

After the Educational Turn—
Alternatives to the alternative art school

Susannah E. Haslam

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Susannah E. Haslam

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Abstract

This research problematises the contemporary phenomenon of alternative arts education after art's 'Educational Turn', encompassed by evidence of a critical discourse between 2006 and 2016. The thesis addresses the questions: what are the alternatives to models of the alternative art school having emerged through the Educational Turn? And, how might dialogic engagement with organisations outside of the Turn propose something other for the future of alternative arts education?

Contemporary art's capacity to instrumentalise education, through its reimagining by artists and the co-option of 'the alternative' by arts institutions, must be countered by considering organisational models that sit outside of the Educational Turn. The field is contextualised by a 'crisis in education' in the UK, contributing to an abundant manifestation of 'alternative' art schools. An often-overlooked plurality exists to 'the alternative' that, in its co-option by contemporary art, is rendered homogenised. Existing discourse considers artistic, self-organised and curatorial practices, framed by institutional and infrastructural critique, but neglects to step outside of the Turn to imagine other models for alternative arts education.

'Knowledge mobility', 'the dialogic' and '(trans)formation' form a framework for the thesis, functioning according to a methodology of critique and proposition. The research derives 'knowledge mobility' to critique the Turn's instrumentalisation of education, by examining existing discourse and practice that problematise the paradoxes of the Turn and frame knowledge as a form of social organisation. The research aligns 'the dialogic' from Mikhail Bakhtin and Paulo Freire, with Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes' 'intertextuality' and Maurice Blanchot's 'infinite conversation'. The function of 'the dialogic' is twofold: as a structural metaphor and conversational research practice.

Four dialogues with organisations operating outside of the remit of the Turn consider the productive and transformative capacities of models not framed as alternative art schools. These are with: Leeds Creative Timebank, *IF* Project, THECUBE and Syllabus programme. Negotiating critical and applied interpretations of 'knowledge mobility', findings from these are reconciled with the research through a process of '(trans)formation', resulting in the proposition of speculative principles to contribute to the field of alternative arts education.

The research has been produced as part of the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council's (AHRC) Creative Exchange knowledge exchange hub, providing the context for stepping outside of the domain of contemporary art. The value of this approach for the field of alternative arts education is in its capacity to have drawn together thinking from each organisation. This research makes its contribution to the field of alternative arts education by working dialogically with organisations where the practice of knowledge is central, establishing a connection between organisations outside of the Turn, which would otherwise be excluded from its discourse, with contemporary art.

The research formulates and puts into practice methods of critique, conversation and proposition: producing a critical vocabulary, lens and through deriving speculative propositions towards a possible future for alternative arts education.

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Preface

In 2013 JOURNEY / SCHOOL, an education project I co-founded with artist Martha McGuinn, temporarily suspended organising free and open seminars. JOURNEY / SCHOOL was and continues to be a proposition about alternative ways of thinking and doing tertiary-level arts education. The project manifested as presentation, discussion, concept and publication-led, where peers, predominantly artists, designers, thinkers, gathered around contemporary subjects. Placing value on the collective act of coming together in non-institutional spaces as a means of engaging in new forms of knowledge production beyond recourse to modes of rereading rehearsed forms of knowledge, it took the following thought from Roland Barthes as one starting point:

Is this a real site or an imaginary one? Neither. An institution is treated in the utopian mode: I outline a space and call it: *seminar*. It is quite true that the gathering in question is held weekly in Paris, i.e., *here and now*; but these adverbs are also those of fantasy. Thus, no guarantee of reality, but also nothing gratuitous about the anecdote. One might put things differently: that the (real) seminar is for me the object of a (minor) delirium, and that my relations with this object are, literally, *amorous*.¹

JOURNEY / SCHOOL was set up in 2011 and was conceived as a political and celebratory education project. The intentions were to: make and inhabit space, facilitate and generate critical and reflective discussion on the work of its peer group, (re)make community, situate itself, form a position, and build itself as a form of alternative expanded learning within the very broad and ambivalent domain of contemporary art in the young London scene, in Europe, post-2008. The significance of 2008 is mapped in the shift in the UK's economic stability after the global economic crisis which informed, for example, changes to funding, fees, infrastructure and attitudes towards both arts education and arts institutions. The significance of the European context is in its influence on the disciplinary and intellectual scope of this research and, at the time of writing, the UK is in the process of withdrawing from the European Union.

In his contribution to 2010's 'Curating and the Educational Turn', art critic and curator Peio Aguirre frames Barthes' extract above from his text 'To the Seminar', as a

¹ Roland Barthes, 'To the Seminar', *The Rustle of Language*, trans. by Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1986), p. 332. [Italics in original]

‘reorientation of desire in education’.² Further, Aguirre took it as a form of hypothetical instruction to understand ‘how educational formats within contemporary art could, and should, reflect upon their own forms of self-representation and how pedagogy can be embedded in art practices without the inevitability of merely producing statements about education or pedagogy.’³ This latter point goes some way to describe JOURNEY / SCHOOL’s temporary suspension and also puts forward a critical reflection on the wider trope of contemporary art’s instrumentalisation of education through the Educational Turn in art, via the act of making statements. As founders of JOURNEY / SCHOOL, McGuinn and I realised that we ended up spending more time making statements about the project in public (predominantly art) contexts than actually doing what we set out to do. In part, we set out to challenge and provide a slice of temporary and marginal resolve to an unravelling landscape of arts education in the UK at that time citing: an abundance of self-organised art spaces without discursive components, the lack of critical and informal fora for practitioners to present their work without being judged against metrics of success, and the cost and increasing opacity of formal educational sites as obstacles in trying to access these sites. JOURNEY / SCHOOL gradually turned into mediated discussions about itself and, accordingly, we felt that the project needed to be suspended to work out why this was the case and if and how this could be avoided, for example, by asking what could be an alternative if the alternative becomes increasingly concerned with itself?

Upon reflection this question seemed to mirror a degree of the theoretical and critical discourse in contemporary art at the time. For example, the rhetoric and discussion surrounding the Educational Turn in art and curating became the lexicon of critical, socially and politically engaged art and artists; the litmus test of criticality; and a seemingly progressive arena for quasi artistic-epistemological discourse for artistic researchers, art theorists, curators and arts educators. The Educational Turn is the difficult-to-define field of contemporary art practice and discourse concerned with the (re) production of education formats and pedagogic models. This Turn emphasises alternative modes of arts education through discursive, socially engaged and critical artistic

2 Peio Aguirre, ‘Education With Innovations: Beyond Art–Pedagogical Projects’, in *Curating and the Educational Turn*, ed. By Paul O’Neill and Mick Wilson (London: Open Editions, 2010), p. 184.

3 Ibid., pp. 184–85.

practices and through resituating these practices outside of conventional educational institutions. This thinking was first conceived by artists, then curators, educators and institutions, as gestures towards alternative iterations of arts education. Some focal points for those concerned with the Educational Turn are the effects on arts education of the Bologna Process, which has promoted systematic mobility and a coherent standard of structuring higher education across Europe since 1999 through the creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Another is the social and political status of contemporary art after Relational Aesthetics, which in its legacy carries with it the continued dematerialisation and subsequent post-medium condition of art, where practice is increasingly explicitly engaged in the (re)modelling and (re)making of experiences, the staging of research and the creation of communities and worlds via its institutions. A final point is in the instrumentality of a marketised creative economy and higher education system in the UK, which is marked by tuition fee increases in 1998, 2004 and 2012 and the now burgeoning Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) as two cornerstone examples. Cumulatively across these discussions knowledge in, of and through art became, and continues to be, a focus of the educational projects, programmes and organisations held within the aegis of the Educational Turn in art, in both practice and in its discourse.

Gesturally JOURNEY / SCHOOL sat at one of many thresholds to the critical maelstrom of the Educational Turn. It was categorically self-organised, with a view not to negate the traditional enterprise of the education institution but to consider how it could function with it, by creating a space that was not gratuitous, after Barthes, but one which would facilitate, to take from Aguirre, a ‘reorientation of desire in education’. It was intended that JOURNEY / SCHOOL would be the testing ground for a longer-term and permanent project and infrastructure that would develop in organisation and formation. This research marks the project’s second iteration by addressing the following research questions through the thesis: what are the alternatives to models of the alternative art school having emerged through the Turn? And specifically, how might dialogic engagement with organisations outside of the Turn propose something other for the future of alternative arts education?

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During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

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Signature: SEHaslam

Date: 22nd May 2018

Introduction

Research aims and problem

This research has aimed to press speculatively at a possible future for alternative arts⁴ education through dialogically engaging with a set of overlooked organisational frameworks outside of the domain of the Educational Turn⁵ in art. It hopes to have done so in a way that makes clear how contemporary art's recent address to education through the Educational Turn has both influenced and problematised the sight lines of art's broader social and cultural responsibilities. Specifically, this is at a time when its education has come under scrutiny through cuts to resources, inflation in fees and proposed merging of education with a culture of professionalism in its UK institutions. The artist Dean Kenning has posited that these measures encompass a 'neoliberal push towards a privatised student-as-consumer model of education'⁶ and that they are publicly contended with through not only continued 'student struggles for free and universal access to education'⁷ but additionally through the re-presentation of 'educational forms' as artworks and advocacy of 'educational initiatives'⁸ through the Educational Turn's

4 My research discusses alternative *arts* education as a conscious expansion on the alternative *art* school model that is discussed in Chapter One, to refer to the wider remit of an arts education and its conventionally associated fields and disciplines; historical, contextual, theoretical, where this encompasses educational programming and its organisation across these fields. Unless specified otherwise, my work refers to this expanded field.

