Complications; On Collaboration, Agency and Contemporary Art

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Annika Eriksson, **Staff at the São Paolo Biennial**, video loop, 10 mins.

Collaboration is without a doubt a central method in contemporary art today. Artist groups, circles, associations, networks, constellations, partnerships, alliances, coalitions, contexts and teamwork—these are notions that have been buzzing in the air of the art world over the last two decades. This represents a new wave of interest in collective activities, following the one which helped shape conceptual art in the 1960s and which was arguably crucial in the transition from Modernism to postmodernism. Various kinds of collaboration—between artists, between artists and curators, between artists and others—are once more appearing and becoming an increasingly established working method. For some this offers an alternative to the individualism that dominates the art world, for some it is understood as a way of re-questioning both artistic identity and authorship through self-organization. And for others, it is a pragmatic choice, offering the possibility of shared resources, equipment and experience. At the same time, these collaborations often constitute a response to a specific, sometimes local situation, and they run a constant risk of becoming incorporated into the system they are reacting against.

This raises a number of key questions: what role does artistic agency play in these developments? To what degree can collaborative practices claim agency through a certain level of opacity in relation to the cult of the individual? What kind of instrumentalization is affecting this mode of cultural production today? And not least, how can artistic agency be reformulated under the current neo-liberalized working conditions? Let me start with some clarifications. I believe that making art in and of itself can be a form of agency. That a work of art which is not in any usual sense thought of as an example of agency can still perform artistic, emotional, social and political agency. Which is to say, even a small abstract painting can function as an act of protest and create space for new ideas and forms for action which challenge the status quo.[1] However, I have a harder time finding contemporary examples of more traditional or "arty" art, which manages to do what some works by, for example, Sophie Täuber-Arp and Howardena Pindell, did at their time.

Cooperation in art is by no means new. On the contrary, its genealogy is long and complex and includes a number of different forms for organizing artistic work and its aesthetics. It extends from Rubens and other Baroque artists' hierarchical large-scale studios, which were lucrative businesses, to surrealist group experiments, constructivist theatre projects, Fluxus games and Andy Warhol's pseudo-industrial Factory.[2] It has also been argued that collaboration was crucial in the transition from Modernism to postmodernism, particularly since the advent of conceptualism in the late 1960s. During the following decade, redefinitions of art tended to go hand in hand with collaborative practices.

According to the curator Angelika Nollert, the first known group of artists who worked closely together were the Nazarenes in Rome in 1810–1830. She very rightly points out that this type of artistic collaboration was first able to develop into a conscious strategy when the guilds disappeared and the notion of the romantic—and thus individual—artist came to the fore.[3] At the same time, it is worthwhile underlining the obvious, as Brian Holmes does; namely, that even the lone artist in their studio is dependent upon contributions from others.[4] This is especially true for many male artists who have been able to rely on more or less invisible support from surrounding women.

This essay, however, deals with collaborations, where some form of conscious partnership takes place, whether interaction, participation, group activity or another sort of intended exchange and process of "working together," often with the purpose of generating some sort of agency. These kinds of collaborations can occur both between people involved, who are often, but not always, artists and between the artists and other people. It looks at some attempted formulations relating to collaborative practices within contemporary art that came about in the mid-1990s, as well as recent developments in how collaboration is structured and motivated. The former indicates that collaboration has had a consistent presence in art of the last twenty years but that it has not until fairly recently entered the mainstream. The latter shows a pronounced affinity with activism and other current ways of getting together around shared concerns, as well as a marked interest in alternative ways of producing knowledge.

If group work in art may be said to be booming at present, it is important to think about how these heterogeneous collaborations are structured and motivated. It is also necessary to pay attention to collaborative work and collective actions in society in general and to current theories of collaboration within philosophy and social theory. There are already a number of formulations around practices which could loosely be described as "collaborative practices" since 1990 that should be taken into consideration as well. From the outset, ambiguities appear because concepts like collaboration, cooperation, collective action, relationality, interaction and participation are used and often confused, although each of them has its own specific connotations. According to the collaboratively-compiled Wikipedia, however, collaboration may be described as follows: "Collaboration refers abstractly to all processes wherein people work together—applying both to the work of individuals as well as larger collectives and societies. As an intrinsic aspect of human society, the term is used in many varying contexts such as science, art, education and business."

"Collaboration" is, as the above definition suggests, an open-ended concept which in principle encompasses all the others. Collaboration becomes an umbrella term for the diverse working methods that require more than one participant. "Cooperation," on the other hand, emphasises the notion of working together and mutually benefiting from it. Through its stress on solidarity, the word "collective" gives an echo of working forms within a socialist social system. "Collective action" refers precisely to acting collectively while "interaction" can mean that several people interact with each other, as well as that a single individual interacts with, for example, an apparatus by pressing a button. "Participation" is more associated with the creation of a context in which participants can take part in something that someone else has created but where there are nevertheless opportunities to have an impact.

Come Together, Be Together, Work Together

Current ideas about collaboration in art are intertwined with other contemporary notions concerning what it means to "come together," "be together" and "work together." Contrary to generally accepted notions about community having changed—meaning it has become less socially responsible, caring, bonding, and, to a degree, has dissolved—Jean-Luc Nancy claims in *The Inoperative Community* that community is extremely vital, but in ways other

than might be expected. Community is, for instance, not the origin of nations and societies, it is what happens to us "in the wake of society" and not something that provides the basis for the formation of society. Community cannot even be created: it is not a product of religious harmony or utilitarian trumpeting, but should be described as resistance to immanent power. In addition, according to Nancy community should, like existence itself, be defined as a non-absolute, that is, as relational. He also points out that community can neither be reduced to "society" nor to diverse mystical associations which can lead to fascism, for example.[5] Nationalism is one such species, and as such it may be seen as an expression of "imagined communities," to borrow Benedict Anderson's term. In contrast to Nancy's philosophical and somewhat idealistic theory, Anderson's study is empirical. In his book, he traces the processes which have led to both American and European imperialism as well as the form it has taken in anti-imperialist movements in Asia and Africa.[6] In great detail, Anderson depicts how feelings of belonging or affiliation and methods for repression have been orchestrated through the daily press and local language.

Dreams of collectivism have undoubtedly been a driving force since the advent of Modernism, but there are two major new forms of collectivism at play in the world today according to Sholette and Stimson; one based on Islamist yearning for an anti-capitalist, absolute and idealized form of collectivity and the other struggling to substitute the programmer for the ideologist, who disappeared together with the communitarian ideals of Christianity, Islam, nationalism and communism. The latter is a sort of minimally regulated and DIY form of e-collectivism which attracts "techno-anarchist hacktivism to hippie-capitalist, pseudo-countercultural imperialism." They argue for the need to historicize collectivism, including the autonomous zones formed in Seattle and Genoa, as well as the provisional community work made by artists groups like Wochenklausur and Temporary Services, in order to reimagine and reshape collective action itself, and in the interest of taking charge of social being in the present. Here, their roots in political radical thinking and its reverence for solidarity come to the fore.

