Visby for his composition of a new tune for the church bells. Making reference to global conflict and suggesting a clash between the Islamic and Christian worlds, he based this on the Arabic musical scale, which is the common denominator in the musical tradition of both cultures. The resulting piece was performed on the Visby church bells every day at three o'clock for six weeks and heard all over the town.

Our ambition became to invite artists at a stage in their development at which they really could benefit from such an opportunity. For many of the artists who have been invited to undertake PIR residencies at BAC, participation in these free processes leads to a major step forward. In some cases, it has even led to key departures in their artistic oeuvre. For example, Annika von Hausswolff took the opportunity to examine something entirely new in her own practice. Internationally recognised as an artist who expresses herself through photography, she experimented for the first time with the construction of a large, three-dimensional object. The main gallery was at her disposal to build a site-

specific installation, and it didn't open to the public until she was ready. Of course, working in this way also meant communicating an alternative approach to the audience.

Between 2004 and 2007, the most extensive production was a 16mm film production by the German artist, Rosa Barba. Shooting with a full film crew in the midst of a snowy winter was much more of a logistical challenge than we had imagined, and the project was only possible for a small art centre to undertake by virtue of generous sponsorship. Barba's 25-minute film, *Outwardly from Earth's Centre*, has since been shown at numerous international film festivals and exhibitions. The longest PIR project to benefit from production support has been a five-year collaboration with Fiona Tan. The project can be regarded as a continuation of the artist's ongoing interest in twins and her 2006 film-work, *Study for a Portrait*. Once a year, the artist returns to Gotland to meet and document a group of twins of different ages and backgrounds. BAC wanted to offer this opportunity precisely because it is often difficult for institutions to enter into such long-term relationships to support the artistic outcome of such a process.

As we have seen, the structures we invested in yesterday may not be valid today, so to speak. If residency centres are to continue to support artistic development, it is a difficult but necessary challenge to be flexible and open-minded in relation to an art scene in a constant state of flux. Creative processes are very diverse and the residency format must be adjusted to suit their specific characteristics.

I would like to sum up by repeating the need to be attentive to the manifold developments in the arts. The task is to always provide a structure that is relevant to artists right now. This might involve negotiations with funders, politicians, regional development, adapting buildings built

for another purpose, etc. There are no generic models for supporting the artistic process in an appropriate way. For one artist, a social networking situation might be more important than having a studio with ample light; for another, advanced computer programming might be a necessary requirement; for a third, collaboration with university researchers, while a fourth might just need time for reflection. This is not only a matter of securing sufficient funding; it is also about how we, as an institution, choose to relate to what we are doing, how we look upon the artist's role, our objectives and the role of the residency in supporting the development of both the arts and society.

Since BAC initiated the PIR programme in 2004, the contemporary art field has gone through many changes. Needs and thinking are formulated differently nowadays, and my successor, Lisa Rosendahl, developed new strategies for what we might call research-in-residence. BAC now not only invites artists but also curators, theoreticians and researchers. This allows for the disintegration of specific roles in contemporary art, embracing the fact that the role of the curator and the artist now blend together. Another focus is that of collective collaborative processes, in which visual artists and authors from different disciplines collaborate on an equal basis, perhaps involving several institutions.

In a society running at an increasingly frenetic pace, expectations of measurable results, income generation and instrumentalisation of the arts is creating a polarisation between populist art and rigorous artistic research. Residency centres are among the few places today that can provide free zones for the kind of experimental practice that is so badly needed.



5. Rosa Barba, *Outwardly from Earth's Centre*, 2006.

'GONE TO PATAGONIA FOR SIX MONTHS'*

Kaja Pawełek

* The contents of a telegram sent by Bruce Chatwin to his editors at *The Sunday Times* when leaving his job on the spur of the moment in 1975.

Narrogin, a town with a population of 5,000, situated almost 200km south-east of Perth, is bereft of a market square; the railway station is long since defunct and all that remains of the drive-in cinema are the crumpled scraps of a screen somewhere in the middle of a field. There is a Coles, though – that popular supermarket from which, for the first time, frozen kangaroo can be bought. To the locals, this is a significant symbol of change. At first glance, the warehouse-style architecture and interior aisles of the supermarket present a standard, uniform and anonymous space, a symbol of globalisation set down in provincial Western Australia. Yet, the first time we went to Coles and bought marrows, prawns and ice cream, a member of the shop's staff came up to us to ask if we were new in town, because he had never seen us there before.

Artistic residencies function as a creative sojourns uniting several archetypal motifs – a journey to another country, settling into a strange place, meeting its inhabitants and working within the local context – together comprising multi-threaded cognitive experiences more significant than any other local or regional professional experience... The difficulty with this is that every one of those elements has become problematic in an era in which not only art has been globalised and institutionalised, but also reality in general. A question: how can prescribed formats be evaded and individual/shared experiences preserved?

Strangers in the Night

The International Art Space Kellerberrin Australia (IASKA) was born in 1998, in the small town of Kellerberrin, situated 200km east of Perth in Western Australia. Even the story of its foundation, on the initiative of farmers and artists, has an

intriguing air, signalling both an institution of singularity and potential otherness, if only in relation to European reality and its particular context for artistic activity. In 2010, IASKA launched the 'Spaced: Art Out of Place' project (2011-12), inviting Polish architect and visual artist, Jakub Szczęsny, to take part; he, in turn, invited me as a curator (normally working at a big public institution, the Contemporary Art Centre Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw) to collaborate with him on a project.

The starting point for 'Spaced' – a biennial, socially-engaged arts event – was the notion of artists working in small, Western Australian communities (primarily those situated in the Wheatbelt region close to Perth, but also those outside the country). Communities were selected on account of the complex social problems that were prevalent in a great many of them. These partners had previously, and independently, notified IASKA of their readiness to participate by responding to an open call in relation to the project. In this way, access to each local community was initially provided via an internal agent who had consciously taken the decision to become engaged in an artistic project and, simultaneously, taken it upon themselves to act as a go-between in generating situation-specific relationships and an ensuing project. The working model proposed by IASKA was for artists to undertake a residency for a minimum of two months in a selected place.

At the same time, two parameters were established; IASKA would coordinate all 'Spaced' projects and act at a supra-regional and international level, while local partners, who know the circumstances of a given place inside out would take care of matters at a local level. As 'Spaced' participants invited to Narrogin, Jakub and I split our

residency into two parts. The first phase encompassed initial research, to be carried out in the spring of 2011; the second phase was dedicated to implementing an art/architectural installation idea, based on the research initiated and developed by us. From IASKA's side, the culmination of 'Spaced' would be a collective exhibition, with an opening at the Freemantle Arts Centre planned for February 2012, followed by a tour to other towns in Australia and abroad. However, as became evident during the first phase of our residency in March-April 2011, the second phase could not be said with any certitude to constitute the project's culmination. Indeed, it may well not even constitute an implementation phase. The reason for this is that our idea for a project expanded considerably beyond the initial timeframe and budget in ways to be discussed below.

Having established our organisational framework and having secured the participation of Matylda Sałajewska to make a film documenting our residency and work on the local installation project, we three 'Polish artists' made our way to Narrogin and settled into a typical old Australian house dating back to the early twentieth century. Karen Keeley, who runs art classes at the C. Y. O'Connor Institute, became our local coordinator and producer, while the general project coordinator on behalf of IASKA was Jan Teagle Kapetas, a woman with many years of experience working on projects involving indigenous communities. The other local partners were Ross Story and Geri Hayden from the Community Arts Network Western Australia (CANWA), an organisation focusing on cultural projects involving the local Ngoongar community. These names and details are not coincidental; while the 'Spaced' format is fairly clear and, perhaps, in no way particularly innovative – consisting, as it does, of a



1.

1. Afternoon sunlight in the backyard of our house in Narrogin – a traditional old country town Federation house, furnished and prepared for our residency stay by the local hosts.

2. A day at the Quartermaine's Family farm, including sheep shearing, bush walking and learning more about the lifestyle of artists, who are also farmers. From left: Quartermaine's Family and Karen Keeley, local host and coordinator, and, last but not least, Bruce, my dream Hunterway dog since then.

3. Breakfast on the porch of our house in Narrogin.

4. One of our dreams, to sleep outdoors in a typical Australian swag, came true in Dryandra Forest where we participated in a traditional Welcome to the Country ceremony, conducted by the indigenous Ngoongar community members.



3.

2.



4.

primary institution and local partners and culminating in an exhibition – it is, nonetheless, intensively grounded in real interpersonal relationships. It is they which serve as a catalyst for the process of acquiring knowledge, encountering new spaces and shaping the imagination, as well as organising one's daily life – constituting the experience in its entirety and not merely its division into 'project elements' with their 'coordinators' and 'organisers'. Its singularity also lies in the emphasis placed on the social element of 'Spaced' and on work that engages the local community beyond the major municipal centres. In other words, and in practical terms, this has meant moving beyond the globalised mainstream art world. Moreover, as it transpired, the difference between a provincial Western Australian community – particularly one a world away from the metropolises of Sydney and Melbourne – and big cities such as Perth, is enormous and translates, in many dimensions, into the complex cultural experience of the country, not only for foreigners, but also, and more interestingly, for local inhabitants.

As regards the project in Narrogin, the singularity of the experience has been grounded, first and foremost, in breaking with our initial working timetable and being able to adapt it to changing circumstances, which signals a flexibility of action. The participation of curators in individual artists' projects within 'Spaced' was not initially planned; my involvement (regarded as a non-artist position) evolved organically from the artist's invitation to work cooperatively and collectively as part of a team that also included the filmmaker. From the outset, it was clear that I would not only work on the presentation of Szcześny's installation within the final exhibition, but that I would also be involved in the whole process of researching and developing the artistic

concept. The way in which this would happen and the specific field and degree of involvement was not clearly determined in advance due to the very general information we had in the initial phase, during which it became clear that we could not predict many of the local conditions, problems or situations we would have to face. However, our team had the potential to operate in quite a distinct way from that of individuals working separately, and, as we encountered various situations that could not have been determined in advance, we adapted the methods employed during the residency. When, as 'strangers in the city', we wandered through the deserted streets of Narrogin on a balmy March night at the tail end of the Australian summer or, when driving, we peered through the dusk to catch a glimpse of kangaroos that could, at any second, leap in front of the car's bonnet or when we watched sheep-shearing on a farm outside town, we were not only 'doing the project', but we were, quite simply, at the very heart of an all-embracing experience comprising travel, life and space. At one and the same time, the nature of the experience was shared and strengthened in both its reception and interpretation, something which was occurring day by day, something fragmentary. And yet, it was meaningful to the process of encountering a new reality and creating a personal system for finding one's bearings.

From the curator's point of view, at least, the contemporary methodology and practice for working with artists in the field of contemporary art is characterised by dilemmas arising from the fluid borders that exist between roles and the division of labour. It may, of course, be that this division is a wholly artificial one, derivative, imposed by increasing institutionalisation and bureaucratisation in the cultural sphere. The bottom line is that the presence

of a curator merely underscores the need to organise, format and translate art into the language of global artistic discourse, moulding the process and assumed results to fit the domain of representation. Moreover, curators often determine the artist's position and their work by means of either a silent or more ostentatious manifestation of symbolic authority, by deciding what is and what is not art. By contrast, withdrawal from a sphere in which the figure of the curator is a recognised and justifiable element of artistic production triggers confusion and bewilderment. In Narrogin, the figure of the artist or architect does not necessarily require definition, with the former encompassing life on a farm, supervising the sheep-shearing, alongside artistic practice and the latter being associated either with building a local school or with being an engineer. What, though, is a curator, given that there is not a single artistic institution within a 200km radius and the next forthcoming large exhibition is an agricultural one? This question about roles was bound to emerge.

The Curator as Ethnographer, the Curator at the Swimming Pool, the Shadow Curator

In his renowned essay, 'The Artist as Ethnographer', Hal Foster – writing about the application of the strategies and methods of ethnography or anthropology to the field of contemporary art – notes that the ethnographic model:

[...] can also be used to develop a new [site]. The local and the everyday are thought to resist economic development, yet they can also attract it, for such development needs the local and the everyday even as it erodes these qualities, renders them siteless. In this case site-specific work can be exploited to make

these nonspaces seem specific again, to redress them as grounded places, not abstract spaces, in historical and/or cultural terms. Killed as culture, the local and the everyday can be revived as simulacrum, a 'theme' for a park or a 'history' in a mall, and site-specific work can be drawn into this zombification of the local and the everyday, this Disney version of the site-specific. Tabooed as postmodernist art, values like authenticity, originality, and singularity can return as properties of sites that artists are asked to define or to embellish.¹

It is difficult to disagree with this, in the face of a drastic revision of the nature of reality, its globally perpetrated stylisation and the selection of thematic fragments in line with arbitrarily chosen scenarios which freely juggle elements of fiction, virtuality and manipulation. This appropriation and transformation is both reminiscent of artistic practices (and their mirrored, deformed reflection) and also, perhaps, a kind of unconscious, unwitting revival of history and culture in an age that is bringing to life a script which makes a society a spectacle. Thus, today's art rarely has to deal with models that are purely local and global, everyday and organised; it tends, instead, to move in a hybrid and fluid reality, one that we are unable to demarcate with either maps or borders. At any moment, we may be caught unawares by an abrupt cut and transition to a new scene or a new narrative. Trained, coerced into rapidly adapting to this flickering, patchwork construct, reality continually elevates our desensitisation to stimulation in the form of yet more incoherent fragments, in which contrast and collision arouse an ever-more feeble reaction. The spatial distinctions essential to anthropology are being obliterated, as are their



5.

5. 6. At some point, we had to give up the purely documentary approach... Kaja Pawelek (camerawoman) and Matylda Sałajewska (zombie victim).
7. Bathroom in our house in Narrogin.
8. Our house in Narrogin.
9. Narrogin former railway station, currently abandoned. The location for the *Project for Narrogin* - a viewing platform designed by Jakub Szczesny and potential site for a new local art institution.



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order and the constructs of here-there, far-near, now-then, we-they, others.

Of course, something else that would seem to be crucial here is the revision of the concept of 'site', as it slips away from Marc Augé's clear division into the anthropological place and the non-place, whereby 'just as anthropological places create the organically social, so non-places create a solitary contractuality'.² In the Coles supermarket in Narrogin, the organically social was evident from the very first visit, despite it being a textbook non-place. With every subsequent shopping trip, the matrix seemed to be more readable and the gossip exchanged in the aisles between products more easily picked up, while newly identifiable 'strangers' caught the eye more rapidly.

As wholly engaged amateur ethnographers – both challenged and supported by the fact of a documentary being filmed on the making of the project – we based our research on a series of interviews. Thanks to our local coordinator's efforts, we were able to make contact with the most diverse and fascinating group of key characters in town. What we were seeking was the material itself, in the form of information and first-person narrative, and the fact that conversations were being held in front of the camera, in an arranged interview situation, created an atmosphere of concentration and focus. At the same time, and to a certain extent automatically, the shooting situation endowed greater dignity upon all the conversations. The research we conducted together constituted something more than simply acquiring knowledge about the local community; through its very format, the process of collecting information simultaneously served as a tool for constructing new relationships. The conventional borders between the professional, project-

orientated situation and social life were erased many times; apart from the supermarket, the main centre of social life in Narrogin turned out to be the sports centre, where, on the grass around the swimming pool, one might become reacquainted with people recently met in town or listen to the comments that arose at the moment someone recognised the 'Polish artists' familiar from the front page of the local paper. Naturally, our work continued here, as well.

For me, the chance to step beyond all the formats proper to the organisational machine and beyond the office-production model, by transferring to working directly with people, was an enormously refreshing and intense experience. By steadily building a network of contacts on the basis of direct relationships, we found our feet in a new place fairly quickly, to an extent that we would never have been able to achieve had it not been for both the social contract that our presence within such a small community constituted and its aim, which is to say working on behalf of the community and in collaboration with it. It was only after we had stepped into the local microcosm that our attention turned to the specific site for our project – that is the historical, but deserted, railway station in the centre of town – and to the concept of building a viewing platform installation alongside it. This would allow an overview of the townscape and – through its mobile, interactive structure and semi-organic 'skin' – would also intend to indicate the slightly wild, funny and scary 'life' at the site. Another community dimension opened up through the idea of becoming engaged in the revitalisation of the railway station – a blank, though very central, spot on the physical and social map of Narrogin – by fusing it with some kind of contemporary arts organisation. Throughout the entire period, what was clear to us was that, no matter what the

final project's idea would be, the fate of the venture would lie primarily in engaging the groups supporting its organisation – the local residents and the municipal authorities, with whom we also made contact during our work in the town, encountering a favourable reaction.

In the Scottish town of Huntly, Deveron Arts has as its central tenet the concept that 'the town is the venue'. Within this context, the term 'shadow curator' was coined to describe an external, temporarily involved curator, whereby something rather like a good spirit appears, by means of dialogue and discussion with the locally based institutional curator. The shadow curator re-examines his or her ideas and acts with a view to consolidating his or her professional methodology. This practice is intended to assist curators who find themselves based in situations beyond the primary discourse, working in geographical or cultural isolation and wishing to expand their collaborative network. For those curators working close to the mainstream but with little time for reflection on their own practice, such a situation might also serve to facilitate an analysis woven into a tight work agenda.³ A similar model could be applied in an intriguing way in Narrogin, with the hypothetical emergence of a new arts institution grounded, on the one hand, in the local and regional community and, on the other hand, in an international cycle. In this situation, shadow curators could exchange roles and conduct a mutual, critical review of practices, moving between mutable registers in cycles of varying scales and hierarchies.

In the meantime, the fundamental strategy for the project in Narrogin was determined in equal measure by our openness to a wholly unknown local context and the day-to-day development of chance events. It was also maintained

by the sensitivity of observers and external agents, who – availing themselves of the privileges accruing to a figure uninvolved in the local community's complex layers but able to enquire about them – would build their own image of reality, retaining a sense of proportion and an awareness of the different cultural and historical perspectives. Of course, one cannot speak about any 'neutral position', but, in a way, we could look at the site from diverse viewpoints and listen to the polyphony of local, sometimes contradictory, voices and versions of history and everyday life in Narrogin, particularly those differences that go beyond political correctness or safe, generalised positions and quickly signalled complicated local relations and the reflection of national and global influences. One of the most striking experiences was the sense of a flow of positive, reciprocal energy from the local inhabitants, which, as we well know, frequently needs release in order to spread its wings. The distanced perspective of protagonists from an Eastern European country 15,000km away proved to be no hindrance in establishing what were often very direct and warm contacts, thanks to which it was possible to discover the history of both the town and its community from a multitude of viewpoints. In this sense, the serried ranks of roles, both adopted and potential, were joined by the position of subjective traveller-reporter-documentarist who, in actual fact, not only gathers information and impressions, but also brings their own tales to the table. For us, late-night discussions on the history, society, politics and everyday life of Australia, combined with reflections on recent Polish and European history and transformation, brought a great deal of understanding and enabled us to connect the fragments of information we had systematically collected throughout our stay in Narrogin. In the long run, everything we saw

and heard was subjected to individual interpretation and mythologisation-in-miniature during shared conversations that were coloured with associations, surprises, emotions and our own imaginations.

In a way, the starting point of the project for Narrogin – the choice of methodology, attitude and strategy – was based on ‘do nots’ rather than ‘dos’. From the very beginning, we were conscious that we would have to act in an extremely sensible, flexible and non-intrusive way when considering our role, parachuting into town and embarking on social interactions that would always bring about consequences for which we would have to take responsibility. This meant that there were many methodological blanks, which, under some circumstances, could be filled in, but could also be left untouched if there was not enough feedback and involvement. Also at an early point in our process, it became clear that contemporary art – understood as an institutional commodity, specific aesthetics, etc. – became less important than the whole scenario we were inscribing with other local protagonists. Finally, we could not limit our own curiosity and our fascination with wild nature, vast spaces, local lifestyle and identity. All told, this was a great and intricate adventure, a very important journey which, through its own inner energy, prompted a far more complex cultural and life experience than the prescribed role of the ‘curator’ might presuppose. The greatest challenge for our further work would be to consider ways of incorporating this into the project itself.

It may well be that the future belongs to a freely-spun fiction in a post-documentary era, to spectacular and

imperceptible disappearances, to tales constructed minute-by-minute and only rediscovered years later as authentic/successful accounts of travels. It will be a time not only of co-existence and a shared abode, but also one of isolation, alienation and anti-participation, a moment in which artists and curators will once again manage to spontaneously discard their roles and disappear into the outback for ever.

NOTES

1 Hal Foster, ‘The Artist as Ethnographer’, in *The Return of the Real: the Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Massachusetts: MIT, 1996), p. 197.

2 Marc Augé, *Non-Places. Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, Polish version: Warsaw, 2011, p. 64; English translation by John Howe (London/ New York: Verso, 1995).

3 See Nuno Sacramento and Claudia Zeiske, *ARTocracy. Art, Informal Space, and Social Consequence: A Curatorial Handbook in Collaborative Practice* (Berlin: Jovis Verlag GmbH, 2010), pp. 16-17.

GLOBALISED ARTIST*

Hagen Betzwieser

* *Günter Herrmann, a Stuttgart-based senior landscape architect and artist, once called me a 'globalised artist' when he picked me up at the railway station where I waited for him in the rain. I was wrapped in a waterproof jacket, with my camera and laptop in a bag, ready to go and shoot a video at his studio.*

If I was asked to describe the standard luggage of a travelling artist on their way to a six-month international residency, I would say that it was comprised of a 10kg bag containing personal belongings – clothes, toothbrush and rain jacket – another 15kg bag with books, materials and special equipment plus 5kg of battery chargers and, of course, an 8kg carry-on with a laptop and digital camera. Generally, it is double this amount by the time the artist leaves the residency.

This is how you find yourself a couple of months after a successful proposal was sent in and several hours after a flight to somewhere in the world, hoping that someone will pick you up.

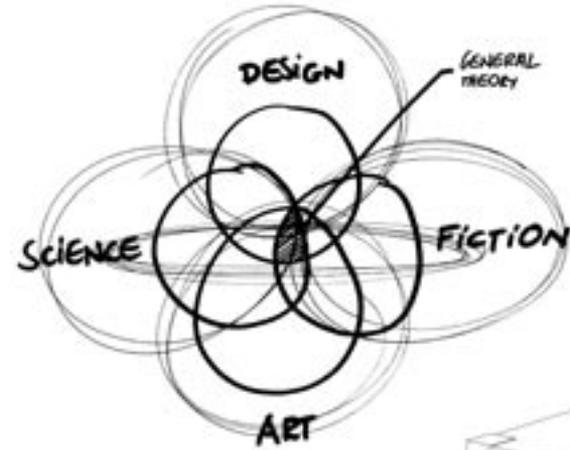
After graduating as a designer from Merz Akademie, Stuttgart, in 2001 and after earning an MA in European Media from the University of Portsmouth, I worked for several years as an art director for video and new media at a design agency in Stuttgart – a well-paid job with interesting clients, like museums and science centres, but, from the very beginning, it was also very clear that my real interest was to realise my independent visions. When, in 2005, I received a letter to confirm that Fiona Raby – the British designer and Professor of Interaction Design at the Royal College of Art in London – had selected me for a six-month residency at Akademie Schloss Solitude, I quit my job, moved to the Solitude castle and started full-time research on my art project, the *Institute of General Theory*.

My work would mostly be defined as conceptual art, media art, new media, interdisciplinary art, art science, science art, ??? ...

Jean-Baptiste Joly, Director of Akademie Schloss Solitude, described it in the most fitting words:



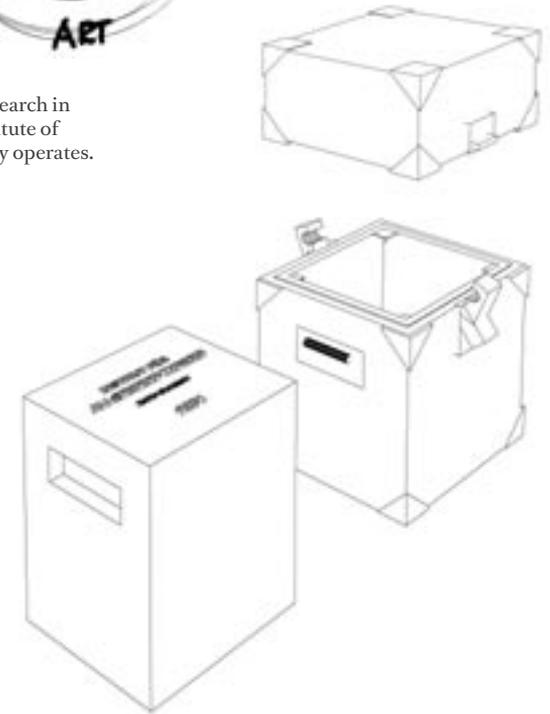
1. Chlorolux 20kg, 2009, 532nm green laser beam, four high power LED flashlights, tripods, 25m of cable and some other small utilities.



3. The field of research in which the Institute of General Theory operates.



2. Institute of General Theory Research Laboratory with table, shelf, aluminium box, devices, 2007.



4. The Mobile Foundation Stone, 2001.

The Institute of General Theory is a project of indeterminate duration, for anything from one to an infinite number of participants. It operates in an undefined area, in the grey zone where there is no distinction between fiction and science, art and craft, independent work and self exploitation; between game, experiment and paid work, between experimental and studio space, or between museum and university. The Institute of General Theory considers itself a laboratory for ‘omnidisciplinary thought experiments’, the results of which are meticulously documented and recorded in a constantly growing archive.

Within the framework of my artistic project, I usually cooperate with artists, scientists and institutions from other disciplines and I generally include a lot of technology, tools and equipment in my research, deploying them as both instruments for their actual functionality and as components of my experimental artistic work. For that reason, the Akademie Schloss Solitude was the perfect match and an ideal environment in which to develop my work – around thirty artists, including architects, composers, musicians, performers, designers, writers and scientists all together in the large playground of the Solitude castle on top of a hill close to Stuttgart, provided with a studio, a secure monthly stipend, a material and project budget and a very good network.

Besides all the other activities – like exhibitions, talks, concerts, performances and symposia – a daily lunch, which is served for fellows and staff together, functions as a kind of small, interdisciplinary meeting in which the most interesting and crazy cooperations develop between soup and dessert.

Since my first residency at Akademie Schloss Solitude, I have participated in many other excellent residency programmes, including those at the Nordic Artists’ Centre at Dalsåsen in Norway, the ACC Gallery, Weimar, and others in the US, the UK and Poland. I have been able to experience the differences regarding organisation, studio spaces, equipment and the general attitude towards art.

Laboratory:

A facility that provides conditions for research and experiments.

A place where equipment is used and processes take place.

(Wikipedia)

Given the institutional, interdisciplinary and technological approach of my work, in which documentation and archiving play an important role, I am very interested in the setting, the structure and the way in which different artistic residencies operate. It is not enough to set up artists’ studios as a kind of decoration for an institution without giving sufficient support to the artist. Aside from providing ‘lab-safety’ for a certain time, which is free from daily concerns and mostly guaranteed by a basic stipend covering living costs and some project budget, it is the attitude of staff members and the artistic management of a place that enables a productive atmosphere for new, cross-disciplinary projects. Small details – like the provision of a daily meal, the way studios are furnished or the way in which artworks are handled and shipped – are not just extra benefits, but factors that can completely change the quality of a residency and provide indicators as to how seriously a place treats its artists.



5.

5. Napkin drawing by Jackie Sumell, 2009.
6. Unusual arrival of a new Fellow with a lot of equipment and luggage, Akademie Schloss Solitude, 2009.
7. Studio view, Nordic Artists' Centre Dalsåsen in Norway, 2009.
8. Studio view, Akademie Schloss Solitude, 2005.
9. Michael Cavayero (avatar of Josh Greene, October–November 2009), performance at A-I-R Laboratory.



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Apart from the terms and conditions of a residency and the way in which it operates, a good network is highly important. To be able to get in contact with other institutions, artists and scientists who can contribute to, and foster, your work is of great benefit. Furthermore, a well-equipped workshop in which to build things, some up-to-date technological equipment, providing easy access to quick experiments, and, of course, a fast, reliable internet connection are all of great value.