5 Through the thesis I refer to the 'Educational Turn in art' in full and 'the Turn' as shorthand, interchangeably.

6 Kenning problematises the effects of this 'neoliberal push' amongst others including, Irit Rogoff, Paul O'Neill and Mick Wilson and Dieter Lesage, whose thinking is examined in Chapter One. Dean Kenning, 'Refusing Conformity and Exclusion in Art Education', <http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/refusing-conformity-and-exclusion-art-education> [accessed 18 October 2017] N.B. no page numbers

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

discourse. It is intended that the work of this research might inform a reflection of some of the effects of art's turn to education on the sector of arts education itself, as the research has aimed to acknowledge some of the issues implicit to art's long and recently intensive reckoning with education via the Educational Turn. These issues can be outlined as a paradox, noted by Kenning, that both elicits art's turning outwards to 'the social terrain of education'⁹ but only insofar as such education becomes 'recuperated and turned back into art, appropriated, mimicked, aestheticised.'¹⁰

I refer to the Educational Turn as a two-fold phenomenon of artistic and institutional practice that has emerged in the discourse of contemporary art between 2006 and 2016 and that continues to expand as a critical discussion in the UK and broadly across Europe. The research has intended to speculate on a chronological and conceptual afterward of the Educational Turn by stepping outside of its immediate frame in contemporary art and by asking what a possible future of alternative arts education might be to the practices, programmes and organisations produced within the Turn. This 'afterward' is defined by a shift in landscape. My work sits at the point of this shift, which encompasses alternative arts education *as* artistic practices, and organisations that are not commonly discussed as part of the discourse on the Turn. Through my observations, the latter are formed through similar educationally alternative principles in their facilitation of knowledge production, exchange and mobility, as central motives and modes of addressing the crisis in education.

This research has been less about analysing the work of the Turn as artistic works, as I believe doing so would further commit to a problem that I highlight as contemporary art's instrumentalisation of alternative arts education. It is more concerned with the Educational Turn's hypothesised pragmatic afterward. This refers to the examination of potential alternative models operating outside the remit of the Turn and their capacity to evolve the project of alternative arts education more broadly to institute real change for a changing landscape of tertiary arts education. Cumulatively, the research examines some contemporary alternative iterations of the art school, self-organised education projects and alternative organisational practices. These are framed in this work ranging from models of socially engaged critical practice held within the aegis of the Turn, an alternative economic structure, co-working space, experimental

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

foundation year to a professional development programme for artists, as examples of potential educational models that are not explicitly addressed as such within the discourse of the Turn.

The research has identified its problem in the instrumentalisation of alternative education by contemporary art. This is a problem manifest through contemporary art's co-option of educational forms and educational initiatives; its interrogation of (alternative) sites of knowledge production; and its matrix of artistic work and theoretical discourse defined by the Educational Turn, as it has become inscribed into art's history and theory. The research posits that a 'double instrumentalisation' of education has taken place: where artists first took on educational forms as modes of artistic practice; for example, the artists Jakob Jakobsen and Henriette Heise's Copenhagen Free University between 2001 and 2007; Tania Bruguera's Behaviour Art Department between 2002 and 2009; and Ryan Gander's unrealised Fairfield International education project from 2014. A second stage of instrumentalisation is marked by curators, educators and existing arts institutions co-opting this notion of 'the alternative'. This manifests in what art historian Sven Lütticken and artists Victoria Sobel and Casey Gollan have termed 'para-institutions',¹¹ describing new institutional models that emerge in cooperation with existing institutional structures. This is exemplified by the organisations Open School East first in London and now Margate (2013–present); Anton Vidokle's unrealised Manifesta 6 programme (2006) which turned into unitednationsplaza in Berlin (2006–2007) and the Night School in New York and Mexico City (2008–2009); and BAK in Utrecht (2003–present). A further example of this second stage can be illustrated through Pioneer Works' Alternative Art School Fair in 2016, which facilitated a 'showcase of 50 experimental art schools'.¹² This second stage is more complex as it begins to expose how 'the alternative' itself becomes an instrumentalised artistic motif through the collective phenomena of the Educational Turn. The idea that a showcase of educational formats can be put forward in the same way that art fairs showcase artwork and galleries seems something of a misrepresentation.

11 Sven Lütticken, 'Social Media: Practices of (In)Visibility in Contemporary Art', *Afterall A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry*, issue 40 (Autumn/Winter 2015), 4–19 (p. 7), and Victoria Sobel and Casey Gollan, <http://www.veralistcenter.org/engage/people/1991/victoria-sobel-and-casey-gollan/> [accessed 18 October 2017]

12 Alternative Art School Fair, <http://www.artandeducation.net/announcements/105335/alternative-art-school-fair> [accessed 18 October 2017]

The distinctions between these stages of instrumentalisation are discussed in part one of Chapter Three, and through my research have become evident in the nuance of proximity between the 'alternative' work of the Turn and the broader field of contemporary art. Proximate discussions surrounding this problem are present across the fields of 'the curatorial', 'new institutionalism', 'institutional' and 'infrastructural critique', 'the commons' and artistic research. However this thesis focuses, through its proposition, on a set of organisational practices that exist externally to these discussions, which have been found through their omission in the existing literature of the Educational Turn discussed in Chapter One.

Research questions and address

To address this problem of instrumentalisation my research questions ask what are the alternatives to the now abundant model of the alternative art school. Further, how a dialogic engagement with organisations outside of the Educational Turn might propose something other for the future of alternative arts education. It asks these questions for two reasons: the first being in order to work to realise a way in which alternative forms of arts education might avoid being 'recuperated and turned back into art'¹³ and wholly consumed by the institution of contemporary art. An effect of this would be that 'the alternative' loses sight of its alternativeness and becomes a mode of artistic methodology. The second reason is in order to examine the observation that 'the alternative' exists in abundance and whether such an abundance implies a homogenising effect on the capacity of alternative forms of education to enact social change beyond the remit of contemporary art. To this end, and drawing on the way Andrea Phillips has questioned the potential 'fantasy' of critical instituent practices that herald principles of 'working together' as being 'politically erroneous' and 'mendacious',¹⁴ it is through questioning a possible other future for alternative arts education in this way that the work intends to avoid simply adding to a now overdetermined, abundant field. It does this through beginning to frame a way in which a set of active propositions might be put forward as

13 Kenning, 'Refusing Conformity and Exclusion in Art Education', <http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/refusing-conformity-and-exclusion-art-education> [accessed 18 October 2017]

14 Andrea Phillips, 'On A Par? A colloquy on enquiry, working together, and curating', <https://vimeo.com/187651122> [accessed 18 October 2017]

an altogether alternative mode of arts education and its organisation by drawing on and examining four models outside of the Turn.

To address these questions, the research has inhabited a position that critiques such phenomena and engages in conversational and propositional research. The first part of the research critiques the Educational Turn and has derived the terminology ‘knowledge mobility’ in doing so. This notion draws from a triangulated set of perspectives that frame ‘knowledge’ in relation to the work of the Turn in social, political and aesthetic terms. ‘Knowledge mobility’ draws from Tom Holert’s ‘knowledge politics’, which is formed through ‘epistemic acitivit[ies]’;¹⁵ Irit Rogoff’s ‘unframed knowledge’ that functions as something that ‘*does* rather than *is*’;¹⁶ and what Phillips calls an ‘education aesthetics’, which problematises the efficacy of contemporary art’s co-option of pedagogy and education that are used ‘as [...] utopian socialised site[s] by organisations and individuals outside of orthodox educational structures’.¹⁷ The second part of the research proposes a conceptual break and practical movement away from the discourse of the Educational Turn by drawing on ‘the dialogic’ both theoretically and in practice. Theoretically, it has drawn across a range of critical interpretations concerning dialogue, from Mikhail Bakhtin’s ‘dialogism’ and Paulo Freire’s ‘dialogics’. In practice, it has engaged in conversational research to form a series of dialogues with four organisations outside of the Educational Turn, which are made manifest through a series of connected relationships formed with and between the work of Sue Ball, founder of the Leeds Creative Timebank; Araceli Camargo and Anne Fritz, founder and co-directors of THECUBE; Jonny Munday, founder of the *IF* Project; and Chelsea Pettitt and Lotte Juul Petersen, head of partnerships and co-ordinator of the Syllabus programme and curator at Wysing Arts Centre, respectively. As founders and facilitators of alternative organisational models outside of the immediate discourse of the Educational Turn, and as organisations distinct from the practices and programmes examined as part of the Turn, these frameworks do not explicitly site themselves as alternative art schools, nor are they addressed as possible alternative models (timebank, co-working, foundation year and artist-development programme) in the literature that I examine in Chapter One.

15 Tom Holert ‘Margins of (Re)presentability Contemporary Art and Knowledge Politics’, <https://www.onlineopen.org/margins-of-re-presentability> [accessed 18 October 2017]

16 Irit Rogoff, ‘FREE’, <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/14/61311/free/> [accessed 18 October 2017], p. 1.

17 Phillips, ‘Education Aesthetics’, in *Curating and the Educational Turn*, p. 84.

It is important to note here that the status of Wysing’s Syllabus programme has evolved significantly during the period of my research. An article dated April 2017 by writer Chris Sharratt for *Art & Education* frames Wysing’s Syllabus as an ‘alternative art education programme’.¹⁸ When I was first in conversation with Chelsea Pettitt and Lotte Juul Petersen in 2015, Syllabus was framed less explicitly as an alternative art *school*, and instead a model that sat consistent with Wysing’s history of facilitating retreats and residencies for artists, and a new professional development programme aimed specifically at putting artists into contact with established artist mentors and medium-sized arts organisations in the UK. This nuance in terminology is important as throughout the course of research the field encompassing alternative arts education, in the UK, has evolved in such a way that has necessarily impacted the terms under which I refer in this thesis to what constitutes ‘the alternative’ and what technically sits outside of the discourse on the Educational Turn. As Syllabus has only recently embarked on its third year, but has already been appraised with the status of a key alternative education model in the UK, this accelerated reputation signals the need to address how and to what extent an organisation’s proximity to the art world can affect, either positively or negatively, the ways in which such an educational model is received as either an appendage to the art world, or by making contribution to the sector of education, or both. Through my research I have brought these additional organisational models into critical dialogue with discourse on the Educational Turn by including a further set of conversations with three organisations that are explicitly positioned at alternative art schools, and are aligned to the Educational Turn as an artistic phenomenon. As such, my position as a researcher has been to facilitate this engagement, through conversation, in order to evolve the field through establishing links and vocalising such connection. These additional conversations have been with Sam Thorne and Anna Colin, co-founders and co-director (Colin) of Open School East; Sara Nunes Fernandes, Ralph Pritchard and Ellen King, founding member (Nunes Fernandes) and current members of School of the Damned; and Sophia Kosmaoglou, founder of Art & Critique.