Hardt and Negri perhaps best formulate that a new understanding of group dynamics has emerged on the macro level in their concept of "multitude." To Hardt and Negri, "multitude" is a replacement for concepts like "the people" and the less ethnic "population." In contrast to "the people," multitude remains plural and multiple. It is a set of singularities in which each social subject maintains its difference. It is compared with the individual as a part of "the people" when the individual must deny his or her difference in order to form "a people." Unlike the masses or the mob, multitude is not fragmented and disconnected but consists of active social subjects who can act together. Indeed, multitude is a concept that can encompass all important group parameters—class, gender, ethnicity and sexual preference—but Hardt and Negri choose to underline the class perspective. This elaboration and development of the enlightenment ideal of emancipation has a curious vitalist touch to it, but in their understanding it is nevertheless there to counteract the forces of "empire," the network of power which is a new form of sovereignity based on the interactions between dominant nation-states, supranational institutions and major corporations. Interestingly enough, they distinguish between "common" on the one hand, and "community" and "public" on the other. Like multitude, "common" can include singularities: the "common" is based

on communication between singularities and comes from the collaborative social processes behind all production. In this context, it is worth elevating their observation that together with communication, collaboration as a method has become a central aspect of the new paradigm of immaterial production during the last decades.[8]

Perhaps the problem is rather that there is too much forced commonality and prescribed collaboration today in the sense of social unanimity and political consensus—at least in Northwest Europe. Political philosopher Chantal Mouffe suggests that it is the intrinsic conflict in liberal democracy that should be cultivated instead. More difference and disagreement, in other words, in order to avoid the risk of "consensus of the centre," which gives scope to right-wing extremists as the (seemingly) only real alternative in the political arena. Mouffe's "agonistic pluralism" can be of use here since it is not based on final resolutions but on an ongoing exchange marked by conflict. "Agonistic" relationships involve struggles with an adversary rather than with an enemy, as with antagonistic relationships. An adversary is someone with whom you share a common ground but with whom you disagree on meanings and implementations of basic principles—disagreements which simply cannot be resolved through the deliberation and rational discussion celebrated by "third way-politicians" and defenders of the "post-political" alike. [9]

Although post-political approaches and some attitudes of the so-called "new media critique-community" might look similar at first glance, as both underline collaboration, they are in fact very different. The longing for a different society based on sharing and cooperation, which has been forcefully expressed by the "new media critique" since the mid-1990s, carries on some of the pathos of the post-1968 "new social movements" when new means of communication began to be generally reasonable and even cheap to acquire. It has been said that movements around open source and open content have thereby created new production paradigms which counteract the type of mandatory collaboration and imposed self-organization that, for example, post-Fordist working conditions often entail. These movements have at any rate produced a lively discourse on, and concrete practice of, various collaborative methods, such as "open space technology,"which allows for a mild protocol for self-organization.

It may also be claimed that another contemporary way of "coming together" and "working together," both in the academic and the artistic sphere, is interdisciplinarity. Old borders are transgressed and different disciplines meet and, at best, fertilize each other. The ivory tower has become somewhat lower and even disappeared altogether when, for example, cultural studies have made it possible for popular culture to gnaw at literature and when contemporary visual art is exposed to the same close scrutiny as art theory studies of historical painting. However, as soon as this cross-disciplinary development began to be described as the "post-disciplinary evil," not only traditionalists but also actors who took on postmodern challenges, for fear of being deemed shallow, began to have grave doubts.[10] This skepticism follows the logic that few, if any, can cover several fields fully and therefore the results of mixing disciplines become far too thin. With the exception of the bureaucratic and economically motivated Wagner experiment, "the coming together" of different subject and genre areas—as subjects and genres—is unusual today. It is as unusual as arranged marriages initiated by people who are forced to get married, as rare as successful blind dates.

Instead of formal mergers, temporary collaborations within self-determined activities may frequently be observed, but these do not entail the literal merging of categories.

Strategies for collaboration in contemporary art seem to have a particular relationship to the last decade's political and social activities. You can even speak of a desire for activism within the field of art today. Ever since *Reclaim the Streets* cropped up on London streets at the beginning of the 90s, claiming common ownership of public space through festival-like happenings which blocked traffic, both individual and collective actions in urban space have increased. On-site actions against corporate ownership and various political questions of justice are now regularly planned for larger meetings of, for example, the International Monetary Fund, World Economics Forum and G8. The "anti-globalization movement," otherwise known as the "movement of movements" or "global justice movement," and its criticism of international corporations' global political impact on both the environment and employment rights, has given large-scale cooperative projects a new public visage, mainly through the media. Who can forget the images from Seattle in 1999? Or the ones from the many cities in the world where mass demonstrations took place against an impending US invasion of Iraq in February 2003? With the help of new technology thousands of people can gather together quickly to express their viewpoints. The new means and forms of collaboration which digital technology has made possible must not be underestimated with regards to the boom in cooperation, where the "tactical media" blending of new technology, art and activism has helped to give political protest a new face.

How work is organized in present-day society is another cardinal point to consider in relation to questions concerning collaboration. Within the post-Fordist work paradigm, immaterial labour, meaning various kinds of services, including information and care as well as other activities that create relations and social situations, is pivotal. It may even be claimed that what is typical of immaterial labour is that it produces communication, social relations and cooperation. Creativity and flexibility are considered essential for maximizing profit and the worker/producer must be prepared to work on short term contracts. Those who work should also be innovative and think in unconventional ways. Therefore, bohemians in general and artists in particular are important role models here. However, in contrast to the ideal of the romantic artist, you must be able to alternate between working on your own, being self-motivating, being part of a group and working in a team. This requires even greater flexibility and lack of security than that of a more conventional steady job.[11] Here the idealistic element of collaboration, which activism represents, clashes with the crass demands of private business and the State to raise profitability and efficiency. While the former stands for self-organization and self-empowerment, the latter is more directly instrumental. Many of these aspects may indeed be recognized in some of the leading examples and conceptualizations of collaborative art practices over the last fifteen years.[12]

Relational Aesthetics, New Genre Public Art, Connective Aesthetics, Kontextkunst and Dialogical Art

Art and its working methods are, of course, not a direct effect of these social, political, economic and philosophical phenomena, as in a causal relationship. They are part of the same culture, anthropologically speaking, in which these processes operate. Art participates

in both the production and reproduction of these phenomena, it both performs and depicts—as well as checks—these processes. The same thing can be said to apply in regard to one of the recent decade's most influential and disputed, not least by the quoted artists, constructions in contemporary art: relational aesthetics. Although not discussing collaboration per se, in the book *Esthétique Relationelle* (1998), the curator and critic Nicolas Bourriaud defines certain contemporary artworks as "an attempt to create relationships between people over and above institutionalized relational forms," almost as a soil for collaboration. Relational aesthetics was widely debated in the mid-1990s in Scandinavia, France and the Netherlands, and recently during a delayed but intense reception in the United Kingdom and the United States. A journey into recent Western art history would quite rapidly take us to work of artists such as Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Jorge Pardo, Carsten Höller, Philippe Parreno, Liam Gillick, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Angela Bulloch and Maurizio Cattelan—the core group of artists whose work Bourriaud is referring to. In his view, this heterogeneous group of artists propose social methods of exchange and different communication processes in order to gather individuals and groups together in other ways than those offered by the ideology of mass communication. They seek to entice the observer or viewer into the aesthetic experience offered by the artwork. Bourriaud claims that these artists do not wish to reproduce or depict the world as we know it but instead create new situations, "micro-utopias," using human relations as their raw material.[13] Acknowledging that interactivity is scarcely a novel idea, but by referring to Duchamp's lecture "The Creative Process," in 1954, Bourriaud nevertheless underlines the importance of these artists producing inter-personal experiences which aim at liberating themselves from the ideology of mass communication. It is an art which "is not trying to represent utopias, but build concrete spaces," and he continues to state that present-day art is also striving to produce situations of exchange, and relational space-time. It is the counter-merchandise. Unlike merchandise, it conceals neither the work process, nor the use value, nor the social relations which allowed its production. It does not reproduce the world that it has been taught. It tries to invent new worlds, taking human relations as its material.[14]