‘A residency without wireless – what would that be?!’ Jackie Sumell, 2009

Concerning technology, I am convinced that it is helpful if a certain budget can be made available to the artist for purchasing the most-needed materials and/or technical equipment which has a lifespan that extends beyond the end of an individual residency. And ‘most-needed materials’ doesn’t necessarily imply oil paints and canvas anymore, especially when we are talking about new disciplines. A question that was often asked during the conference was: What should the artist pay back for having been offered a residency? In all the places, I have experienced a good match from both sides – I am considered to be a Fellow and it is not about leaving an artistic work as a kind of payment. What is much more valuable is a long-term relationship between artists and an institution and the people operating it. In this way, a network is built up via residencies and the friendships that grow out of them. As participating artists go on to achieve success, this reflects back onto the institution, providing reputational currency to fuel its future efforts.

‘The Institute of General Theory is my residency and my territory. I am an institute without a building and without funding.’

During the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES conference in November 2009, Marijke Jansen from Res Artis mentioned that ‘It is not the goal that artists go from residency to residency.’ However, for my kind of work and for similar approaches by other artists, this is often the only way to establish experimental constructs like The Institute of General Theory. For this reason, I would encourage everybody – especially those who work in the grey zones between artistic disciplines – to travel as much as possible and to visit as many residencies as possible, building up new networks and broadening their artistic spectrum.

During a dinner in Warsaw with the US artist, Jackie Sumell, we discussed who she would invite to an interdisciplinary residency. Besides my ideas for astronauts, astronomers, nuclear scientists, sewage engineers, farmers, mountaineers and accountants, we came to the conclusion that actually anybody, of any age, who could contribute to a vivid and interesting process should be welcome (for more details please see napkin drawing).

‘I am now reaching the age at which residencies have to invest in my ideas ;)’

I would love to open a residency in a huge hardware store like Bauhaus, Obi (German), B&Q (in the UK) or Home Depot (in the US), having three studios over two floors with 24-hour access. Downtown in a city. During the residency, the

ACCIDENTAL PLEASURES

Yeb Wiersma

artist gets a budget they can use to take whatever is needed from the store, whether material or equipment. At the end of the stay, the work will be shown in a gallery space in the store (like Cuchifritos, the small gallery space of the AAI Studio Program in New York City which is located in a food market).

To me, the redesigned A-I-R Laboratory organised by CCA seems a promising environment, with the right mix of parameters, in which new disciplines can easily emerge. I am sure it will be a great place for artists to research.

Dear residencies, please open more laboratories!

There's still time, for some exercise.

I'm walking the streets of Warsaw¹ – pondering what I'll be speaking about later this afternoon at the conference² – when loud, throaty calls demand my attention: *caw-aw-ah, caw-aw-ah*.

I look up.

Even though I'm aware of this scruffy crow³ being just another city dweller, roaming for human leftovers, I decide it's not just some random, hooded creature, but my personal VIB – very important bird – escorting me towards my final destination: Ujazdowski Castle.

While I'm checking on my aerial chaperone, my mind wanders.

- I have to think of the film *Kaos*,⁴ pretending that I'm the dizzying bird's-eye-view flying over the archaic and unyielding choreography of Agrigento.

- I have to think of the fact that I hardly see any hooded crows in The Netherlands. I wonder why.

- I have to think of how there's always a Joni Mitchell⁵ song to accompany my journeys: *There's a crow flying, black and ragged, from tree to tree. He's black as the highway that's leading me, Now he's diving down. To pick up on something shiny, I feel like that black crow, flying in a blue, blue sky.*

- I have to think of the emerging artists who signed up for my workshop. They are curious to find out what it means, and takes, to become an artist-in-residence. They are ready

to leave their *terra cognita* behind. How can I show them which path to take to make this happen?

Some of them might be disappointed since I won't be handing out A to Z guides on 'How to become an artist-in-residence'. Nor will I be selling 'all-inclusive-last-minute' package deals to faraway destinations.

Dear artist, I would like to invite you to accompany me on a trip.

What shall we bring?

- Neon Lights
- Laughter
- Party Supplies
- Emergency Blankets⁶
- Vertical Clouds
- Large Windows
- Pine Trees
- Brainstorms
- High-rises⁷
- Whirlwinds
-
-
-
-

Let's surprise ourselves today and NOT take the highway, but follow the road less travelled by.⁸

Recently, I wrote down a passage written by the author, Rebecca Solnit, who stated in her book *The Field Guide to Getting Lost*⁹:

to be lost is to be fully present, is to be capable of being in uncertainty and mystery
to be lost is to be fully present, is to be capable of being in uncertainty and mystery
to be lost is to be fully present, is to be capable of being in uncertainty and mystery
to be lost is to be fully present, is to be capable of being in uncertainty and mystery
to be lost is to be fully present, is to be capable of being in uncertainty and mystery

Like a mantra, I am reading this line over and over. She's right; in order to find inspiration and materials to create intriguing and merciless artworks, you have to allow yourself to travel within this field of uncertainty and mystery.

It's not always easy, though, to maintain a crisp state of mind in which there's plenty of room for serendipitous experiments. Daily preoccupations and worries lurk around the corner and can keep you from roaming around. Losing yourself is serious business. It requires full dedication and time – time to travel.

INWARDS AND OUTWARDS

Of course, there are many ways in which to undertake an illuminating journey. I'm not suggesting that you always need to bring your passport.¹⁰ You don't necessarily need to go far to feel like playing¹¹ again; there are many ways to revitalize:

- Start Running
- Lie Down in the Grass
- Organize a Lecture Series
- Start a Fire
- Make Out¹²

- Get Bored
- Buy a Bottle of Something
- Collect Driftwood
- See the Library
- Learn Tap-Dancing

But, what if this doesn't do the trick, what if you keep longing?



Left page: *I, etcetera*, Susan Sontag.
Right page: *2 ou 3 choses que je sais d'elle*, Jean-Luc Godard.

When serious restlessness is the case – or even when this is NOT the case – you're doing fine; but, if you have an adventurous mind – this might be your boarding call to pastures new.

Artists have always travelled* to the farthest corners of the world, in search of isolation and inspiration.¹³

– nothing new about that –

* By the way, don't forget to pack loneliness.

Displacing yourself, from time to time, from your comfort zone – by going somewhere else, changing your scenery and your set of working and living conditions – often functions like an eye wash; it triggers your imagination and lust for life. When you're able to deal with the uncertainties that come along with exploring new territories – like confusion and chaos – I'm sure you will be back.

For more.

One way of travelling – inwards as well as outwards – is to sign up for a residency programme.

Safety Warning: working your way through the voluminous catalogue of artist-in-residence opportunities can be overwhelming and might lead to (temporary) indecision about where to go.

And yes, they do come in all different colours and sizes.¹⁴

Upon arrival, you will land softly, though; artist-in-residence organisations are the specialists when it comes to hosting travelling artists. They know what it takes to comfort strangers and what it means to embrace otherness. Not only will they share their hospitality and their expertise with you; they will also provide you with a set of professional working tools to facilitate your artistic needs.

Dear artist, you are well on your way, heading towards your residency of interest. Let's say goodbye here and now.

I don't see any barriers or reasons NOT to continue. You are sufficiently equipped. To fall. Into mysterious fields.

Of uncertainty.

And that will make all the difference.⁸

CAW-AW-AH,
CAW-AW-AH,
CAW-AW-AH,
CAW-AW-AH.

My accidental friend, my bird's-eye-view calls in again, loud and clear.

It's time, for some action.

I look up – as far as I can – before the crow disappears in the sky. In the nearby distance, I hear a small crowd of people laughing.

I smile as I walk towards them.

ACCIDENTAL NOTES



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1 'Not to find one's way in a city may well be uninteresting and banal. It requires ignorance – nothing more. To lose oneself in a city – as one loses itself in a forest – that calls for quite a different schooling' – by Walter Benjamin. Benjamin – who lived from 1862 until 1940 – was not only a professional strolling philosopher,

literary critic and intellectual, but was also known for his miniature handwritings. His ambition was to squeeze a hundred lines of compressed thoughts on to a single page of notepaper. He never managed to do so. (www.guardian.co.uk/books/2008/jan/27/society)

2 RE-tooling RESIDENCIES was the title of a conference organised by CCA Ujazdowski Castle and Res Artis as part of the Eastern European Res Artis Meeting in Warsaw, November 2009. The conference provided a platform for the critical reworking of both existing and emerging residency models in Central and Eastern European countries.

3 Romanian artist, Anca Benera, was one of the artists-in-residence at CCA Ujazdowski Castle in 2008. During her residency, she observed and investigated the lives of Warsaw's wild animals – familiar from gossip, tales, legends and research reports. It turns out that crows, like magpies and ravens, often prey on other birds' nestlings. A magpie can even catch a baby sparrow in mid-flight (www.csw.art.pl/air)

4 The film, *Kaos*, was directed by the Taviani Brothers and based on Luigi Pirandello's short stories. Pirandello was born in a village with the curious name of Kaos, a poor suburb of Agrigento, a town in southern Sicily. Typical of Pirandello, writing is the attempt to show how art, or illusion, mixes with reality and how people see things in very different ways, making words unreliable and reality at the same time true and false (www.wikipedia.org).

5 At the age of nine, Joni Mitchell contracted polio during a Canadian epidemic, but she recovered after a stay in hospital. It was during this time that she first became interested in singing. She describes her first experience singing while in hospital during the winter in the following way: 'They said I might not walk again, and that I would not be able to go home for Christmas. I wouldn't go for it. So I started to sing Christmas carols and I used to sing them real loud. The boy in the bed next to me, you know, used to complain. And I discovered I was a ham'. She also started to smoke at the age of nine, a habit which is arguably one of the factors contributing to the change in her voice in recent years. Mitchell herself disputes this in several interviews (www.wikipedia.org).

6 The Emergency Blanket from Gelert is made from strong insulating material, aluminised both sides to reflect at least 90 percent of radiant body heat. It provides emergency protection in all weathers when camping and mountaineering (<http://www.cave-crag.co.uk/1689/Gelert-Emergency-Blanket.html>)



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7 On the second day of the conference, I attended a resourceful talk by the visual artist, Cyprien Gaillard, who presented several of his iconoclastic works and films in collaboration with musician, Koudlam, who was responsible for the accompanying soundtracks. At the time of the conference, Gaillard and Koudlam were both artists-in-residence of the DAAD and Berliner Künstlerprogramm, working closely together on a new series of works.

Image: In Belief in the Age of Disbelief from 2005, Gaillard introduced high-rises into seventeenth century Dutch landscape etchings. Once a symbol of utopian promise, these post-war structures – which have come to

represent racial conflict, urban decay, criminality and violence – have been seamlessly assimilated into a rural idyll. Like the paintings of Hubert Robert, admired by Diderot, which depicted the ancient ruins, and even the imaginary future ruins, of the Louvre, Gaillard comments on the relationship between romanticism and decay, and architecture’s inherent communicative power.

8 This line was stolen from Robert Frost’s poem, *The Road Not Taken* (1920).



/9



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9 Further Reading: *A Field Guide to Getting Lost* by Rebecca Solnit – *Will Happiness Find Me?* by the Swiss artists, Fischli and Weiss, *A Project for a Trip to China* by Susan Sontag.

9 Image: left, Susan Sontag; above, Fischli & Weiss

10 ‘Being an artist-in-residence isn’t necessarily about international mobility anymore; it is about inhabiting a space, and that space might be around the corner. While a residency was formerly about going somewhere else, in a geographical sense, mainly involving travel outside one’s own country, artists now also want to experience difference in terms of a social, cultural or professional otherness’. This challenging statement was made by Odile Chenal, who is part of the Research and Development Team of the European Cultural Foundation. She was one of the guest speakers at the Ujazdowski conference in 2009 (reported by Erik Hagoort at www.transartists.org)

11 *Jules et Jim*, a playful film by François Truffaut, 1962.

12 Jack Nicholson and Maria Schneider are about to make out in Michelangelo Antonioni’s film, *The Passenger*, 1975



/12

13 Inspiration and isolation are just two of the numerous reasons why artists today sign up for a residency programme. The Trans Artists Foundation informs artists from all disciplines of residency opportunities. On their website, you will find an extensive and helpful checklist, which guides you through all the different criteria of why and how to join a residency programme. (www.transartists.org)

13 Image: *Vatnasafn/Library of Water* by the artist, Roni Horn, who has often travelled to Iceland since 1975; the landscape and isolation of Iceland have strongly influenced her body of work. In 2010, CCA Ujazdowski Castle presented a large number of her photographs. It must have been 1996 when I first encountered the work of Roni Horn, and it retains great importance to me. Her works open me up, tempt me to wander off. Again and again.



/11

ON CURATORIAL RESIDENCIES

DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS:

Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy (Curator of Contemporary Art, Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, New York); Chris Fitzpatrick (independent curator, San Francisco) and Astrid Honold (Director, Office for Contemporary Art, Amsterdam); Kari Conte (Director of Programmes and Exhibitions, ISCP) and moderated by Tobi Maier (Curator, Ludlow 38, New York).¹

INTRODUCTION BY

Kari Conte

¹ *On Curatorial Residencies:* Panel Discussion. Monday, 2 May 2011 at 7pm, Goethe-Institut New York, 72 Spring Street, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10012. Presented by the International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP) and MINI/Goethe-Institut Curatorial Residencies Ludlow 38

Artists' residencies have a long history, beginning in the late nineteenth century. Today, there are numerous international residencies for artists, serving a distinct function within the contemporary art world. The development of curatorial residencies has not been as widespread, but has initiated a complex set of institutional models. The International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP) and MINI/Goethe-Institut Curatorial Residencies Ludlow 38 initiated 'On Curatorial Residencies', a panel discussion held at the Goethe-Institut New York on 2 May 2011. It engaged with various questions including: What is the impact of curatorial residencies on research and production? In which ways do they relate to various forms of institutional approaches? How are they defined in relation to artists' residencies? Do curators and artists have the same residency needs? Have curatorial residencies developed in tandem with curating as a profession? How do these residencies activate networks and collaborations? What are the expectations of curators and hosts?

Kari Conte

—— It is a particularly pertinent moment to consider the impact of curatorial residencies on art institutions and on individual practice. Artists' residencies have often been critically discussed in forums such as this one. However, curatorial residencies and their various models have been addressed less often and, as many new curatorial residencies are being established across the world, it is necessary to consider their inherent merits, motivations, contradictions and problematics if any.

Many residencies provide curators with an opportunity for international mobility and cultural exchange. As cultural producers who create links between places and ideas, curators

are in a position to take great advantage of residencies. More than ever, curators are expected to be itinerant in order to have an understanding of the particular cultural and socio-economic specificities of different regions, and so residencies can provide an extended research period that can lead to a first-hand understanding of how to frame artistic practice in different cultural contexts. This learning experience is not only one-way but reciprocal, in that a local scene can also benefit from this exchange.

The International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP), where I am Director of Programmes and Exhibitions, founded its curatorial residency programme in 1994, but it wasn't until 1999 that the first curator participated. This was due to a lack of funding support for curatorial residencies. The first curators came from the Eastern Bloc, followed by Asia. Since then, ISCP has brought more than seventy-five curators to New York to participate in a programme which is, for the most part, parallel to the one that we provide for artists-in-residence. Curators engage with ISCP's programmes, including meetings with guest critics, partaking in research trips and public programmes. They may also organise exhibitions during their residency. The reasons that curators come to ISCP are varied; they may want to carry out research on New York City's complex art scene and meet artists and other cultural producers, they may need the concentrated time away from their regular practice to focus on a particular project, or they may also like to work alongside, and share ideas with, ISCP's artists. As a host, we do not have specific expectations in terms of tangible outcomes for our curators-in-residence – in some cases the results can be immediate, while others generate a longer-term output.

There are many distinct types of curatorial residencies across the world, and it seems that, at present, there are more models for curatorial residencies than there are for artists' residencies. A few of these models (based on my personal observations) include:

- The proposal-based residency – during which curators are invited to carry out an exhibition proposal often based on in situ research.
- The collaborative residency – during which curators who usually work in different places come together within a residency to exchange ideas and research.
- Residency as retreat – during which curators take time out from constant production.
- The guest curator residency – during which a curator will be responsible for the institution's programme over a set period of time.
- Residency as training ground – during which an emerging curator will work alongside an institution's curator.

How can these models and others serve curators best? Today, I hope that we will discuss various aspects of curatorial residencies and their position within contemporary art practice. The panellists will each make a short presentation on residencies that they have participated in, followed by a discussion open to the audience moderated by Tobi Maier.

Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy

——— I have participated in two curatorial residencies – the first, in 2008, at Kadist Art Foundation in Paris,

France; the second, immediately afterwards, at CCS Bard in Annandale, New York. Here, I will focus specifically on my experience at Kadist, because, while I was preparing for this panel discussion, revisiting the projects I undertook during that time, I noticed how important they were for my practice and, for whatever reason, I had not yet talked about them publicly. This is not to leave my residency experience at CCS Bard totally out of the picture, because it was also important in a different way. I can now say a couple of things that seem relevant to this discussion. Both residencies were opportunities that came at a time when I was working as an independent curator. While these two residencies were quite different, they had in common something important – they gave me access to resources; aside from a stipend, I had the permission and encouragement to use libraries and art collections specialising in contemporary art. (Through Kadist, I received a membership to the Kandinsky Library at the Centre Pompidou and, in the case of CCS Bard, to their holdings.) Considering that most specialised archives and art collections are privatised and open only to museum workers and academic affiliates, having access to these kinds of resources while working independently was invaluable.

Just to briefly introduce Kadist, it is a private foundation that collects contemporary art and has an exhibition space open to the public; their space is located in Montmartre, a touristy area in Paris and, more importantly, a historic neighbourhood known for being home to visual artists. (They've since opened a second venue, in San Francisco, California, and have expanded their programming to commissioning and other activities too.) In the building's ground floor space is a gallery, and there is a small apartment upstairs, where their residents stay. I arrived there in the

spring of 2008. About a year earlier, Kadist had invited me and five other nominated candidates to apply for a residency. The application process was straightforward and to the point. I had to respond to questions regarding past work; to mention artworks, practices or research topics of interest; to develop a possible conceptual dialogue between my practice and Kadist's existing programme; and to present a preliminary curatorial proposal. My interest in participating in the curatorial residency at Kadist was because I wanted a break; I felt it was important to disconnect from the institutional infrastructure in which I had been working. Before then, for a little over four years, I had been curating at Art in General, a non-profit space here in New York. The core of the exhibition programme there, which I had initiated, was based on commissioning new work, and the art projects we developed were quite unconventional. (We also had an artists' residency programme and many other initiatives that I was working on with a very small, but amazing, team.) I was working with several artists on projects that had different visual and performative iterations, lasting from between three and six months to a couple of years. I love producing, meaning I love the experience of being a curator-as-producer, working closely with an artist, helping him or her, or them when it's a collective, to take their ideas into different dimensions. What I mean by dimensions refers not only to scale, in terms of the size of the work; I also mean it in terms of audiences. But I wanted to test other ways of working, too. So, when I applied to the residency at Kadist, my approach was simple; I needed some time away from my existing curatorial practice, and I wanted to go back to thinking about objects that already exist, to discrete objects that one can find in the artist's studio but also to interesting objects that could pretty much be found in

other places. I also needed some time to read, and I wanted some time to think.

As Kari mentioned in the introduction, there are different kinds of curatorial residency programmes, and the one at Kadist, in my experience, combined two of the models she described – the residency as retreat, and the guest curator residency. So, basically, time there can be used to think all you want, as you administer your own time, but, by the end of the five-month residency, one does produce a project. When there is an actual exhibition space, there is generally a looming pressure of filling or using it somehow! Anyway, what I proposed to Kadist was to make an exhibition that was inaugurated halfway through my residency period, so that I could experience it during the second part of my time there, instead of opening the show and leaving, and so I could organise and partake in a series of related programmes and engage with the exhibition public in a closer way. The exhibition I curated was called ‘Archeology of Longing’, a title that came from a short story by Susan Sontag, which had inspired a month-long, personal trip through China pretty much around that time – travels very much instigated with the same idea of disconnecting that I described earlier. The exhibition brought together artworks by a group of artists that I had worked with in the past, and others who I first met during the process. It also involved the participation of a furniture designer and a writer, and the inclusion of common objects like a *New Yorker* magazine issue and a Cuban can of Coca-Cola. What I was thinking about in organising the exhibition was bringing together a number of instances, whether in and of art or culture, that dealt with doubles and disenchantments, with ideas or objects relating to the break of a spell, whether politically (as in the stir towards

revolutions) or romantically (as in the ends of love). The exhibition was presented at Kadist gallery space, and we held a series of events at the garden of the nearby Montmartre Museum. You know, Erik Satie lived next door to the building that is now the museum, and that little reference inspired not only the choice of this second site but also a line of research within the exhibition. Also, I came there initially because of a longstanding interest in museums in houses, and, being in Paris, it was a treat to visit so many of them during the residency.

I think that the important aspect of the residency was that it really allowed me to start new research and to devote time to writing. During my time at the Kadist residency, I wrote more than 50,000 words for a blog that I launched there, called Sideshows (which I consider to be an exhibition space of sorts, in which to share research, theses and so on). That’s a lot, and even if half of those blog entries are not all that great, I think the other half are pretty good. Many of the materials that were on that website provoked new exhibitions, not for me, but for some of the artists that were mentioned in blog entries. The blog also served for posting entries and uploading videos related to ‘Archeology of Longing’, and, in doing so, it helped me reflect on different types and stages of documentation and communication in regard to exhibitions. Immediately after the residency, I had the opportunity to expand some of the research I began there, and I returned to Paris some months later to present it as an essay in a conference; eventually, that too will become part of a larger research project in advance of an exhibition.

Lastly, I’ve thought a lot about productivity as it pertains to curatorial practice in general and to residencies in particular. The question of productivity comes up constantly

in residency programmes, and I feel that sometimes, in the overly professionalised field that we're in, there is a tendency to consider every single opportunity as a way to show or to display or to open (like open studios) and so on. If anything, over the course of a residency, most time is being spent finding how to resolve things in a new context. All the errors that come about the way, all these different lapses or failings that one can experience through the residency, become one of the most interesting cultural aspects of travel.

Chris Fitzpatrick

—— I've been involved in three residencies; one was at the Banff Centre in Alberta, Canada, in 2009; I was also nominated for a shorter residency, more of a research trip, through FIAC/Fondation d'entreprise Ricard in Paris; and I was selected for a four-month residency by Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Turin, which I'm going to speak most about today. The Banff Centre is different from the other two because it is in the middle of a picturesque mountain town where people ski in the winter. The campus is very large, with incredible facilities – from an auditorium and an Olympic-sized swimming pool to hiking trails with elk and even wolves. It's very much a terminal because you have different people coming from all over the world; generally no one in residence is from the town of Banff. I intended to use my time there to work on something very specific with a lawyer, but, in the end, I made a different project based on the specific context of Banff.

Being a curator, I didn't need the same kind of facilities as the artists. I had the kind of office generally given to writers and, from there, I ended up designing a publication called *The W. in W. Victor Crich*, drawing material based on a portrait by

Yousef Karsh of W. Victor Crich, which hung in the hallway near my office. Briefly, Crich was a photography instructor at the Banff Centre. As it turned out, my studio was in a building that had been built over the ruins of a facility that was once named Crich Hall. It burnt down in the 1970s, and there was this whole mystery around the fire, which the publication goes into, while also adding speculative material, generated by artists internationally and in residence at Banff, alongside the archival material. I printed only one copy at Banff and Jane Parkinson, the archivist, accessioned my publication back into the archives, so it went full circle. The point is that the Banff Centre has more to offer than mountains, letterpress machines or a pool. It's a charged place. Yet, if, in another way, Banff can be thought of as a terminal offering a reprieve from urban life, both the Young Curators' Residency Programme at Fondazione Sandretto and the Young Curators' Invitational (YCI) at FIAC bring international curators to specific urban places with specific aims. It seems that the primary motivation behind bringing foreigners in is to provide opportunities for artists living in the host institution's country or region, as well as to potentially create opportunities for the curators to work with other local institutions. For the YCI programme at FIAC, each year five curators nominate five other, younger curators, who are then brought to Paris, given accommodation and passes to see the art fair, with a series of meetings already arranged with local institutions and artists. And what's great about it is that you're able to gain a lot of knowledge in a short period of time, but, like Banff, you're not required to produce anything specific. What comes out of the opportunity is up to each curator.

Now, the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo is based in Turin and is more specific. Each year, they

invite the leading curatorial schools and, more recently, other arts institutions, to nominate a few young curators. Those nominated curators may then apply and a panel goes through the applications, conducts phone interviews and then chooses the three curators they will send to Italy for four months. My residency programme was from January to May of 2010, with curators Erica Cooke and Angelique Campens, and it was coordinated by Stefano Collicelli Cagol. We were given an apartment in Turin, but spent most of the time travelling and conducting studio visits with artists, and meeting curators and critics, while seeing different sites. We went to a total of twenty cities, including Bolzano, Bologna, Trento, Vicenza, Venice, Florence, Pistoia, Rome, Milan, Palermo, Catania, Modica, Modena and Genoa. And, in between the trips, we would go back to Turin and work on our exhibition in the institution, where they gave us an office. We also spent some time in Milan at the Careof/DOCVA/Viafarini complex, looking through the archives. I think, through all of our travels and the whole research process, we met more than 200 artists.

There were certain days where we would have maybe fifteen studio visits and presentations, one day twenty. Or, on other days, we'd just visit one specific site or have a tour through a particular museum, but, like I said, the general idea was to bring foreign curators to Italy to introduce them to artists, in the hope of creating a new network, facilitating working relationships that may continue into the future. The residency concluded with the exhibition 'Persona in meno', which translates literally to person in less, or as minus person. It was a really simple premise: portraiture without portraiture. Having met so many artists in such a short time, we didn't want to come up with a concept and then shop for

artists working to that theme, so to speak, as there was such a breadth of different aims and imperatives in the work we'd seen. So, we each chose a certain number of artists and then came together for long conversations, justifying our choices, if necessary, explaining what we thought was really important about the artists, about their practice, about their current standing. On some level, in all of their works we found absent presences, apparitions, odd surrogates, private rituals, reappearances, transformations, failed attempts at invisibility – basically, a strange relationship between what's visibly absent and what is absently visible. So, the exhibition was first on display at Palazzo Re Rebaudengo, an incredible space in Guarene d'Alba. Then I flew back to Italy in September for the installation of 'Persona in meno' at Palazzo Ducale in Genoa, along with the release of the catalogue we made for the exhibition, which was published by Mousse.

Okay, so having introduced the three residency programmes I've been a part of, I think what's interesting (and we can talk more about this during the open section) is the idea of supporting the region where your institution is based by bringing in curators from outside of that region. It inverts the more familiar idea of sending artists abroad. Bringing curators from abroad raises the question: Do you support more artists from a particular region by sending them a few at a time elsewhere, or do you support more artists in that particular region by bringing in curators from elsewhere? I would say the second, absolutely. Another interesting question, which Kari touched on in the introduction, is that, as curators become more and more itinerant, does that mean that there is no investment in any one place? And, correspondingly, how may the acquisition of knowledge from going cross-country or overseas all the time benefit the place where you live?

Tobi Maier

—— I think it is interesting that you approached and perceived your residencies in very different ways, and I'm sure this also has to do with the framework in which you find yourself. So in the case of Sandretto, it is a private collection or a private initiative; in the case of Kadist as well. But there are, of course, other kinds of frameworks that are, in part, publicly funded, like Cubitt in London or the Goethe-Institut's Ludlow 38 residency here in New York, where you really have to make a programme for a year or eighteen months and engage on a daily basis with your visitors and your team. I think it is fundamental to think about the differences of residencies. I sensed with Sofia that she was much more interested in taking time out and reflecting or researching while in Paris, whereas, in Italy, Chris underwent a series of studio visits almost every day. A quick Internet search reveals that, in fact, there is a bunch of residencies advertised all over the world and I want to mention a few of them. There is the Balmoral residency that is open for six months and offers a stipend of €1,200 and accommodation in a castle. Then there is a curatorial residency at Ringenberg castle, near Düsseldorf, where curators below the age of thirty-five can realise their own projects and which offers €1,250 plus accommodation and an office.