Cumulatively, dialogues (with the timebank, co-working, foundation year and artist-development programme models) were carried out in order to offer up, via the

18 ‘The Syllabus: A Peer-Led Non Prescriptive Postgraduate Alternative’, <https://www.artandeducation.net/schoolwatch/129372/the-syllabus-a-peer-led-non-prescriptive-postgraduate-alternative> [accessed 18 October 2017]

potential variations on educational models that they represent, a set of discrete alternative frameworks to propose and speculate towards a possible future for alternative forms of arts education. By locating its problem in contemporary art's instrumentalisation of education, the research works to argue that the organisations mentioned above might offer something altogether organisationally different and transformative to the field of alternative arts education. Their inclusion into the discourse, by nature of their distinction from the domain of the Educational Turn, might prevent their instrumentalisation and subsequent institutionalisation which I argue to be the shortcoming of contemporary art's co-option of education.

The research has been produced as part of the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council's (AHRC) Creative Exchange research programme. The Creative Exchange project has worked to enable arts and humanities academics and research to connect with practitioners and organisations of the UK's creative sector.¹⁹ This has provided a unique environment through which the collaborative endeavours of this research have been supported. Drawing on the collaborative method of conversation, the research has intended to introduce a number of voices to the discourse which would otherwise be left unheard, in order to push the direction of the field outward and beyond the confines of contemporary art. The Creative Exchange has provided the context to step outside of the homeground of the research in art theory, to apply the research in collaboration with four organisations. As a methodological practice for eliciting new, collaborative research across art and design disciplines and across the domains of the arts and humanities broadly, the Creative Exchange has taken on and developed ideas of knowledge exchange in relation to art and design research. This methodological position has permitted and evolves collaborative work and experimental forms of knowledge production in art and design, advocating forms of collaborative scholarly practice in terms of how research can be produced, disseminated, applied and transformed.

Research functions and propositions

The research functions to highlight the potential shortcomings of alternative arts education within the field of contemporary art. It serves to problematise the Educational

¹⁹ The Creative Exchange, <http://thecreativeexchange.org/#> [accessed 18 October 2017]

Turn's capacity to effectuate a transformed future for alternative forms of arts education in the social and political context of the UK. What is meant by this is that the research works to propose a departure from the remit of contemporary art insofar as its education is concerned, on the basis of what I describe above as 'double instrumentalisation'. Part of this critique highlights the plurality in approach, forms and motivation of the alternative models of art education documented in the existing literature on the Educational Turn. It acknowledges that further work emphasising the plurality in scope of existing models both within and outside of the domain of contemporary art, the risk of homogenising these models through art's instrumentalisation might be avoided. In attempt to avoid this, my engagement with organisations operating outside contemporary art's immediate remit serves to put forward a set of additional organisational options to draw from. The research culminates with a set of speculative hybrid propositions to be realised beyond the PhD.

This work acknowledges its limitations insofar as the field of alternative arts education has evolved significantly during the period of research; what was initially a set of critical artistic practices has formed a socially and politically motivated space that spans disciplinary and cultural locations. The methodological framing in 'the dialogic' founds a communicative framework through the practice of conversation, which seeks to transpose locations, acknowledge plurality and attend to the contemporary moment through its occupation as research. This framework offers the research a means of communicating and distributing beyond disciplinary boundaries. As an approach to research, 'the dialogic' is also reflected in the research practice, by stepping outside of the subject's domain of contemporary art. It is useful to draw from what art theorist Gerald Raunig has termed 'instituent practice', where the imperative is to step outside – in this research, of contemporary art, as the territory of the Educational Turn – in order to avoid the 'fixity' and 'paralysation'²⁰ of being 'established in the art field and confined [to] its rules.'²¹ For Raunig, instituent practices are the actualisation of the future in the present and a 'process and concatenation of instituent events [which] means an absolute concept beyond the opposition of institution: it does not oppose the

²⁰ Gerald Raunig, 'Instituent Practice Fleeing, Instituting, Transforming', http://eipcp.net/transversal/0106/raunig/en/#_ftnref2 [accessed 18 October 2017]

²¹ Ibid.

institution, but does flee from institutionalisation and structuralisation.²²

Methodologically this research flees from the same ‘fixity’ and ‘paralysation’ of disciplinary binding in that it has formed its own discursive space that has moved from and between its home ground in art theory and its subsequent dimension of the Educational Turn, and engaged with a set of organisational practices independent from academic disciplinarity. It also conceptually attempts to avoid the fixity and paralysation that I observe may be a consequence of contemporary art’s instrumentalisation of education through the Turn. However, it does advocate for the continued inhabitation of the orbit of existing education institutions. Moreover, as research, it has intended to put into motion the ethos of the type of alternative education formats it alludes to in its proposition, meaning that by way of research design, it attempts to lay a set of research principles that it simultaneously aims to put forward as an alternative arts education framework. This imperative to ‘move beyond’ both symbolically and structurally informs not only the design of the research, in its refusal to adhere to a given disciplinary frame, but is also put into practice through the research as a form of speculative proposal. Furthermore, and following Raunig, the research finds another limitation in writer Marina Vishmidt’s concept of ‘infrastructural critique’,²³ which can be defined as a mode of interventionist practice that premises its capacity to model another reality rather than simply diagnose another reality. This notion parallels Aguirre’s critique of how education can be embedded in art (practice, institutions) without recourse to simply making statements about education. Holert remarks that infrastructural critique ‘marks a particular stage of interventionist practice that does not stop at [only] conveying the inherent and embodied ideologies of the modernist gallery, museum or academy, but rather works beyond disclosure and diagnosis towards modelling.’²⁴ It is at this point between Raunig and Vishmidt’s interventionism that this work finds a boundary, and by taking the following propositions as forms of interventionist practice, the work finds its contingency.

22 Raunig, ‘Instituting and Distributing On the Relationship Between Politics and Police Following Rancière as a Development of the Problem of Distribution with Deleuze’, <http://eipcp.net/transversal/1007/raunig/en> [accessed 18 October 2017]

23 Marina Vishmidt, ‘Beneath the Atelier, the Desert: Critique Institutional and Infrastructural’, in *Marion von Osten Once We Were Artists* ed. by Tom Holert and Maria Hlavajova (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2017), p. 222.

24 Holert, ‘A Politics of Knowledge in Contemporary Art?’, *Performance Research*, vol. 21, no. 6 (December 2016), 57–62 (p. 59.)

The research has found that the value of stepping outside of the remit of art in order to investigate what might come after the Educational Turn, insofar as alternative arts education is concerned, lies in the identified capacity of other forms of organisation to inform or institute a different type of pedagogic or educational infrastructure. It has found that in combination, the timebanking, co-working, foundation year and artist-development models with which my research has engaged, offer something unique for alternative arts education: a set of practical and realisable principles for the immediate future of alternative arts education. Examples of these, as my thesis presents in Chapter Four and in the Conclusions chapter, illuminate a shift that I observe emerges through the act of making distinctions between these types of projects being framed within and outside of the remit of the art world proper. This shift refers to the potential of combining the diverse range of organisational approaches that timebanking, co-working, foundation year and artist-development models are founded upon. For example, the Leeds Creative Timebank is marked by alternative methods of economic transaction that are not based on finance but time, and which build communities of exchange in skills and knowledge. New, hybrid and smart working environments that keep pace with technological advancements and are responsive to their users’ requirements and facilitate new working communities, are premised by THECUBE co-working space. New forms of pedagogy that are based on the individual needs of students, which includes rethinking the role of mentors and educators, and building communities across institutional networks, are exemplified by Syllabus. New, free and inclusive foundational programmes in the fields of humanities education, where graduates, researchers and established academics share teaching and build from one another as an extended form of training are put forward by the *IF* Project. As such, two propositions that form the work’s evaluations are:

1 Theoretically considering each organisation my work has been in dialogue with as unique and alternative modes of addressing the crisis in arts education in the UK. Together these models can be considered to offer both original and organisationally diverse approaches to conceiving a new alternative educational form. Conceptually this means that while these approaches as forms of political address offer something unique, they are relatively bound to a perceived crisis in arts education, in that they exist on the basis that they offer something of an alternative to the prevailing conditions of such a crisis. An important consideration in this proposition is whether or

not these models could feasibility work in the longer-term, and whether they would be sustainable, should the wider landscape of education significantly change, for instance, if tuition fees were cut.

2 These original and organisationally diverse approaches include, but are not limited to:

- the reconfiguration of value attributed to processes of exchange that do not rely on a monetary-based system as found in the timebank model;
- foregrounding the value of a foundational approach to the wider context of arts disciplines, specifically considering the role of critical thinking, paired with the pragmatics of professional development as with *IF* and Syllabus;
- emphasising the need for flexible, smart and technologically proficient work spaces and the cultures of community intrinsic and necessary in arts practice as found in the co-working model; and
- an emphasis on the importance of a shared network and co-produced pool of resources that peer organisations and academics/practitioners can provide, as found in all four models.

This proposition advocates a hybrid, co-produced approach to the founding of an alternative ‘substitute’ model of arts education. These are discussed further in the ‘Propositions’ section in the Conclusions chapter.