Despite the fact that the notion of relational aesthetics was originally coined to discuss works by certain artists, it has become a catch phrase carelessly used for any artwork with an interactive and/or socially related dimension. Recent years' relational tendencies, which often depart from the model Bourriaud formulated, include interventionist and off-site projects, discursive and pedagogical models, neo-activist strategies, and increasingly functionalist approaches (eg. art/architecture collaborative groups). Many of these are marginalized in the mainstream art world, as were their predecessors from the 1980s and 1990s.

Incontestably, much of the radically heterogenous art that Bourriaud refers to involves interaction and participation, sometimes even direct collaboration between the artist and individuals or groups. Many of the artists whose work he deals with have also worked with each other, but collaboration remains one facet among many. However, closer examination reveals that all types of interaction and exchange occur more or less amongst the artists Bourriaud refers to, which at the end of the day makes the concept of relational aesthetics even more open-ended than "collaboration." A significant portion of the criticism that has been levelled against him and the concept of relational aesthetics concerns to what degree

it implies "good" collaboration, "positive" interaction and participation, i.e. what is the quality of exchange that is stimulated? For the Australian art historian Stephen Wright, the art associated with relational aesthetics is intellectually and aesthetically meagre, it foists services on people they never asked for and draws them into "frivolous interaction." The efforts made by the participants, albeit often small, are not reimbursed and therefore society's class-based power relations are reproduced.[15] Everything that can be connected to relational aesthetics is therefore brusquely dismissed as capricious and exploitative. New York-based critic Claire Bishop's criticism of relational aesthetics stems from a more formalist-oriented art historical position. She focused on a few works by Gillick and Tiravanija, contending that by orchestrating a kind of conviviality they covered up or glossed over the tensions and conflicts that exist in all relations between people. In her understanding they basically subscribe to a quasi-democracy and buy into compromises and consensus.[16]

In contrast, Bishop cites Santiago Sierra and Thomas Hirschhorn, claiming that when they let people from different economic backgrounds collaborate they retain the inherent tensions and conflicts that exist between the observers, participants and contexts. In this way, the putative self-righteous self-image of the art world as a place where social and political issues from other segments of society are embraced is challenged. Her greatest stumbling block is how this art should be judged; for her, it must not under any conditions be judged if the relations created can be considered exploitative, disrespectful, etc. Actually, her position is an inverted version of Wright's criticism. Whereas he believes that the works of art in question are problematic, even bad, because they function as exploitative, the problem according to Bishop lies in the fact that they contain too little conflict of that kind. The art based on relations that retain their tensions and difficulties is better than the art which is assumed to seek agreement and harmony, which she ascribes to Tiravanija's and Gillick's work, although their art has rarely if ever referred to these third-way abstractions. Here Bourriaud's, Wright's and Bishop's own commonality is striking: they are all equally perilously impressionistic in their descriptions of artwork and equally sweeping when they mix together art and artist. In this context it is also crucial to distinguish between someone's interpretation of a work of art and the work itself, a matter that is often overlooked by all three. Their working methods are also a reminder of the importance of having experience of the project one is discussing, or at least of being able to rely on detailed and trustworthy eyewitness descriptions. This sort of installationist, cooperative work has proven to be even more difficult to describe than other types of art, let alone analyze.

In this context, the art historian and critic Christian Kravagna's distinction between four different methods seen in contemporary art with an interest in human interaction may be useful: "working with others," interactive activities, collective action, and participatory practice. According to Kravagna, "working with others" is done by "sozio-chics" like Christine and Irene Hohenbüchler, Jens Haaning and Tiravanija who devote themselves to building social and communicative relations with the public. Here the public becomes cynically used by the artists. For those with more in-depth knowledge of these bodies of work, it is, however, clear that potentially political content is present more often than not but in ambiguous and opaque, albeit precise, ways.[17] Interactive art permits one or more reactions that can influence the appearance of the work without deeply affecting its structure.

The idea behind collective action is instead that a group of people formulate an idea and then carry it out together. Neither of these is described with concrete examples, but one can imagine that "push button art" is included in interactive art and that Guerilla Girls' actions can exemplify collective action. Participatory practice presumes that there is a difference between the producer and receiver, but the focus is on the latter, to whom a significant part of the development of the work is transferred. Adrian Piper's *Funk Lessons*, in which the artist arranged and made videos of putatively ethnic dance lessons and Clegg & Guttman's *Open Library* in Graz and Hamburg, where a common public library was created in a residential neighbourhood, are described in detail and cited as two good examples of participatory practices.[18] *Funk Lessons* was not focused on as the point of departure of an already existing community, but instead the work itself produced a community which had not existed before.

Among the more overlooked conceptualizations of collaborative practices from recent decades are Suzy Gablik's "connective aesthetics," Suzanne Lacy's "new genre public art" and Grant Kester's "dialogical art." Outside the German-speaking context this is also true for the so-called Kontextkunst. New genre public art is a term coined by Suzanne Lacy, founding member of the Feminist Studio Workshop at the Woman's Building in L.A., to discuss art which seeks to engage more directly with audiences. In an anthology entitled *Mapping the Terrain* (1995) Lacy defines it in this way: "New genre public art calls for an integrative critical language through which values, ethics and social responsibility can be discussed in terms of art."[19] It is a working model based on relations between people and on social creativity rather than on self-expression, and it is characterized by cooperation. It is community-based, often relating to marginalized groups; it is socially engaged, interactive and aimed at another, less anonymous public than that of art institutions. It is about creative participation in a process. Activities are primarily pursued in other social contexts such as housing areas or schools, far from established art institutions. In this way, a kind of reverse exclusiveness arises: those who are attracted to and captured by the project have more access to this art than the usual art public. The examples in her book function as case studies and the artists range from Vito Acconci, Joseph Beuys and Judy Chicago to Group Material, Mierle Laderman Ukeles and Fred Wilson.