Then, there are more research-based residencies such as the one at Frankfurter Kunstverein, where I worked between 2006 and 2008 and, with Chus Martínez and Katja Schroeder, invited curators to come to the city, meet other artists, or stay completely focused and develop a research project with the support of the institution. And there are residencies in which you are invited to really make one exhibition, such as La Galerie in Noisy-le-Sec, a suburb

of Paris, or at Context gallery in Derry or at KHOJ in New Delhi, which is advertised with a deadline of 31 May, or Kiosko in Bolivia that offer an annual residency. And, as I see Helmut Batista from Rio de Janeiro here tonight, I would also want to mention his Capacete project in Rio, a platform that benefits from support by governmental agencies to dispatch curatorial talent into the world and invites curators and artists from all over the world to spend some time in this marvellous city and engage with people Helmut knows or people he can refer to with whom visitors can interact. Chris, what was your feeling, what is this proliferation of curatorial residencies about, what are the hosts interested in?

Chris Fitzpatrick

—— That's a good question, and it's one I have been thinking about since being invited for this talk. I'm not sure that I have the right answer, but I keep thinking about the question of whether or not an institution, Fondazione Sandretto for instance, supports more Italian artists by bringing three international curators to Italy than by sending three Italian artists abroad. I can agree completely with the former idea, because I have already worked with more than three Italian artists and continue to work with Italian artists and institutions, both in and outside of Italy. I think that's the primary intention; it's a sort of regionalism bound up in internationalism, which is interesting to me.

Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy

—— I think that Chris is right on this when it's about a residency focused on a region. The intention of the host is that the resident gets a wide scope of the scene, a sense of

the context, and I think it works. When I was working at Art in General, we also organised curatorial residencies, but only seldom because we focused more on hosting artist residencies. The artistic and curatorial residency programmes were begun there in the early 1990s. It was actually very new for residency programmes to begin at the time. These were initiated by then director of Art in General, Holly Block, who is now at the Bronx Museum, and her interest was in very specific regions. She was particularly focused on Cuba and the Eastern Bloc. Her intention was to create residency programmes in order to bring artists as well as arts administrators (the term 'curator' not really used as often as it is today) to the USA. In the case of residencies for curators, the idea was to invite them to come and experience the art scenes, but also to visit Art in General and other institutions, to learn of possible models, systems and processes for them to take back to their homelands – to their new democracies in the case of Eastern Europe. I think those residencies, which were anywhere from three weeks to three months, were instrumental in helping to create new networks and shape the institutional infrastructure as much for these arts administrators as for Art in General.

Residencies allow for many different forms and methods of knowledge-sharing. I think residencies allow you to share knowledge not only as a visitor, say to a city or to an artist's studio, but also through the very workings of your host institution. You actually learn a lot about how that institution is run, regardless of whether it is a three-person or 300-person institution, just because of how they host and make evident the expectations of the residency, whether you will be importing new thought and perspectives to them or exporting their arts scene and introducing them to new markets – and, by that, I mean not only commercial markets

but also markets of ideas. I think that the rise of residencies and the figure of the itinerant curator is very much tied to the market in the art field, and, once again, to that idea of productivity, of the new. I think that Terry Smith's book – *What is contemporary art?* – is very telling in its analysis of the idea of contemporaneity through temporary art exhibitions *vis-à-vis* exhibitions of permanent collections at museums. I think that this is interconnected with the recent anxiety around the so-called investment of one's time in an artist's studio or in a given context of production of contemporary art, and whether one can really get a grasp, really get a sense of that, through a temporary residency versus living there permanently. And I think that a residency may allow you the option of immersing yourself in a context and understanding, at least as a curator, the way in which the city works and the way in which an institution, or institutions, within a place work, or don't work, and how and why that shapes artistic practice, discourse, criticism and so on and so forth. They allow you to understand the system, the value system that allows for an arts scene to be an arts scene.

Tobi Maier

—— Astrid, do you maybe want to add something to this? How long are you staying in New York and what is your focus while you are at ISCP? Is there a particular research project that you are also working on that refers to New York, which you are planning to take back to Europe after the residency?

Astrid Honold

—— I want to address the physical aspect of residencies. Because our practice is so highly professionalised and

our visual culture is very fast, we have all these mobile options. As opposed to former times, there are not a lot of physical places in which artists and curators can share an intensity with each other. And I think that what Chris was speaking about with the Sandretto sounded very much like a very intense meeting and, if you think about art in former times, you know you had concepts like the Bauhaus or artist centres like Paris where artists would really meet on a regular basis and have prolonged discussions. And I think that, in our culture and in the art world today, you have art fairs where people meet, but you have no intensity whatsoever. I think that this is also a very important aspect, perhaps not so much for the institutions but for the curators and artists themselves, to have that physical framework in which to meet and to have deep discussions and to share this passion. And that's also why I enjoy very much being in New York. Of course, being in New York also has other aspects that add to this, since it's still the centre of the contemporary art world in a way, at least in a commercial sense. But, you know, just to go to the ISCP every day and to have all these different artists from all over the world – meeting them just because you share the same residency is a very luxurious state of being. And I think that we all come to these places with the same sensibility and so there is an increased sensibility to approach one another and to share experience and then to build on this.

Tobi Maier

——— I'd like to move onto another point, which has to do with the role of residencies as an alternative in the context of institutional life today. At times, residency is another term for a freelance curator arriving at an institution to

make a programme. In some instances, the residency then substitutes for the role of a full-time institutional curator, which can become problematic because the result is a lack of sustainable long-term involvement in a local context. Another question that Kari put to me was how curatorial residencies run parallel to an increasing professionalisation of curating and curatorial programmes. A residency such as Ludlow 38 is understood as a space with an ongoing exhibition programme. So, every year there is a different curator from Germany; every two months or so, there is a new exhibition. There is an incredible freedom in what you can do at Ludlow 38, and we are trying to challenge the exhibition format by making publications, organising public events or other side projects inside and outside of the gallery. It is a very intense sort of experience because you combine all the tasks of exhibition-making in more or less one person. It's why I think the German *Ausstellungsmacher* is a good word for this role because it joins theoretical capacity with practical necessities. Personally, I think that this increase in residencies offers continuing education, allowing curators to take some time and immerse themselves in a new context, research a particular subject or develop writing skills, something you can't do when you are in an institution from nine to five – and often very much longer than that. So, are there possibilities that you see with residencies that you would offer if you were to build a residency? Or, asked differently, what would be the utopia of a residency?

Chris Fitzpatrick

——— Well, I think that what is also interesting in the context of residencies, or research grants for that matter, is that we can go to regions where we may know artists but

have never been to before, or have had limited access to (and were therefore not able to fully understand the context in which those artists are producing their work). So, I think that travel grants are also relevant to this discussion. There seems to be a requirement now for curators to have this aerial view over the entire world's cultural production, which is, of course, impossible, but is interesting to strive for. So, I think that the more of these programmes that spring up, particularly in the least likely places, the better. Certainly outside of the main urban centres is where really interesting, or different, production is often happening, but we don't get to see it in magazines or in other forms. A residency can be a powerful channel.

Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy

—— Just stepping beyond the stronger, or more established, institutions and cities, one notices that there are a number of active and emerging residency programmes in different countries which don't follow this structure at all. I think it is also important to include these in the discussion because one of the reasons for residency programmes – at least in my experience and my conversations with some of the founders, who tend to be artists themselves – is being able to bring other voices and other viewpoints and perspectives into a local art context. It's not about importing voices; new viewpoints are brought in that allow new conversations to emerge. There is a new residency programme that just began a year and a half ago called *Residencia en la Tierra*, run by three artists in their early-to-mid-twenties; the space is in Armenia, a coffee-region in Colombia, and it's like a hotel, like a bed and breakfast. This residency programme is not typical, it is based on

workshops or themes, and you pay a fee to attend (that is, they don't pay you to go) and share bedrooms with other fellows. While they've received some funding (it looks like Spanish foundations are supporting this type of initiative), it's ultimately not enough. So, they invite established artists (by established, I mean artists with a long-standing trajectory, with a strong body of work and recognition in the field) to lead a workshop or discussion and, in turn, they receive a kind of rain-check allowing them to return there, on vacation with their friends or family, whenever they want. I think it's great. It's a professional programme to the extent that they are very serious about it, but it doesn't follow the structure that we're all used to in terms of funding or in terms of participation or obligation or evaluation or any of that stuff.

Tobi Maier

—— So, when you are in a place for longer, how important is it that you can also interact with communities outside of the art world? Often, one is parachuted into an institution or space that has close affinities to people in the art world, and it seems very easy to make twenty studio visits a day because they are organised for you, right? Of course, that can be enjoyable but, on the other hand, I imagine that it can be very important for curators to have somebody who can help them create links with people from different professions. And I think that it could be interesting, perhaps, to think a little bit about that, about how curatorial residencies can function without necessarily offering an exhibition space or forcing the curator to make an exhibition or publication or something, but trying to develop models that interact with the fabric of the city, outside of the institution. When

you were going to places, did you make a lot of research beforehand or were you too busy to do that?

Chris Fitzpatrick

—— Well, I can say that, when I was going to FIAC, they would have maybe two or three, possibly five things per day, which left a lot of time open. So, for that particular residency, although it was only five days, I prepared some visits in advance, making sure I was going to see whatever else I wanted to see, much like I'm doing here this week in New York. But it also left time for setting things up once I was there, like visiting France Fiction or going out to Castillo Corrales. At Sandretto, because the programme was so dense, there wasn't as much room for that, but Stefano asked us in advance what we were interested in, so that could be incorporated into the programme and he also modified that programme as we went along. At Banff Centre, it's a little different because it's an amazing complex the size of a university and also a relaxed mountain town. You're there at the Banff Centre with musicians, mathematicians, architects and other people outside your specific field. So, there is the opportunity to talk to people in different disciplines and, by extension, there's also the opportunity to go into the town and interact with people there. I met people at the Banff Crag and Canyon and random people on trains in Italy, but, overall, I didn't really have that much experience in any of these residencies of interacting with people who were not already interested in art.

Tobi Maier

—— They could be interested in art but still from different disciplines, like mathematicians or Wall Street traders...

Chris Fitzpatrick

—— You're right. Definitely at Banff, if you're interested in a particular discipline outside of fine arts, visual arts, there's more than likely going to be someone there for a shaman conference or business conference. It's a completely bizarre and wonderful place, where you run into people you would never meet otherwise. In a way, that's also the whole point of a residency.

Astrid Honold

—— I think that one important aspect is also the length of a curatorial or artist residency because, if you have enough time to become involved with a different group of people, you can build trust. For example, I am working on an exhibition right now that combines works from five major New York collections; I'm having meetings with collectors that are between approximately sixty and seventy years old, academics, and they tell us about what has changed in the art world since the 1980s and that is actually an invaluable insight into how our time has changed. I would never have been able to speak with them or gain their trust if I had just been here for one month.

Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy

—— Also, if your residency hosts are interested in wider culture, beyond the visual arts field, you are likely to meet a novelist, a journalist a film-maker and other people who are participating in the cultural scene of a city. I even would say that, in New York, this is a bit more difficult, meaning that the art field is so jealous of its own time, and a little bit more constraining in terms of interdisciplinary relations. I find everywhere else richer in that sense.

Tobi Maier

—— You are mentioning a key factor as I am looking at the time; I would like to use this opportunity to throw this open to the public for questions and comments.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

—— I know you have gone over this, but as a polemical statement. It's interesting because, just to look at the situation of twenty studio visits per day in Italy – which resembles the most stage-managed tour of North Korea or of some government that's closed – the reason for having twenty studio visits is essentially to make sure that you don't have time, so that you have to follow a certain script. One thing that was interesting in what Sofia said about the models was that what they essentially have is different economics. Typically, with a residency, one that is paid for by the resident is less prestigious than one that carries a stipend. But, what if one were to reverse that? Which of the residences would people actually want to participate in, if one had to pay for them? That's the point at which it seems they would change from being a kind of de facto job or something that one does at the invitation of someone else.

Kari Conte

—— Sofia brought up the idea of the research trip as a kind of self-organised residency. I think, as a curator, you are naturally really interested in going to places and meeting artists and so curators often self-fund their own 'residencies' as well. In the case of ISCP, we have partnerships with many different governments and foundations, but we also have a panel that accepts a small percentage of artists and curators

who apply to us directly. These artists and curators don't pay the programme fees themselves, but they have to research and secure this funding from various donors, which can be really difficult, and I find it extraordinary that most of them persist in looking for this funding until they're able to make it happen. I think, as curators, so much of your research is often self-funded in any case.

Chris Fitzpatrick

—— Well, they have scholarships, but you have to pay something to go to the Banff Centre. FIAC flies you there and covers all expenses and Fondazione Sandretto flew me there, covered my expenses and gave me a monthly stipend. While I was in Italy and still under contract with the Oakland Museum of California, I sublet my apartment in San Francisco; so, if you get a bit creative financially, it can work.

Yes, at Fondazione Sandretto, you make an exhibition of your own choosing with the support of the whole institution behind you – a press office, a registrar, an incredible installation crew and so on. Still, the exhibition may only include Italian artists. You earn your money and your opportunity. You work every day and, in the end, you've made an exhibition and a catalogue based on that exhibition, and potentially a lot of important contacts. You've had the chance to conduct all these studio visits and gain a rare familiarity with the Italian scene. With the Banff Centre, on the other hand, I think that what you're paying for is to get out of the city, get out of your circle, to a place where everyone is from somewhere else, or from other disciplines, and to have access to all these different facilities – for production or for leisure. So, in a way, Banff's like a residency at a resort.

Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy

—— I appreciate the question, because there has been an increasing debilitation of state funding for the arts. I know this hasn't affected the United States, but, in other countries, the repercussions have been quite strong... in France, Italy and Holland, Germany and also in some countries in Latin America. It's not the experience of the United States because the state doesn't significantly participate in the production and communication and presentation of culture; where it has historically had an active role, the consequences are stronger. In any case, I think residency spaces are a third space, a third institutional space that exists in the context of state museums or private galleries, spaces where things may happen outside of the itineraries and routes of established institutions.

Tobi Maier

—— Again, I believe it's important to look at the institutional framework of the institution you are applying to when you are a curator looking out for a residency. You should very much be aware of what you are going for. Your question is a bit difficult because, if you're going into a residency, how should you pay for it? You're giving up either your job or you are in between jobs or you have no income or little income. So, I think rather there should be more funding for residencies, available for artists and curators to go onto existing residencies and for new models to be developed in and outside of existing institutions.

STRATEGIES OF WEAKNESS

Jakob Racek

Il ne sait rien faire et il est exigeant.

He doesn't know how to do anything, but makes demands all the same. Who are we talking about here? It's Jean-Jacques, the first person I encounter as I ponder the question of what it means to work in the field of art. Jean-Jacques roams free and has no fixed abode. He has no regular employment, which does not hinder him in pursuing his career. He does what he has to in order to survive, taking on odd jobs and performing small errands. Then there are the big projects – writing plays, composing music, even revolutionising society itself. He takes part in philosophy competitions, writes theories about the origin of order. He battles against those in power, yet repeatedly finds their favour. He is a figure of compromise and openly lives accordingly. The first station on Jean-Jacques' journey is Les Charmettes, a manor house owned by Madame de Warens whom he somewhat frivolously calls 'Maman', bearing in mind that his motherly girlfriend subjects him to a multiple initiation. Under her loving guidance, he is introduced to the great poets and thinkers – Voltaire, certainly, but also Locke, Leibniz, Descartes, Newton, Hobbes and Machiavelli. The oedipal order, inscribed upon this double-bind comprising mother and lover, can also be applied to the modern state and its citizens – 'le pouvoir de l'haute et la confiance d'en bas' (Pierre Légendre) – or the relationship between effective leadership and voluntary affection. Within the feedback loop of good government (the adored mother), free obedience has become fixed from below as a variable. The pathos of this negative freedom can also be found in Jean-Jacques' now famous saying: 'Man's freedom lies not in

the fact that he can do what he wants but that he does not have to do what he does not want to'. In other words, Jean-Jacques, makes demands – on the state, on society and on education. He also makes demands on his donors, albeit of a profane nature.

Then there is Thérèse le Vasseur, a Parisian washerwoman and Jean-Jacques' wife – she too is a provider. What she earns can hardly be enough to support their children. The children are loud; they eat and disturb Jean-Jacques as he writes *Émile, or On Education*. They are parasites and will be handed over to the state. Mother – lover – state.

Between Delay and Transition

We now introduce the character of the artist into this trinity and notice that his exposed position is linked to a certain tragedy. With respect to the hyper-structures of power, he always remains on the threshold, tolerated, supported and used. He is powerless. Let us take, for example, the relationship between artists and the nomenklatura that governed in Bulgaria prior to 1989. An artist was anyone who was a member of the Union of Bulgarian Artists, and that was virtually every graduate of any art academy, irrespective of their talent. But, compared to other states in the Eastern Bloc, one might notice the lack of any serious artistic opposition. One reason was the country's isolation during the Stalinist era. Any links to centres of art in the West that had existed before the Second World War had been severed. The (scant) avant-garde that did exist underwent a programmatic conversion to the socialist realism prescribed by Moscow. However, marginalising the art scene would not have single-handedly achieved the goal of annexing art to the state. Quite the contrary, it was

found that a far more effective means of gaining control over those who might otherwise have adopted a dissident stance was to acknowledge their creative work and to give them special social status – in short, through inclusion rather than repression.

In this regard, the Union of Bulgarian Artists played a strategic role in bringing together all activities in the domain of art with the aim of making them more controllable. Within the institutional framework prescribed by the Party, its members and artists were able to act with considerable freedom. This concerned the appointment of new members, the right to stage exhibitions (including those in the West) and all agenda-setting in the area of cultural policy in Bulgaria, such as the allocation of studios, sponsorship programmes, residences. Lyudmila Zhivkova – daughter of the dictator, Todor Zhivkov, and Minister of Culture for a time during the 1970s – furnished the union and its members with additional privileges, such as foreign travel, guarantees of state purchase and promotion at Western art fairs. Mother of the arts, lover of artists – this welfare *dispositif* was a most effective means against any kind of artistic-intellectual recalcitrance towards the Party. The key currency of this concordance was that the state apparatus trusted the union to reconcile artistic activities with the interests of the Party. The annexing of art by the state was so complete that there was no longer sufficient critical potential in the country to establish any veritable opposition to the institutionalised sector. Any resistance was, quite simply, rendered ineffective through indulgence.

The 'distribution of the sensible' (Jacques Rancière) may have been less dogmatic than in Moscow or other socialist countries – artists were able to copy works by



1.



2.



3.

1,2. Research for the art project *Paysage* realised by gangart collective (Simonetta Ferfoglia, Heinrich Pichler) in the framework of the exhibition 'METAPOLISM. Urban matters' at the Center for Contemporary Art, Plovdiv, between 15 October and 12 November, 2010.

3. Production process of gangart collective (Simonetta Ferfoglia, Heinrich Pichler) at Optela Laser Technologies company, Plovdiv.

4,5. Installation view of *Paysage* by gangart collective in the interior of the Osman Bath house, now hosting the Center for Contemporary Art, Plovdiv.



4.



5.

Miró and Hundertwasser without exposing themselves to accusations that they were Westernising or de-politicising art. At the same time, the benevolence of the state apparatus spawned generations of artists who, within this distorted institutional framework, became increasingly detached from the political, social and economic realities which existed in the country. The political shifts that took place in 1989 were to change everything. Art was freed from its ideological shackles at the same time as its economic basis – state funding of the arts, fellowships and studio programmes – was withdrawn. Institutions such as academies and the Union of Bulgarian Artists, although they continue to exist, tend to be involved mainly in administering the legacy of the past era. So far, the newly installed democratic capitalist state has failed to guarantee any lasting support for art. Thus, Bulgaria is today the only country in Europe that has no museum of contemporary art in its cultural landscape. Although visible at an international level – via biennales, art fairs and major exhibitions – the local art scene is sporadic, and only exists thanks to the initiative of private individuals and organisations. The Ministry of Culture and the museums and institutions under its control are mired in a lethargy which, ultimately, leads to many young and advanced culture professionals leaving the country.

While Western art practice in the 1990s underwent a visible shift towards analysing economic and institutional factors within the art system – thus making critique of existing structures the basis for action – artistic criticism in Bulgaria (and other post-socialist countries) manifests itself within a vacuum in which there is an absence of validating bodies such as the public, the market, museums and galleries. A number of interventions by artists and

curators are testimony to these phantom pains, such as Ivan Moudov's *Wine for Openings* event at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007, at which he offered wine that he had produced and bottled to all the national pavilions, using this multiple presence to draw attention to Bulgaria's invisibility in an international context. An initiative called 'The Bulgarian Pavilion' developed from a similar impetus; this was an ideas competition aimed at 'bringing back' the (non-existent) Bulgarian pavilion from Venice to Sofia.

The positive side of the absence of institutions, however, is that it gives rise to an independent, internationally connected and critical art scene with its own spaces and its own know-how. Unlike state-subsidised structures, these highly motivated forms of art are far more actively engaged within their social sphere of action. Giving people the chance to once again develop intersubjectively within a community – at a time when individuals are withdrawing into the private domain – such forms of art can, therefore, have a therapeutic benefit for society. Those who act within such shadowy areas are strategists of weakness. They know all about the disparate forces that can influence a given situation, and develop instincts and techniques that will allow them to identify favourable opportunities. Their actions are geared to openness and constantly generate new syntheses and methods which can be compressed to form highly adaptable routines.

Culture is a perpetuation of politics by other means. When the war in the Western Balkans was brought to an end by the bombing of Belgrade, international foundations began to energetically expand their activities into this geopolitical territory. From Skopje to Chisinau, 'Centres for Contemporary Art' were founded with the generous support

of George Soros and co. The first residency programmes were also established at this time – the main examples in Bulgaria being the Red House in Sofia and the Art Today Association in Plovdiv. Both organisations received institutional funding over a number of years and, as a result, were able to create a programme involving international (i.e. Western) artists at a surprisingly high level. At the same time, the ‘Balkans’ experienced a boom in major exhibitions: ‘In the Gorges of the Balkans’, ‘Blood and Honey’ and so on. The Balkans became a political and cultural screen onto which a whole series of Western European obsessions, such as order, violence and nationalism, was projected. The fact that Western artists were now more interested in this region led to national and cultural identities being cultivated, and to a kind of self-colonisation according to Western concepts and values. Some contemporary artists respond to the representational mechanisms of the art market with a deconstructive coupling, adapting the dominant systems of symbols in order to use them as signifiers of subversive content. Such paradoxical situations make art more difficult, more dissonant, but also more political.

Interpreted through a Hegelian ‘history of salvation’, the leitmotif of communism passes through a cathartic phase until it reaches its redemptive ‘historical conclusion’, as embodied by its admission into the European Union. The claim of such a historical evolution, however, can by no means bear direct comparison with the political, social and cultural realities that exist in Bulgaria. Following its accession to NATO and the EU, the process of bringing the country up to Western standards was regarded as largely complete – an illusion for which local governments and EU institutions are equally responsible. The expansion

of the EU from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea changed Europe’s political topography. And, while Bulgaria and Romania are no longer outside the EU, their integration gave them a marginal position within the EU. International foundations withdrew from the new EU states in order to focus their funding on the countries of the Western Balkans or the Middle East. Mistakenly believing that the organisations they had supported in the past would continue to be supported by public funds, the international foundations left those working in the field of art and culture to their own devices, at the mercy of largely incompetent cultural authorities. For organisations like the Art Today Association, this meant a radical change after three years of institutional support from the Pro Helvetia Foundation. What are needed now are alternative models that can be used to establish a stable working environment for artists, curators and their public.

Contemporary artists in Bulgaria have learnt the bitter lesson of what Aaron Moulton called the post-Soros condition. Having put in place their own sub-structures without any economic basis in the 1990s – structures which were then substantially and unilaterally funded for a transient period by cultural foundations – today it is more a question of ensuring that such provisional structures can be used creatively in the long term. Nowadays, the Art Today Association is involved in a lively, yet by no means conflict-free, exchange with other actors in the field, as well as with the economic, social and political hyper-structures. Time and time again, this results in the emergence of new joint ventures between small-scale team structures and larger associations, giving rise to a fabric of cooperation that is as precarious as it is efficient. These more or less

heterogeneous collectives constitute a public sphere that extends beyond the private domain, survives without any institutional framework and is dedicated solely to social interaction. Thus, the community's public sphere is once again rehabilitated as a field of action for subjects acting within a network.

The picture outlined above defines the local level. Turning our attention to the specifics of artists' residencies, we find that they only become useful in the context of trans-local cooperation. Following years of bilateral exchange with Central and Western European centres, the Art Today Association now increasingly seeks cooperation with partners from other post-socialist and post-Soviet countries. Since December 2010, the Association has been operating within a network of independent organisations from Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Slovakia and Turkey. Numerous residencies, workshops and exhibition projects have increased the cohesion of this network, the real goal of which is to overcome its own (economic, geographical, political) marginalisation and to achieve greater attention and potential for action by setting a common agenda.

Para-sites and Subjects

Contemporary artistic practice never takes place outside such constellations, but is interwoven with global capital and political power at a variety of levels. Artists and curators alike work within these structures, and also work against them – in a constant game of deconstruction and reproduction. The field of art today allows a profound analysis of the capitalist system in all its intensity and contradictions. The first generation of Institutional Critique in the 1960s and 1970s, with its critical attitude towards the system and its mechanisms, was based on

the fact that it distinguished itself from the ruling system and thus cultivated values such as independence, creativity and responsibility for one's own actions. These days, it is precisely these values that have degenerated to become slogans of the post-Fordist world of work, which are generally used to conceal the fact that employment relationships have become increasingly precarious.

The artist is just such a precarious creature, particularly when he is a guest, a traveller, who makes the principle of 'residency' part of his strategy. He is a transient character, at all times on the point of vanishing or – even worse – of remaining where he is (being a radicalised form of Heidegger's ontological concept of *Dasein*). At best, the guest always arrives with the inherent promise of temporariness; he remains while passing through. The guest, in his purest form, would thus be our beloved enemy, the *hostis*, whom we occasionally meet for a *ren-contre*. This 'other' (*contre*) always remains an intruder from the outside – only through him as the 'other' does our own self acquire its meaning. No sooner has he crossed the threshold into our courtyard than he starts to make demands; he wants to eat, entertain (and be entertained) and to spend the night. *Il ne sait rien faire et il est exigeant*. If we are unlucky, the guest will leave traces behind him; before he departs again, he uses – that is to say he irreparably moistens and soils – our home. He is a true para-site, one who stands aloof and is never entirely here or there. As a figure on the threshold, he opens our house to the outside, giving entry to that which we sought to exclude. He intervenes, interrupts patterns of activity and thereby interferes with established rules – in short, he causes disorder. Even if we attempt not to listen to him, or to drown him out, his voice is still audible as noise

in our otherwise so pristine channels. Yet, a world without parasites – today we are more at risk from this totalitarian utopia than ever before – is a world that stands still. That is the particular skill of the artist; he intervenes, making action visible in its microstructures.

Supplement: Leave the Low Land Behind

Not far from Plovdiv lies the village of Govedare, renowned locally only for its car scrap yard, the owner of which, who is known as Metscho (Bulgarian for 'bear'), collects wrecked cars of Russian origin in order to ship their individual parts to Egypt, where they are urgently needed as spares. The 'gangart' artists' collective (Simonetta Ferfaglia and Heinrich Pichler) from Vienna learnt of this place and its scrap-based economy during the course of their residency in Plovdiv and began to talk business with Metscho. The subject of their discussion was vehicle body parts that were needed for an installation at the Center for Contemporary Art in Plovdiv. Another subject was Metscho's ideas for an artwork, which ultimately resulted in the following deal: a commissioned painting, featuring landscape and family, in exchange for twenty car bonnets. During the course of subsequent discussions, Metscho's ideas for the painting concretised to the point at which a comprehensive description of every detail took up half a sheet of A4 paper. This description was then cut out of the car bonnets, using CNC laser cutting equipment, and affixed to the wall at the Center for Contemporary Art. The text describes a gently rising path, with a family and their house in the foreground, ending with the enigmatic instruction 'leave the low land behind'. The original oil painting, based on this description, hangs in Metscho's house.