Contributions

The research makes a contribution to the evolving discourse on the Educational Turn through eliciting an original methodological position around the methods of critique, conversation and proposition, through aligning and putting into practice ‘the dialogic’ as a form of intertextual research. It has derived a critical terminology around the notion of ‘double instrumentalisation’, and focuses on the nuance of the plurality of the alternative in alternative arts education to address this. Through deriving ‘knowledge mobility’ from the field of the Turn as a critical notion to resituate its discussion outside the remit of the Turn, and in order to find a new set of organisational perspectives, the research broadens both the scope of the Turn’s discourse and presents the efficacy of departing from the field of contemporary art. In formulating a conceptual vocabulary and lens around

‘knowledge mobility’, ‘the dialogic’ and ‘(trans)formation’, the research finds a means of articulating and transmitting multiple voices and positions. Through stepping outside of the immediate and well-covered field of the Educational Turn, the research proposes the inclusion of organisational models that would otherwise be excluded from its discourse, bringing them into its orbit in order to elicit a sense of expanded critical continuity to the discussion raised. The research contributes in disciplinary terms to contemporary art theory and, through its placement within the Creative Exchange programme, expands its scope to the fields of communication and artistic research through its engagement with artistic and design researchers and practitioners external to an academic context. The development of the research has been transdisciplinary and is founded on principles of transposition and communication, discussed in the ‘Structuring metaphor’ section in part two of Chapter Three.

Thesis structure

Chapter One addresses the Educational Turn as the field in which my research is located. It examines some of the key literature that frame my problematising of the Turn’s instrumentalisation of alternative arts education. The chapter is split into three parts, the first introduces the emergence of the Turn as an artistic phenomenon, the second is composed of sections that each discuss the notion of problematising the Turn and its paradoxes. These sections are framed thematically by texts that draw on issues surrounding: the role of the arts institution; Suhail Malik’s notion of sentimentality and Dieter Lesage’s notion of an educational complex. The third section presents a broader discussion that problematises the Turn’s ‘aestheticisation’ of education and ‘academicisation’ of contemporary art.

Chapter Two addresses some key contextual practices held within the aegis of the Turn which are delineated according to practices that emerge from the institution; that are led by the institution; and those which are artist-led. The following discussion focuses on five examples of key practices that range from a single-artist’s work; an artist-led temporary residency programme; two alternative art schools; and an institutional exhibition. These examples outline the scope of the critical space to which my research aims to make contribution, in that I propose a new approach in organisational terms to

alternative arts education that is so far not yet addressed in practice.

Chapter Three is composed of two parts. The first analyses and evaluates the material discussed in chapters one and two. It does so through drawing out three problematics that are articulated via the critical notions: ‘double instrumentalisation’, ‘the (many) alternatives’, and ‘knowledge mobility’. In doing so, this discussion locates the field’s omission of considering models that encompass the practice of knowledge mobility outside the Educational Turn. Part two introduces and discusses ‘the dialogic’ as the research’s methodological frame. It theoretically contextualises ‘the dialogic’ from Mikhail Bakhtin’s thinking on dialogism and heteroglossia and Paulo Freire’s applied theory of ‘dialogics’ in education. It presents the research practice comprising methods of critique, conversation and proposition and discusses the theoretical grounding of conversation from Maurice Blanchot’s conception of ‘infinite conversation’. In addition, the chapter presents, discusses and evaluates conversation as a research method used in this research, according to the dialogues it has initiated with organisations outside of the Educational Turn.

Chapter Four presents, discusses and reflects on the research dialogues undertaken in collaboration with Sue Ball of the Leeds Creative Timebank, Jonny Munday of the *IF* Project, Araceli Camargo and Anne Fritz from THECUBE and Chelsea Pettitt and Lotte Juul Petersen of Wysing Arts Centre. This chapter discusses the material derived through each dialogue, towards proposing a hybrid alternative arts education model. These dialogues, though presented chronologically, are to be read as a series of intertexts with the two contextual discussions presented in appendices 2 and 3. This chapter includes the presentation and discussion of three further shorter conversations with Sam Thorne and Anna Colin on Open School East, Sara Nunes Fernandes, Ralph Pritchard and Ellen King on School of the Damned and Sophia Kosmaoglou on Art & Critique. These latter conversations took place as means of evaluating the conversations with organisations formally outside of the Educational Turn with organisations that are, by definition, more closely aligned to it; for example, they explicitly present as alternative art schools.

The final chapter, Conclusions, forms the work’s evaluations. It is divided into three sections: ‘(Trans)formation’, ‘Propositions’ and ‘Contributions’. It conclusively analyses and reflects on the research process, detailing key findings pertaining to the

limitations of the research and its contributions. Through a discussion of the (trans)formed research, it reviews the research broadly by conceptually reconciling it back within the frame of the Educational Turn. This mode of evaluating, by pulling the research and findings back into the discourse of the Educational Turn, is presented as a means of putting forward a set of (trans)formed principles that together, and evidenced by this research, propose a speculative hybrid alternative formation of arts education to those aligned formally to the Educational Turn.

The Appendices present supplementary material, including two discursive texts (appendices 2 and 3) that underpin two key discussions of my research journey; one explores the notion of ‘the apparatus’ in relation to ‘the institution’ to which my work on alternative arts education seeks to move away from, and the other examines the role of friendship as an expansion of my methodology, through the presentation of some artistic work undertaken throughout my research. Their inclusion in the Appendices position these texts as supplementary discussions that have guided my thinking at critical points in the research. They are to be read as forms of expanded thinking that address the wider theoretical scope of my research, and that support the research work towards its proposition.

Chapter 1 – Literature review

The following chapter presents a literature review of some of the key theoretical texts and positions of the Educational Turn as it relates to the focus of the research that frames a conceptual afterward of the Turn. It is presented in three sections with the intention to explore the scope and nuance of the positions and practices that elicit the gap that the research addresses; namely, one which problematises the alternative practices existing within the frame of the Turn, which have subsequently motivated the imperative to look to organisational practices outside of its remit.

The first section gives an overview of the emergence of the named Educational Turn in recent discourse between 2006 and 2016. It charts the distinction in perspectives that it encompasses; alternative education *as* artistic practice, and the organisational act of instituting alternative models of education outside of formal education institutions. This distinction is contextualised by drawing on the model of the alternative art school and the position of the arts institution in relation to the notion of ‘the alternative’. The second section presents a review of the thinking that problematises key issues pertaining to the Turn. These are addressed in subsections concerning the proximity and role of arts institutions in relation to the field of alternative arts education. This is discussed through the notions of ‘alter-’ and ‘para-institutional’ practice defined by Sven Lütticken; the ‘sentimentality’ of expanded forms of art learning raised by Suhail Malik; and the ‘paradox’ and ‘complex’ of alternative arts education, addressed by Dieter Lesage. The third section presents some further issues surrounding the ‘aestheticisation’ and

‘academicisation’ of the field of the Educational Turn, defined through contributions to the field by Paul O’Neill, Mick Wilson, Irit Rogoff, Andrea Phillips, Dean Kenning and Angela McRobbie, among others.

Combined, these sections present the scope of thinking that positions the Turn as a critical discourse that asks what alternative arts education can do *for* contemporary art and its associated field of curating. Ultimately my research seeks to address and problematise the notion in the reverse; in other words, how contemporary art is framed as a potential space for arts education. From this conceptual gap, I argue that the efficacy of the work of the Turn is confined to the field of contemporary art, above education, and that alternative educational forms become instrumentalised to the end of art.

The emergence of the Educational Turn

The Educational Turn in art can be described from two perspectives: the first, as the collective phenomena encompassing artistic practice that co-opts educational forms, such as the seminar and modes of gathering around knowledge production and exchange. The second involves the act of instituting alternative models of education outside of formal education institutions, such as within or in relation to arts institutions, where institutions co-opt 'the alternative'. Between these two perspectives is a concern with the social and political act of organising education in alternative ways using alternative means that serve either to oppose the traditional and formal iterations of the art school, academy or art departments in universities, or to expand on and extend these institutional spaces. In their text 'Curatorial counter-rhetorics and the educational turn', Mick Wilson and Paul O'Neill frame the Educational Turn as a 'broad arena of cultural practice',²⁵ which 'connects longer standing contest over public education and public culture'²⁶ and works towards forming a 'set of oppositional rhetorics'.²⁷ Such oppositional rhetorics are manifest through the Turn across artistic and institutional practices and discourse. However, Wilson and O'Neill put forward that 'it may be precisely [that] the rhetoric employed in talking of an educational turn [...] tends to obscure and overwrite the critical intentions at work in counter-institutional practices of self-organisation.'²⁸ With this in mind, the following discussion intends to contextualise the most recent recourse to contesting public education, framed as the Educational Turn. It does so to set the foundation for the motivations behind this research to step outside of the immediate domain of the Turn as is presented in Chapter Four.