New genre public art came about at the same time as relational aesthetics, as did the kindred connective aesthetics developed by Suzy Gablik. Formerly an artist, Gablik is active as a critic, theorist and teacher. According to her, connective aesthetics locate creativity in a kind of dialogical structure which frequently is the result of a collaboration between a number of individuals rather than an autonomous self-contained individual. Connective aesthetics is the antithesis of modernism and its "nonrelational, noninteractive and nonparticipatory orientation," in its embracing of traditional values such as compassion and care and seeing and responding to needs.[20] Connective aesthetics is furthermore listener-centred and not vision-oriented. Therefore it is claimed to contribute to "a new consciousness of how the self is being defined and experienced." Sources of inspiration are psychotherapy and ecological discussions, and notions like "healing" crop up in her texts. Gablik states that connective aesthetics "makes art into a model for connectedness and healing by opening up being to its full dimensionality—not just the disembodied eye."[21] Her examples include Jonathan Borofsky's and Gary

Glassman's video documentary *Prisoners*, 1985-1986; Suzanne Lacy's *The Crystal Quilt*, 1987 (Minneapolis), featuring 430 older women on Mother's Day discussing hopes and fears of aging, their accomplishments and disappointments; and Mierle Laderman Ukeles' *Touch Sanitation*, 1978, in which the artist shook hands with 8500 sanitation workers over a period of 11 months, saying "Thank you for keeping NYC alive" to each and every one of them.

Connective aesthetics and new genre public art have been largely disregarded and many feel somewhat suspicious of the didactic, salutary intentions and slightly "new agey" character that the authors claim for them. Yet, they have indeed opened up new ways of thinking about the role and nature of art and its audiences, with collaboration at their core. Just as the urgency to formulate one's thoughts around art that seeks to go beyond the contemplatively intended image and object-based art—as is the case with relational aesthetics—must be seen in the light of 1980s spectacularization, commodification and sales boom, so should new genre public art and connective aesthetics. However, Kravagna contends that the two suffer from political deficits, which are compensated for with pastoral means; that is, they seek "the good." In his view this goes hand in hand with developments in society towards political impotence and decreased possibilities to really effect political processes, where voluntary work and other social interests replace political influence. Otherwise, some of Bourriaud's descriptions of relational aesthetics would better suit most of the art that Lacy and Gablik examine than the art he himself addresses. Quite a lot of what Bishop criticizes Tiravanija and Gillick for is rather more present in the formulations of new genre public art and connective aesthetics, but referred to in positive terms.

A third concept of relevance here, which developed around the same time is that of Kontextkunst (context art). By investigating and questioning contexts, often through various forms of collaborations, it reached a wider public in conjunction with the exhibition of the same name, assembled by the artist and curator, Peter Weibel, as part of Steirischer Herbst in Graz, 1993.[22] The artists involved here are connected to an axis from New York to Cologne and include Mark Dion, Andrea Fraser, Clegg & Guttman, Renée Green, Gerwald Rockenschaub, Thomas Locher and Christian Philipp Müller. Their critical investigations of how culture is actually produced often puts one in mind of the institutional analytical strategies of the 1960s, and their art tends to be site-specific. Like the artists associated with relational aesthetics, contextual artists' approaches are inter-disciplinary and include such areas as architecture, music and the mass media. However, in contrast to the former, contextual artists are more historically oriented and their methods are more academic. Aesthetically, they tend to keep a low profile, with straight conveyance of information as a major concern.

Dialogical art as discussed by Grant Kester in his book *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (2004) is a more recent treatment mainly of work from the 1990s.[23] Again it focuses on art intersecting with cultural activism, based on collaboration with diverse audiences and communities. Creative dialogue and empathetic insight are at the core of the works he refers to, as are models for successful communication. This art primarily exists outside the international network of galleries and museums, curators and collectors. Among his examples are Wochenklausur's *Intervention to Aid Drug-Addicted Women* (1994, in Zurich), which involved facilitating discussions on a harbour boat amongst those dealing with the situation and resulted in a boarding house for the women, and Suzanne Lacy's *The*

Roof Is on Fire (1994 in Oakland) where the artist worked with 220 teenagers to question racial stereotypes in a media event to which more than 1,000 local inhabitants were invited. Like Kravagna and Lacy, Kester also discusses Stephen Willats and Adrian Piper's work. This thorough study traces art's function as communication from Clive Bell and Roger Fry to Clement Greenberg and Lyotard, and points out something crucial: that they all associate semantic accessibility in, for example, advertising with the destructive effects of captialist commodification. He understands dialogical art as an "open space within contemporary culture where certain questions could be asked and critical analyses articulated." Dialogical art is furthermore based on a critical time sense that takes into account cumulative effects, i.e. things happening today have an effect on the future.

Most of these interpretations of collaboratively-based artistic practices have been around for a few years, as have the artworks they refer to. Relational aesthetics, new genre public art, connective aesthetics and dialogical art focus on the relation between the work and the public and on forms of participation. It could be said that the tricky issue they maneuver around is "the social" or "sociality," although they use very different methods to reach their public.[24] Kontextkunst also has participation in view but rather than having the social as a spine, it privileges the political. These methods of working of course continue to exist, but newly, or somewhat newly, developed and revised versions have appeared. Ways of working, which have a particular relationship to the notion of "collectivity" and being a number of people sharing—as well as questioning together—authorship.

Recent Models of Collaboration

What do the more recent collaborations look like—those that were formed after the mid-1990s, or became visible over the same period? Undoubtedly, there are many forms of artistic collaboration: stable multiple authorship as with the duos Bikvanderpol, Marysia Lewandowska and Neil Cummings, Elgaland-Vargaland, Clegg & Guttman and larger groups who have been together a long time such as Radek in Moscow, Irwin in Ljubljana, Group Material in New York, Critical Art Ensemble in the US and Women Down the Pub in Copenhagen. There are single-issue groups such as Park Fiction that dissolved when their goal, which was to prevent a vacant lot in a deprived area of Hamburg from being developed, had been achieved. Oda Projesi, consisting of three young women artists and sociologists, were based in the quarter of Galata in Istanbul for a number of years. They worked together there with the local inhabitants investigating and redefining the use of various types of space. Temporary Services is a collective based in Chicago which focuses on temporary and ephemeral projects in public space. Others have chosen to organize themselves taking the model of a music group, for example, General Idea and Freie Klasse. Still others allude to the forms of the business world and branding methods—for instance, Bernadette Corporation, or more bureaucratic organs like Gala Committee. Schleuser.net borrows the forms of a lobby organization for business enterprises specializing in undocumented cross-border human traffic. These activities resemble the art activism of Raqs Media Collective and Multiplicity. The latter two consist of people coming from different professional backgrounds—artists, architects and sociologists—and they nourish a desire to change society

with their work. A backdrop to most of this is the awareness that collaboration entails contact, confrontation, deliberation and negotiation to a degree which goes beyond individual work, and that this produces subjectivity differently. There are also examples of willing immersion; as the critic and curator Gregory Sholette claims, groups like Gelitin and Dearraindrop fulfil the needs of entertainment culture by separating the image of collectivist art from its strong history of political radicalism. In this way the individualistic art world can bond with its antithesis and draw from its grooviness.[25]

In a variety of symposia, conferences, colloquia, exhibitions and publications over the last few years, the form and basis of these collaborative and collective activities have been presented, examined and called into question: how people work on a short-term basis, as well as on more long-term basis; how they spread their attention across various subjects, methods, lifestyles, political orientations; how they hope for some kind of emancipation; which obstacles they come across and last but not least, what sort of satisfaction results from working in a group.[26]