As a result of an encounter with the 'other', a picture is generated here. Within this picture, the imaginary is linked to the real. The experience gained during the encounter allows the participant to regard the other person, the stranger, as someone who gives us the chance not to become mired in redundancy.

TOURING CULTURE

Agnieszka Pindera

The first article reporting that an artist-in-residence programme was being planned by the Centre of Contemporary Art (CoCA) in Torun, northern Poland, appeared in a local newspaper in 2008 and triggered an avalanche of phone calls to the city council officials. Outraged citizens voiced their anxiety about how public money was going to be spent. A storm of confusion was caused by the term 'residency', used by journalists, which was associated with a luxurious mansion. By contrast to this, as will be discussed below, the expression 'plein-air' causes no such mistrust. Why is the reception of these two terms so different? Is it merely a matter of different understandings? This begs further questions in Poland, such as: Would it be right to claim that artistic residencies have, to a certain extent, evolved from plein-air? How has our local cultural landscape changed and when did it happen?

I Remember Only the Sunny Days

In Poland, plein-air sessions have a fine, long tradition.¹ They constitute an element of artistic education in secondary schools and art academies, which may be obligatory or optional, stationary or ambulatory. We may assume that their enduring popularity as a teaching method is partly associated with the academicisation of painting undertaken by the Kapists and Colourists who took up the majority of professorial posts in Polish art colleges after 1945.

A breakthrough in this history occurred in 1963. On the initiative of Marian Bogusz and Jerzy Fedorowicz, the first annual plein-air session was organised in Osieki near Koszalin. Recalling the early days, Fedorowicz writes: 'In the contemporary, ideologically ice-bound reality, it was difficult to imagine normal activity by artists or philosophers. Osieki was sufficiently isolated, and thus secure from the

authorities, that a margin of freedom was able to exist there'.² The organisers took a novel approach and invited artists and theoreticians from various fields who, as well as participating in workshops, attended lectures and talks and held discussions. A new tradition was established, and works created during successive plein-air were handed over to the nearby museum in Koszalin. As a result, an interesting collection was built up, which also included documentation of various events as well as other archival materials (printed matter, guides, publications, posters, press cuttings, films and several thousand photographs). The history of the Osieki plein-air is regarded by many as a chronicle of the concerns and experiences of the Polish avant-garde.³

A frequent participant in those plein-air, Jerzy Ludwiński, wrote in his 1966 essay, 'Bania z malarstwem' [The Bubble with Painting], that the Osieki tradition contributed to an increase in the number of conventions, meetings, conferences, plein-air and other sessions held throughout Poland, which quickly became the kind of artistic events associated with those days.⁴ He also expressed the belief that the entire 'movement' demonstrated a need for artists to meet and exchange information, describing the events as symbolic art centres, providing a substitute for more formal structures as they toured. This was consistent with the cultural policy operating at that time, which was aimed at stimulating art in the provinces.⁵

Ludwiński was convinced that the movement he described was spontaneous and unofficial and, unlike other associations, culture departments or industry giants,⁶ it was not centrally controlled. However, according to Zygmunt Wujek, an artist and participant in many plein-air, the spontaneity admired by Ludwiński was pre-arranged. In his

opinion, 'Osieki was a security valve in the sphere of culture. It was an important event due to its countrywide character. Koszalin was a fine place to release political pressure thanks to its neutrality'.⁷ Moreover, Piotr Piotrowski claims that plein-air:

[...] fulfilled the unwritten rules of a silent social agreement between the environment of avant-garde artists and the authorities. On one hand the events of this type provided an exceptional chance to meet, discuss and experiment with the latest materials and technologies. On the other hand, the plein-air and symposiums were organized on the occasion of state anniversaries and celebration, while the authorities did not expect from the authors 'anything' else, but delivery of politically indifferent works, meeting the modernist slogans of examining the internal structure of the medium and autonomy of the piece of art. The freedom in the area of the plein-air was thus only a sham freedom, as the formal experiments performed there were controlled by the institution of censorship. The expectations of the authorities did meet the peculiar syndrome of post Socialist Realism: the aversion against the commitment of art into activities criticizing the political and social status quo.⁸

During the 1970 plein-air session in Osieki, Jarosław Kozłowski created a work, entitled *The Zone of Imagination*, which referred to the dubious freedom of artistic actions in the context of supervised meetings. At a radius of four kilometres from the centre, the artist placed twenty-one plates, each reading THE ZONE OF IMAGINATION, thus

demarcating the symbolic limits of the 'artistic freedom reserve'. In a similar way, Anastazy Wiśniewski's act of establishing the Centre for Artistic Silence at the Tak [Yes] Gallery was also aimed against the phenomenon of plein-air. It served as a protest against state officials judging an artistic event through the number of artworks produced.

The last plein-air at Osieki took place in 1981, the year that martial law was imposed in Poland. Shortly afterwards, attempts were made to restore the habit of annual meetings. During the twenty-five years following 1983, an event known as Artists Operating in the Language of Geometry was held, which moved from Białowieża to Okuninka before settling in Orońsko.⁹ Arising from this, two international collections of geometric art were compiled – in the Regional Museum in Chełm and in the Centre of Polish Sculpture in Orońsko – which directly build on the tradition of Osieki. However, Andrzej Ciesielski, an artist and curator of the two final Osieki plein-air in 1980 and 1981, writes: 'In the '80s, the art was already totally different. First of all, art and artists left the confines of the workshop walls, the fences of resort centres where the plein-air were held. Everyone kept going out, there were artists who performed sociological research, surveys among the residents; the art went outdoors'.¹⁰

I'll Sell the House in Which I Can Live No More

If the artistic community founded in the German village of Worpswede in 1889 is taken to signal the beginning of European residency programmes, then the tradition of institutional residencies in Poland, initiated by the A-I-R Laboratory at the Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw in 2003, is a fairly new one. It operates in two ways, inviting artists from abroad and recruiting among



1. Jarosław Kozłowski,
The Zone of Imagination, 1970.

natives for foreign residencies. It is also the only centre in the country which, in addition to the regular residency programme, is involved in the promotion of the residential model of art practice, through discursive events such as this publication and the conference preceding it. The resistance voiced by the citizens of Torun to the residency programme proposed in 2008 demonstrated the importance of clearly mediating one's aims in this area. The headline of the article that caused the infamous misunderstanding screamed 'CoCA [...] is about to create a paradise for artists'. The strained atmosphere that resulted forced CoCA staff to place a disclaimer on the gallery's website, alongside an explanation of the idea behind the programme and the benefits that the city and its inhabitants may obtain from it, which luckily solved the problem.

As of May 2011, the Polish Wikipedia entry for 'artist-in-residence'¹¹ which hardly mentions the central issue – that is, the mobility of art professionals – demonstrates that knowledge in this field remains underdeveloped. Rather, the definition suggests that a residency involves an artist being employed by an institution that covers the costs of accommodation (in whole or in part) and creates conditions favourable to undertaking commissioned work. According to this source, the main features of Polish initiatives are: focusing on the role of sponsor institutions and the problems of maintaining the frequency of residency programmes. An example of this way of working is to be found in the residency organised by the National Museum in Warsaw last year, for which 'Eminent artists inspired by the [museum] collection' were sought to translate Jan Matejko's painting, *The Battle of Grunwald*, into the 'language of other media: music and computer animation'.¹²

The relatively low popularity of residency programmes in Poland is connected to the lack of infrastructure necessary for their effective development. Due to the lack of studios or even apartments at CoCA in Torun, they were forced to use hotels, implementing a pilot project over a year and a half period, which proposed short periods of stay (a week in most cases).¹³ Among other things, this lack of facilities and the additional costs it generated also led to disruption of the project when priorities changed.

The House of Creative Work (HCW) in Wigry, situated on the lake of the same name in the north-eastern part of Poland, provides evidence that political transition became an impediment for the development of practices described here. Its story reflects the moment at which a new formula appeared in Poland – the disapproval of change or, rather, the lack of ability to cope with new circumstances on the part of the authorities. In Wigry, the state had planned to reconstruct, for use as an arts centre, a Camaldolese monastery that was built in the seventeenth century and had lain in ruins for about 150 years. In 1973, the communist authorities had signed a fifty-year lease on the property with the Curia in Ełk [parish council of Ełk], a branch of the church, as its legal owner. Shortly afterwards, part of the reconstructed monastery in Wigry was transformed into a leisure centre for artists and employees of the Ministry of Culture. Under the supervision of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw and administered by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, HCW was established in another part of the cloister to house plein-air, conferences, etc. In 2011, having enjoyed forty years of the lease, the home of this thriving centre was returned to the Curia in Ełk. Having no alternative premises, the institution was almost instantly closed down.

This closure was brought about through serious problems in the management of the centre during the twenty-year term of director, Bogumiła Cieślukowska, who was accused of corruption and of causing the state (according to various estimates) between 300,000 and 1 million zloty. Cieślukowska was eventually dismissed from her post in 2002, having outlasted fifteen ministers. The next two directors of the centre, Dariusz Jachimowicz (2002-2006) and Agnieszka Tarasiuk (2006-2011), substantially improved HCW's programme by, for example, introducing recurring events like *The Art of Dialogue* (2002-2006) or *The Peninsula of New Music* (2008-2010). Tarasiuk also planned to establish a centre for contemporary music in Wigry, similar to the Institute for Research and Coordination Acoustic/Music (IRCAM) at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. In 2010 (the last year of HCW operation, because liquidation proceedings commenced on 1 January 2011), different art projects were organised alongside photography plein-air.¹⁴ In the context of this discussion, it should be emphasised that, under the management of Tarasiuk, HCW Wigry had the potential to become a centre that effectively combined the two models of residencies and plein-air. Moreover, the institution's programme was based upon an idea of integrating the local context with global issues. In 2010, Tarasiuk commented that 'The unique nature of Wigry is in the meeting of contemporary art and local culture; one day, the MIMEO group, the world avant-garde leader of electronic music is giving a performance, the next day we're having a slow food market with regional producers selling their goods. [...] Such encounters inspire respect for art and contemporary culture in the provinces. Also, artists from big cities develop an interest in local narrations, in the world outside the centre'.¹⁵

Tarasiuk also devoted the final year of HCW activity to a programme built around the relations between secular culture and the church in Poland.

In an article published by the daily newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Roman Pawłowski relates that 'Wigry could have stayed under ministerial administration until 2023, but already in 2005 the then Minister of Culture in the left-wing government, Waldemar Dąbrowski, offered to return the monastery to the church before the agreed date. In a letter to the Bishop of Ełk, Jerzy Mazur, Minister Dąbrowski explained that the activity of HCW "failed to significantly affect the development of cultural and artistic movement in the region" and that "the considerable distance between the institution and Warsaw did not allow the Ministry to effectively supervise and control it".¹⁶ Speaking about supervision and control, Dąbrowski was presumably referring to Director Cieślukowska; however, the strategy he chose to overcome the problem was rather short-sighted. Also, the distance between the capital and Wigry, mentioned by the Minister, calls to mind a series of government centralisations (before 1989) and decentralisations (after 1989). Jan Stanisław Wojciechowski has diagnosed that the decentralisation and empowerment of regions, and of local centres and cultural institutions, runs more slowly than was expected. Changes in the management policies of public institutions (especially community centres) are being implemented slowly, if at all, and cultural centres often frustrate audience expectations. On the other hand, the dispute between the church and the socialist state that existed during communist times has taken on a different form but not disappeared. Under democratic conditions, the church has fully regained its legal, institutional, financial and social

influence and, through its charitable activities, it takes visitors away from the cultural institutions.¹⁷ The Minister of Culture, Bogdan Zdrojewski (2007-ongoing), unsuccessfully resumed negotiations with church representatives on renewal of the monastery lease.¹⁸

When summing up the history of plein-air development between 1963 and 1970, Bożena Kowalska wrote: 'The birth of the great countrywide fine arts events, developing so successfully thanks to the generous patronage of the state and society, are a specific and unusual Polish phenomenon'. She also adds that 'It is worth remembering that its existence on such a large scale is possible only in the conditions of a specialist society'.¹⁹ With this in mind, the former state infrastructure for supporting plein-airs could still be useful. The network of places providing residency opportunities is extraordinarily well developed, comprising HCWs and plein-air houses located in different parts of Poland, which constitutes a national infrastructure of at least fifteen centres.²⁰

On Departure Clauses

Returning to the questions posed at the outset, it may be said that the main difference between plein-airs and residencies is the number of participants; plein-airs are organised for groups, while residencies are usually intended for single artists. Another difference, one which favours residencies, is that artists-in-residence tend to devote themselves to research or interactions and work more closely with local communities than participants of plein-airs. It could also be said that plein-airs are for Polish artists while residencies are for international artists, although this is not always true as the plein-airs discussed above also had international

sessions. It could further be claimed that the difference lies in the media with which plein-air artists and artists-in-residence work; but, keeping in mind the Osieki events or the workshops of the artist-in-residence laboratory in Warsaw, it seems clear this division is artificial. In actual fact, the choice of location is far more important. In Poland, plein-airs have historically been organised²¹ in the provinces, in small towns and villages, whereas artistic residencies are associated with big city institutions.²²

Because of their unrepresentative nature – which speak much more about the potential of both models than about actual practices – the differences outlined above confirm my belief that plein-airs and residencies are two different names for the same phenomenon – that of providing shelter for artists. Rather, the shift lies in realities beyond the art world, which has had a significant impact on cultural institutions over the past fifty years. But, beyond the aforementioned changes in Polish politics and culture after the transition, we can also refer to a more general trend. In a preface to *The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts* published in 2010, Helga Nowotny writes about a new trend for 'practice-based research in and through the arts'.²³ She describes the process as a return to a practice popular in the Renaissance, which, she claims, has been brought about through the changing relations between art and society. According to Nowotny, research in art has been institutionalised through its inclusion in existing high school structures, which is mostly in evidence in Europe because of the long tradition of education systems being dominated by the state. Consolidating her argument last year, the Academy of Fine Arts in Poznan changed its name to the University of Arts and altered its structure and

programme. This renaming also suggests a transition from the teaching of craft (the university was founded in 1919 as the School of Decorative Arts) to the place of knowledge production.

The distinct division between different disciplines of arts – which was cultivated by academies for many years, in order to maintain their conservative values – has been surpassed by newly established inter-media departments and studios. At the same time, exhibition centres demonstrate an increasing interest in site-orientated practices. In her book, *One Place After Another: Site-specific Art and Locational Identity*, Miwon Kwon presents a rather mocking formula for this way of working: ‘The project will likely be time-consuming and in the end will have engaged the “site” in a multitude of ways, and the documentation of the project will take on another life within the art world’s publicity circuit, which will in turn alert another institution to suggest another commission’.²⁴ In his aforementioned essay on Osieki, Ludwiński refers to the ‘misunderstandings’ that can arise through residencies being arranged for artists in visually attractive places by host institutions wanting to assemble a collection of landscape paintings at little cost. Such ‘misunderstandings’ are not so rare these days either. One could easily imagine, for example, that this sort of commission would be given to plein-air or residency centres by any of the cities taking part in the contest for the European Capital of Culture. While, during socialist times, the government arguably used plein-air sessions to control artists, nowadays, plein-air and/or residency centres can be instrumentalised by considering them as valuable tourist destinations, with cultural actions often generating eye-catching news in the mass media. Enriched by fifty years of

organising events that stimulate the mobility of artists, we must keep in mind that the laws of the market should not be allowed to dominate artistic residencies.

All subtitles in this text come from Bohumil Hrabal’s stories.

NOTES

¹ The variety of plein-air provides for all needs as regards, for instance:
disciplines (plein-air are organised for painters, photographers, sculptors, ceramicists, weavers, etc.),
age groups (children, youth, students and adults),
skills (there are plein-air for amateurs and hobbyists, art school students and artists).
It is worthwhile mentioning that plein-air sessions are held for particular groups on special occasions, such as, for example, Polish communities abroad or the disabled.

² W. Orłowska, ‘Introduction’ in Jerzy Kalicki, Ewa Kowalska, Walentyna Orłowska and Ryszard Ziarkiewicz, (Eds.), *Avant-garde in plein-air: Osieki and Łazy 1963-1981*. The Polish Avant-garde of the mid-twentieth century in the Collection of the Museum of Koszalin (Koszalin: Museum of Koszalin, 2008), p. 16.

³ Events in Osieki were not only linked with the avant-garde.

The annual meetings were extremely diverse and, from the second session in 1964, attracted not only artists but also art theoreticians and scientists. They were devoted to all kinds of themes determined by slogans: THE EXPERIMENT IN ART (1967), Colour-Form-Function (1968), MAN – WORK – MASTERPIECE (1969), PROPOSALS (1970), SCIENCE AND ART IN THE PROCESS OF PROTECTING THE FIELD OF VISION (1972), SCIENCE AND ART IN THE PROCESS OF PROTECTING THE HUMAN FIELD OF VISION – THE MODELS OF WATER IMAGES (1973), ARTISTS AND EARTH 400,000 km AFAR (1974), PROBLEMS OF MODERN CIVILISATIONS AND FINE ARTS (1975), TECHNOLOGY – ART – QUALITY OF LIFE (1976), VISION – IDEA – PERCEPTION (1977), ART – POETRY – AVANT-GARDE – REALITY (1978), THE FOURTH DIMENSION (1979), LINE (1980), THE RHYTHM OF ART, THE RHYTHM OF TIME, THE RHYTHM OF GENERATIONS (1981).

4 In 1963, almost simultaneously with the first plein-air in Osieki, on the initiative of Marian Szpakowski, the Symposium-Biennale in Zielona Góra was initiated, with subsequent editions in 1969 and 1971. Since 1965, plein-air meetings in Białowieża, sculpture meetings in Orońsko, Lower Silesia and Hajnówka. Such a meeting was the First Biennale of Spatial Forms in Elbląg, established in 1965 on the initiative of Gerard Kwiatkowski (then the director of the El Gallery) and Marian Bogusz – jointly organised by the regional cultural departments and Zamech Mechanical Works – was also based on the Osieki experience. Also under the patronage of the industrial plant, the Artists and Scientists Symposium was held in Puławy a year later, under the motto ‘Arts in a Changing World’. Another in the series of ‘events-laboratories’, as they are called by Bożena Kowalska, is the symposium, ‘Wrocław 70’, organised to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the ‘return of Western and Northern Territories to the Homeland’. See B. Kowalska, *Polska Awangarda Malarska 1945–1980*. Szanse i mity (Warsaw: PWN, 1988), pp. 164–177.

5 The Movement for Communication between City and Countryside was initiated in the 1948 when, in accordance with directives coming from Moscow, it was decided that Polish agriculture would be the subject of collectivisation. The primary aim of the Movement was to gain the support of the farmers for the forms of social and economic life propagated by the government. Moreover, thanks to the mutual contacts and help provided

by both parties, it was a means of consolidating the bonds between the dwellers of the countryside and townsmen (represented by the factory workers), thus helping to implement the communist idea of alliance between farmers and proletarians. The Movement for Communication was originally introduced as a system of relationships between production plants, cooperatives and mutual aid villages, in which factories were the protectors of farmers. In order to win popularity amongst the peasantry, the authorities organised performances by company orchestras, theatres and choirs on Sundays; there were also 207 travelling cinemas. A deficit of qualified staff to engage in handling agricultural equipment spawned a need for assistance from mechanics. For the authorities, this presented not only a need for ad hoc technical support, but also a method of exerting political influence over the villagers by supporting meetings and talks on relevant issues, primarily collectivisation. Over time, the campaign gained momentum and the forms of assistance were enriched; by 1952, the Movement had 3,000 company teams. This new model of communist cultural policy was actively pursued during the implementation of the six-year economic plan (1950–55). From 1950 onwards, the authorities organised so-called plein-air studios for writers, intended to familiarise them with the life of the working class. The Ministry of Arts and Culture awarded grants to attract as many participants as possible. Writers typically stayed in big industrial centres and went on tours of neighbouring towns and villages. The end of the Movement occurred in October 1956. See L.

Próchniak, ‘Ruch łączności fabryk z wsią 1948–1956’ in *Biuletyn Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej*, 2 (25), February 2003, pp. 34–39.

In an essay on community art, Jan Cohen-Cruz states that ‘during Nuremberg party rallies, not only blond, athletic workers paraded, but there were also women in traditional Teutonic attire performing folk dances’. Drawing on this, Pascal Gielen asserts that ‘Without necessarily subscribing to Nazi ideology, folk art is often intended to bring people together’. Pascal Gielen, ‘Mapping Community Art’ in Paul De Bruyne and Pascal Gielen (Eds.), *Community Art. The Politics of Trespassing* (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2011), p. 20.

6 The author probably means initiatives such as, for instance, the Visual Arts Workshops, founded in the late 1940s (still existing in a limited version). ‘This state institution’, Łukasz Ronduda writes, ‘enjoyed a monopoly in Poland. They received all commissions for public space, from shop windows to monuments. Commissioned by the government or other offices of the socialist state, tasks were assigned by the management of the Workshops to its members’. Quoted in: Ł. Ronduda, ‘Neoawangarda w teczach SB’, *Piktogram*, no. 9/10, 2007–8, p. 34.

7 ‘Avant-garde in plein-air. Walentyna Orłowska talks about the Osieki plein-air with Andrzej Ciesielski, Ewa Kowalska, Aleksandra Siękowski, Andrzej Słowik and Zygmunt Wujek’ in Kalicki et al., op cit., pp. 45–46.

8 L. Nader, ‘Conceptual and Contextual Plein-air. Artistic

Manifestations at the Osieki Plein-air’ in Kalicki et al., op cit., p. 83.

9 Bożena Kowalska was the initiator and curator of those plein-air. In 2004, she published a book summarising the twenty-year history of annual meetings, entitled ‘20 plein-air under the sign of the geometry’. While plein-air in Białowieża were addressed only to Polish artists, those in Okuninka were international. Every meeting also had its own motto, defining a theme for lectures and discussions. Among others, the following participated: Adler, Alviani, Barting, Berdyszak, Breval, Bruch, Buban, Budziszewski, Bujnowska, Castagno, Chatrny, Chwałczyk, Danil, Davou, Dłużniewski, Dudkowiak, Eck, Enzweiler, Ernst, Esbojknsson, Fajo, Fangor, Fedorowicz, Fijałkowski, Frömel, Gieraga, Glass, Gołkowska, Gortchakova, Grabowski, Grynczel, Haasz, Hamann, Hałas, Hawryłkiewicz, Hencze, Hilgemann, Hill, Hughes, Husqinet, Jachtoma, Jurkiewicz, Kałucki, Kamiński, Kamoji, Kapusta, Karlewski, Keijzer, Keppler, Kjaer, Knut, Kościelak, Kovács, Kracht, Krygier, Kunen, Kwiatkowski-Blum, Kyncl, Lappas, Lenk, Liden, lipski, Lowe, Luther, Lütkenhaus, Łuczaj, Ługowski, Maciejowski, Marzec, Michałowska, Michas, Mikołajczyk, Młacki, Mosso, Möller, Müller, Mysłowski, Napoleone, Nowacki, Opałka, Orbitowski, Otto, Padmore, Pamuła, Pastra, Pasquer, Pfahler, Piersol, Popet, Popiel, A. Prodromidis, Prodromidis, Raczko, Radke, Ridell, Robakowski, Roy, Schrader, Sosnowski, Spencer, Staechelin, Starczewski, Steele, Stein, Szańkowski, Szewczyk, Sztabiński, Teuscher, Treliński, Urbasek, Valoch, Vallandschoot, Wdowicki, Węglowski,

Wieczorek, Wiktor, Winiarski, Wiśniewski, Xaeoraris, Zawacywińska, Ziemiński, Zouni.

10 Kalicki et al., op cit., p. 56.

11 <http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artysta-rezydent> (accessed 19 May 2011).

12 <http://www.mnw.art.pl/>

13 During this time, there were six residents: Romeo Gongora, Daniel Malone, Richard Grayson, Suzanne Treister, Roland Ross, Ghenadie Popescu.

14 The FLOWER POWER project invited to Wigry the artists Elżbieta Jabłońska, Julita Wójcik, Dominik Jałowiński, Aleksandra Wasilkowska, Jeronimo Hagerman, Maurycy Gomulicki to realise a project in the monastery.

15 Roman Pawłowski, 'Rozmowa z Agnieszką Tarasiuk, dyrektorką Domu Pracy Twórczej w Wigrach, Gazeta Wyborcza', 6 January 2010 [Translated by Monika Ujma]. http://wyborcza.pl/1,75475,7422898,Rozmowa_z_Agnieszka_Tarasiuk_dyrektorka_Domu_Pracy.html#ixzz1Mo8UPSTE

16 Ibid.

17 J. S. Wojciechowski, 'Instytucje kultury w Polsce na tle przemian kultury w latach 1989–2009. Globalizm, lokalność, kryzys' in Jacek Sójka, Przemysław Kieliszewski, Piotr Landsberg and Marcin Poprawski (Eds.), *Instytucje kultury w czasach kryzysu*, (Poznań: Bogucki Wydawnictwo Naukowe (2009)), p. 18.

18 I am unable to determine what the position of his predecessor, Kazimierz Michał Ujazdowski (2005–2007), was in this matter.

19 B. Kowalska, op cit., p. 177.

20 The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage possesses several fixed properties, including three Houses of Creative Work (HCWs): Palace and Park Complex in Radziejowice – since 1965, this has been used as an HCW for culture creators; Willa Astoria in Zakopane – House of Creative Work of the Association of Polish Writers and Palace Complex in Obory – House of Creative Work of the Association of Polish Writers supervised by the foundation Dom Literatury.

Moreover, the Polish Academy of Sciences has several HCWs in: Jurata, Zakopane, Wierzbica, Otwock, Świnoujście, Zawoja and Ruciana-Nida. Also, the Academies of Fine Arts have such outposts. The Wrocław Academy has an HCW in Luboradów, while the Harenda Plein-Air House belongs to the Kraków Academy; the Palace Complex in Skoki is supervised by the Poznań Academy and the Warsaw Academy has a plein-air house in Dłużew. If I am not mistaken, the art school in Tarnów is the only secondary art school with a plein-air centre; it is located in a fortified Renaissance manor house in Jeżów.

21 Due to the cultural policy outlined in footnote 5 or simply 'landscape views', the Osieki plein-air were atypical because, unlike during other events of that type, participants were never actually meant to take advantage of the local landscape. In

published fragments of memories, we read that artists didn't even leave the centre. The only time the plein-air was held somewhere else – in nearby Łazy because of refurbishment – nostalgia for the original location is found in the notes. Interestingly, the legendary Osieki plein-air took place in a leisure centre for the regional authorities of the Polish United Workers' Party.

22 Smaller locations include Bytom and Bielsko-Biała but these are still cities with almost 200,000 inhabitants.

23 H. Nowotny, 'Foreword' in Michael Biggs and Henrik Karlsson (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), p. xvii.

24 M. Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 2004), p. 46.

AN INTERVIEW/CASE STUDY ON NIDA ART COLONY IN THE CONTEXT OF RESIDENCIES IN LITHUANIA AND EASTERN EUROPE

Rasa Antanavičiūtė and Vytautas Michelkevičius

Nida Art Colony was opened by the Vilnius Academy of Arts (VAA) in spring 2011. Rasa Antanavičiūtė is executive director; Vytautas Michelkevičius is artistic director and curator. This interview was undertaken via e-mail in June 2011.

Vytautas Michelkevičius

——— Rasa, let's start our case study by discussing the local landscape for mobility and residencies in Lithuania. Why, in the past twenty years were there almost no local initiatives starting up residencies to welcome foreign artists? The concept of the residency in the Lithuanian artist's mind (possibly also in curators' minds) is that of a rich place in Western Europe which provides a lot of money to produce work. So, for recent decades, mobility was mostly happening in one direction – Lithuanians were going to the West for residencies. Only NIFCA occasionally sent a few Nordic artists to Lithuania, as an exotic land in which to undertake research and produce some work. I have met quite a few artists who took part in this programme and they largely benefited from being in residence here. Could you tell me why you had the idea of starting an artist-in-residence (a-i-r) programme within the Colony's premises?