To pick apart this first description in relation to the Turn's emergence as an artistic phenomenon, it is useful to refer to Tate's 'Art Terms' definition of the Educational Turn. As one such art institution that has contributed toward the concretisation of the terms under which the Turn is written, Tate writes, 'a theme that emerged in the mid-1990s, educational turn refers to collaborative or research-based art

25 Mick Wilson and Paul O'Neill, 'Curatorial counter-rhetorics and the educational turn', *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 9:2 (2010), p. 179.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid., p. 186.

where the impetus is on the process rather than an object-based work.'²⁹ This definition serves to exemplify the Turn in methodological terms, where an incentive is to realise new modes 'for creating art outside the existing traditional educational and institutional structures.'³⁰ Further, *frieze's* 'Keywords' frame the 'Pedagogical Turn' as a means of describing education as a form of art.³¹ This resonates with curator Okwui Enwezor's definition of contemporary art making in the context of the art school being brought in to question as a subject or object of critique in art making itself; in 'process more than product',³² it is 'about building social and intellectual capital and opening up new sites of enquiry.'³³ The practices encompassed by these definitions are in the most part collaborative, involving the framing of public participation, and continue the thread of the tropes of socially constituted, politically engaged and discursive artistic practice from the period surrounding the emergence of Relational Aesthetics during the 1990s. They range the work of single and collaborative artistic practices that utilise, appropriate and recast educational forms (teaching, learning and variations of these) and structures (organisation and environments) to both reveal and figure as the artwork. Examples of these are Jakob Jakobsen and Henriette Heise's Copenhagen Free University, which was set up in 2001 in the artists' flat. The project was 'dedicated to the production of critical consciousness and poetic language.'³⁴ Through this the artists rejected the imposition of instruments such as the prevailing knowledge economy and attempted to work towards creating space for 'forms of knowledge that are fleeting, fluid, schizophrenic, uncompromising, subjective, uneconomic, capitalist, produced in the kitchen, produced when asleep or arisen on a social excursion – collectively.'³⁵ Conversely, Tania Bruguera's Behaviour Art Department took form as an artistic research project between 1998 and 2009, utilising the frame of education through which to examine art's capacity as a social and political instrument for ideology and civic action.³⁶ Further, Bruguera argues through her practice,

29 'Educational Turn', <http://www.tate.org.uk/learn/online-resources/glossary/e/educational-turn> [accessed 18 October 2017]

30 Ibid.

31 'Keywords', <https://frieze.com/article/keywords> [accessed 18 October 2017]

32 Okwui Enwezor, 'Schools of Thought', *frieze*, issue 101 (September 2006), 142–43 (p. 143.)

33 Ibid.

34 Copenhagen Free University, <http://www.copenhagenfreeuniversity.dk/infouk.html> [accessed 18 October 2017]

35 Ibid.

36 Behaviour Art School, <http://www.taniabruquera.com/cms/492-0-Ctedra+Arte+de+Conducta+Behavior+Art+School.htm> [accessed 18 October 2017]

in particular on her work defining Arte Útil, that art as an institution has the capacity to transform the way we inhabit and act in society. This is key as it provides a lens through which to consider the efficacy of projects within the frame of the Turn to inform such social transformation, beyond the pedestrian idea that art is useful insofar as it diagnoses social and political issues concerning education. From this a question emerges of whether such diagnosis is enough?

This first description of the Educational Turn is distinguishable through its alignment to artistic practice, whose specificity is in its manifest appropriation of educational forms to art's own ends, exemplified by Bruguera's attempts to emphasise art's capacity to institute social transformation. A second definition is described through an alignment to a type of organisational or infrastructural practice that has effected and transformed the traditional vertical hierarchies of art institutions (galleries and museums) through the most recent instantiations of the project of Institutional Critique. For example, in the conflation of the roles of artist and curator, or museum director and researcher, as influenced by an inclination among arts institutions in the first decade of the twenty-first century to fully incorporate education departments, programmes and professional development into art museums and galleries. This practice is illustrated by curator and museum director Alex Farquharson under the aegis of 'New Institutionalism'³⁷ in the same 2006 *frieze* issue which Enwezor, Rogoff and Stephan Dillemath illuminate contemporary art's attention to the art school, and its education. According to Farquharson, New Institutionalism as an institutional phenomenon was characteristic of the organisational shifts emerging across arts institutions around 2006. These are defined around a language of 'crisis' that parallel the troubles articulated through the Educational Turn with reference to arts education in the UK, where arts institutions were 'subjected to governmental and bureaucratic repression— funding cuts, forced merger, and closure.'³⁸ For Farquharson, New Institutionalism initially incorporated a radical shift towards new 'operational machinery'³⁹ that would facilitate 'larger publics'⁴⁰ needing new 'systems of accountability'⁴¹ in arts institutions where

37 Alex Farquharson, 'Bureaux de change', *frieze*, issue 101 (September 2006), 156–59.

38 Farquharson, 'Institutional Mores', *ONCURATING.org*, 21 (December 2013), 55–59 (p. 55.)

39 Ibid., 'Bureaux de change', p. 157.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

'production and reception [could] co-exist with presentation on equal terms.'⁴²

More recently he has referenced the ways in which art institutions during this period 'follow[ed] the lead of self-organised groups, often led by artists, whose principle medium was dialogic research and experimental collective learning systems.'⁴³ Much of this thinking figures similarly to questions amounting to scalability in the context of the work of the Educational Turn. Farquharson considers a process of 'de-institutionalis[ing]'⁴⁴ through 'work[ing] small, with small numbers of participants, in situations that involved little money, and therefore relatively little political scrutiny.'⁴⁵ A recent example of this thinking can be observed in Eastside Project's series of meetings, which together formulate their 'Policy Show'. These meetings form a working think tank that aims to produce new, small-scale policies of 'care'⁴⁶ for the development of the art organisation. This notion of care is addressed through the lens of support in relation to the art organisation, housing and education.⁴⁷ This marks an increased focus on the formation of an organisation's public/s in recent institutional critique that attempts to redefine the role of the art(s) institution as one which aligns the 'personal' to domains of the 'public' through examining the social and political conditions of art making.⁴⁸ Specifically what this means in relation to the art organisation, is the distribution of labour among its workforce and the incorporation of resources concerning, for example, its responsibilities over housing and education for artists.

Nicolas Bourriaud aligns with Farquharson when he implies that the Educational Turn, rather than actually impacting on the status quo of arts education, 'has allowed for a change in the world of curating and art institutions, introducing processes of knowledge-sharing whilst orienting diverse forms of knowledge towards the protocols of education and dissemination.'⁴⁹ Claiming additionally that between curating and art institutions there now exists an 'organic link'⁵⁰ between the forms of exhibition,

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid., 'Institutional Mores', p. 55.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 'Policy Show', <https://eastsideprojects.org/wp-content/uploads/Press-Release-current.pdf> [accessed 18 October 2017]

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 Nicolas Bourriaud, 'Revisiting the Educational Turn', *Art Review*, vol. 67, no. 8 (November 2015), 182–85 (p. 184.)

50 Ibid.

presentation and distribution through expanded art-learning as modes of representation for wider institutional practice. Bourriaud's point contributes an argument that the Educational Turn has blurred distinctions between arts education and the art market by its own edict of critiquing the market and its instrumentalising values. For Bourriaud, the focus on the art school and its elevation as a necessary component to achieve success as an artist has worked to inadvertently protect the art student and diverted collective attention away from the realities of the market. He argues that the purpose of art school is to equip the next generation of artists for the art world and not to symbolically embellish the institutions of arts education with anything more: 'this ideology of autonomy is a means of preserving pedagogical authority in its most retrograde aspect.'⁵¹ It is worth comparatively noting Bourriaud's idea that art school should equip students for the (current) art world, with founder of Art & Critique Kosmaoglou's assertion, that an arts education should equip students for a changed art world, which is *not* conditioned by the market.⁵² The difference in ideas about what an arts education should do from an international curator to an alternative art school educator and organiser is crucial, as it exposes the degree to which art market value shapes the way in which an education is both idealised and actualised.

Tate's definition refers to an inaugural period of these practices emerging in the mid 1990s and refers further to the 'radical organisations' of the 1960s, exemplifying the work of Joseph Beuys and the Antiuniversity of London. The Turn was named during the period of 2008, between Irit Rogoff in her e-flux text, 'Turning' and at a discussion co-chaired by Paul O'Neill and Mick Wilson as part of London's Institute of Contemporary Art's (ICA) Nought to Sixty season.⁵³ During this period and increasingly again since 2013, a number of art journals and publications have dedicated special issues to the subject of the art school, an educational aesthetics and the changing status of arts education, both in the local political and economic contexts of London and more widely

51 Ibid.

52 In discussion with Kosmaoglou, artist and founder of Art & Critique, a London-based alternative art education framework, she posited that alternative arts education models should equip artists for a *changed* art world. This is discussed in detail in Chapter Four, in the 'Open School East, School of the Damned and Art & Critique' section.

53 Paul O'Neill and Mick Wilson, 'You talkin' to me?', in *Nought to Sixty*, ed. by Richard Birkett and others (London: ICA, 2009), p. 147.

at a global scale.⁵⁴ Numerous contextual and theoretical volumes edited by O'Neill and Wilson, Stephen Henry Madoff, Felicity Allen, Tom Vandeputte and Sidsel Meineche Hansen, Stine Hebert and Anne Szefer Karlsen present the nuanced and wide-ranging literature on the subject. These works simultaneously issue the Educational Turn as a continuous space of intellectual criticality and urgency, not only within the immediate frame of the contemporary art world across biennials and surveys at public arts institutions, but also through the interrelation between 'infrastructural critique', 'the curatorial', and 'self-organisation' configuring a social, cultural and political discourse of 'the alternative' post-2008.

The Turn is also referred to variably as a 'pedagogical turn',⁵⁵ by artist writer Kristina Lee Podesva, a 'discursive turn',⁵⁶ by Wilson and is alluded to by art historians Grant Kester and Claire Bishop in their framing of dialogical aesthetics and participatory art. In Tirdad Zolghadr's prelude to Malik's essay, 'Educations Sentimental and Unsentimental: Repositioning the Politics of Art and Education', drawing on the model of Taipei's 2010 Biennial, the Educational Turn in art is also discussed through the lens of the art PhD.⁵⁷ Here the discussion becomes transposed on to a space with close proximity to the burgeoning institutional domain of artistic research and the many art schools and academies that are expanding their remit of artistic qualifications, in line with the Bologna Process in Europe. O'Neill and Wilson equally highlight the Turn as the resurgence of a 'counter-rhetoric' to state education and institutionalised public culture. They define it as a 'broad arena of cultural practice [that] proceeds from the earlier

54 *frieze* committed its September 2006 issue to a survey of art schools 'then and now', with Okwui Enwezor, Irit Rogoff and Stephan Dillemoth reflecting on the then as-yet-to-be-named turn to education in art. *Art Monthly's* 2008 'The Future of Art Education' issue, edited by Patricia Bickers manifested as a direct response to the volume of material the magazine received in response to a text about the present state of art education in London at the time. More recently we can observe a resurgence in *Art Monthly's* 2013 return to the subject, the reconfigured Antiuniversity Now! Festival held annually since 2015, Pioneer Works' Alternative Art School Fair in November 2016, *Performance Research's* December 2016 issue on Radical Education, School of the Damned's 100% Official Unofficial Open Day for Alternative Art Education in October 2017 and the publication of Sam Thorne's volume *School A Recent History of Self-Organised Art Education* that art's turn to education has been committed to contemporary art's history.