Since 2000, through UKK (Unge Kunstnere og Kunstformidlere/Young Artists and Art Mediators) and IKK (Institutet för konstnärer och konstförmedlare/The Institute for Artists and Art Mediators), Denmark and Sweden have seen the growth and establishment of more politicized public discussions about cultural production, which has created new special interest organizations for artists and art mediators. The currently inactive Hildesheim Societät can in this context seem aloof with their devotion to intensive self-fictionalizing within the framework of an archaic upper class club. Fictionalizing is a well-tested method for questioning authorship and one of the more recent additions to the art scene is the curator Daniela Johnson, behind whom a group of curators and artists is concealed. Reena Spaulings is both the name of a gallery in New York, run by a collective of artists, and the title of a collectively-written novel whose main character bears the same name. In many cases, the individual members in the groupings continue their own careers, while others immerse themselves totally in group work. All, however, are based on collaboration between specific founders. Some of these people have systematically collaborated with others, a method they share with individual artists like Johanna Billing, Annika Eriksson, Jeremy Deller, Apolonija Sustersic, Santiago Sierra and Thomas Hirschhorn, who individually involve groups of people in their projects. However, they work with these groups in very different ways.

Billing, Eriksson, Deller and Hirschhorn, for example, have approached groups of people who already have something in common, and the artists have then proposed a new type of activity, which to an extent produces a new identity which does not always go in tandem with their primary identification. In their projects, these artists appeal to latent qualities and conflicts which are tested and then acted out. In these cases, the differences in types of relations which are established between the artist and the people involved must be emphasized: are the latter given a role or task by the former or do they develop it together? Is the "commission" carried out with or without remuneration? Is it about a win-win situation or can one person be said to exploit another? The question is whether you can talk at all about collaboration when the responsibility lies very clearly with one party as in many of Billing's, Eriksson's, Deller's and Sustersic's projects. The people involved have no responsibility in the sense of, for example, improving or following up the project. They can even leave the

No Ghost Just a Shell, installation detail.

situation without a guilty conscience. Neither do they normally get credited as collaborators. Possibly these projects can be regarded as "weak" or "not fully-fledged" collaborations, involving varied groups of people. The projects are participatory but they generally lack the social commitment of new genre public art, connective aesthetics and dialogical art.

While discussing contemporary collaborative practices you shouldn't overlook loose groups of artists who for a time live and work side by side at a particular place and share attitudes and approaches. Examples of this include Christine Borland, Douglas Gordon, Nathan Coley, Jacqueline Donachie, Claire Barclay, Simon Starling and Ross Sinclair in Glasgow in the 1990s.[27] In Geneva during the same period Gianni Motti, Sydney Stucki, Sylvie Fleury, John Armleder and others did the same.[28] These loose groupings or networks obviously lie close to the classic "circle of friends" model, but their role as breeding grounds for temporary collaborations in particular should be acknowledged.

Many of today's collaborations in art contexts operate horizontally and consist of agents from different fields; very often these collaborations lie on the border between activist, artistic and curatorial activities and they tend to be self-organized. Ordinarily, the collaborators have joined together in order to react to or in a specific local situation, for example KMKK in Budapest, DAE in San Sebastian, B+B in London and WHW in Zagreb.[29] Some groups have become incorporated into institutional contexts—albeit temporarily—like some of the groups mentioned above, in the Ludwig Museum, Manifesta 5 and ICA respectively, whilst others have even taken over entire institutions, as was the case with Konst2 (Art2), who took over Tensta Konsthall in Stockholm in the spring of 2004.[30]

The various constituent parts of *No Ghost Just a Shell*, a project initiated by Pierre Huyghe and Philippe Parreno, have been shown in a number of different institutional contexts—the project itself could hardly be thought of without institutional interference. As a single complete project, it has been shown at the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, the Institute of Visual Culture in Cambridge and at Kunsthalle Zurich.[31] *No Ghost just a Shell* was a project-long collaboration between a loose network of friends and colleagues where the artists gathered together around a shared interest. Or, as Huyghe has commented in relation to AnnLee: "a sign around which a community has established itself," but also a phenomenon around which a particular energy has crystallized.[32] However, the aim was at the same time to give this "flashing sign" certain rights. After a grand farewell fireworks display and equipped with a casket made from parts of IKEA furniture, AnnLee was allowed to pass away after four years. In conjunction with her demise, Huyghe and Parreno handed over their rights to AnnLee for one Euro to a newly formed association that guaranteed that the image of AnnLee would never appear again in anything other than what was created prior to the transference of rights.[33] This particular collaboration is over.

No Ghost Just a Shell, installation detail.

Specific to *No Ghost Just a Shell* is the fact that it relates to and at the same time involves concrete popular culture and commercialism and therefore raises questions concerning the production and reproduction of identity. The project is clearly inscribed in the logic of the art market but frustrates it at the same time; it is arguably the first example of an extensive collaborative art project presented in the form of a group exhibition being bought as a whole by a collection.[34] More idealistic notions of sharing are combined with a neo-liberal logic of networking and outsourcing. It is consciously situated at the intersection between sensibilities promoted by post-1968 social movements and hardcore post-Fordist mechanisms, playing out the problematic and contested aspects of both. Its structure ends up looking very much like the rhizome described by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, and it certainly shares some of the characteristics of Michael Hardt's and Antonio Negri's understanding of the "common." *No Ghost Just a Shell*'s "promiscuous" creation story—its form and content along with its degree of complexity and contradictoriness, and the way in which it simultaneously touches upon the fetish character and the open sources of art—makes it something of a key project within contemporary art.[35] Moreover, *No Ghost Just a Shell* is probably one of the most noted collaborative art works that has been done during the last decade. According to Hans Ulrich Obrist, it may also be claimed that the project has even contributed to changes in the prevailing exhibition paradigm.[36] It recalls the important distinction between one single, solitary collaborative project and ongoing collaborations between authors and/or others.

The basic models of contemporary collaborative forms in art can be easily extended—there are many variations on the theme—but this overview should suffice to show their prevalence on the one hand, and indicate their heterogeneity on the other. Historically, what motivates engaging with collaborative practices certainly varies: people have joined together to find new forms of shared life closer to nature, as with Monte Verita and in Worpswede during the turn of the last century; or, using different types of actions to wield political

influence, like the group Tucuman Arde in Rosario and the Art Workers Coalition in New York at the end of the 1960s. Early on it became clear that there is a crucial difference between wanting to live and work together commune-style and wishing only to work together. In contemporary art life, beyond artist-couples, the distinction between living and working together and only working together is clearly exemplified by how the Copenhagen-based groups N55 and Superflex have structured their forms of collaboration, with N55 formerly living and working together and Superflex being content with collaborative work.