Rasa Antanavičiūtė

——— I was working in the VAA's International Office. From time to time, offers and invitations came in from foreign a-i-r programmes. Gradually, I got to know about more of them. At the same time, I had the chance to discuss residency experiences with Lithuanian artists and to meet a couple of foreign a-i-r residents in Vilnius. The Lithuanian Artists' Union and Vilnius Municipality had one studio and the Contemporary Art Centre (CAC) had another. For several years, the CAC studio was functioning as a host within the Pėpiniėres mobility programme.¹ Until 2007, that was about it in Lithuania. Later on, the Artists' Union studio closed, the CAC residency was restricted to invited artists only. I was always fascinated by the idea of changing

one's environment as a way of getting to know new places and people. Residency programmes seemed to offer an ideal model for such an experience.

Another reason for introducing the a-i-r programme at VAA was the fact that it was very difficult to attract international faculty, for legal, financial and psychological reasons. I thought an a-i-r programme could provide the opportunity to involve international artists and curators in the Academy's routine, thus broadening the horizons of both academic faculty and students.

The introduction of Nida a-i-r also came about through a number of coincidences. VAA had an old run-down storage facility in Nida, and the EEA-Norway Grants² supported the idea of adapting this store to allow for international education and cultural activities. Added to this, Nida is in the National Park, which is one of UNESCO's cultural heritage sites and, in the nineteenth century, Nida was famous for hosting a colony of German Expressionists, which led to the idea that it would be a perfect place for an a-i-r programme.

I don't blame Lithuanian artists for seeking affluent residency programmes with which to collaborate. Taking into account the financial situation of most local artists, it is hardly surprising that they are looking for places with grants. However, I think artists are aware that there are different kinds of residencies with different financial conditions, not just rich places with generous grants.

Orientation towards the West dominated all spheres of life for almost two decades. But this is gradually changing – more and more people are interested in the lesser-known, more 'exotic' and challenging countries. Unfortunately, Eastern Europe does not fit into this category any more.

Vytautas Michelkevičius

——— I don't blame Lithuanian artists for wanting to go to Western Europe to participate in a-i-r programmes either. My point was that this is how a-i-r is understood in Lithuania and neighbouring countries – as the only possibility to escape a less well-supported local situation and to create artwork or take part in an exhibition. This is also related to the political situation – there are no cultural policy mechanisms in place to support local artists taking part in a-i-r programmes abroad or for local a-i-r programmes to host foreign artists. From my experience of conferences about mobility and residencies, it seems that most a-i-r work on the basis of bilateral exchanges between artists. Do you see any way that Nida a-i-r could break out of this and find new ways of working both locally and in the region?

It is true that Western European funding is shifting away from Eastern Europe and towards other continents, because Eastern Europe is regarded as having developed enough. However, to my mind, the social and economic imbalance between Western Europe and Eastern Europe still remains large. For example, in the Netherlands, you have seventy-five a-i-r and, in the Baltic states (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia), which are half of the size of the Netherlands (in terms of inhabitants), there are only seven a-i-r. In order to survive, we should look for collaborative models with other industries. Nida Art Colony's symbiosis with VAA is a promising way to run a successful residency. On one hand, incoming artists can benefit from the Academy's infrastructure (galleries, library, publishing house and equipment) and people (2,000 students and several hundred professors). On the other hand, we can find sources to maintain the a-i-r programme from educational funds, since most of the artists receiving grants are

obliged to run workshops in exchange. Moreover, the Colony functions as a laboratory (with a workshop, event spaces and sixty-three beds) in which larger groups of artists and students can work together on projects involving residents who stay for a longer period. Therefore, I think we should emphasise our advantages and find our own way of running a-i-r programmes in a no-residency landscape. At the same time, we should look for more partners, but I'm not sure we will be able to find them in Eastern Europe. What kind of future prospects do you see for a residency place in an international context? I am thinking that it could be beneficial to connect with big exhibition spaces in Western Europe and start fruitful cooperation, whereby we host artists at a place where they can have time and space to produce their work and the exhibition space communicates the results.

Rasa Antanavičiūtė

—— You're right; identity (local) and international frameworks (global) are both important. I tend to imagine that our landscape is broader, not just including the Baltic States or Eastern Europe. I see Nida as one of the residency places in Europe. With this in mind, it is even more difficult to create a unique and specific a-i-r programme; in a total no-residency landscape, it would be easier.

The connection with VAA is unique; it has to be developed further and refined. After the first workshops were delivered, it was clear that it was not enough to ask residents to host a workshop. This part of the residency needs far deeper planning and preparation if we want to obtain satisfactory results for both artists and workshop participants. Teachers and students have to be involved (in one way or another) in the residents' selection; we should

put much more effort into presenting the residencies to potential workshop participants. It would also make sense to include these workshops in the curriculum so that participating students could earn credits.

The identity of Nida a-i-r could also be created/developed through tight partnerships with the local community. After four months of activity, it is obvious that extensive invitations to participate in our events, workshops, open studio days do not work that well, even if they are sent to personal e-mail boxes. We need to find a means of changing the attitude of locals towards 'artists from Vilnius and the rest of the world'. Since the local community is very small and specific – lacking historical bonds and relying on seasonal work – we need to be very sensitive about local habits, expectations (if any) and needs. Needs are the most important. Perhaps it would make sense to undertake very informal social research on what the modest, pragmatic needs of the local population are, and to try to meet at least some of them. We need to become interdependent friends with the local people. Little by little, step by step. If we succeed in doing this, Nida a-i-r will be unique.

I believe that artificially induced international partnerships never give satisfactory results. They look good on the surface, but do not give ground for further development – lots of effort for little effect. Three or four carefully selected partner institutions can yield much more. Such partnerships can create a framework in which the residency programme may develop further. I don't think that the direct exchange of residents between residency centres is a very effective way of cooperating either. It always implies a narrower choice of artists (than an international open call) and usually doesn't extend beyond the exchange itself. I see partnership as both an

exchange of experience and shared growth. Something similar, at least for us, is happening with regard to the Culture Factory Polymer³ and MoKS (Centre for Art and Social Practice),⁴ both in Estonia. The network of Baltic-Nordic Remote Art and Residency Centres that we are building, with the support of the Nordic Culture Point (the derivative of NIFCA), seems very right for us. This network is regarded as the best platform from which a-i-r curators and managers (not artists) can exchange practice and experience. It will focus on community-building and the integration of art centres into the local environment. If we properly implement our visions, the network may develop into something new and interesting.

Having said all the above, I think that the development of a sound residency programme is a slow process. I understand a residency programme to be long-term couch surfing – an a-i-r centre has to feel like home and one needs time to create this home environment, to allow it to develop naturally, by accepting some ideas and dropping those which do not take root or which seem to be artificial. Each place is unique and, if you encourage its natural development with care and an open mind, you will get a unique a-i-r programme. Nida is a remote a-i-r place and we have to take this into consideration. It will never become a busy cultural meeting place, and it should not. It is more of a slow motion therapy than a heavy duty workshop and unlike you, Vytautas, I do not see it as a place to develop artwork for big exhibition spaces in Western Europe. I would prefer small, but quality, projects, which have a huge impact on a small number of people. It may also be sensible to have an annual exhibition of Nida a-i-r artists' work in one of the Academy's galleries. Perhaps, later on, it could develop into something bigger or more important.

Now, talking about changing the general a-i-r situation in Lithuania, I think meticulous educational work needs to be done. First, we need to present the phenomenon to the wider public – very few people know what we mean by a-i-r. Second, we need to demonstrate that it can work in Lithuania. Third, we need to lobby for the idea within both state and private sectors. Lithuania is not a big country. It is possible to reach the most important people in person if you really know why you need them. Thus, I believe that Nida a-i-r can break through and change the local situation.

Vytautas Michelkevičius

—— I agree that we have to use the potential of VAA, but I don't think that we have to convert our a-i-r programme into an academy and seek only educational goals. I believe that part of our programme could be successful in offering a retreat (or time to rethink artistic practice) as well as space for artists to make site-specific and community-based art. During April and May 2011, we had eleven artists in residence at the same time, and most of them produced site-specific works. Their stay developed into a temporary living and working community with its own joys and troubles. It was a good test of the Nida Colony and, to my mind, it was quite productive; artists made works from locally found material and ideas; they formed small collaborative groups; two of them conducted successful workshops with local youth and artists. In this way, the Colony became a very busy meeting place, and this continues during summer schools and workshops. It functions as an intensive cultural and events space in itself, and the guests don't even need to go out. Of course, it becomes much more difficult for us to manage the place – it feels like a festival seven days a week.

However, when the staff lives together with artists, students and professors, there are many more chances for it to become a place like home. To my mind, this quality is quite exceptional compared to other residencies.

One of our main goals is to undertake experiments and innovations in art education. I see the Colony as a promising learning environment that could facilitate communication and creativity among students, professors and artists-in-residence. I would aim for a similar experiment to that undertaken at the Black Mountain College in the USA in the 1930s. It was located in an isolated, rural setting with little budget, but it managed to create an inspiring atmosphere and attract a lot of prominent artists and professors. However, we have some limitations to implementing a similar learning community (among other things, the short stays of artists and teachers). Having said that, we have quite a lot of advantages – the large, supportive community from the Academy, for example. Since the Academy is quite flexible compared to similarly sized academies in Western Europe, we have to best deploy this and to create inspiring conditions for our guests.

Regarding our possible partners, I don't think that Eastern European residencies can be compared to, or compete with, established Western residencies with traditions dating back to the 1980s. In the past two years, I have experienced the tendency that Eastern European cultural professionals are tired of non-stop export to the West, and they are eager to know what is happening next door. First, we should look around ourselves and try to establish strong partnerships with our neighbours because we share similar historical and living conditions. I hope that our network of Baltic-Nordic Remote Art and Residency Centres will help us to explore the specific character of

Eastern European residencies and to develop a knowledge exchange platform. Our planned internships and exchanges for curators and a-i-r managers could be a profitable experience for both hosts and working guests. It will also expand the concept of residencies, because managers and curators don't have many possibilities to undertake residencies.

Rasa Antanavičiūtė

——— I agree with the above. What I would like to stress is that Nida Art Colony is not a typical a-i-r place. Alongside our five residencies, we have a workshop house which can host students and participants of art/education projects. The Colony also offers a small exhibition venue and a communal space for film screenings, presentations, meals and work. This combination of a-i-r and a short-term project space is rather unique. It expands the range of activities of our residents and provides some insight into the a-i-r programme and artists' work to project participants. This interaction is not obligatory; artists can choose to participate or not (which is very important, I think), but the fact that they have the option to step out and meet a dozen or more artists in Nida, especially out of season, is extraordinary.

NOTES

1 www.art4eu.net

2 www.ecagrants.org

3 www.kultuuritehas.ee

4 www.moks.ee

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM – THE OSMOTIC MUSEUM

Ewa Małgorzata Tatar

Text based on a shared curatorial experience with Dominik Kuryłek at the National Museum in Kraków; curatorial assistant: Wojciech Orlik

The National Museum in Kraków is a highly specific and multifaceted organism with a diverse cultural profile. It is one of Poland's largest cultural institutions, comprising numerous branches and departments, encompassing – not only symbolically but also literally – the whole city of Kraków. For its research, exhibition and education programmes, the museum concentrates on Polish and international art, historical as well as contemporary. As we can read in a Mission Statement drawn up at the beginning of the twenty-first century, one of its key roles is 'attesting to national and humanistic values by promoting international and Polish art, especially that created in Kraków'.¹ Put succinctly, the National Museum was established to maintain memory; to endure and remember. Conscious of that assumption, I will try to show other aspects of the foundation of the National Museum in Kraków that insist more on the *process* of creating and establishing an idea of common value and the tools, gestures and figures applied to that action-in-process.

Dominik and my collaboration with the National Museum in Kraków began in 2005 – he became part of the curatorial team, in advance of the re-opening of its Gallery of Twentieth Century Polish Art following a five-year renovation; I collaborated with the team and was eventually invited to be the author of some ideas drafted in the first guide book around the gallery.² This was being curated by a team under the supervision of vice-director of the museum, Marek Świca, and we were invited to work independently with the fabric of the museum itself. At first, we were mostly interested in identifying phenomena which, until then, had been marginalised in the museum's collection, not only in expanding the range of artists represented, but also in highlighting the critical potential of twentieth and twenty-

first century art. I don't remember now whose idea it was to place Grzegorz Sztwiertnia's *Museum of Imagination*³ in the 'Intertext' room, which would form the first and last space of the display, the room in which contemporary artworks made by artists from, or related to, Kraków were collected, most of them touching in a critical way on the problems of the art world with its mechanisms and institutions. Sztwiertnia's work conceived of the museum as a peculiarly embodied, fragmented or even crippled, terrifying cabinet of curiosities. This perception was echoed in my 2010 text, entitled 'The Osmotic Museum', in which, after years of working for the institution, I returned to the figure sketched by Sztwiertnia, having lost faith in the idea of intervening into an existing structure to suggest instead that the institution's very fabric could be rethought while retaining its unique character and potential.

Taking part in the gallery re-opening made Dominik and I realise for the first time how many potential narratives hadn't been taken into account; how many artists or artistic genres hadn't been included in official representations. We started reflecting on how we could include neglected statements in the larger narrative of the National Museum in Kraków. That would lead to the birth of what came to be known as 'The Guide Project', a prelude to which came in the form of Grzegorz Sztwiertnia's performance piece, entitled *Mister Head*, on the day of the gallery's re-opening on 18 November 2005. Assuming the role of a museum guide and leading the guests through the newly opened spaces, Sztwiertnia pointed out the ways in which the institution strips artefacts of their meanings and adapts them to existing expectations, mainly by flattening their discursive potential, reducing them to messages sanctioned by the institution.

Sztwiertnia's one-off action took place a month before the first event that had been planned within 'The Guide Project', which ran from December 2005 to February 2007 and has not yet been recapitulated as a whole.⁴ Although the project was terminated early (as will be discussed below), it nonetheless caused the National Museum to look more favourably upon the presence of contemporary artists in its space and paved the way for many other projects, among others Zorka Wollny's *The Museum* (2006),⁵ Joanna Warsza's *The Belli of the Mooseoom* (with Michał Górczyca) (2009),⁶ Roman Dziadkiewicz's *The Study of Mud* (2011) or planned projects by Paulina Ołowska and Robert Kuśmirowski. At this point, however, it is worth going back in time a little, to think about our crucial inspirations when working on revising the museum space, aside from what will already be obvious – the performances of Andrea Fraser.

Officially established by a City of Kraków resolution, dated 7 October 1879, with painter, Władysław Łuszczkiewicz, as its director, the National Museum's earliest collaborations with artists date back to the institution's prehistory. Researchers trace the institution's unofficial beginning to a gesture made by the renowned painter, Henryk Siemiradzki, during a ball to commemorate fifty years of artistic work by writer, Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, which had been hosted two days before the decision was taken to construct a museum by Princess Izabella Czartoryska in Sukiennice (the section of the museum that sits in the market square in Kraków, where the Gallery of Nineteenth Century Art is currently housed). At this event, Siemiradzki publicly donated his magnificent painting, *Nero's Torches* (1876), to the mayor of Kraków, Mikołaj Zybkiewicz, as the foundation of the future collection of a museum. His act was soon repeated by



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1,2. Joanna Warsza, *The Belli of the Mooseoom. A Round of Technological Background of the Main Edifice*, performance in collaboration with Michał Gorczyca, 15 May 2009, curated by Anna Grajewska.

3. Zorka Wollny, *Museum*, 2006, film still.

4. Grzegorz Sztwiertnia, *Museum of Imagination*, 2004, film stills.

4.

many well-known Kraków-based artists, including, among others, Tadeusz Ajdukiewicz, Juliusz Kossak, Wojciech Kossak, Witold Pruszkowski and Franciszek Żmurko.⁷ Siemiradzki's gesture of evoking a public place that could be responsible for the unity of the historical and national in society, before Poland existed as an independent country again, marked the beginning of the movement that can be situated within Alain Badiou's category of the event to which we return unceasingly in our work.

The presence and activity of artists has also been very important in two historical exhibitions held at the museum, providing another important reference point for our project.



5. Henryk Siemiradzki, *Pochodnie Nerona* [Nero's Torches], 1876.

Where Siemiradzki had donated his painting, which provided a paradigm of nineteenth century historicism, artists were later invited to deal with history itself – with history as exhibited in the museum and the ways in which historical narrative is established by this institution. The first of these exhibitions – ‘Widzieć i rozumieć/Voir et concevoir’ [To See and to Understand], curated by Professor Mieczysław Porębski – took place in 1975 as part of the eleventh congress of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA). Housed in the Gallery of Nineteenth Century Art in Sukiennice (The Cloth Hall), it invited several Kraków-based artists to reflect, visually or textually, on the Kraków artistic tradition.⁸ As Porębski wrote in his curatorial essay, the exhibition aimed to ‘present several characteristic contemporary modes of understanding painting’s iconic and semiotic functions in their interrelation’. In his formulation, *to see* was the ‘iconic aspect of the artistic fact; a relatively permanent or transient *visual image* resulting from certain technological processes and actions (*image-as-trace*), in turn affecting the viewer’s sensibility and imagination (*image-as-call*)’, whereas *to understand* was the ‘semiotic aspect of the image; the image as text, which needs to be read by placing it in the proper cultural *context* of things, concepts and images, and by referring it to a proper situational *subtext* determining its creation’.⁹ The second seminal exhibition was ‘Forty-Four Contemporary Artists towards Matejko’ in 1994, curated by the museum’s incumbent director, Zofia Gołubiew.¹⁰ The number forty-four in the title refers to a nineteenth century drama written by Adam Mickiewicz as the third part of *Dziady* – a classic piece of Polish literature from the Romantic period – and Messianism idea expressed therein. Selected artists – including, among others, Krzysztof Bednarski,

Jerzy Bereś, Grzegorz Klaman, Grzegorz Kowalski, Barbara Zbrożyna and members of the Gruppa collective – were asked to make a statement on the public reception of the art of nineteenth century Polish painter, Jan Matejko, and his influence on national consciousness and imagination.¹¹ The result was an exhibition in the main building of the National Museum and a publication featuring the participants' statements. This sensitivity to the cultural, social and historical context of the art presented at the museum and the role of the institution in shaping the ideological landscape of the present accompanied us when presenting the preliminary outlines of 'The Guide Project' to the museum's directors. What was especially interesting for us was the way in which we could, through contemporary theory and artistic practice, re-evaluate the categories of community, nation and history as fundamental for the institution. This included a consideration of social and political changes and the types and needs of communities arising as a result in Poland.

In the end, we invited artists who we felt tackled critical-institutional issues related to the National Museum's tradition that, for various reasons, had not been reflected in the Gallery of Twentieth Century Art. Over a period of two years, working with the artists Joanna Rajkowska, Elżbieta Jabłońska, Roman Dziadkiewicz and Hubert Czerepok, we carried out a series of about twenty events.¹² The process of working on successive instalments of the project offered us an opportunity to constructively revise our own position, conditioned by working *with* the museum, in order to perform a self-analysis that would eventually expand the consciousness of the institution itself. Together with the participating artists, we travelled through the physical, historical and symbolic spaces that had been opened up to us.

The first artist we invited was Joanna Rajkowska, a significant Polish artist who, although though she had studied under Professor Jerzy Nowosielski at the Kraków Academy of Fine Arts, had not been featured among his other students in the Gallery of Twentieth Century Polish Art around an exhibition of Nowosielski's paintings. Rajkowska responded to our project by inviting all of the National Museum's 624 employees to a picnic on nearby common land. About fifty people turned up on a frosty, but sunny, December afternoon. The atmosphere loosened up, the institutional hierarchy temporarily suspended. Literally and metaphorically, the director and the cleaning staff met on the same ground. The artist shook everyone's hand. People had an opportunity to chat with her and with each other.

The staff's curiosity, combined with the distrust and criticism that had resulted in relatively poor attendance, was, for us enthusiasts, a kind of symbolic failure, and we maintained this self-analytical position while working of every detail of 'The Guide Project'. We realised that we were treading on very delicate ground; trying to overwrite a 'grand narrative', one can easily be absorbed by it. In carrying out artists' projects, we made sure that we organised meetings, discussions, lectures and so on, in order to reflect on the context in which we worked. Rajkowska's *Outing*, as the picnic became known, was accompanied by a lecture by Łukasz Ronduda on female neo-avant-garde Polish film-makers and a panel called 'An Artist for Hire',¹³ in which we discussed with our guests the relationship between the artist and the institution within neoliberal reality. With time, it transpired that Rajkowska's project exposed the institution in a very blunt manner, highlighting its internal fragmentation and alienation, and the hierarchical (verging on the feudal) structure of relationships between its staff members.



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6. Joanna Rajkowska, *Waiting for 624 employees of the National Museum in Kraków*, 2005, in the framework of 'The Guide Project'
7. Elżbieta Jabłońska, *The Meeting*, 2006, in the framework of 'The Guide Project'
8. Druga Grupa, *Memorising*, 1972/2006, performance during 'Panel of Artworks' by Roman Dziadkiewicz, in the framework of 'The Guide Project'
9. Hubert Czerepok, *Who is afraid of red, yellow and blue?* – a part of *Museum Covers*, 2006, in the framework of 'The Guide Project'



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In what seemed to us an obvious parity, another of the women artists invited, Elżbieta Jabłońska – who was mostly known at that time as author of the photographs and installation entitled *Supermother* (2003) – targeted a group of single mothers, typically excluded from cultural participation, and decided to prepare a programme of events for them and their kids, aimed at pulling them out of their daily routine. Working in collaboration with Jarosław Gawlik at the Dom Kultury Podgórze [Podgórze House of Culture], we managed to get in direct contact with some single mothers, and invited them to take part in a meeting with Jabłońska at the gallery. We also invited mothers we knew personally. For a work that became known as *The Meeting*, the artist prepared two pools filled with plastic balls, a relaxation film and a guided tour around the gallery (with Dominik Kuryłek) centred on the presence of women as both artists and the objects of the art shown there; snacks were provided for everyone and an artistic ‘hare and hounds’ game was organised for the children. A dozen or so mothers participated with their kids and the museum became one big playground, completely ignoring the respectable atmosphere of a highly distinguished institution. *The Meeting* was accompanied by a lecture by Ewa Toniak, on art’s strategies towards the feminine, and a discussion panel, entitled ‘Is Your Mind Filled with Goodness?’ The latter reflected on whether it makes sense for artists to work with socially excluded groups and the effectiveness of such work, on the traps of social stigmatisation for the excluded, on the social role and responsibility of the artist, the curator and the art institution, and on the kind of cultural projects that can help to bring about social change.

Following these two events, which presented an alternative perspective of the museum’s symbolic

significance, it was the turn of Hubert Czerepok, who raised the issue of the neoliberal pacification of artistic and countercultural strategies of subversion. As part of his *Museum Covers on the Gallery of Twentieth Century Polish Art*, he performed a series of repetitions of ‘iconic’ anarchic gestures. So, for example, he replaced video art and performance-documenting DVDs with those showing scenes of the destruction of works of art (excerpted from movies, such as *Batman*, or music videos, such as those by Björk); Banksy-style, he put a kitsch painting, bought at a street stall, on the gallery’s wall and made graffiti. The finale of his presence at the museum involved the recreation of a life-sized copy of the most attacked painting in art history: Barnett Newman’s *Who’s Afraid of Red, Yellow and Blue?* (1966). This copy was placed in the gallery and destroyed in front of the public by a young Kraków-based painter, Tomasz Kowalski, then restored and deposited in the museum’s collection. The *Museum Covers* were accompanied by Professor Steven Rushton’s lecture on the strategies of artistic re-enactment and a discussion panel on how (un)predictable interventions are possible in visual and material culture.

Paradoxically, these mummified gestures of subversion – which, when re-enacted, already seem to be castrated from their revolutionary potentials – worried the museum’s directors (despite their having previously sanctioned them) to the extent that ‘The Guide Project’, which had been planned to have eight instalments, was ended after the fourth one. The last event to be realised was Roman Dziadkiewicz’s *Imhibition*, which had originally been planned as a long-term, web-spinning ‘background’ project, but what had been intended as a latent initiative was

unexpectedly thrown into the spotlight by the museum's decision to discontinue the project.

Imhibition was a sort of psychoanalytic session, organised by Dziadkiewicz for the National Museum in Kraków, with the participation of a dozen or so artists and theoreticians. This study was initiated by the re-publication (with Dziadkiewicz's introduction and illustrations) of Emil Zegadłowicz's volume of erotica, entitled *Heathers*. Zegadłowicz's volume was originally published in 1935 in five copies, four of which were addressed to specific people close to the artist and one deposited with the Jagiellonian Library, to be made public fifty years later. Re-writing *Heathers*, Dziadkiewicz repeated the poet's gesture; each copy was handed over to a specific person and one was deposited with the National Museum in Kraków, to be made public no earlier than 2057.¹⁴

Imhibition was inaugurated with a presentation of *Heathers*. Safely locked in display cabinets – some of them open, other closed, perhaps shrouded even in white envelopes – copies of the books were displayed at five different locations in Kraków – three in the National Museum's main building (one in the lobby, later moving into the 'Intertext' section of the Gallery of Twentieth Century Polish Art; two others in sections entitled 'A to Polska właśnie...' [Poland is just like this] and 'Avant-Garde' sections) and (while retaining a museum-like form of display) two in locations that were important to Dziadkiewicz: the Nürnberg House and a private apartment. This event was accompanied by a panel discussion called 'Unproductive Frenzy of Exultations', featuring the artist himself and the curator, Aneta Szyłak.

During subsequent months, the artist worked with invited partners, within the museum and outside of it,

tracing and identifying sources and theoretical contexts, performing an artistic and cultural study. Among other events, we invited Agnieszka Kurant to give a lecture, entitled 'Snow Black – Invisible, Subconscious, Pirated', and present an ephemeral exhibition of invisible works of art (in poster form, printed black on black). Also organised was the lecture/performance 'Of Becoming Invisible' by the group called the Self-Managing School and, finally, the 'Panel of Works', a meeting/presentation of works and people important to the project.¹⁵ During the opening of the 'Panel', the collective, Druga Grupa [The Second Group], re-enacted their performance, *Remembering*, originally carried out at Warsaw's Foksal Gallery in 1972. Winding around the whole exhibition space was a 'cobweb' of inspirations, via quotations from authors such as George Bataille, Walter Benjamin, Joseph Conrad, Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, Witold Gombrowicz, Jerzy Grotowski, Tove Jansson, Franz Kafka, Jerzy Ludwiński, Stephane Mallarmé or Gabriela Zapolska. At the end of the unveiling of *Imhibition*, Professor Michał Paweł Markowski delivered a lecture, entitled 'On the Invisible', and the whole project concluded with the publication of an anthology.

That 'The Guide Project' finished prematurely was upsetting, but, knowing the rules by which the institution was run, we decided to negotiate further moves and projects rather than simply making a political case around the act of cancellation, and we used the potential of this failure as the motor of the actions with less force-based implications, less provocative, generating a new or unexpected meeting platform. We began to reflect on how we should continue our work with the National Museum. Dominik initiated a film project, called Film Gallery, which introduced a new

perspective for looking at the institution, and we began placing works of contemporary art in the context of existing permanent exhibitions. This saw Zbigniew Libera's *The Gay, Innocent and Heartless* (2010) being sited in the Gallery of Arms and Uniforms in Poland. We have also planned a series of exhibitions, inspired by correctional and intellectual 'Marginalia' from the museum's collection,¹⁶ which opens up a space for discussing the role and ideological profile of 'the national' within museum narratives. We have started to envisage a permanent residency programme for artists and curators, and we are about to organise a series of seminars to enable the museum's staff to develop a broad and flexible vision of the institutional framework and functions. Indebted, in a polemical way, to the concept of the 'critical museum' that Professor Piotr Piotrowski tried to establish in the National Museum in Warsaw,¹⁷ the anticipated result is that the National Museum will be transformed into an 'osmotic'¹⁸ tissue'.