55 'A Pedagogical Turn: Brief Notes on Education as Art', <https://fillip.ca/content/a-pedagogical-turn> [accessed 18 October 2017]

56 Wilson, 'Curatorial Moments and Discursive Turns', in *Curating Subjects*, ed. by Paul O'Neill (London: Open Editions, 2007), pp. 201–16.

57 Tirdad Zolghadr, Prelude to 'Educations Sentimental and Unsentimental: Repositioning the Politics of Art and Education', *Red Hook Journal of Curatorial Studies*, 1 (28 August 2011), <http://www.bard.edu/ccs/redhook/educations-sentimental-and-unsentimental-repositioning-the-politics-of-art-and-education/> [accessed 18 October 2017] N.B. no page numbers

radical aesthetic practices and critiques of the ‘visual’ characteristic of much twentieth-century avant-gardism and artistic experimentation.⁵⁸ However, if the work of the Turn attempts to produce a ‘counter-rhetoric’, it is through Zolghadr’s framing of the often misrepresented ‘democratic promise’⁵⁹ of “‘informal,” “experimental,” or “open”⁶⁰ status of “‘non-institutional” initiatives’,⁶¹ where a paradox emerges and the principles of the Turn are de- and re-contextualised through their co-option by art institutions themselves.

Problematising the Educational Turn and its paradoxes

What is education if it is not participation and discussion about everything which involves us? Let’s hope that the people most concerned about their education do not become the victims of the educational system.⁶²

At its worst, and in spite of all radical content and non-hierarchical student-tutor relations etc., alternative art educational models risk exacerbating exclusion and instituting what might be called a pedagogy of privilege.⁶³

The role of arts institutions

The above demarcations of the Turn are often discussed according to the proximity between autonomous, alternative organisational practices and existing institutions. This is highlighted by Lütticken’s description of ‘alter-’ and ‘para-institutions’ in his essay, ‘Social Media: Practice of (In)Visibility in Contemporary Art’. Here he discusses common variations of ‘the alternative’ in practices of expanded art-learning and organisational consortia. Alter-institutional practices function generally as autonomous organisations for ‘artists, intellectuals and activists as well as [...] cleaners and refugees’⁶⁴ which, quoting Marion von Osten, ‘defy “the known boundaries between art practices as well as those between art practices and between institutions”⁶⁵ towards the creation of

58 Wilson and O’Neill, ‘Curatorial counter-rhetorics and the educational turn’, *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, p. 179.

59 Zolghadr, *ibid.*

60 *Ibid.*

61 *Ibid.*

62 F.H., ‘What Happened: The First Four Days’, in *The Hornsey Affair* (London: Penguin, 1968), p. 39.

63 Kenning, ‘Refusing Conformity and Exclusion in Art Education’, <http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/refusing-conformity-and-exclusion-art-education> [accessed 18 October 2017]

64 Lütticken, ‘Social Media: Practices of (In)Visibility in Contemporary Art’, p. 8.

65 Marion von Osten in Lütticken, *ibid.*

other ‘social assemblages’⁶⁶ that produce ‘culture’⁶⁷ in alternative ways. For Lütticken this approach is marked widely by organisational structures ranging from ‘transinstitutional’ organisations such as L’Internationale, a confederation of art museums across Europe, to ‘translocal organisations’. Examples of the latter include, 16 Beaver Group in New York that has run programmes of free talks and discussions, and MayDay Rooms in London, an educational charity with a focus to open up access to historical material concerning social movements and experimental culture. These serve as organisational models that attempt to institute themselves autonomously outside of formal state-led or corporate-sponsored institutions, public programming and existing institutional archives. Para-institutions, by contrast, are often led by single artists in collaboration with established institutions, even if, as Lütticken mentions, they operate towards the same pursuit as alter-institutions. Lütticken notes that even if they pursue similar ends as alter-institutional practices, they run the risk of mimicry and recourse to ‘purely strategic and pragmatic approach[es] to the frameworks in which they operate.’⁶⁸ This point is crucial as it highlights the fine line between what it means to act towards a changed landscape and what it means to perpetuate the same problematic landscape but through alternative means.

Drawing further on the second perspective of the Educational Turn, it is necessary to consider how rhetorical phenomena such as New Institutionalism help define some of the issues at stake in considering the problematic nature of the Educational Turn. Around the same time that the Turn emerged in art’s critical discourse, New Institutionalism became the latest realisation or ‘internalisation’⁶⁹ of Institutional Critique, as specified by Nina Möntmann in her 2007 paper, ‘The Rise and Fall of New Institutionalism’. As a curatorial mode of institutional art practice, whose politics, according to Charles Esche, lay within the premise of offering ‘hope, faith and charity in complicated times’⁷⁰ for expanding publics of arts institutions, New Institutionalism’s aim can be summed up as being ‘to create “an active space” that is “part community

66 Lütticken, *ibid.*

67 Osten, *ibid.*

68 Lütticken, *ibid.*

69 Nina Möntmann, ‘The Rise and Fall of New Institutionalism Perspectives on a Possible Future’, <http://eicp.net/transversal/0407/moentmann/en> [accessed 18 October 2017]

70 Charles Esche, ‘What’s the Point of Art Centres Anyway? Possibility, Art and Democratic Deviance’, http://republicart.net/disc/institution/esche01_en.pdf [accessed 18 October 2017]

centre, part laboratory and part academy.”⁷¹ This parallels the ethos behind some of the ideas emerging concurrently surrounding alternative iterations of arts education. For example, an incentive might be to hybridise the function of arts education, through its incorporation to the programming of arts centres, and it being the subject for discussion at events staged within arts institutions, whereby critical ephemera such as publications and lectures mark the multi-purposing of education.

Vishmidt more recently has offered an expansion on the well-trodden ground of Institutional Critique by claiming the intellectual space of ‘infrastructural critique’, which works beyond critique towards inhabitation and realisation. For Vishmidt, this interventionism at the level of the arts institution, alongside or within it, is a way of realising an institutional practice that distinctly negates what Holert has called the ‘logic of the neoliberal institution’, which ‘pursues a de-politicising politics of control, evaluation and business-as-usual’⁷² ethos and is a way to distinctly separate the aesthetic project of Institutional Critique from the infrastructural and political practice of constructing or remaking arts institutions. This interventionist approach echoes the type of instituting or organising that Lütticken describes in para-institutions. This can be further illustrated in Holert’s reference to the work of Sobel and Gollan, co-founders of the Free Cooper Union project, an activist group which advocated free education for all in the light of Cooper Union’s reinvention proposal in 2012 to charge tuition to its graduate students after being tuition-free, with its ‘open and free to all’ ethos. This notion of the para-institutional, in relation to Vishmidt’s infrastructural critique, serves to advocate and insist upon the possibility of the arts institution as an apparatus that *can* counter the impending corporatisation of the art world; where forms of political action *with* the institution can attempt to resist and refuse the thrall of neoliberalism at the point of these institutions. Even if they do not succeed, the point is in the recognition of their capacity to be able to do so, which seems to constitute a significant motivation behind the exploration of alternative forms of organising education *for* art itself, as is articulated through the Educational Turn.

‘Transinstitutional’ and ‘translocal’ organisational praxes are examples of the embodiment of co-operative models that intend to act with or alongside traditional

71 Esche in Möntmann, ‘The Rise and Fall of New Institutionalism Perspectives on a Possible Future’, <http://eicpc.net/transversal/0407/moentmann/en> [accessed 18 October 2017]

72 Holert, ‘A Politics of Knowledge in Contemporary Art?’, *Performance Research*, p. 59.

institutions of art and education. Examples include the 2006 A.C.A.D.E.M.Y project (between Hamburg Kunstverein, MuHka Antwerp, the Van Abbe museum Eindhoven and Goldsmiths London) and in programmes such as ‘How To Work Together’, a project between London’s Chisenhale Gallery, The Showroom and Studio Voltaire during 2014–2016. However, it is through this notion of para-institutionality that the art world’s own co-option of alternative critical art forms is veiled through what Aguirre has termed as the act of making statements and what Holert has described as the limiting diagnosis of a problem, often without taking sustained action. For Holert a mode of instituting that is based on actualisation in organisational terms is distinct from Institutional Critique and perhaps some of the more obvious work of the Educational Turn, on the basis that many of the projects or organisations within its remit are limited in their scope to be sustainable as long-term projects. It is through such actualisation that premises continued attention to the ‘shared commitments and urgencies’⁷³ of education over its ‘curatorial or artistic directive’,⁷⁴ which I interpret as the act of taking on a form of collective responsibility and commitment that clusters around specific political and social urgencies. Holert identifies this in the premise of Vishmidt’s infrastructural critique, which ‘refuses the principle of the thematic exhibition and looks instead for formats, platforms, performativities and interactions that enable common research and transversal pedagogies along the line of an aesthetic and political objective.’⁷⁵ However, it stands to question just how and whether alternative arts education could and should be conceivably framed according to Holert’s ‘aesthetic and political objective’ without recourse to redefining the objective of education itself.

This is discussed by Rogoff in relation to those speculative locations of education that foreground unframed or ‘unknown knowledge’⁷⁶ that operate contingent to locality and contemporary specificity. For Rogoff, unknown knowledge is the objective of a type of new alternative education format, where forms of knowledge, modes of access to it and the institutional capacities to facilitate it are most important. In the context of infrastructural critique, Rogoff’s ideas meet with the idea of refusal over resistance. This is crucial to note in infrastructural critique’s attempts to critically model over critical

73 Ibid., p. 60.

74 Ibid.

75 Ibid.

76 Rogoff, ‘FREE’, <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/14/61311/free/> [accessed 18 October 2017], p. 1.

diagnosis.⁷⁷ Additionally Holert proposes the model of ‘commoning’ as one potential direction for this discussion, which I think helps to frame the difference between an aesthetic practice and political practice, where there lies a tension.