The motivation behind today's collaborations varies radically, almost in proportion to the number of different modes of working. A common explanation is the wish to practice generosity and sharing as an alternative to contemporary individualism and the traditional role of the romantic artist as a solitary genius and marketable identity. Self-determination in an ever more instrumentalized art world, both commercially and publicly, and a desire to be a more powerful force in society have also been mentioned as important motivations, not to forget the fun involved in working with others and the practical advantages of sharing tasks according to specialities and preferences.[37] In certain cases, the need for an infrastructure has brought about collaboration around technical equipment and venues. As Beatrice von Bismarck has pointed out, formalized groups of artists can often be associated with self-promotion and a desire to achieve success in the art world. Similarly, teamwork, with its orientation towards a rational division of labour and maximizing of profit, is linked to economic contexts. Collective activities, on the other hand, are connected to a desire to withdraw from the art market and its exploitation, to turn away from the production of objects and from marketing. Wanting to be a stronger force in society is a kindred motivation as is a desire to create an intellectually and emotionally stimulating work situation. A legacy of the so-called new social movements is the notion that collaboration per se is positive; collaboration as an intrinsic critique of individualism and profit-seeking. Then there is the prosaic fact that artists often want to create their own working conditions and at the same time be shaped by them.[38] It may be warranted here to note that artists and curators today often work under similar economic conditions; both can be classed as "precarious workers," that is, their working situations are uncertain.[39]

What is of interest here is collaboration as a conscious process among artists and its use as a working method. Since the middle of the 1990s, the field of art has expanded, and affinities with, for instance, activist-inspired methods have developed. A kind of "neo-idealism" flourishes in the arts beside political "neo-radicalism." This should come as no surprise; when politics in principle are completely steered by economics and the economy follows a capitalist logic, then culture tends to become an arena for ideological debate. Culture in general, and art in particular, then functions as a venue where the political is allowed to be enacted, if sometimes covertly. A situation then emerges where on the one hand the political discussion in parliamentary democracies' public space is increasingly about ethics and morality, and on the other, art seeks out political phenomena that have long been taken for granted—phenomena like citizenship that either have been eroded or utterly transformed. Today we have reached a point where culture and art are not only used as instruments in the political arena, but they also produce a potent force, something that is palpable in the current strong interest in activism within contemporary art.

It is in light of this process that the collaborative turn in contemporary art best can be seen, as it has increasingly been developed as a way for its practitioners to create room to maneuver when the art market's position is being reinforced, and publicly-financed art is becoming more and more instrumentalized. It is easier to nourish self-determination and develop your own way of working when you are self-organized. If the 1990s in art were marked by a wish to dissolve borders and the melding of previously separate fields, the new millennium has revealed a form of "neo-separatism." The differences, not least in terms of self-definition, between the commercial market and larger mainstream public institutions on the one hand, and self-organized parallel initiatives on the other, have increased. The former strive to be public-friendly and tend therefore to adhere to the principles of entertainment. The latter are more investigative and question given preconditions. This division has always existed but it has deepened during recent years. Collaborative practitioners can indeed be found everywhere within this, and also within public and commercial institutions, but a fair number are clearly at home among the self-organized parallel initiatives. It is easier to practice strategic separatism when you are part of a group rather than left on your own. This urge to create space for maneouvering or "collective autonomy," to borrow a term from Brian Holmes, through strategic separatism is both a sign of protection and an act of protest.[40]

It has been claimed that the anthropology of collaboration must be considered together with Marcel Mauss and the demanding relations of the gift. Something as apparently insignificant as a gift is not just an expression of unselfish generosity but rather a way of exercising power through the strict reciprocal logic of the potlatch. Yet, often positive values such as loyalty, the ability to change, altruism and solidarity are baked into the concept of collaboration. At the same time, collaboration can stand for the opposite, for treachery and ethical irregularities. A collaborator can be a blackleg, a traitor, someone serving the enemy and therefore not trustworthy. The same may be said of the method of cooperation. Therefore it is worth recalling that communication and collaboration can be just as efficient as smoke screens as they might be methods which generate generosity and solidarity. The crux lies in specificities, in the precision of the "there and then," the consideration of time, context and other forces in order to elaborate on when collaborations work and when they don't.

But the result then? Does it make any difference if diverse forms of artistic collaboration lie behind an art work or any other kind of cultural production? Is collaboration inherently a "better" method which produces "better" results? The curatorial collective WHW claims that the purpose of collaboration is that it has to result in something that would otherwise not take place; it simply has to make possible that which otherwise is impossible.[41]

Self-Organized Initiatives and the Dilemma of Art Institutions

To enumerate economically independent artists' or curatorial initiatives, or financially independent, non-commercial initiatives in general, is not an easy task. 16 Beaver[42] and e-flux[43] in New York are two clear examples of artists who have survived with integrity in the capital of art commerce, through rental fees and the distribution of information respectively. Eipcp (European institute for progressive cultural policies) in Vienna has succeeded in seeking and obtaining sufficient amounts of European cultural subsidies to run an

independent trans-national, research-related program in which a critical discourse is given a great amount of space.[44] Eipcp is moreover one of the few organizations that has got engaged in publishing important texts on the Net, which are translated into several languages. One could also mention Pro qm, a thematic book shop in Berlin which, through selling books, publishing, doing projects and other public events, is dealing with cities, architecture, art, design, pop, politics and theory.[45] All of these examples do produce ideas and projects which you virtually never encounter within either the publically funded or commercial art market. There are also a number of individual artists and institutions that have acquired certain sources of income—mainly renting out space—which are supplementary to the official (public) sources. These channels or sources often function together with conventional funding and together create a mixed economy, and to my knowledge rarely lead to non-conformist art production and curatorial practice.

In addition to what the authors of the report say about the future importance of self-organized artists' initiatives, I would like to add something which has come to my attention fairly recently. I am thinking of initiatives which take a sort of "counter position" in relation to mainstream culture and specially instrumentalization, wanting to be situated "outside," also for polemical reasons. In a way the mentioned initiatives would qualify here but I am thinking of a more vociferous spelling out of discontent and taking certain action. Some producers of culture have even joined forces to alert people about the risks involved with the instrumentalization of art and to present alternatives. In doing so they are taking a big step to the side from current cultural production as mediated by public and commercial institutions, underlining negation, withdrawal and the importance of opacity. In this context it is even possible to speak of yet a new turn of institutional critique within the "systemic approach," namely that of a certain strategic separatism. Here the lines are drawn between spheres and activities, if only to clarify that at the moment the leakage is seriously undermining artistic practice as we have known it over the last fifty years but also to symbolically mark that "enough is enough." This turn can be understood as a survival attempt.

One example of this new wave is the so-called Manifesto Club in London, a forum and campaign around the issue of artistic autonomy.[46] They are reacting against the kind of conformism that instrumentalization produces. Or as they themselves phrase it:

> Our ambition is to develop a network of individuals who share the common interest of challenging the current culture of instrumentalism that artists face in current government policy, and the strain of anti-experimental conformism that infects both art education, cultural policy and mainstream culture more broadly. Against this, we defend artistic autonomy in all its forms: A vibrant artistic culture we believe must be founded upon artistic freedom, and the only limits for artists should be the limits of the discipline and the limits they choose for themselves. We want to start a new discussion about the values we attach to art, about the role of artists in our society, and about the nature of cultural experimentation and an aspiration for new possibilities. We also feel it is important for people working in different areas of culture—visual arts, museums, theatre, music, film, design, dance, etc.—to come together and understand the common challenges we face.

Although this bears some similarity to high modernist ideas of autonomy and art for art's own sake, it is does not appear to be an essentialist approach. They seem to promote an art which can very well be actively engaged with society, if the artists so wish. Therefore I do not, so far, see it as a return to the ivory tower but as a slightly desperate scream for the possibility of self-determination and reasonable space for maneouvering, a call for the continuous relevance of emancipation.