At the beginning of this text, I insisted on the fundamental aspect of the museum being the preservation of memory. As has been stressed on numerous occasions by Professor Maria Janion, an outstanding researcher of Polish phantasmal space, Polishness is connected with a great many images, phantasms, emotional issues, dreams and illusions. Janion believes that we should be creating the future 'only with our dead ones'.¹⁹ In this context, it might be beneficial to reflect on how the museum works towards maintaining memories for future generations.

Analysing past determinants and being aware of the character of one's own existence in an appropriate historical and symbolic context is an important aspect of future-orientated work. As historiography theoreticians, such as

Hayden White or Frank Ankersmit, stress in their writings, an historical narrative is never given once and for all. It is always a product of its time and a mirror in which the 'Zeitgeist' is reflected. The National Museum, established as a specifically intellectual construct derived from nineteenth century historical thought, has additionally been affected by the fact of Poland's non-existence followed by its construction as an independent state,²⁰ by the situation of non-being and the need to create a community, which, these days, is inevitably based on the concept of nation-building.

In an era of European integration and (alter)globalisation, of a communication revolution driven by rapid technological progress, of the continuing development of civil society accompanied by a simultaneous crisis of neoliberal and conservative rhetorics, we should reflect on how the National Museum can pursue, or reconstitute, its mission.

As an institution fragmented in terms of both its profile and the subject of its work, the National Museum in Kraków seems to be a very timely institution. Its archaic structure, which provides many opportunities for re-conceptualisation, corresponds with the dynamic mood of the present time. This peculiar quality – this 'osmoticity' – is of great value. The museum's 'construction' (the way in which all kind of hierarchies and divisions are made), its 'mission' (to preserve and store) and its history are a perfect basis for conducting a meta-critical study, not only a museum-specific one but also a study of reality in general, which always begins with self-analysis.

Working with the National Museum's symbolic and material collections thus offers great potential. It could turn the institution into a participant within worldwide

intellectual debate, enabling it to become an active catalyst of social change. For this to happen, it is necessary to look at the museum as a single body composed of many elements, but not a fragmented one; as a corporeal one construed in terms of the philosophy of Elizabeth Grosz, not as a transparent and abstract idea, not dualistically as matter plus idea, but as a specific, potential physical matter animated by psychoenergetic and social inscriptions on its surface. Construed as a body that constantly expands and contracts, the museum can elude the confining and limiting process of iconisation – reduction of symbolic meaning on behalf of the image itself – and become, as Elizabeth Grosz writes, ‘extremely fluid and dynamic ... its borders, edges, and contours ... “osmotic”’, with a ‘remarkable power of incorporating and expelling outside and inside in an ongoing interchange’.²¹ A disorganised set of possibilities that gains its consistency and subjectivity through a desire-based relationship with the ‘other’.

When we attempt to look at the museum as an organism determined by a fluid diffusion between inside and outside, in which the programme is a result of a profound reflection on its own potential and a result of the meeting of the external with the internal (of artists and audience with the institution), it may turn out that the museum appears as an agora – a space of public debate. It is likely that this will not be a debate based on conflict, but one led in an atmosphere of delicateness and tenderness by looking at, reacting kindly to, opening towards, plenitudes and alterity.

If we manage to snatch the museum away from the stasis of monumentality, which condemns it to the past, we come to understand the monument as a block to current sensations,²² produced in time and space. Rethinking the

institution as an immanent subject, constantly establishing itself through practice and according to internal and external changes, we will be able to redefine not only this particular institution, but also the model of community based on current beliefs, rather than experiences. Only such an institution can, we believe, truly benefit today’s society, by generating social change, educating in a soft way, based on affects, serving as a genuine public forum. This would produce an institution the effect of which is not a memory but a fabulation – a fabulation of and about the past, present and future. And, further, as in the cycles of a helix, we should be careful to examine how processes are taken into consideration and the ways in which effects are displayed. As Jill Dawsey writes in her essay on the pedagogical aspects of exhibitions,²³ the most compelling ones ‘cause us to question what we think we know, to reorganize our knowledge, to confront the unknown’.²⁴ The ideal situation for museum projects²⁵ would be for them to adapt themselves, and outside actors, to a process of accommodation in which inner structures must adapt to the new, must be revised. The residency programme gives the participants a unique opportunity to go deeper into the history of the institution as well as their own presence; together with us, the museum workers, it allows them to propose the future while helping us to see ourselves and the museum in the mirror, to re-conceptualise our positions and strategies. This remains a challenge for us and for the museum, with the outcome as yet unknown. On 2 September 2011, Paulina Ołowska is expected to open her *Café Bar* installation on the roof of the institution – we are waiting to see and experience what will unfold.

NOTES

1 Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie, *Misja*, <http://www.muzeum.krakow.pl/Misja.ro.o.html>.

2 *Galeria sztuki polskiej XX wieku. Przewodnik*, red. A. Fryz-Więcek, (Kraków, 2005).

3 Made for an exhibition, entitled 'Ładnie? O ładnym...' [Beautiful? About Beauty], curated by Dominik Kuryłek and myself in Kraków in 2004.

4 The project's first part is recapitulated in the conversation: E. M. Tatar, D. Kuryłek, K. Szreder, *Pomiędzy krytyką instytucjonalną a krytycznością instytucji. O projekcie 'Przewodnik' w Muzeum Narodowym w Krakowie*, <http://www.obieg.pl/rozmowy/5714>; as part of Roman Dziadkiewicz's project, the anthology *Imhibition* was published, eds. R. Dziadkiewicz, E. M. Tatar, Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie, Korporacja Ha!art (Kraków, 2006).

5 E. M. Tatar, 'Muzeum' - performance taneczny, http://magazyn.culture.pl/pl/culture/artykuly/wy_in_zorka_wollny_Krakow.

6 W. Szymański, *Muzeum jedzie na Woodstock. Rozmowa z Jolantą Gumułą*, <http://www.obieg.pl/rozmowy/16042>.

7 Z. Gołubiew, 'Początki i terażniejszość Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie', in *Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie i Kolekcja Książek Czartoryskich* (Warszawa: Arkady, 2010), p. 9.

8 Tadeusz Brzozowski, Stanisław Fijałkowski, Tadeusz Kantor, Adam Marczyński, Jerzy Nowosielski, Andrzej Pawłowski and Ryszard Winiarski.

9 M. Porębski, 'Widzieć i rozumieć (kilka wyjaśnień i komentarzy)', in *Widzieć i rozumieć*, exh. cat., Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie, Kraków, 1975. Italics in original.

10 Zofia Gołubiew, who is now a directrice of the museum, was Head of the Department of Modern Polish Painting and Sculpture in 1994.

11 Cf. ba., in *44 współczesnych artystów wobec Matejki*, exh. cat., Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie (Kraków, 1994).

12 Cd. D. Kuryłek, E. M. Tatar, 'Phantoms and Phantasms, or the Recesses of the Institution', in *Imhibition*, op cit.

13 The titles we chose for panels and meetings had mostly been used before as titles of artworks within 'The Guide Project'.

14 Zegadłowicz appears here as Dziadkiewicz's alter ego, an enfant terrible, a figure both epigonic and avant-garde. Cf. R. Dziadkiewicz, 'Imhibition (Introduction to Accidia)', in *Imhibition*, op cit.

15 This included Łukasz Korolkiewicz's *Fog - Vague Premonitions*, Jarosław Modzelewski's *Joseph Conrad Korzeniowski*, Janina Turek's *Journals 1943-2000*, Elżbieta Janicka's *Odd Place*, Agnieszka

Kurant's *Snow Black (NMC Edition)*, Aneta Grzeszykowska's *Portrait*, Jadwiga Sawicka's *Nothing Inside*, Jerzy Rosołowicz's *Neutronicon P-24*, Krzysztof Bednarski's *Poster for the Mountain Project by Jerzy Grotowski's Teatr Laboratorium*, video documentation of Jan Świdziński's *Erasing performance*, Zorka Wollny's video *The Museum* and Roman Dziadkiewicz's video *Imhibition (Heathers)*.

16 This word, which, in Polish, connects with the margins of narration, also means trifles or refers to marginal notes like the ones made in medieval manuscripts, often illustrated and including some surprising additional perspectives.

17 See: P. Piotrowski, *Muzeum Krytyczne* (Poznań: Rebis, 2001).

18 Facilitating spontaneous bi-directional flow.

19 See: M. Janion, *Do Europy - tak, ale razem z naszymi umarłymi* (Warszawa: Sic!, 2000).

20 Partitions of Poland in 1772, 1793 and 1795.

21 E. Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 79.

22 G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, 'Percept, Affect and Concept', in *What is Philosophy?* (London: Verso, 1994).

23 J. Dawsey, 'History Lessons: on The Short Century', *The Exhibitionist*, no. 1, January, 2010.

24 Ibid. p. 7.

25 In which a 'project is not formed independently and imposed upon the work, but rather emerges from the work [...]. A project may lead somewhere not defined at the beginning. A key process may fail or objectives may shift. It feels less imperative that the final form should be as rigidly preconceived as, say, that of an exhibition with a thesis to illustrate. [...] The project can occupy a fluid space between the various protagonists involved, like the physical equivalent of conversation'. See R. Bowman, 'First Person Singular', *The Exhibitionist*, op cit., p. 36.

PRECARIOUS SITUATIONS AND COSMOPOLITAN REALITIES IN EAST EUROPEAN ART¹

Maja and Reuben Fowkes

¹ The authors of this text preferred to use 'East European' rather than 'Eastern European' as they felt that the latter seemed too geographical in this context.

The prevailing assumption according to which art qualifies as East European only when it deals with the shared history of socialism that once defined the region, the legacy of political symbols, and the jigsaw of national identities that surfaced after the fall of communism, is called into question by current trends. The pervasive effects of globalisation in Eastern Europe – which have accelerated and deepened with European integration and are reinforced by both technological advances and new forms of migration – have arguably liberated the notion of East European art from its identitarian origins. As a result, a shift in emphasis can be detected between the artistic practices of the first post-communist decade, in which artists were frequently drawn to explore the immediate aftermath of political changes and the complex of identity questions generated by them, and the situation in more recent years, in which artistic involvement with the politics of national identity has diversified into new concerns, accelerated by the experience of cosmopolitan realities.

This shift is vividly illustrated by the famous performative act by Dan Perjovschi, a Romanian artist with a formidable international career, whose decision to tattoo the word 'Romania' on his arm at an art festival in 1993 was an affirmation of both his national and East European identity. Interestingly, in 2003 the artist decided to have the tattoo removed, which indicates not only his own development, but also wider changes in the realities of East European art. Commenting on the process of tattoo removal via medical lasers, Perjovschi explains, 'ROMANIA didn't disappear from my body, it only spread itself so as it is no longer visible.'² This reversal could be interpreted as recognition of the emergence of more complex and multi-

layered forms of belonging in contemporary Europe, in which national identity no longer has a dominant role, but is rather dispersed and subsumed as just one mode of identification among many possible attributes.

The assumption that an East European artist should primarily be identified through a national frame was also challenged through Slovak artist Roman Ondák's participation in the 2009 Venice Biennale. When Ondák was selected to exhibit in the Czechoslovak pavilion, he was well aware of the politics underlying the only post-socialist pavilion to bridge a geopolitical divide by sharing the space between two now-independent countries. His contribution, entitled *Loop*, was a total environment consisting of a garden setting, which reflected the scenery of trees and shrubs in the vicinity of the pavilion to create a looped reality. Ondák's statements at the opening of the pavilion indicate that he had devised an artistic strategy for sidestepping the expectations of national representation. He explained: 'I'm representing Slovakia in the Czechoslovak pavilion. But, by doing this work, I don't feel I'm representing the country [...] it seems as if I'm not here, and my work is not here. I'm playing with the disappearance of the pavilion as it merges into its surroundings,' continuing, 'I'm in the pavilion, and I'm not completely erasing my nationality, but this is suppressed by the way I participate.'³ Ondák's displacement of artistic concerns beyond the national frame corresponds to what Gayatri Spivak has called 'setting limits to mere identitarianism' by refusing to produce 'a naturalized, homogenous identity'.⁴

Also pointing away from narrowly national preoccupations was the broader environmental dimension of the work, which went beyond the use of natural materials or a declarative ecological agenda. The artist's intention to

replant the shrubs nearby after the biennial closed provoked the approving observation that, in contrast to the mounds of waste and debris that typically accompany the taking down of exhibitions in the Giardini, Ondák's pavilion had 'the smallest possible environmental footprint'.⁵ This reference to ecological concerns that require global collaboration in the search of relevant solutions signals an interest in emerging forms of cosmopolitan solidarity. Global ecological crisis is also a context in which a more affirmative understanding of cosmopolitanism is gaining ground and displacing habitual accusations of elitism from the historical left.

The 2011 edition of the Venice Biennale throws additional light on the issues raised. While some of the East European pavilions continued to opt for national representations by native artists that dealt with the legacy of the trauma of twentieth century history – through established methodologies that express the notion of 'East Europeanness' such as by employing totalitarian symbolism – others attempted to liberate the East European artist from the burden of socio-political signifiers. As an example of this latter approach, the Croatian pavilion, by curatorial collective, WHW, presented the oeuvre of avant-garde performance artist and filmmaker, Tomislav Gotovac, through the particularities of his own work, while consciously avoiding the trope of the dissident East European artist and the reintegration of his artistic career into the canon of national art history. Instead of encouraging visitors to read the work primarily in terms of resistance to an oppressive state apparatus and by forgoing an overtly ideological or nationalistic frame, the singularities of his artistic practice were allowed to come to the fore.

Another step towards recognition of the cosmopolitan realities of Eastern Europe was taken by the Polish pavilion,



1. Yael Bartana,
Zamach [Assassination], 2011, production photo.

the opening statement of which began with the bold declaration: 'Yael Bartana is the first non-Polish national to represent Poland in the history of the Venice Biennale'.⁶ The difference in approach to national issues and history lies not only in the fact that a non-native artist was given the opportunity to speak for an East European country, but also in the way Bartana opens up specific issues of minority politics and nationalism to a global audience. For Bartana, an Israeli artist whose long term engagement with Poland began during an international residency at Foksal Gallery Foundation in 2006, the present age of globalisation requires the imagining of new forms of multinational community that need to address the social and political relationships 'among Jews, Poles and other Europeans'.⁷ Through three films, the artist dug deep into the contemporary psyche, probing historical sensitivities around the question of the Jewish presence in Poland, while at the same time challenging the assumptions of Zionist nationalism.

Today, the more cosmopolitan outlook of contemporary artists reflects their greater possibilities for travelling and working abroad, through networks of residencies and more informal modes. Living abroad for extended periods does not mean cutting ties with the art scene at home and, with the communicative possibilities of new technologies and the ease of travel afforded by budget airlines, an increasing number of artists is able to maintain a significant artistic presence in their native country while being active in one or more art scenes elsewhere. This situation is reflected in the extended length and complexity of artists' biographical details in catalogues, which often sees 'lives and works in' followed by two, or even three, cities with which the artists equally identifies, while others opt for

a single locational signifier, simply stating 'lives and works everywhere'. These new patterns of transnational living have contributed to a broadening of artistic concerns away from one-sided national preoccupations, so that when artists deal with, and are immersed in, their surrounding reality, they approach this from a comparative perspective and are often drawn to its cosmopolitan aspects.

Today's networks of artistic communication in Eastern Europe are built on the traces of informal and underground artistic communities that quietly flourished in former times, despite official barriers to movement and interaction across borders. During the socialist era, with the exception of national survey exhibitions and other ideologically framed forms of artistic exchange, there were few officially sponsored opportunities for artists to spend extended periods of time abroad. However, below the frozen surface of politically-ordained cultural exchange, East European artists were, from the late 1960s onwards, making enthusiastic contact with fellow artists elsewhere, visiting each other and organising unofficial exhibitions that were opportunities for sharing ideas and comparing experiences, while keeping in touch through the haphazard means of the postal service.

The initial post-communist period saw a slight decline in significance of these delicate lines of east-east communication, as artists looked to the world beyond the old Iron Curtain. Today, though, there is a revived interest in exploring experiences common to both socialism and post-communism, not least in considering the legacy of underground artistic communities which transcended national and political divides. Characteristic of recent artistic approaches to the legacy of socialism is that the emphasis is generally not on the re-establishment of grand narratives and over-emphasis

of communalities, but rather on investigating particularities, exceptions and singular experiences. At the same time, the re-emergence of strong organisations and institutions for art in the region has facilitated a resurgence in the circulation of art professionals within the former Eastern Bloc.

Artists' residencies in Eastern Europe have, in the best cases, provided opportunities for artists to address sensitive local issues, courageously bringing an outsider's eye to intractable questions by highlighting fresh perspectives. When Polish artist, Joanna Rajkowska, took up a residency in Budapest in 2007, she was confronted, on the one hand, with the phenomenon of the rise of the extreme right, which was highly visible on the streets at that time, and, on the other, with the unstoppable forces of globalisation, reflected in the growing diversity of the metropolitan population. In response, Rajkowska used her time in Hungary to produce a video work that dealt directly with the increasingly transnational reality of contemporary Eastern Europe and the difficulty of accommodating a historically novel situation within a nationally orientated social and political order.

One channel of her film *Airways* (2008) shows documentation of an extremist right-wing group marching on Budapest's Heroes' Square as part of a uniformed initiation rite, unaware of the air corridor above their heads, along which relentless planes transport potential targets for their wrath. This is juxtaposed with footage of an unlikely group of people, from Syria, Mongolia, Nigeria, Bulgaria, Russia, Serbia, Great Britain and China, who share on camera their experiences and reasons for settling in Budapest, all significantly delivering their stories in broken Hungarian. The artist then invited this group to join representatives of other minorities, such as gays, Jews and extremist nationalists, to

take a flight on an old Soviet plane along the Danube Bend. 'Whether the plane flies safely depends on the pilot's skills as well as on how the passengers behave – whether they observe the social contract or try to pry the door open or snatch the joystick away from the pilot', explains the artist, 'so the airplane becomes a symbolic territory (where the minorities became majority) in which a group of people has agreed to spend an hour together despite the fact that all the conflicts are still present and not solved'.⁸

As can be seen on the film, it turned out to be a very bumpy flight; no one felt like drinking the champagne that was provided, and all the passengers seemed equally anxious – when they got back down to earth, it was with a sigh of relief. Although the film doesn't try to understand these multiple conflicts or find a solution to them, it does suggest a need to organise society so that, in the artist's words, 'absolutely everyone have [sic] a place for themselves'.⁹ The work points to the complex cultural diversity that exists in present-day Hungary and, through the metaphor of an old and rather unstable plane, the artist makes us aware of the fragility of the situation and how easily things can become unbalanced.

Rajkowska's film is of particular relevance here for two reasons – on the one hand because it came about as a direct result of new transnational structures that provide working possibilities and resources for art projects; on the other hand, it draws attention to the existence of diverse and trans-cultural communities in the capitals of the region, which may not always be fully acknowledged by the local art world. This new reality – which is ultimately the result of wider processes of globalisation and, in particular, the legal and administrative changes brought about by European integration – represents an important shift away from an earlier model of traditional



2.

2. Eike, *News Time Trap*, 2009, installation view from the exhibition curated by Maja and Reuben Fowkes, 'Revolutionary Decadence: Foreign Artists in Budapest since 1989'.

3. Katarina Sević, *News From Nowhere, object 9, Chandelier*, 2009, installation view from the exhibition curated by Maja and Reuben Fowkes, 'Revolutionary Decadence: Foreign Artists in Budapest since 1989'.



3.

4. Dan Perjovschi, *Removing Romania*, 2003, undertaken within the framework of 'In the Gorges of the Balkans', Kunsthalle Fridericianum Kassel.

5. Joanna Rajkowska, *Airways*, 2008.

6. Roman Ondák, *Loop*, 2009, installation view, Czech and Slovak Pavilion, 53rd Venice Biennale, 2009.



4.



5.

6.



Central European 'multi-ethnicity' to a much more cosmopolitan and globally-connected situation of multi-nationality. The existence of new international communities in Eastern European capitals is amply reflected in the art scene, and the presence and contribution of foreign artists and curators can be recognised as a decisive factor in fostering the more cosmopolitan outlook and modalities of East European art today.

The transformations brought about by the political changes of 1989 opened up the borders of the former Eastern Bloc to a new wave of migration, which has had a deep impact on the cultural life of the region. Although it has remained largely unexamined, the specific phenomenon of foreign artists settling in the capitals of Eastern Europe may also be traced back to the immediate period following the fall of the Iron Curtain. Coming as nomads, travellers or on artistic exchanges, and often attracted by lower costs of living than in other parts of Europe, they arrived in the midst of a national revival that followed decades of communist suppression; however, they were mostly profoundly indifferent to such aspirations. Instead, foreign artists immersed themselves in new forms of sociability that sprung up in the liminal spaces of the post-communist city, while happily sharing their personal contacts with the art scenes from which they originated, often providing the first international conduits for local, and until then largely isolated, East European art scenes. In a historical perspective, despite large numbers of foreign artists spending a significant amount of time in the capitals of Eastern Europe, there has been relatively little recognition of their contribution to their adopted art scenes.

In the aftermath of 1989, foreign artists experienced the capitals of Eastern Europe as liberated zones, experimental

enclaves, in comparison to the over-structured social, educational and artistic systems they left behind in the West. Typical of a transitional state, a parallel process resulted, which saw a trend towards the commercialisation of the local art world, on the one hand, and the thriving of a non-market professional art scene on the other. The informal structures that flourished in the era of late communism and were characteristic of the East European neo-avant-garde were taken further by foreign artists who built new networks and professional collaborations that were casual and post-national in character. At the same time, foreign artists were increasingly caught in the pincer of identity politics, being both alienated from attempts to build national representation according to the multi-ethnic traditions of the region and surplus to attempts to construct a new post-communist East European identity. At the height of the art world's preoccupation with identity politics in the 1990s, therefore, some foreign artists decided to leave the region, as the visiting international curators they met were clearly looking for 'authentic' East European artists and as newcomers, they did not match the profile.

One research project that investigated the issue of how the work of non-native artists could be accommodated within the nationally orientated art historical narratives of the post-socialist countries took Hungary as a case in point. This project, devised by Maja and Reuben Fowkes, resulted in an exhibition, entitled 'Revolutionary Decadence: Foreign Artists in Budapest since 1989', and in an accompanying publication, which consisted of interviews with selected non-native participants in the Hungarian art world.¹⁰ At issue was not a belated rerun of the exhibition strategy of 'The Other Story' at the Hayward Gallery in 1989, which called for the

recognition of the work of Afro-Asian artists in the narrative of British modernism; in other words, it was not simply a matter of demanding the inclusion of non-native artists in national art historical narratives. Rather, the aim was to initiate a discourse about the phenomenon of foreign artists living and working in East European capitals with a view to investigating their contribution to the diversification of local art scenes of the region in the era of globalisation.

In order to investigate the involvement of non-native artists in the local art scene, some key indicators were considered, such as their membership of official art associations, positions in the Academy of Fine Arts and other art institutions, as well as nominations for prizes and scholarships. Other factors included their representation by local commercial galleries, inclusion in important exhibitions and the level of critical attention devoted to them in the art press. Perhaps in response to barriers encountered in integration, non-native artists have shown a propensity to create their own niche by initiating independent institutions, collaborations and exhibition spaces, which then provided a platform for further fruitful networks. In conversations with non-native artists, one issue that came over strongly was the precarious situation they face in their working and living conditions, due to the fact that in global post-transition Eastern Europe, and in contrast to the situation in the 1990s, the cost of living has risen sharply.

While the publication primarily dealt with the manifold reasons underlying the decision by foreign artists to settle in Hungary, the exhibition had a different focus. In order not to recast the bare identitarian approach to which East European artists have been regularly submitted, which saw their artistic personalities relegated to second place, the artists in the

exhibition were asked neither to essentialise, or exoticise, their experience as foreigners in an Eastern European capital, nor to address the problems of migration or minorities. While, for some, tackling these kinds of issues was a constitutive part of their practice, the artistic interests of many of the artists participating in the exhibition were only tangentially related to their own personal story of migration.

As one of the key aspects of globalisation, the emergence of new forms of migration is conditioned by the synchronicity of global cultures and the rapid speed of information exchange and has clear ramifications for East European art. This phenomenon is frequently discussed in an art context in terms of exiles and nomads, which often gives rise to cynicism in response to claims of a 'utopian nomadism' reserved for the economically privileged.¹¹ Spivak, for example, contrasts the 'cosmopolitanism of the global elite and the passive exposure to multi-nationality in the everyday of the global underclass'.¹² However, whether they choose to settle in Prague, Berlin or New York, the position of the majority of artists should perhaps be discussed in terms not of privilege but of the shared precariousness of unstable and insecure working and living conditions that have become increasingly dominant in our late capitalist society.

The rise of cognitive capitalism, with the integration of individual creativity and leisure into economic processes and increasingly insecure working conditions, is another decisive factor in shifting the interests and working methods of East European art into new terrain. Sean Snyder, a North American artist based in Kiev and Tokyo, conceives of precariousness as part of his artistic practice, claiming: 'I have often placed myself in precarious situations in order to access information and images for my work. I have been thrown out



7. Sean Snyder, *Exhibition*, 2008.

of places, been arrested, had cameras confiscated, have faked journalist credentials, paid bribes, and so on.' The method that the artist wittily situates between compulsion and research-based practice has also been applied to his works dealing with the legacy of socialist realism in the former Soviet Union. The remit of East European art has, therefore, expanded to include non-native artists who have settled in the region or who have simply chosen Eastern Europe as the focus of their artistic research, complicating any attempt to generalise about the identity of the artists engaged in producing East European art.

As has been shown, new patterns of migration, the spread of transnational communities and the development of information technology are all factors that have conditioned the cosmopolitanism of the twenty-first century, which results both from practical changes in people's lives and through the emergence of new global sympathies around issues such as ecology, social justice and the anti-war movement. As one theorist of the post-national puts it, 'cosmopolitanism doesn't begin and end with a love of all humanity, but with modest, small scale and undeliberate personal networking'.¹³ Cosmopolitanism can therefore no longer be automatically assumed to constitute a shallow or artificial form of identity and may instead be conceived in more substantial terms as 'rooted' or 'experiential'. One recent publication, dealing with the cosmopolitan imagination in an art context, proposes an understanding of cosmopolitanism that is 'grounded, materially specific and relational', deals with 'cultural diversity and movement beyond fixed geo-political borders', and is 'premised upon an embodied, embedded, generous and affective form of subjectivity'.¹⁴ This kind of emergent cosmopolitan reality is what is at stake in East European art now.

NOTES

² See the artist's website: www.perjovschi.ro

³ 'Roman Ondak discusses the Czech/Slovak Pavilion' on www.artforum.com

⁴ Gayatri Spivak, *Other Asias* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), p. 9.

⁵ Blake Gopnik, 'Roman Ondak's Fertile twist is simply inspired', *Washington Post*, 10 June 2009.

⁶ The text was prominently displayed at the entrance to the pavilion and in the press release; see the Polish Pavilion at Venice website: www.labiennale.art.pl

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ See artist's website, www.rajkowska.com

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ See Maja and Reuben Fowkes (Eds.), *Revolutionary Decadence: Foreign Artists in Budapest since 1989* (Budapest: Museum Kiscell, 2009).

¹¹ T.J. Demos, 'The Ends of Exile: Towards a Coming Universality', in Nicolas Bourriaud (Ed.), *Altermodern: Tate Triennial*, exhibition cat. (London: Tate, 2009), pp. 73-88.

¹² Spivak, *Other Asias*, op cit., p. 237.

¹³ Ulf Hannerz, 'Where we are and who we want to be', in Ulf Hedetoft and Hjort Mette (Eds.), *The Postnational Self: Belonging and Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), p. 231.

¹⁴ Marsha Meskimmon, *Contemporary Art and the Cosmopolitan Imagination* (London: Routledge, 2010), p. 19.

WHY INVEST IN RESIDENCIES?

Odile Chenal

Within the brief question above, which was posed during a roundtable at the conference RE-tooling RESIDENCIES,¹ several other questions lie hidden.