For Holert, in an address to a potential politics of knowledge in relation to practices of contemporary art that attempt to institute alternative forms of education, ‘commoning’ is a model that is initiated through ‘an orientation away from themes and issues’⁷⁸ that would usually be negotiated within existing education institutions. Instead of operating by remaining within existing institutions, practices of commoning can be sites upon which education is reinvented and restructured, interrupted, alternated and transformed. This points towards the idea for Holert that ‘the social [...] assemblage [is] one of the strategies [that can] enable actual change concerning the ways in which the production, pedagogy and experience of art is to be pursued.’⁷⁹ Noting this as emblematic of the shift toward a resurgence of organisational practice in and as art, Holert claims that it is ‘related to a [wider] political economy of knowledge’ that is governed in a way that is preventative of the type of social and culturally alternative organisation that commoning permits. In other words, one which is ‘social[ly] cooperat[ive] that takes seriously the right of each participant and any sub-group to co-create and co-determine the path of the organisation in question.’⁸⁰ This idea is put forward by Holert as a means of reflectively and speculatively altering the perceived direction of travel of the current discourse. While many of the practices, programmes and organisations that have emerged from the Turn have set in motion this forward-thinking discussion, following Holert’s call to re-evaluate a politics of knowledge from the perspective of Institutional Critique, there is still a lot to be done by way of realising this broad, wide and hybridised landscape of alternative arts education.

In a similar way, but from the perspective of a proximate discussion located in discourse on ‘the curatorial’ concerning the often-cited imperative to ‘work together’, Phillips has discussed the slipperiness of committing to forms of action that actually might work beyond the rhetorical nature of such diagnosis. In this case, ‘diagnosis’

77 This notionally draws from Holert’s claim that infrastructural critique ‘works beyond disclosure and diagnosis towards modelling.’ Holert, ‘A *Politics* of Knowledge in Contemporary Art?’, *ibid.*

78 *Ibid.*, p. 58.

79 *Ibid.*

80 *Ibid.*, p. 59.

amounts to an imperative to institutionally act in solidarity and work collectively, thereby producing a politics that is not determined as a subject, but as an act itself. Highlighting her involvement in the project ‘How To Work Together’ Phillips posits that the act of instituting does not always constitute the principles that categorically underpin the democratising nature and appeal of working together. Instead the practice of instituting often becomes a ‘conceit of political power’⁸¹ that works to frame (arts) institutions as benevolently in tune with a culture of ‘pseudo-leftist politics’ marked by a status of working together. Even if, in the case of ‘How To Work Together’, the project worked to reinforce and elevate the organisational distinctions of each organisation, and the necessary terms under which each organisation has to commit to its own autonomy, which is rendered in competitive terms. Here the very idea of ‘working together’ is paradoxical through the lens of contemporary art. Further Phillips discusses the ‘logical fault of commoning’,⁸² as a lateral organisational method and aesthetic paradigm.⁸³ She argues that within the frame of art, while commoning constitutes a mode of gathering, it does little by way of actually constituting organisational reform at a social and political level, to counter Holert’s comments above. An invaluable question here to follow from Phillips is how can institutional and organisational practice work towards enabling models that enact such reform, instead of simply making statements, or programming work about doing so. In terms of my research, this point is significant in its allusion to the misgivings of the rhetorical nature of organising around education in the context of art, or the claims that art institutions make by acting in cooperation with the idea of alternative arts education.

Sentimentality

To shed more light on this paradox, I now refer to two examples: one in Suhail Malik’s notion of the sentimentality of contemporary art’s recourse to education, and the second in what Dieter Lesage has termed the ‘Black Mountain Complex’. Both these examples begin to develop lines of criticism as part of the discourse of the Turn from two perspectives: Malik aligns with Phillips’ critique of the institutional rhetoric of

81 Phillips, ‘On A Par? A colloquy on enquiry, working together, and curating’, <https://vimeo.com/187651122> [accessed 18 October 2017]

82 *Ibid.*

83 *Ibid.*

contemporary art and Lesage problematises the institutional rhetoric from the perspective of arts education.

In his 2011 essay, 'Educations Sentimental and Unsentimental', Malik discusses the critical distinction between schooling and education, to which Ivan Illich alluded in the 1970s as an analogy for a wide social, cultural and political conditioning that he argues can be addressed through the socialising of education, or, taking from Illich, through his theory of 'deschooling'.⁸⁴ For Illich, the distinction between schooling and education is the difference that commonly confuses 'teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new.'⁸⁵ What Illich suggests here is that the institution of school and its systems of value obfuscate the location of the values of education by placing importance on objects of attainment over the experience of learning. Education and schooling, he explains, can be facilitated by other appropriate 'institutional arrangement'.⁸⁶ Such a radical institutional arrangement, he continues, might function as a form of automated educational service or network, which is reflected nearly half a century later in Sean Dockray's online and offline Public School infrastructure. The Public School operates as a comprehensive knowledge-sharing network, which principally exists online, insofar as its organisation is concerned, and then offline, in physical manifestation. What is meant by this is its organisational strategy is resonant with Illich's speculation about the most radical alternative to school being 'a network or service which [gives] each [person] the same opportunity to share [their] current concern with others motivated by the same concern.'⁸⁷ The Public School is organised around shared interest and a desire to learn, and only exists in formation, if enough mutual interest generates significant demand.

Returning to Malik, the distinction lies in the idea that '[school] is the repetition of a fixed body of knowledge, selected, assessed, passed, or rejected by given authorities

84 For Illich, 'deschooling' can be illustrated by the following maxim: 'to abolish the power of one person to oblige another person to attend a meeting.' Ivan Illich, 'Learning Webs', in *Deschooling Society* (London: Marion Boyers, 1970), p. 94. Illich's theory of 'deschooling' is a process through which society unlearns itself, where it is dismantled and disconnected from the institutional apparatus that sanction and control it; where a transfer of responsibility is made from self to institution. Deschooling is the act of inhabiting new approaches to formalising 'incidental or informal education.' 'Why We Must Disestablish School', p. 22.

85 Ibid., p. 1.

86 Ibid., p. 17.

87 Ibid., p. 19.

[...] It is the practice of instrumentalism'⁸⁸ and, '[e]ducation [...] is a learning process that never ends.'⁸⁹ What is different is that one is fixed and one is a process; one an object and the other more of a means to an awareness of the transformative capacity of objects. Illich defines this difference through the following example: schooling can be illustrated as 'skill-drill'⁹⁰ learning, where skills are taught, and education, as the environment where the 'exploratory and creative use of skills'⁹¹ can take place. Malik's differentiation in relation to this is key as it serves as a litmus test to distinguish the political from the sentimental in the sprawling project of contemporary art's Educational Turn.

Malik employs the term, 'expanded art-learning'⁹² to account generally for the field of alternative forms of art(s)⁹³ education – projects, programmes, organisations, schools, institutions. For the purposes of critique, 'expanded art-learning' could refer to the way in which the Educational Turn in art notionally delimits and co-opts educational forms, such as learning, teaching, programming, knowledge production, knowledge exchange, as artistic forms, and also to how it has engaged art with a type of politically and socially inclined practice of instituting described above. Through critically examining the politics of forms of expanded art-learning, Malik argues the potential political failure of traditional art schools as educational institutions, and further, the somewhat opaque politics of alternative forms of arts education emerging via the Educational Turn, on the basis of their proximity to the domain of contemporary art. He argues that traditional art schools are not only political failures on the basis that 'they are formalised institutions with explicit mechanisms of admission and progression',⁹⁴ but also because the 'open-ended and "wild" models of art education [...] advocated since the 1960s [...] are being eradicated by the international standardisation of education and turned into schooling.'⁹⁵ Additionally he explains that the project of contemporary art is in fact encumbered by the same levels of exclusivity that formal art schools are, through

88 Suhail Malik, 'Educations Sentimental and Unsentimental: Repositioning the Politics of Art and Education', *Red Hook Journal of Curatorial Studies*, 1 (28 August 2011), <http://www.bard.edu/ccs/redhook/educations-sentimental-and-unsentimental-repositioning-the-politics-of-art-and-education/> [accessed 18 October 2017] N.B. no page numbers

89 Ibid.

90 Illich, p.22.

91 Ibid.

92 Malik, *ibid.*

93 This distinction is made between references to art education and the broader remit of arts education, to which this research refers.

94 Ibid.

95 Ibid.

such processes of admission and mediated progression.

Despite claiming that contemporary art can be anything and can be by and for anyone, the fact that art schools are symbolically tethered to the domain of contemporary art, in that they are the foundations of it, draws together a paradox. Malik explains the criteria of such a paradox as ‘art-making involves training and a discussion among peers who are selected for their appropriateness and ability to partake in it’ and ‘only certain artists will be recognised as being able to make a contribution to contemporary art.’⁹⁶ Such a group is defined as a ‘certain milieu’ who have ‘a highly limited set of references, interests and authorities’, meaning that only ‘those who are lucky or unlucky enough to be accepted into art schools are the ones who tend to become established artists.’⁹⁷ While these points are contestable, it is through them that Malik arrives at problematising the site of contemporary art as a potential domain for alternative arts education.

In his essay, ‘School’s Out!–?’ Jan Verwoert addresses a similar set of concerns on the ‘symbolic boundary’ of formal arts education institutions and the art world proper which mediates the ‘competitive logic of the art market.’⁹⁸ Verwoert evokes an imaginary dialogue between a defender and critic of formal arts education through the lens of this boundary, where in its defence there is a claim to protect the distinction between the experimental and developmental environment of the art school and the outside monopolistic environment of the art world. Verwoert contends with the idea that traditional forms of arts education are both institutions of refuge and institutions of power: ‘the academy can today be understood equally as monopolist institution of power and as one of the few remaining strongholds against the art market.’⁹⁹ A crucial point is made here in this reckoning that resonates with the above discussion in Malik, where arts education is seen to be the preserve of the few and ‘the ideas about making art and being an artist [...] by people inside the academy are very often just a distorted version of the dominant principles of the art world’¹⁰⁰ which are formulated around what constitutes being successful enough to exhibit in galleries. For Verwoert, instead of constituting a genuine alternative space to the spaces of art defined by the market, art

96 Ibid.

97 Ibid.

98 Jan Verwoert, ‘School’s Out!–?’, in *Notes for an Art School*, <https://manifesta.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/NotesForAnArtSchool.pdf> [accessed 18 October 2017] p. 1.