Another pertinent example is the project "Opacity: Current Considerations on Art Institutions and the Economy of Desire," curated by Nina Möntmann, which pointed out and challenged "anti-experimental conformism," particularly the institutional constraints.[47] The project tried to provide a platform for artistic practices which are based on research and analysis, for example those by Stephan Dillemuth, Kajsa Dahlberg and Gardar Eide Einarsson, through exhibitions, workshops, screenings and the production of a fanzine. As opposed to classical institutional critique, by artists such as Hans Haacke and Andrea Fraser, this project used lack of transparency rather than its abundance. It propagated the right for artists and smaller institutions to be opaque in order to have a chance to experiment with new types of collaborations and other practices. By turning their back to the expectations of constant and immediate accessibility in public institutions they also pointed to the fact that for post-studio practice, having time and space to prepare for projects can more or less only be offered by institutions.

The picture that emerges from European Cultural Policies 2015, and which is already discernable today, shows a tendency of radical division in the art world. What eight writers from seven regions in Europe have predicted regarding contemporary art and its public funding in 2015 has already been implemented.[48] Art has been heavily instrumentalized and become a popular tool for social inclusion. It is used to create jobs at the same time as it is expected to function as an entertaining, free time activity. Moreover, art is a rewarding instrument for building and reinforcing regional, national and European identities. On the one hand, we have a commercially viable art, often entertaining and/or "shocking" with populistic elements, adapted to the public institutions, particularly the large ones, that increasingly function as mass media. On the other hand, we have a "difficult" and "uncomfortable" art with critical ambitions, which opposes being incorporated into these patterns. The former produces high visitor figures and copious media coverage but lacks serious, long-term production of new ideas. It tends to be superficial and to be implicated in the creative industries. The latter generates lots of new ideas and excels in sophisticated discourse but preaches to a small group of the already converted. Although this division has existed before, channels of communication between the different branches have nevertheless existed. Today these channels are rare, and if we are to believe the authors of the report, they will hardly exist at all in 2015. Whereas support for opening up art—and intellectual activities in general for that matter—to popular culture and to deconstruction of all kinds of power hierarchies has been strong in critical circles over the last forty years, the doors are now closing. But again, for strategic reasons rather than belief in essentialism. Decades of theoretical defense of ideas of the productive nature of hybridity (Homi Bhabha), the constructed nature and power relations of all categories (Michel Foucault) and not least the emancipatory potential of fluidity and leakage (Deleuze and Guattari) now have to give some way to more

separatist thinking. Which means that we will probably see more quotes from people like Gayatri Spivak and Hal Foster in the near future.

If the crossroads have long since been passed and the roads are becoming more and more distant from each other, I have to ask if it is desirable to bridge these differences? If yes, is it at all possible? If not, will not each branch wither away without contact with the other? Increasing numbers of institutions—and by extension, even artists—are forced to adapt their programs and/or work to the prevailing policy and/or market forces. If not in public then at least between themselves, colleagues vent their feelings about the pitiful compromises they are forced to make and about how great is the gap between what they must do and what they want to do. To their funders, they stress quantities—numbers of visitors, numbers of exhibitors, numbers of press cuttings—despite the fact that this way of measuring quality is met with considerable scepticism by most professional producers of art, mostly privately. The real question, it appears to me now, is how the first "populist" variant of contemporary art will manage without influx from the "idea-rich" segment? And how will it be in the long run with an art that wishes to remain narrow and advanced if it does not, at least periodically, resonate with a broader public? This is what we need to debate now.

This text expands on the author's "The Collaborative Turn" in *Taking the Matter into Common Hands*, Black Dog Publishing, 2005, pp. 15-31 and "The future is here." *Framework: The Finnish Art Review*, no. 6, January 2007, pp. 56-59.

ENDNOTES

1 These depend on specific conditions and contexts of the time. For example, Sophie Täuber-Arp and Cercle et Carré, Abstraction-Création, a loose association of artists formed in Paris in 1931 to counteract the influence of the powerful Surrealist group led by André Breton. Or, Howardena Pindell's minimal and repetitive paintings that question what it meant to be a painter in NYC in the 1960s. However, I have a harder time finding contemporary examples of more traditional art, "arty" art, which manages to do what some works by Sophie Täuber-Arp and Howardena Pindell do.

2 Marion Piffer Damiani, "Get together—Kunst als Teamwork," in the catalogue with the same title, Kusthalle, Vienna, 1999.

3 Angelika Nollert, "Art is Life, and Life is Art," in *Collective Creativity*, catalogue, Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel, 2005.

4 Brian Holmes, "Artistic Autonomy and the Communication Society," *Third Text* 18, no.6 (November 2004): 547- 555.

5 Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, (London and Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

6 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London and New York: Verso, 1983 and 1991).

7 Blake Stimson and Gregory Sholette, "Periodising Collectivism," *Third Text* 18, no.6 (November 2004): 573-583.

8 Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and democracy in the Age of Empire*, (New York: Penguin Press, 2004).

9 Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox*, (London and New York: Verso, 2000).

10 See for instance *Games, Fights and Collaborations: Art and Cultural Studies in the 90s*, eds. Beatrice von Bismarck, Diethelm Stoller and Ulf Wuggenig, (Cantz Verlag: Stuttgart, 1996) and *The Anxiety of Interdisciplinarity*, eds. Alex Coles and Alexia Defert, (BACKless Books and Black Dog Publishing: London, 1998).

11 See for instance Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, (London & New York: Verso, 2005).

12 A seminar entitled New Relation-alities, curated in collaboration with Nina Möntmann, took place at Iaspis in Stockholm, 25 February, 2006, in which such topics were brought up. The seminar dealt with art focusing on social relations and working from a critical and theoretical perspective in order to decode and understand what types of relations with the viewer a piece of art produces. What are the relations created between art, institutions and the public? What linguistic means of expression are obtainable when trying to find adequate terms for all of these forms of relations?

13 Nicolas Bourriaud's essayistic and yet relevant discussion on relational aesthetics has been widely disputed, even in aggressive terms. The Los Angeles-based art historian and writer George Baker's "open letter" to Nicolas Bourriaud sounds like a vendetta: "Despite its myopia in the face of the full range of contemporary art practices outside of France, despite its inability to develop and carry a theoretical argument or model, the misconceptions and ignorance displayed in this text have only been matched by its popularity within contemporary curatorial circles. A full critique of its terms, however, will have to await another moment, another more specific 'open letter.'" Quoted from "Relations and Counter-Relations: An open letter to Nicolas Bourriaud," exhibition catalogue, *Contextualize*, Kunstverein, Hamburg, 2002.

14 Nicolas Bourriaud, "An Introduction to Relational Aesthetics," exhibition catalogue, *Traffic, CAPC*, Musée d'Art Contemporain, Bordeaux, 1996, no pagination.