Not only is the question ambiguous in itself – meaning both ‘Why **do** we invest’ and ‘Why **should** we invest?’ – but it also prompts other queries. Who is doing the investing – the artist, host organisation, or funder? And in **what** are they investing? Since investment implies the expectation of getting something in return, we need to know exactly what it is that’s expected, and by whom.

In this short article, I would like to comment on these issues from the perspective of a funding organisation, the European Cultural Foundation. But first, I would like to ask one more question: why are we asking this **now**?

Artists’ Residencies: A Trend

Debating this subject is very timely, since, despite the economic crisis, there is a growing tendency to invest in artists’ residencies.

Indeed, a mushrooming of residency centres has occurred over the past ten years, and money that cities and regions would once have put into festivals has been going to residencies instead.

The difference lies not only in the number of residencies, but also in their location. European artists are not only attracted by large western cities, but also by Eastern Europe, China, Africa, the Middle East – places offering new inspiration and fresh artistic challenges.

There has also been an increase in what I call ‘secular residencies’, which are residencies in environments not traditionally considered artistic. These can be just about anywhere – in universities, private companies, airports, hospitals, private houses, etc. All of these places want ‘their’ artist.

At a very general level, how can this trend be explained?

Firstly, the role of artists in our societies has changed and is changing. Artists are called upon to intervene in all kinds of social contexts, especially where politicians and social workers have failed. They are expected to unveil new realities, bring people together in communities, contribute to inclusive policies, and so on. Whether they want it or not, they have been assigned a role as actors and beacons of change; the role performed by intellectuals in the twentieth century is being thrust upon them.

Secondly, related to this is the desire to re-connect art and artists with the social environment. There is also a growing interest in the creative, economic impact of arts and culture. Artists’ residencies are becoming part of the panoply of cultural policies for local development.

And, finally, even if concrete outcomes are less visible than with arts festivals and events, residencies give both artists and hosts a sense of duration, of process and of sustainability.

These developments mean that the concept of the residency is no longer automatically associated with geographical mobility. A residency used to be about going ‘somewhere

else’, usually beyond the borders of one’s own country. Nowadays, residencies can take artists deeper into their own environment, their own cities or towns. They still experience difference there, but the challenges come not from working far away but from being in totally different contexts, professionally, scientifically, politically. In terms of distance, ‘otherness’ can be very close.

As one artist at the Residency Cairo Symposium[2] put it, ‘I could even go on a residency in my own home. It is not about distance or unusual environment; it is a state of mind!’

This may be taking the point to an extreme, but residency is, indeed, about inhabiting and working within a ‘space of difference’.

Residencies: Expectations, Interactions, Negotiations

By entering this different space, the artist also enters a new system of relations. And it is this **complex system of relations**, seen from the viewpoint of a funding organisation, and with particular attention to ‘secular’ residencies, that concerns me here.

In a residency, there are typically three active partners involved – artists, host organisations and (usually) funders – not to mention a possible fourth partner with a decisive role: those people, artists or otherwise, within the immediate environment. Each of these partners has particular expectations, and an attempt will be made to unravel some of them here.

Artists

An artist can take up a residency for a number of personal reasons: curiosity, career development, the inspiration to be drawn in confronting a different art scene or simply the opportunity to survive financially; they might also have a need for broader interactions, for research, social engagement and intervention, a need to interact with other professionals or a specific environment.

Artists will mainly have dealings with the host organisation, usually including a curator, a director of programmes who is their interlocutor and with whom an agreement has been established. In some cases, agreements are very loose, very open ('I was only given the keys'), directed only at the artist's professional development. But many residencies have formal or informal requirements and expectations regarding an end production or exhibition, and also regarding relations with the professional or local environment.

Host Organisations

The host organisation will typically have all kinds of more or less clearly expressed expectations. These tend to be centred on working with interesting artists, supporting them, contributing to a vibrant local art scene, while also increasing the visibility and status of the institution, gaining international networks and recognition.

Funding Bodies

Things become more complex when funders come into the picture. There is naturally a large diversity of public and private funders, but nearly all of them have expectations of either a specific or general nature.

Local or national funders may expect a return in terms of improvements to their image, to tourism, local development or cultural diplomacy. Funders with a social mission (such as foundations) will evaluate residencies more in terms of social change, community building or, as has often been stressed in recent years, intercultural competence, exchange and dialogue.

How to Invest

Artists often expect the host to keep the funder and its objectives at a distance. But these objectives exist and, like it or not, artists are part of this interplay of relations with hosts, funders and the environment. Artists are more and more often being invited to work in a political environment: an area of conflict, a difficult urban district, a region undergoing economic transformation, etc.

While artists' residencies are multiplying – a very positive trend – they are increasingly becoming an aspect of cultural and economic development, of social and international policies, and the risk of instrumentalisation is only a short step away.

Personally, I am not too concerned by this risk, providing the partners involved present their expectations with as much clarity as possible and there is space for discussion. Needless to say, not everything can be clarified; an artistic process is always a journey into the unknown, but at least the basic objectives should be exchanged and common ground negotiated.

The arm's length principle means that funders are often absent from this negotiation. But, since more residencies are

taking place outside art centres and within certain political contexts, artists should be ready to engage in conversations with the funders. In my view, this conversation is one of the keys to a 'successful' residency – defined as a residency in which artists know the context they are entering and funders, while not intervening in the course of the residency, remain open about their agenda and, above all, open to listening to the artist.

In short, for all partners involved, there are many diverse reasons as to **why** they should invest in residencies. However, it is not only about why, it is also about **how** to invest – how to clarify each of the partners' expectations in a way that doesn't affect the artist's freedom, but acknowledges the various perspectives and negotiates objectives.

And, finally, if artists' residencies are investments, they are not only about investment. They are also about hospitality, and hospitality is when you do not expect anything in return!

NOTES

1 RE-tooling RESIDENCIES, an international conference on artistic residencies, CCA Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, 16-19 November, 2009. www.re-tooling-residencies.org

2 Residency Cairo symposium. www.crs.nu

ONE DAY, ONE QUESTION

Jean-Baptiste Joly in Conversation with
Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka

Akademie Schloss Solitude was founded in 1990. It is a public foundation that operates as an international residency programme, supporting young artists, subsidised by the State of Baden-Württemberg Lottery. It is located in two former military buildings in the grounds of Schloss [castle] Solitude in Stuttgart.

As its name suggests, Akademie Schloss Solitude combines the idea of an academy, for scientific and artistic exchange, with that of a retreat. It operates in the intermediary space between private and public, in which art is reflected upon and produced while also finding a connection to the public.

According to its statutes, Solitude's task is to mainly promote younger artists by organising public performances, readings, concerts and exhibitions. Since 2002, Solitude has invited artists working in the fields of architecture, design, video/film/new media, literature, music/sound and both visual and performing arts, as well as scholars, researchers and scientists to apply for residency fellowships. Fellowships are granted for either six or twelve months, and fellows are selected by ten jurors, working across disciplines, who are nominated by a chairperson.

From the outset, Solitude has promoted young artists from Eastern Europe, by giving them an opportunity to develop their work. In 2002, cooperation was established between Akademie Schloss Solitude and the Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw, which led to the foundation of the Eastern European Network, the first exchange programme in Eastern Europe. As a result of this positive experience, Solitude extended this programme into Hungary and Romania in 2005 and 2006 (respectively) and to Bulgaria and Serbia in 2007 in cooperation with the

Ministry of Science, Research and Art of Baden-Württemberg, the Collegium Budapest, the József Attila Circle, the Robert Bosch Foundation, the German-Polish Foundation, the Hungarian and Romanian Cultural Ministries. Between 2008 and 2011, the programme was further extended into the three-year project known as 'Opening Our Closed Shops', supported by the Allianz Cultural Foundation, which saw interdisciplinary cooperation between Solitude and five partner institutions from Warsaw, Budapest, Bucharest, Sofia and Novi Sad. Its main aim was to counteract the imbalance of artistic exchange between Eastern and Western European countries, through residencies as well as public events like exhibitions, workshops and concerts.

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka, a curator and leader of the artist-in-residence laboratory programme at CCA Ujazdowski Castle, was a Solitude fellow in the field of art coordination and invited to prepare a Solitude exhibition and festival in Warsaw in autumn 2002. Here, she corresponds with Jean-Baptiste Joly, director of Akademie Schloss Solitude in an e-mail exchange that took place in April 2011.

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka

—— Why did you focus on an institution from Eastern Europe, by initiating a collaboration with Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw in 2001? Was it based on personal reasons – for example, a good relationship with our former director, Wojciech Krukowski – or was it a strategic/political decision?

Jean-Baptiste Joly

—— My good relationship with Wojciech Krukowski

surely played a part, but there were also other reasons. Since its opening in 1990, Solitude had developed its network in parallel with the process of European integration. As a Frenchman living in Germany and having been very influenced by the close French-German relationship since my childhood, being in charge of Akademie Schloss Solitude I felt that I had a responsibility to the integration process between East and West. So, this is the basis of my interest in the art scenes of Eastern Europe.

As such, Solitude made an effort to communicate with the eastern part of Europe. I travelled as much as I could, to create contacts in Budapest, Bucharest, Sofia, Vilnius, Warsaw, etc., in order to understand what was happening in the art scenes over there, to see which other institutions (among them, the Soros Foundation) were building up. In our efforts to make the Solitude Fellowship better known, we made a special effort in Eastern Europe; by the end of the 1990s, more people from these countries were applying to Solitude than people from Western Europe.

In 1999, having tried different strategies for cooperation projects in different countries which had been successful but not sustainable, I suggested this new partnership to my friend, Krukowski.

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka

—— Since then, Solitude has initiated exchanges with partners coming from Eastern Europe, within the 'Eastern European Exchange'. This terminology is now treated as a cliché, as it doesn't allow for differentiation. Wasn't there a pitfall that, from the start of our collaboration, we would fall into the usual dependencies between East and West, losing

sight of the artistic projects while concentrating on political priorities? How does this influence your way of thinking about projects, such as the Eastern European Exchange and 'Opening our Closed Shops', which are held in collaboration between countries from the east and west of Europe. Working on such projects you have to be careful... What is the most important thing to avoid according to your long experience?

Jean-Baptiste Joly

—— Yes, dear Ika, you are right – Eastern-Western European cooperation became a cliché, as did the French-German cooperation, or even women's liberation, a long time ago. But, the fact that these things are clichés doesn't mean that it is no longer necessary to work on them, to struggle for them. So, the pitfall would be to decide that we don't need to take care about them any more. Within the possible cooperations between Eastern and Western Europe there are well known paths, invented by technocrats and governments, which take place in the sphere of political representation – Sunday morning speeches, 'artistic' exhibitions in official places with politicians appearing together with artists, etc. And there are other, unknown, paths, like those we created together for 'Opening our Closed Shops', in which we tried to face real questions. So, for example, we all claim to be in favour of exchanges and openness, but, in reality, our 'formats' never fit together. Participating in an exchange means being aware of the difference between partners and coming closer, accepting this difference. In that sense, I really think that we made a great contribution to European integration with the

'Opening our Closed Shops' programme. It changed my view of things as much as it did it for all the participants. I learnt, for example, about the ongoing difficulty of maintaining an NGO in Eastern Europe, which sometimes gave our exchange an additional difficulty. The next, very practical, question would be: How would we organise an exchange which reinforces the NGOs involved instead of endangering them?

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka

—— Why do you think that project managers from Eastern Europe declare an interest in grounding collaborations within the region but then they have problems handling them? Why are residents – for example, former Solitude fellows from Western Europe – welcome?

Is the expressed 'need' for inner-Eastern European exchange coming from an imaginary space of 'how nice it would be' or how 'we don't know much about each other' but is the reality that, by inviting 'Western Solitude Fellows', we have direct access to 'outside' reality? Because it is easier to promote them, the quality is already assured...

Jean-Baptiste Joly

—— As the name suggests, NGOs are not institutionally recognised by governments and are not on the regular payroll for public funding, so they permanently have to struggle for money in order to cover running expenses like rental costs, etc. In most of the cases I know, the people who run NGOs don't get paid for their work and have to undertake extra work beyond the NGO – as art critics,

teachers, translators, guides, website-designers, etc. – in order to make money to survive. They are totally dedicated to their NGO, and to raising funding for projects, but this doesn't secure the running costs and it takes up time earning money for them or their family. This is a dramatic situation, a self-exploitation, without which many projects would never happen. This is one of the reasons why Solitude feels so involved, because we think that we can help, by making things more 'official' (through financial support and meetings with government representatives), when we back an NGO to host a residency in Budapest, Novi Sad or Sofia. Solitude does not suffer the same precarity; we have quite a comfortable situation and get regular funding to cover salaries, running costs, facilities, grants and projects, making things much easier. We are aware of this and of the fact that the exchange between East and West is still not balanced – more Eastern European artists want to go to the West than the other way around. We tried to redress the balance, and tried also to develop exchanges between East and East.

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka

—— How is it possible that, despite all the years you have run Solitude's programme, you are still open to fellows and new projects proposed by artists? You seem not to be at all tired.

Jean-Baptiste Joly

—— Why should we be tired of this extraordinary situation? Through the Solitude network and application system, we promote great people – smart, open, excellent in their field and on their way to success. I can't imagine

anything for Solitude other than being open and regularly rethinking its practice. This policy is somehow our *raison d'être*!

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka

—— In the RE-tooling project, we organised residencies for cultural operators – one-month residencies that seemed short, although some of participants complained that they were too long. Solitude has worked with this model for a longer time, but your residencies last between three and eighteen months. How do you shape residencies for art operators – curators, managers – so that they have the most sense and effect?

Jean-Baptiste Joly

—— This question relates to a general problem that doesn't only concern the shaping of residencies for art operators. In every business, one has to make the distinction between urgent and important. In general, we tend to give priority to urgent matters rather than to important ones – a necessary mistake from which we try to escape from time to time. In my opinion, it is crucial to stay in Solitude for at least one month in order to really learn from this experience. This longer break allows you to step back from daily business and urgent (but not necessarily important) matters, in order to rethink your practice. Being in Solitude means having the time to undertake a critical self-analysis of your way of working, within a favourable environment, sharing your ponderings with people who had similar experiences in residential art centres. But the most important thing is to get in touch with the network of Solitude artists, which is

probably the most valuable thing we have produced – a mix of disciplines, origins, working conditions and generations, a large diversity of methods, thoughts and practices. This is very inspiring for thinking anew about one’s job as a curator or cultural operator; it also offers real possibilities for involving other artists from this network in one’s work. So don’t forget to make a distinction between the important and the urgent!

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka

—— I keep repeating in my mind the last sentence of your answer – So don’t forget to make a distinction between the important and the urgent! – and thinking about how hard it is to achieve in life.

Please describe what the term ‘residency’ means for you; you often say that a ‘residency is time without quality’ – would you please develop that idea?

Jean-Baptiste Joly

—— As cultural institutions, residential art centres are laboratories in which it is possible for artists to risk more, to develop new projects and practices. Compared to other cultural institutions, residential art centres have less constraining contractual relationships to artists. They have a flexible timetable (‘time without quality’, which means not being dedicated in advance to any defined task),¹ no obligation to produce (even though artists may have this intention) and a grant for living rather than a salary. If it takes its role seriously, a residential art centre can create a very generous environment for artists and it can also profit a lot from it; it can be a place in which it is easier to create personal relationships beyond trade rules, based on mutual

confidence and sympathy. This is, in my personal opinion, a genuine place for reinventing the relationship between artists and cultural institutions, which means between artists and society as a whole.

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka

—— In your opinion, what is the difference between curatorial activity aimed at residencies compared to regular curating? How would you describe your position?

Jean-Baptiste Joly

—— In recent years, Solitude has hosted many curators in its programme. While working with artist-fellows, some were quite successful, some less. Trying to explain why this was the case is not easy; even more difficult is to put it in relation to the activities and specificities of a residency. For many people, including artists, the job of the curator is mainly seen in terms of the power to make a decision – which artists will be in a show, which won’t. In Solitude, decisions about artists being accepted into the programme are taken by jurors, let’s say one year before the selected few begin their fellowship. Personally, I always had problems with the idea of a curator making a further selection beyond the already tough selection of the jurors. Let me give an example. During the last application round, our juror for visual arts, the British artist, Tacita Dean, was asked to select only eight candidates from 684 applications! Under these premises, making a selection from a selection is problematic. Instead, successful curators in Solitude have initiated projects by opening them to all the current fellows. It was the process itself that they initiated, allowing the process to be self-

selecting: Who is interested, who has time? And, from the side of the curator, it was more about 'who should I convince?' than about 'who do I choose?' That's how a large group show like 'Territories of the Inhuman' – curated by the two directors of the Württembergischer Kunstverein, Iris Dressler and Hans D. Christ – was organised last year for the twentieth anniversary of the institution, which involved more than fifty visual artists, video-artists, scientists, film-makers, designers, architects etc...

In 2007, the chairman of the jury, Fabrizio Gallanti, was curating the group-show 'Searching for an ideal urbanity' with me, which would involve more than twenty participants. Gallanti described himself as a 'facilitator' rather than as a curator. I must say I like the word. My own role is that of a 'facilitator of the facilitators', working as head of Akademie Solitude at a meta-level, organising things in such a way that good, sharp decisions can be taken anew, while maintaining the long-term logic of the institution. It is a kind of commonplace to say that art critics, conservators or curators always feel closer to the artists of their own generation and don't necessarily recognise what comes after. For this reason, an institution like Solitude can't depend on one's own taste and capacity to recognise quality for more than five or seven years. Inventing a system in which your own subjective preferences don't play any role is, therefore, preferable for an institution like Solitude. The selection system we have applied since the very first jury in 1990 is based on the subjectivity of jurors who are replaced for every new session, all chosen by one jury chairman who is in charge of two sessions. When Johannes Cladders was in charge of the jury from 1990 to 1994, he asked a German collector to make decisions about the visual artists, and then

a French curator and conservator. Those two gentlemen were at their best in the early 1990s, but it could be the case that they have lost sight of the practice of young artists by 2011. So, renewing the juror regularly is a possible solution; until now, it has seemed to work...

NOTES

¹ This has literary connotations to, for example, Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities*.

RESIDENCIES AS A CHANCE TO RE-TOOL SOME EAST-WEST ISSUES

DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS:

Alessio Antonioli, Amy Walker (Gasworks, London); Angela Butterstein, (Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart); Marianna Dobkowska, Anna Ptak, Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka (CCA Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw); Joanna Sandell (Botkyrka konsthall, Stockholm); Ondrej Stupal (FUTURA Centre for Contemporary Art, Prague).¹

INTRODUCTION BY

Viktor Čech

¹ This text is based on a fragment of a discussion held in London in April 2011, in which the whole RE-tooling RESIDENCIES project team participated. This discussion served as a mid-term evaluation of the project.

West and East, or Archaeology of a Myth

Today, it may seem a little dated to consider a topic that used to be popular in Europe during the dynamic changes of the 1990s. More than two decades after the breakthrough events of 1989 and the subsequent period of intense effort to establish contacts with the art world of the West, it seems that the prevailing difference between the centres of Western culture and our Eastern environment is embodied in the normalisation of the centre and periphery, in the sense of both economic and cultural development. The youngest artists attempting to establish themselves in the art world no longer suffer the psychological barrier of 'frontier' awareness so typical of previous generations (which may have experienced a curtailed lifestyle under the past regime, albeit in their childhoods). The mobility of the international art world opens up in all possible directions at the same time as fascination with a journey to the 'West' fades; with equal ease, the student of art will choose to stay in Rotterdam or Budapest. What matters are the specifics of a given environment and the profile of the region surrounding it. Some Eastern European artists of an intermediate and younger generation have already earned their position in the upper echelons of the international art world, by having foreign gallerists and regularly exhibiting in renowned art museums. In addition to this, after so many years of foreign residencies, travelling to biennials, Documentas and other exhibitions abroad, members of the older generations now feel at home in a foreign environment.

In light of the above, the continual definition of East versus West seems anachronistic when viewed within the narrow and elitist milieu of the contemporary art scene. By contrast, a sensation of solidarity between the former

West and East is being manifested by the current economic crisis, connected to the rebirth of a strong, left-orientated intellectual movement throughout Europe, which finds its echo in the art world. The variety of networks between the individual art scenes in the former Eastern Bloc and their Western counterparts, also contradict this binary comparison, but differences in the quality of relationships remain. And so, the striking abundance of Polish artists in Western art galleries does not quite compare with the more intimate and withdrawn Czech and Hungarian positions. Individuals, such as Roman Ondák, who achieved a place at the forefront of global art developments, certainly do not represent the 'exotic East'; on the contrary, they play by the same rules as any other members of this elite.

Put simply, in the social environment of contemporary art, we can barely find any convincing reasons to maintain the distinct categories of East and West. Nevertheless, if we step down from the ivory tower of the art world, we can find common roots in the experiences of the former Eastern Bloc and its normalised peripheral status. By this, I mean the tremendous abyss that extends between contemporary art and the more general 'cultural' public. In the Czech Republic, the Uroboros serpent, eating its own tail, may well serve as a metaphor for the autonomous isolation of art from a public longing for 'culture'. With great appetite, it feasts on its own body in those regions of Europe in which sufficient economic prosperity and cultural tradition provide all the basic prerequisites for an autonomous art world. The hypertrophied body of civic society and its related cultural habits (here also little developed) do not offer any alternative diet. Here, the 'culture' of broader society is not developed and structured enough to enable comparison between

attendance at a theatrical performance or a contemporary art exhibition. However, this cultural atrophy must be apprehended in its totality, with both the viewer and the exhibition curator preparing an exhibition seemingly designed for a viewer, while both being equally confined by their preconceptions.

Thus, we are confronted with questions: Is the current state of art in the Eastern part of Europe caused by us continuing to find ourselves, without realising it, on the other side of a mirror through which only a chosen few can pass? Or was the mirror shattered by the events of 1989 and are we only moving against the broken fragments, still attached to the frame, which prevent us from having a direct and objective view of the situation? This paradox, in which we continually have to ask about the authenticity and value of our position, may, of course, also be very inspiring. The East is certainly no longer what it used to be; nevertheless, the elementary rules of cartography determine that we cannot change geographical facts merely by turning the map upside down. The either/or situation has created a reality in which we must ask ourselves whether we are holding the right map in our hands and, rather than considering its correct orientation, perhaps we should analyse its inner structure.

Anna Ptak

—— The starting point for the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES project was that residencies have proliferated greatly over the past twenty years, which has also meant that the subject of residencies is increasingly discussed in the Eastern European countries, where this project was born.² We've risked applying the idea of divisions between the East and West of Europe to ask whether they remain operational when developing

residency networks between institutions. Before the enlargement of the European Union, the individual mobility of people in search of a work-life balance or professional opportunities – one of the crucial features of residencies – wasn't so obvious. After the political transformations of the Eastern Bloc, support for residency initiatives – through, for example, the programmes of the Soros Foundation, Pro Helvetia, CEC ArtsLink – was directed at under-developed art scenes that were considered to be part of the process of 'democratisation'.

In the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES project, representatives from institutions that have operated residencies for a long time met with people who wanted to start similar programmes.³ We sought to discover how one could learn about the background against which new ideas about residency programmes are born and about participants' expectations. In a way, we focused on residencies as a broad spectrum of choices that could be made both by artists and organisers in order to create a meaningful communication within a collaborative work environment. Partner institutions in the RE-tooling project represent a wide range of approaches to the ways in which residencies can be established or run. From these examples, it is clear that residency programmes might represent an institution's sole function (e.g. Akademie Schloss Solitude) or they might be only one among many other activities (e.g. FUTURA, CCA Ujazdowski); they might be municipal projects devoted to the issues relevant to a specific location (e.g. Botkyrka konsthall, situated in a district of Stockholm characterised by its multicultural population) or part of the studio programme of organisations operating internationally (e.g. Gasworks). At the same time, this exposed the kind of preconceptions

with which we approached the subject, given that we were all already institutionalised.

The RE-tooling RESIDENCIES programme was not based on a redistribution of funds; nonetheless it might have given an impression that certain models are transferable. The results of inviting emerging residency projects to the programme have been unpredictable; many do not have financial stability and, with three exceptions, they cannot rely on an existing infrastructure.⁴ This raised questions about whether the attribution of established models of residencies (associated with Western European cultural policies) was productive, when compared to the lack of relevant cultural policies in Eastern Europe. If we apply the language of support to a situation at the interface between existing and emerging organisations, it creates an imbalance and an odd perception that there are predefined ways in which to run a residency. Perhaps new residency initiatives can reshape the landscape for artistic mobility in Europe. How can this mutual learning process be described?

Alessio Antonioli

—— You can follow the cliché but you can escape from it. I mean it's also about emerging and being...

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka

—— While I was working in the International Exhibitions Department at CCA Ujazdowski Castle, I was invited to undertake a three-month residency at Akademie Schloss Solitude, a residency centre in Germany and partner institution to the CCA.⁵ My task was to prepare an exhibition at CCA that would present Solitude within the broader framework of a project commemorating the

collaboration between Baden-Württemberg and Poland. In this way, I was dropped into a politicised, top-down situation, in which the initial agenda was predefined by non-artistic or curatorial choices.

This was my very first residency experience. Rather than confining the end result of the project to an exhibition, I decided that the best way of communicating the residency programme to the Polish public would be to transform it into a festival and a short series of residencies. Many interesting projects were created during this time, and I had the feeling that the potential of residencies lay in their ability to continually bring knowledge to Warsaw and – because of the presence of artists – to call different aspects of the local reality into discussion.

As a permanent outcome of this project, I wanted to initiate a residency programme in Warsaw. This wouldn't have been possible without the support of Jean-Baptiste Joly,⁶ who helped me to convince the CCA's board and the Polish authorities of the merits of such a decision. When devising the RE-tooling project, I imagined how we might be able to support know-how and networking, by co-organising projects, speaking with the authorities and giving talks on the topic of residencies to individuals who would like to initiate residency projects in Eastern Europe. When we started thinking about this project, we had an impression that there were very few examples existing in this area and that the idea of the residency was not being discussed at an institutional level.

So, the call for participants was aimed at people from Eastern European countries. But this was not about an opposition between East and West, or between partners and participants, because, in geopolitical terms, we are all EU

states. If the Pilot Project for Artist Mobility, financed by the European Commission, allowed for partnerships to be made with non-member countries, we would most probably open the project up to countries of the Middle East and Global South, where one could find interesting projects dealing with the subject of residencies.

Joanna Sandell

——— When talking about East versus West, I think in terms of self-confidence. On what grounds do our RE-tooling residents stand in their artistic practice when it comes to working at an international level? Do they have the confidence to say 'my institution is of importance outside of its local situation although it is still in the making and in need of finding both funding and partners'? Do you see this as an East versus West issue?

Alessio Antonioli

——— I guess, when you are talking about confidence in the context of the relationship between East and West, you are speaking about the fact that one partner has a lot to learn and another has a lot to give; that's very dangerous because it creates a teacher-student relationship that does not allow for the fact that each side has different and very valuable knowledge to be shared. Perhaps the struggle is that of abandoning the constructed 'American Dream', less for its 'can do' attitude and more for its ability to fuel a collective inferiority complex based on the belief that history puts you in a disadvantageous position. Whether it's true or not, if you perceive yourself to be lower or higher, that's how you go through life. Confidence, or lack of it, determines the way that you interact with your peers, but it also determines how

you portray yourself as an individual or an institution in many relationships, including the one between East and West.

Joanna Sandell

— During the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES project, it has been interesting to see a great variety of ideas emerge in terms of mobility and forms of art production. However, several of the participants raised the issue of funding – or, maybe more so, lack of funding – and, frustratingly enough, spent a lot of time comparing themselves with initiatives with better funding. Maybe this is what I am thinking about also in terms of self-confidence or the lack of it. Can one create a functioning programme without the stability of solid funding? Surely, stable funding is of importance, but does it determine whether a residency programme can be launched or not, and whether it can be maintained? Most of us would argue that good quality art projects are not created out of money. Furthermore, most cultural managers who now have a reasonable budget have at one time been in the situation of not having sufficient funding.

I can imagine a future in which the local area in which I operate will no longer have money to support an exhibition venue, and I have nightly dreams of the imaginary spaces I will create and of the artistic productions that will be realised with money found in bits and pieces from disparate sources around the globe. I can also imagine a scenario in which only the residency that I have created is left, running on funding from abroad, or perhaps on a voluntary basis by those who want to support it.

The largest artistic productions I have come to realise through the artists' book publishing house, Labyrinth Press, have been with money from Eastern Europe, and, while reporting from the region of Eastern Europe for a major Swedish daily during the 1990s, I was perceived as a representative of affluent Sweden while living in a shack in the woods without running water.

In 2011, when more and more European countries are cutting cultural funding, the question is not about who has been more disadvantaged throughout history. Our focus will probably be more about how we create a common survival strategy for artistic production in the future, and this will rely on putting aside our prejudiced thoughts about the other. Hopefully, any preconceptions about the former Eastern European region having fewer assets than Western European initiatives will dissolve as a large array of RE-tooling RESIDENCIES projects is developed within the spidery networks that make mobility matter all around the world today.

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka

— We [A-I-R Laboratory at CCA Ujazdowski Castle] perceived ourselves as an institution that needed to define our ways of working. We have been dealing with the idea of residencies for around eight years now, but we still don't feel that we have all the necessary 'know-how'. Having augmented the number of studios in 2009 and having gained some recognition among artists and institutions, we reached the point at which we needed to ask questions about our constitution and decided that this should be dealt with

alongside the emerging residency programmes. RE-tooling RESIDENCIES provided a moment to reflect upon the fact that we're no longer a partisan agency acting within a bigger institution.

Marianna Dobkowska

—— I would like to refer here to my experience as a curator of residencies. I believe that 're-tooling' should, and can, be undertaken at different stages of development and by involving different actors. An artist coming to CCA Ujazdowski Castle for a residency automatically finds themselves inside a Big Institution devoted to the presentation and production of contemporary art, employing several dozen staff and organising several hundred events annually. For many artists, this is an appealing vision, especially since the proximity of the institution and its resources implies curatorial support. It is precisely this combination that defines CCA's A-I-R Laboratory residency centre and makes it unique among residential models. Still, this is a Central European institution; our programme is the first regular residency established in Poland. Since the residency as a possible medium of art is – or was – not well recognised in this region, we probably have to work harder than our colleagues from the West in order to obtain funding, visibility and public understanding while keeping both artistic quality and curatorial care at the highest possible level.

Not every residency stay results in an exhibition or the execution of a specific project. Often, a residency turns into a research project, with the artist gaining knowledge and building lasting professional relationships for the future. Since our programme operates as a part of an active

institution dedicated to the presentation and production of art, it often becomes an expectation of our residents to use such opportunities. And we, the curators, are happy to make this possible.

From my perspective, the residency curator's role is to provide residents with theoretical and practical support, engaging them in creative cooperation, networking with people and institutions capable of supporting the artist's efforts, conceptually or physically. Such activities are the gist of curatorial practice. Intense working with an artist during a stay of several months, particularly if combined with the production of a project, can lead to inspiring collaborations. Such conditions make it possible to build a sense of closeness, develop a lasting relationship, even friendship.

The down side of this work is the great quantity of less interesting, latent and unspectacular challenges. Unfortunately, the most time-consuming of these involves battling the various levels of bureaucracy, securing and accounting for funding, 'educating' local authorities about what a residency is and performing countless administrative tasks. These, of course, are much less uplifting, satisfying and intellectually inspiring than working with artists, and they also steal huge amounts of time for which one might find other uses. I think that both sides of this work are somehow more intense here, in Eastern Europe.

Additionally, in our case, the proximity of the Big Institution means that, willingly or not, the artist is pulled into its structures. It's hard to say whether the experience can be valuable for them. It certainly offers the artist an opportunity to watch the machinery from up close. As a resident once noted, we, the residency curators at A-I-R Laboratory, are like firemen – we fight crises all the time.

Attempts to reconcile all the tasks faced by the curator in a way that both sides are happy with are not always successful. How does one make sure that the residency proves – to use the title of a project by Matthias Böttger and Jennifer Morone – more of a dream than a nightmare for both the artist and the curator? We started our residency programme with an idea, rather than a ready model. This mode of shaping residencies while curating them is very ambitious and appealing, but I have a feeling that we have reached a point at which we should ask ourselves a question: Does the curator have to be a fireman? I am talking about the economy of time and resources in the context of artists' and curators' expectations towards residencies – in terms of funding, management and the amount of time spent on collaborative work. It is probably this area that needs the most 're-tooling'.

Alessio Antonioli

—— You talk about wanting to model and change the programme after eight years. We selected aspiring curators and residencies to take part in this project. When you are so fresh, you might not be in a situation where you're reflecting so much on yourself.

Angela Butterstein

—— Solitude is an institution that has existed now for twenty years, and we are still looking for new ways of working. I think that it is a necessity for such an institution to adapt to the circumstances and the needs of the artists we house, because, if we're not able to do this, I think we're lost. So, we're still looking for new ways and possibilities to improve the circumstances of the artists who stay with us. But then, on the other hand, when we started with

the project with Warsaw, the exchange was exactly about looking for a way to do it on a kind of equal basis – not being the institution that has a lot of experience and also money, but trying to exchange on a reciprocal level.

We had the feeling – this is exactly the point – that we were looking for a way to avoid the situation in which one is superior and the other is inferior, or one is giving and the other is receiving. We could contribute with knowledge – about dealing with political situations and convincing politicians and getting funding – enabling partner organisations to take things to the next level in whichever way was realistic in their local context.

Joanna Sandell

—— There is always a difficulty regarding the role of being a guest, metaphorically speaking. I am thinking of it both in terms of the situation for artists and curators visiting residencies and in terms of an East/West issue. Being a guest puts you in a vulnerable position, and you need to feel worthy of a residency and that you have something to offer, as well as something to learn. The relationship between host and guest can, of course, be reflected upon in terms of power. Hopefully, in 2011, cultural exchange between the Eastern European region and the so-called West no longer has to be thought of these terms.

Alessio Antonioli

—— I guess international residencies, in this case between Eastern and Western Europe, establish relationships between participant and host that are loaded with preconceptions about privilege, power and perception.

Amy Walker

—— The language that you have to use in order to get money from the EU is based on this rhetoric of applying to join a club. You are a new country in the club and now we have this big pot of money and you have to use a certain language to get this funding, and you also have to make sure you use that language a bit in your printed materials, because otherwise the EU says 'look, you told us you would do one thing and you're doing something completely different.' You're sort of tied into this language, and it's about finding a way to make sure that all the participants understand that everyone has a different set of aims.

But we are still talking about 'what we trade for what'. This is another side to the question of colonial dependence. What I found interesting is whether this project counterbalances the idea of an exchange between two parties that strive towards being equal but which are not.

Alessio Antonioli

—— It's not just a question of money; it's actually about where you think things are happening – that's the East-West divide again. It's not as well defined as East or West, but it's again this perception that: 'oh, but all the cool things happen in Berlin,' and, if you're in London you think of there, or you think of New York, if you don't know what's happening in New York it's like 'who are you?' It's these stereotypes, preconceptions that we have in our heads that come from somewhere; it's not just because we're idiots; I think they come from a collective belief. You open *Frieze* magazine, which is an international magazine, and a lot of the reviews

are of stuff that happened in Berlin, London, New York and Los Angeles, and then, on the back page, there's the São Paulo thing. But you know there's a whole machine that keeps alive that distinction, and I think it's there and it's the same distinction that doesn't allow or doesn't not allow; it blinds you from looking regionally because there's still that divide.

And in the same way that you have the East looking at the West with admiration, the West also looks at the East in search of exoticism; that's exactly what you were saying – we want to be like, 'oh, we want to have the first Kyrgyzstani artists in London because we're so cool and we got there first.' It's that sort of colonial explorative thing, like going on the Grand Tour and coming back with examples of things you saw in an exciting country.

A sort of cultural tourism; it's very alive, especially at times where 'how are you going to market yourself' is a consideration among all cultural institutions.

Anna Ptak

—— A large part of education, both for artists and curators, is rooted within the language of art history which, on one hand, focuses on local and national history and discourse and, on the other, limits itself to a certain repertoire of 'universal' values. This universal vocabulary is mostly defined by debates written in the metropolitan and cosmopolitan nodes of the global art scene. So, there is also an issue around the perceived quality of artistic work and of institutional practices happening in the immediate vicinity – in the context of Eastern Europe, I refer here to what you, Alessio, called 'looking regionally', which itself is impossible to define without reference to some ideological stance.

The fact that recognition of complexities of the nearby art scene is mediated through what is being discussed in the centre of attention may result in sort of self-colonisation: either neglecting certain features that are easily overlooked because of presumed communality of experience, or trying to differentiate from the region by associating oneself with a more central position. Either way, neglecting the fact that differences exist, especially when we consider art-making in the broader frame of cultural production.

Alessio Antonioli

—— Quality of work is also a very dangerous issue. Who decides what regarding quality – on what are their criteria based? What is considered high quality in one place may be different in another.

Angela Butterstein

—— The same refers to institutional cooperation. Akademie Schloss Solitude has facilitated a project called ‘Opening Our Closed Shops’⁷ which basically supported exchange between East and East. It was a result of our long-lasting bilateral exchanges with institutions from Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, Romania and Serbia – whose representatives had been declaring that they didn’t know enough about each other within the region. I was only partly involved in this project, but, in my personal opinion I think that, at a certain point, we (as the institution having initiated it) felt like, ‘okay, we should stay outside of this because it’s about an East/East exchange’. But at the same time – that didn’t work somehow. Bilaterally – with each of the

partners separately – it worked; the partners involved shared a mutual interest in residential exchange. But a spirit of shared interest wasn’t so strong in these exchanges in which the Akademie did not participate. There were different expectations on the part of all the contributing organisations. There were very different ideas about what the outcome of the project should be. So, on various levels, we acted as a ‘middleman’ or as an interpreter.

Marianna Dobkowska

—— We haven’t yet underlined in this discussion the fact that mobility could be understood differently; we were expecting that maybe, in Eastern European, emerging residency initiatives could reveal alternative ideas about what the resources of a residency are or who an artist-in-residence is. It occurred to us that there are many different forms of moulding a residency; it’s almost an individual issue. An interesting example – although it was actually a US residency programme discussed during the conference – was Residencies Unlimited – which operates without having a space. Residency Unlimited is this enterprise in New York that doesn’t have studios; it doesn’t own flats, but it operates as an agency that links people, so they do have residents. You could also save a lot of money for residencies that are done in such a way.⁸

Alessio Antonioli

—— You are suggesting that mobility isn’t necessarily something that you do by taking a means of transport, but also something that could be about connecting people over the internet?

—— It might sound obvious but what we seem to be discussing here, and throughout the project, has been the ways in which residencies can respond to new developments within contemporary art practice. One of the threads of this practice-based research that we have been going through is that the kind of mobility and context that residencies can offer is different to that of exhibitions, biennials, art fairs. The fact that there are real alternatives to understanding this field was implicated in some of the project proposals for the RE-tooling RESIDENCES exchange programme⁹ too.

Amy Walker

—— There was one more thing that I had in mind – it's also what we really believe in as an institution; it's not about exchanging funding or whatever; it's about exchanging ideas. And perhaps we need to step back a little bit from what we do, to get ideas from others, because I think it's not about telling somebody how to build something up. It's about sharing ideas, because people know best the opportunities and possibilities they have in their own country. Instead, it's maybe about brainstorming, and letting people discover what they have, what kind of potential they have and what they can work with. And this is exactly what we get out of any exchange with any country or participant; it's like, 'okay, wow, they were this way; maybe we can benefit from this way of thinking and working and see how we could apply it to our conditions,' and I think that this application to the conditions you have in your own country is what makes it most powerful.

2 RE-tooling RESIDENCIES was initiated by the A-I-R Laboratory team at the Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw, Poland.

3 Curators, artists and managers representing emerging initiatives in the field of residencies who were invited to participate in the exchange programme included: Zuzana Bodnárová, Svätopluk Mikyta (Štokovec – Space for Culture/ Banská St a nica at Banská Štiavnica, Slovakia), Marta Bogdańska (freelance curator, working between Poland and Lebanon), Alena Boika (curator and chief editor of *Umelec* Magazine, Prague, Czech Republic), Lenka Dolanová (yo-yo, Kravin project at Hranice u Malče, Czech Republic), Ivars Gravlejs, Petra Petileta (artists, working between the Czech Republic and Latvia), Vyara Mlechevska (Art Affairs and Documents cultural organisation, Sofia, Bulgaria), Dominik Kuryłek, Ewa Tatar, Wojciech Orlik (National Museum in Kraków, Poland), Magdalena Ujma (art critic and curator at Bunkier Sztuki, Kraków, Poland).

4 Three out of the eight projects that were developed within the framework of RE-tooling RESIDENCIES and have been 'located' are: Banská St a nica – an art space located at a railway station in a small Slovakian town, run by Zuzana Bodnárová and Svätopluk Mikyta; Kravin house – a summer countryside residency and workshop space, run by Lenka Dolanová and yo-yo association in the Czech Republic, devoted to art and ecology issues; 'The Guide Project'

by Ewa Tatar and Dominik Kuryłek, based on residencies at the National Museum in Kraków.

5 The Akademie Schloss Solitude is a public-law foundation that offers an interdisciplinary and international fellowship programme for artists and scientists. Since 1990, the Akademie has supported artists in the disciplines of architecture, visual arts, performing arts, design, literature, music/sound and video/film/new media to undertake residencies and fellowships. Since 2002, young people from the science and business sectors have also been eligible for fellowships as part of the art, science and business programme. See also 'One Day, One Question. Jean-Baptiste Joly in Conversation with Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka' in this publication, pp. 218–229

6 Jean-Baptiste Joly has been the chairman of the board of the Akademie Schloss Solitude foundation since 1989. He is also a board member of various other foundations, including: the Schader Foundation, Kunstmuseum Stuttgart and the Council for Innovation of the State of Baden-Württemberg.

7 'Opening Our Closed Shops': a three-year project (2007–2009) funded by Allianz Kulturstiftung, based on multilateral residencies for artists from Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Serbia and fellows of Akademie Schloss Solitude.

8 Residency Unlimited is a non-profit organisation that has been operating in New York since 2009. It supports residency initiatives by working to emphasise collaboration

between different institutions. <http://www.residencyunlimited.org>. On 18 November 2009, as part of RE-tooling RESIDENCIES: International Conference on Artistic Residencies, Nathalie Anglès, one of its founders, said:

One of our goals is to redefine the contemporary concept of residency, putting the artist and the artistic process in the centre of our mission. [...] There are certain limitations typical for the format [of studio-based residency programme – ed. remark]. A calendar is created – the artists come and go – routine starts to creep in. From my personal perspective, I felt the need to experience something completely new. The idea of collaboration is crucial for me in this respect because cooperation requires the partners to make their own contribution and work under the project is done actively and together. This isn't easy but it's a challenge, boosting the diversity of the possible residential initiatives. So what we do is broadening the definition of residency. Expanding the possibilities it offers and its meaning.

9 Examples of such initiatives which were denying an institutional vision of the residency among those selected to participate in exchange programme, could be: Ivar Gravløys and Petra Petileta's idea to run a residency as couch surfing between artists; Vyara Mlechevska's idea to create a residency programme based on sharing resources (space, video equipment, artists' assistance) between several organisations in Sofia; Alena Boika's Happy House: an exchange programme built on the grassroots organisation of support for artist-activists.

SOURCES OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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Dworzec Centralny w Warszawie [Central Station in Warsaw], 1977 – 1978.
photo: Zbyszko Siemaszko

Matthias Böttger,

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Dream or Nightmare?

Matthias Böttger, Jennifer Morone – raumtaktik, *Dream or Nightmare*, 2009, installation view from the exhibition curated by Marianna Dobkowska, Anna Ptak and Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka, 'Working Title. Tytuł roboczy'.
photo: Karol Kadłucki

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- Rosa Barba, *Outwardly from Earth's Centre*, 2006.
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Kaja Pawełek

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Photos 1–4 and 7–9 by Kaja Pawełek.
Photos 5 and 6 by Jakub Szczyński.

Hagen Betzwieser

Globalised Artist

All pictures by Hagen Betzwieser.

Accidental Pleasures

Yeb Wiersma

Images found by means of the google search engine which, together with the text, are conceived as an artistic whole.

Jakob Racek

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All pictures by Mickael Brock, Berlin.

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Courtesy of the National Museum in Kraków and Grzegorz Sztwiertnia.

5. Henryk Siemiradzki, *Pochodnie Nerona* [Nero's Torches], 1876.
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7. Elżbieta Jabłońska, *Spotkanie* [The Meeting], 2006, in the framework of 'The Guide Project',
photo: Tomasz Babik
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8. Druga Grupa, *Zapamiętywanie* [Memorising], 1972/2006, performance during 'Panel Prac' [Panel of Artworks] by Roman Dziadkiewicz, in the framework of 'The Guide Project',
photo: Piotr Stokłosa.
9. Hubert Czerepok, *Who is afraid of red, yellow and blue?* – a part of *Muzealne Covery* [Museum Covers], 2006, in the framework of 'The Guide Project',
photo: Paweł Czernicki.

Maja and Reuben Fowkes Precarious Situations and Cosmopolitan Realities in East European Art

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- 2009, installation view from the exhibition curated by Maja and Reuben Fowkes, 'Revolutionary Decadence: Foreign Artists in Budapest since 1989'.
4. Dan Perjovschi, *Removing Romania*, 2003, undertaken within the framework of 'In the Gorges of the Balkans', Kunsthalle Fridericianum Kassel.
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7. Sean Snyder, *Exhibition*, 2008.
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris.

Rasa Antanavičiūtė is Executive Director of the Nida Art Colony at the Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania. As an art historian, she is mostly interested in the ways in which art in public spaces is used for non-artistic purposes – discourse of power, (re)construction of memory, image building.

Alessio Antonioli is Director of Gasworks, London, UK, and the Triangle Network, specialising in international, cultural exchange through the visual arts. He has acted as a coordinator of the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES exchange programme.

Hagen Betzwieser is a Stuttgart-based artist and designer and founder of the art project known as the Institute of General Theory. Between 2005 and 2007, he was a Fellow at Akademie Schloss Solitude and has been a participant in many other residency programmes.

Zuzana Bodnárová is an executive director of Banská Staničníca, an arts centre embedded in a railway station in the middle of Slovakia (www.banskastanica.sk). Bodnárová's background is in the theory of art, centred on architecture and design. She co-operates with the Centre for Central European Architecture (CCEA), and she initiated the Štokovec - Space for Culture foundation. In parallel to this, she works as an organiser of exhibitions and occasional publisher and participated in the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES exchange programme.

Marta Bogdańska is a Polish curator, cultural operator and photographer. Formerly working as a manager for the Arnaldottir-Jurewicz Art Foundation, and organising a project called 'Fenix cities' – which entailed the production of art

workshops and exhibitions in Poland and Lebanon – Bogdańska currently works independently between Warsaw, Berlin and Beirut. She participated in the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES exchange programme.

Alena Boika is an editor-in-chief of *Umelec International* magazine of contemporary art and culture (Czech Republic). Being originally from Belarus, she has a special interest in, and responsibility for, operating in the Russian-speaking and post-Soviet context. A freelance art journalist and curator, Boika has worked extensively in Georgia, Russia, the Czech Republic and other countries. A Founding Director of the Eastern Alliance Cultural Program (www.divus.cz), she was invited to take part in the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES exchange programme.

Matthias Böttger is an architect at Raumtaktik and Curator at DAZ - Deutsches Architektur Zentrum - in Berlin. He teaches art and architecture at ETH Zürich - the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology.

Angela Butterstein has worked in several positions within the cultural field, and as a freelance project manager for cultural institutions in Tübingen, Stuttgart and Berlin, among others EXPO 2000 GmbH Hanover, »Photography now«, Deutsche Film and Fernsehakademie Berlin GmbH. Since 2004, she has been Project Manager for Press and Public Relations at Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, and acted as a coordinator of the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES exchange programme.

Viktor Čech is a curator and theorist of contemporary art based in Prague, Czech Republic. He studied Art History at the Charles University in Prague, and is currently

working on his PhD thesis at the Academy of Art, Architecture and Design in Prague. Since 2005, he has prepared many curatorial projects in the Czech Republic and Italy. He has contributed to various art magazines and newspapers, including *Flash Art*, *CZ/SK*, *Ateliér*, *Era 21*, *MF Dnes*.

Odile Chenal was a researcher at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris, France, until 1982, when she was appointed Director of the Centre Culturel Français in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, later becoming Cultural Attaché at the French Embassy in The Hague. Since 1990, she has been working at the European Cultural Foundation in Amsterdam, where she is currently responsible for the Research and Development sector.

Kari Conte is a curator and writer based in New York City, US, and Director of Programs and Exhibitions at the International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP).

Marianna Dobkowska is an art historian, curator, producer and graphic designer. She studied Art History at Warsaw University and Curating at the Jagiellonian University, Kraków. Since 2001, she has been working at Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) Ujazdowski Castle and currently serves as Curator of the artist-in-residence (A-I-R) Laboratory programme. During this time, she has coordinated, produced and curated many projects, exhibitions, presentations and publications. She has acted as project manager of Rooted Design for Routed Living and assistant project manager and graphic designer of the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES project.

Lenka Dolanová is an art historian, curator and researcher, working at the boundaries between

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Chris Fitzpatrick is based in San Francisco, US, and has organised exhibitions and events for international venues, including Palazzo Ducale, Genoa, Italy; Proyectos Monclova, Mexico City; the Oakland Museum of California, Oakland; as well as the Exploratorium and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco. He has been awarded curatorial residencies by the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Turin; the Banff Centre in Alberta, Canada; and FIAC/Fondation d'Enterprise Ricard in Paris. Fitzpatrick's writing and interviews have been published in many magazines including *Pazmaker* and *Mousse Magazine* and he is on the curatorial board of the Present Future section of Artissima 18, Turin.

Maja and Reuben Fowkes are contemporary art historians and curators working together out of Budapest, Hungary, and London. Their projects include the exhibition series entitled *Revolution Trilogy* (2006-09), the SocialEast Seminar on the Art and Visual Culture of Eastern Europe (since 2006) and the annual Symposium on Sustainability and Contemporary Art at Central European University, Budapest (since 2006). Their current exhibition project, *Loophole to Happiness* (2010-11), deals with the

possibilities for freedom and creativity at the margins of social systems.

Rebecca Gordon-Nesbitt is a former curator at *salon3* in London and NIFCA in Helsinki, Finland, the latter of which saw her organising a residency exchange for artists across the Nordic region, the UK and Ireland. She has served as Commissioning Editor of *make: the magazine of women's art* and several catalogues, artists' books and monographs and as Managing Editor on an anthology entitled *Proud to be Flesh: A Mute Magazine Anthology of Cultural Politics after the Net*. Her research and writing is located at the intersection of art and society, and she is currently completing a three-year investigation into the cultural policy of the 1959 Cuban Revolution.

Ivars Gravlejs is a visual artist operating mainly in the field of photography (<http://ivarsgravlejs.com>). Since 2008, he has been working as a pedagogue on the New Media Programme at Liepaja University in Latvia. Together with Petra Petileta, he participated in the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES exchange programme.

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Stefanie Hessler is an independent curator and writer based in Stockholm, Sweden. She worked

on behalf of the Royal Institute of Art Stockholm as part of the curatorial team of the 9th Biennial of Video and Media Arts in Santiago de Chile. Hessler has worked as the editor of several publications and regularly writes for exhibition catalogues and magazines. She joined the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES team as evaluator.

Astrid Honold is a German curator based in Amsterdam, where she established the Office For Contemporary Art, together with artists, Fendry Ekel and Folkert de Jong, and supports a selected group of talented young artists working in the Netherlands. With Black Cat Publishing, Honold publishes monographs and exhibition catalogues and she also acts as an independent curator, working with international galleries and museums. From February to August 2011, she was ISCP curator-in-residence.

Jean-Baptiste Joly has lived and worked in Stuttgart, Germany, since 1983. From 1983–88, he was the Director of the Institut Français de Stuttgart. Since 1989, he has been the chairman of the board of the foundation Akademie Schloss Solitude. In 1998, he received the title of Honorary Professor at the Kunsthochschule Weisensee, Hochschule für Gestaltung, Berlin. He is a founder member of Res Artis, a board member of various foundations and a member of the French-German Council for Culture.

Irmeli Kokko is a cultural producer and curator who has worked with artists' residencies since the mid 1990s. She is one of a three-member expert group for the Nordic Mobility and Residency programme and her work on international residencies has included both advisory and practical duties, as well as research. Since 2007,

Kokko has been working as a lecturer at the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki.

Dominik Kuryłek is an art critic, historian and curator. He has been working at the National Museum in Kraków since 2005. A PhD candidate at Jagiellonian University, he writes on nihilism and Polish art after 1945. He is co-author of the book *Short History of the Ładnie Group* (2008) and of numerous articles published in art magazines and exhibition catalogues. He participated in the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES exchange programme.

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Svätopluk Mikyta is a visual artist, working primarily with the media of drawing and sculpture. Since 2003, he has been an assistant professor at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava, Slovakia. He has exhibited worldwide and is winner of the Oskár Čepan Award

(2008), Tatras Tiger (2008) and the Strabag Art Award (2011). Together with Zuzana Bodnárová, he runs Banská St a nica and participated in the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES exchange programme.

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Anna Ptak is a researcher, producer and curator with a background in the social sciences who works as residencies curator at A-I-R Laboratory, CCA Ujazdowski Castle. She is a co-founder of so:on association – a collective of artists and cultural animators dealing with cultural policy and audio-visual media through activism and artistic interventions. She acted as a researcher for the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES project.

Jakob Racek is a curator and cultural manager at the Center for Contemporary Art in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. In 2008, he obtained a MA in Media Theory and Cultural Studies at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, Germany. As a curator, he has worked independently and for several galleries and institutions in Germany and abroad, co-founding the alternative gallery showroom berlin.

Raumtaktik [spatial tactics] Office from a Better Future is a Berlin-

based agency for spatial intelligence and intervention. It deals with the production of space, its conditions and its ecological and political parameters, which determine the composition of architecture and urban development.

Joanna Sandell is a writer and curator based in Stockholm, with a background in civic journalism. In 2006, she became the director of Botkyrka konsthall, Stockholm, and has developed the programme to include the artists' book publishing house, Labyrinth Press, and the international residency programme for public art and social practice known as Residence Botkyrka. She acted as a coordinator of the RE-tooling RESIDENCIES exchange programme.

Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka is Chief Curator at CCA Ujazdowski Castle. In 2003, she founded the A-I-R Laboratory as the first ongoing residency programme in Poland. Between 2003 and 2011, she curated and co-produced projects with more than twenty international visiting artists. She has also acted as project manager of two multi-institutional European projects – Rooted Design for Routed Living, funded with European Economic Area and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms resources, and RE-tooling RESIDENCIES, supported by the European Commission.

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Ewa Małgorzata Tatar is an art critic, historian and curator. She studied Art History and Psychoanalysis, and is working on her PhD at Jagiellonian University. Formerly editor-in-chief of *Halart* magazine and editor of *Obieg* art magazine, she is currently editor of the academic journal *Panoptikum* and of the Visual Line book series of Korporacja Halart editing house. She has published around 100 articles in anthologies, exhibition catalogues, art and popular magazines.

Maria Tuerlings is an expert in the field of residencies and a supporter of residency initiatives, acting as director of Trans Artists, a knowledge centre on residency opportunities. She has been working with the Open Method of Coordination, introduced by the European Commission – a programme designed to help member states jointly progress in the implementation of reforms needed in order to achieve the goals of the Lisbon treaty.

Magdalena Ujma has published more than 400 texts about modern art since 1989. Her major areas of interest are gender issues in recent art, reflections on contemporary art criticism, representations of evil,

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Yeb Wiersma is a visual artist and teacher of Fine Art. In 2001, she graduated from the Gerrit Rietveld Academy for Visual Arts in Amsterdam and continued her studies at the Cooper Union Arts Academy in New York City. Since returning to the Netherlands, she has been coordinating her own artistic practice and has participated in various artist-in-residence programmes around the world. For several years, she has been a freelance representative of the Trans Artists Education Team.

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