15 Stephen Wright, "The Delicate Essence of Artistic Collaboration," *Third Text* 18, no. 6 (November, 2004): 533-545.

16 Claire Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," *October* 110 (Fall 2004): 51-79.
17 See Maria Lind, "The Process of Living in the World of Objects: Notes on the work of Rirkrit Tiravanija," in *Rirkrit Tiravanija, A Retrospective (tomorrow is another fine day)*, (London: Serpentine Gallery, 2005).
18 See Christian Kravagna, *Modelle partizipatorischer Praxis I Die Kunst des Öffentlichen*, eds. Marius Babias & Achim Könneke, (Amsterdam and Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1998).
19 Suzanne Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, (Seattle and Washington, Bay Press, 1995), p.43. Lacy uses the term to discuss a number of very different projects in the US from the 1970s to the 90s, everything from Adrian Piper to Mujeres Muralistas.
20 Suzi Gablik, "Connective Aesthetics: Art after Individualism" in *Mapping the Terrain*, p. 80.
21 Ibid..
22 See Peter Weibel, *Kontextkunst—Kunst der 90er Jahre*, (Cologne: Du Mont Verlag, 1994). Many of the relevant discussions about the work of these artists had, previous to the exhibition and the catalogue, been published in the journal *Texte zur Kunst* and a number of those involved felt that Peter Weibel as well as some other curators, had hijacked their project. See for instance Stefan Germer, "Unter Geiern—Kontex—Kunst im Kontext" in *Texte zur Kunst*, no. 19, 1995.
23 Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).
24 For a discussion on art as social space see Nina Möntmann, *Kunst als sozialer Raum*, (Cologne, Verlag der Buchandlung Walther König, 2002).
25 Gregory Sholette, "Introducing insouciant art collectives, the latest product of enterprise culture," in *Free Cooperation*, a newspaper published in conjunction with the conference with the same title, Buffalo, Department of Media Study, SUNY at Buffalo, 2004.
26 During the past years, for example, there have been a number of projects and publications: "Art and Collaboration," *Third Text* 18, no 6 (November 2004), which is based on a 2003 conference, "Diffusion: Collaborative Practice in Contemporary Art" at the Tate Modern in London; "Dispositive Workshop" (a series of six artistic projects) at Kunstverein München 2003-2004; "Colloquium on Collaborative Practices" at Kunstverein Munich in July 2004, documented in *Collected Newsletter* published by Revolver Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, Frankfurt 2005; "Collaborative Practices Part 2" at Shedhalle in Zurisch in April 2005; and "Collective Creativity" at Kunsthalle in Fridericianum in Kassel, in May 2005. The symposion "Taking the Matter into Common Hands," took place at Iaspis in Stockholm in September and October 2005. The Swedish cultural journal *Glänta* has made a special issue on "collective art," no 1-2, 2006. Among new media events dealing with this issue, the conference "Free Cooperation" at the Departement of Media Study, SUNY at Buffalo in 2004 should be a Zeitgenössischen Kunst, ed. Christophe Keller, (Revolver Archive fur aktuelle Kunst, Frankfurt amMain, 2002). "Circles" was a series of exhibitions in five parts, with lectures held at ZKM in Karlsruhe in 2000 and 2001. Each part focused on a circle or a network, of which most can be associated to a particular town during the previous decade. "Get Together—Kunst als Teamwork" was an exhibition at Kunsthalle, Vienna in 1999. A catalogue with the same title was published during the exhibition.
27 See for example Katrina Brown, "Trust and Ross Sinclair: What's in a Decade?", in *Circles: Individuelle Sozialisation und Netzwerkarbeit in der Zeitgenössischen Kunst.*
28 Lion Bovier, *Zeitgenössischen Kunst*, ed. Christophe Keller, (Revolver Archive fur aktuelle Kunst, Frankfurt, 2002).
29 Maria Lind, Katharina Schlieben and Judith Schwartzbart, *Colloquium on Collaborative Practice: Dispositive Workshop* Part 4, supplement to Kunstverein Munich's *Newsletter*, Fall 04, 2004 (also published in *Collected Newsletter* published by Revolver Archive für aktuelle Kunst, Frankfurt, 2005). See also texts by KMKK, DAE and B+B in the same publication.

30 Rebecca Gordon Nesbitt, "Curatorial and Institutional Structures," in *Colloquium on Collaborative Practice.*
31 See the list of exhibitions in *No Ghost Just a Shell*, eds. Pierre Huyghe & Philippe Parreno, (Verlag der Buchandlung Walter König, Cologne, 2003). During my time as director of Kunstverein Munich we showed the first four video sequences by Philippe Parreno, Pierre Huyghe, Dominique Gonzales-Foerster and Liam Gillick, one after the other for a month at a time in the same room as a part of the exhibition "Exchange & Transform" (Arbeitstitel) in spring and summer 2002.
32 Pierre Huyghe, Stefan Kalmar, Philippe Parreno, Beatrix Ruf, Hans Ulrich Obrist," Conversations," in *No Ghost Just a Shell*, p. 17.
33 It is a little unclear exactly what the two initiators reckon as contributions to the project as a whole. In addition to video sequences by the two originators, Liam Gillick and Dominique Gonzales-Foerster, the project includes the designers M/M's posters, which also function as wallpaper specially designed for the videos; videos by Francois Curlet, Pierre Joseph and Mehdi Belhaj-Kacem, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Melik Ohanian; paintings by Joe Scanlan, Henri Barande and Richard Phillips; objects by Angela Bulloch and Imke Wagner; music by Anna-Lena Vaney; a magazine by Anna Fleury and texts by the fiction writer, Kathryn Davis, immunology researcher, Jean-Claude Ameisen, art historian, Paurice Pianzola, biologist and philosopher, Israel Rosenfield, art historian Molly Nesbit, art critic, Jan Verwoert, curator, Hans Ulrich Obrist and philosopher, Maurizio Lazzarato, as well as a contract created by the lawyer, Luc Saucier.
34 One complete edition is now in the collection of van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven.
35 Jan Verwoert, "Copyright, Ghosts and Commodity Fetishism," in *No Ghost Just a Shell.*
36 Hans Ulrich Obrist, "How AnnLee Changed Its Spots" in *No Ghost Just a Shell.*
37 Judith Schwartzbart, "The social as a medium, meaning and motivation" in *Colloquium on Collaborative Practice.*
38 Stefan Römer, "Are the Volcanoes Still Active? About Artist Self-Organization at Art Schools," in *Colloquium on Collaborative Practice.*
39 Alex Farquharson, "Notes on Artist and Curator Groups" in *Colloquium on Collaborative Practice.*
40 Brian Holmes, "Artistic Autonomy and the Communication Society."
41 What, How & For Whom (WHW), "New Outlines of the Possible," in *Collective Creativity*, eds. René Block, Angelika Nollert, (Frankfurt: Revolver, 2005), pp. 14-24.
42 <www.16beavergroup.org>
43 <www.e-flux.com>
44 <www.eipcp.net>
45 <www.pro-qm.de>
46 <www.manifestoclub.com>. At the moment they are focusing on the idea of a possible free art school.
47 See Nina Möntmann, *Art and its Institutions: Current Conflicts, Critique and Collaborations*, (London: Black Dog Publishing and Nifca, 2006).
48 *European Cultural Policies 2015*, eds. Maria Lind and Raimund Minichbauer, (Stockholm and Vienna: Iaspis and eipcp, 2005).