99 Ibid.

100 Ibid.

schools tend to be inward-looking and exclusive, while maintaining the image of being open and exploratory. The field of expanded art learning, through the Educational Turn, has worked to problematise the ‘divide and rule’ distinctions of how the milestones of an artist’s career should play out. Verwoert questions the distinctions that ‘art education [...] takes place in the academy, art production in the studio, art presentation and circulation in the gallery...’¹⁰¹ by claiming that they only reinforce existing power structures of the art world and asks if and how they should be overturned. If, according to Malik and Verwoert, there exists an unavoidable continuum between the tropes of formal arts education, art world and expanded (alternative) forms of art learning, through the unbreakable feedback loop between the three, then an imperative must be to relocate this discussion elsewhere. Verwoert poses a useful point to take this forward: through considering the art school as a site to initiate its students into practices of resistance through continued inhabitation of it.

Returning to Malik, by citing exclusion and demise as attributes of the potential political failure of traditional sites of arts education, Malik suggests the ‘awkward situation’¹⁰² they find themselves in when confronted with the burgeoning field of expanded art-learning. This awkwardness emerges through further examining the proximity that forms of expanded art learning have to the field of contemporary art, as is described through their relation to arts institutions. Malik explains that such exclusion at the point of formal art schools in reality ‘makes [it] too clear that contemporary art is [also] *not* for anyone or everyone.’¹⁰³ Contrary to the notion in parallel that ‘[c]ontemporary art can be anything and can take place anywhere’¹⁰⁴ which would suggest an endowment of the ‘democratic credentials’ and a sense of ‘commonality’¹⁰⁵ to expanded art-learning, to which the sprawling domain of contemporary art generally alludes to. This assertion puts contemporary art, and so expanded forms of art-learning, into the same exclusionary realm of traditional forms of art education, and is seemingly contradictory. Malik writes that the key issue surrounding the turn to education in art is at this point where expanded forms of art-learning claim to be anti-exclusionary, anti-authority and anti-cost. Such assertions form the basis of their attempts to democratically

101 Ibid., p. 2.

102 Malik, *ibid.*

103 Ibid. [Italics in original]

104 Ibid.

105 Ibid.

chip away at or attempt to alleviate the crisis of arts education. As these characteristics also form contemporary art's 'common appeal', according to Malik, here lies the contradiction. Expanded forms of art-learning can neither claim educational status nor can be committed to the so-called principles by which contemporary art stands, because they exist as part of and for the project of contemporary art.

As such, the delineation of a logic between political and sentimental education lies at the heart of this paradox. Even though expanded forms of art learning claim 'democracy, anti-institutionalism and commonality'¹⁰⁶ on the basis of a rejection of the exclusive, open and costly traditional art school, these alternative forms are produced as artistic-political manifestations of the project of the Educational Turn. Through its containment within contemporary art, these are ultimately bound to the same exclusive, institutional and privatised logic of the traditional art school. Here Malik makes a pivotal claim that my research takes as a departure point. The distinction between political and sentimental arts education lies within the capacity of forms of expanded art-learning to either realise progressive educational modes that work to replace or evolve traditional art schools or accept that arts education should be in the charge of formal institutions (university, academy), where its alternatives are reduced to what Malik calls, 'free play'.

Drawing again from Vishmidt, it has been helpful to refer to how she articulates artistic practices often confined to the periphery of popular discourse in contemporary art to further examine Malik's claims. In the context of attempting to define media arts as an example, Vishmidt frames the critical slipperiness that is implicit to articulating these thresholds between practices that are aligned to the "proper" art world¹⁰⁷ by proximation (sentimental), and conversely, practices that resolutely emerge from within it and because of it (political). The existence of an educational turn within the increasingly blurred boundaries of contemporary art is therefore highly problematic: Malik questions

106 Ibid.

107 Vishmidt describes these to be sustained by 'established organs of criticism, reception, funding, publicity, all the cultural vectors and financial mechanisms' further, which are constituted by 'critical and market circuits' which instruct and maintain such organs, criticism, reception etc. I am drawn to Vishmidt's reference here to a 'proper art world', particularly as it is contextualised by an attempt to outline a stake for media arts as a set of proximate practices that are categorically separate by definition of their resistance to the same critical and market circuits that define the proper art world. I find her clarification useful to parallel the distinctions between and proximities to artistic practice of the Educational Turn and alternative educational forms outside of the proper art world. Marina Vishmidt, 'Introduction', in *Media Mutandis: a NODE.London Reader*, ed. by Marina Vishmidt and others (London: NODE.London, 2006), p. 3.

whether contemporary art can morally carry the claim to education as with the project of the Educational Turn, as an assumed universal expansion of art education on the back of art. Where he questions this on moralistic terms, Vishmidt offers a pragmatic way forward via proposing to eradicate, in its articulation, all the obligations that the proper art world demands and imposes from practices aligned to it (organs of criticism, reception, funding, publicity...). For Malik, contemporary art cannot be so clear-cut in the way that Vishmidt alludes. If alternative forms of arts education within the remit of the Educational Turn can be in part defined by their rejection of the exclusiveness, marketisation, hierarchisation, authority and bureaucracy of traditional art schools, owing to their proximity to the wider arena of contemporary art, then these alternative practices hold inherent contradictions. As such, Malik states that it is through contemporary art's own inextricability from the institution of the art school, that it cancels out its own status of democracy, anti-institutionalisation and commonality. If practices of expanded art-learning rely on contemporary art's assumed autonomy, publicness, flexibility, deregulation, universality, common, public good, then therefore practices of expanded art-learning are also flawed. According to Malik, they are sentimental and not political.

Drawing on the contradistinction and specificity of a curatorial education, in his Prelude to Malik's text, Zolghadr intimates that the wider discussion is not about gatekeeping or inclusion, but is rather a proactive discourse that seeks to 'undermine the art system of its sole authority – autonomy [...] – over what constitutes originality or innovation in art.'¹⁰⁸ As we learn through Malik's logic, this is not actually found at the point of the traditional art school nor in its alternative forms, owing to the art school's hold on what actually constitutes contemporary art, and therefore, the nature and efficacy of alternative forms of arts education as products of art's Educational Turn. In other words, the traditional art school inadvertently but actively produces them. Further, Zolghadr states in his essay, 'The Angry Middle Aged: Romance and the Possibilities of Adult Education in the Art World' that the value in this ambivalent field lays in its 'question[ing of] how the distinctive features of pedagogy warp and transfigure when the setting is that of visual art and, vice versa, how art tends to change when the intention

108 Zolghadr, Prelude to 'Educations Sentimental and Unsentimental: Repositioning the Politics of Art and Education', <http://www.bard.edu/ccs/redhook/educations-sentimental-and-unsentimental-repositioning-the-politics-of-art-and-education/> [accessed 18 October 2017] N.B. no page numbers

is pedagogical.¹⁰⁹ In response to this, my research questions whether other forms of alternative organisation outside of the remit of the Educational Turn can resist this feedback loop found within contemporary art, in the way that Zolghadr, Malik, O'Neill and Wilson recognise 'the curatorial' to be one such space capable of resistance.¹¹⁰ It is useful to refer Malik's ideas on sentimentality, to Aguirre's understanding of embedding pedagogy and education in art, as is articulated in Aguirre's text, 'Educations With Innovations: Beyond Art-Pedagogical Projects', as the 'reorientation of desire in education'.¹¹¹ As opposed to simply making statements about pedagogy and education through art, as noted in the Preface, Aguirre takes Barthes' advocacy of rethinking one site of education, the seminar, as the object of desire. It is worth paralleling Malik's sentimentality and Aguirre (and Barthes') reorientation of desire to offer two ways to view two different sides of the discussion about alternative forms of expanded art learning in the context of the Turn.

In his writing 'To the Seminar', Barthes discusses the conceptual space of the seminar as a site of democratic education and emancipation in a way that 'build[s] communit[ies] of listeners'¹¹² over communities of speakers. Aguirre parallels this to the playwright Bertolt Brecht's own ideas of pedagogy in the context of the entertainment and political communication channels of opera and the radio. Aguirre cites Brecht's claim that 'pedagogics' reconfigures the way to new art, whose communicative and political power lay in form, less than in content, which for Brecht was key, 'to convert institutions from places of entertainment into organs of mass communication'.¹¹³ Though written nearly a century ago, Brecht's ideas that educational processes and structures (forms) can serve as the space of transformation that, to take Aguirre's words, seek to subvert the structures or apparatus of production, are particularly pertinent in the context of Malik's argument and reckoning of sentimental and unsentimental education. Aguirre argues through Brecht and Barthes that 'however much theoretical discourse is brought to bear within an educational structure [...], without a transformation of things at higher levels,

109 Ibid., 'The Angry Middle Aged: Romance and the Possibilities of Adult Education in the Art World', in *Curating and the Educational Turn*, p. 160.

110 Zolghadr and Malik, 'Educations Sentimental ...' and O'Neill and Wilson, 'Curatorial counter-rhetorics and the educational turn', pp. 177–93.

111 Aguirre, 'Education With Innovations: Beyond Art-Pedagogical Projects', in *Curating and the Educational Turn*, p. 184.

112 Ibid., p. 183.

113 Brecht in Aguirre, p. 182.

including the level of form, then all that happens is the reproduction of the educational apparatus.¹¹⁴ This argument, in the context of the literature on the Educational Turn, is reproduced itself, and constitutes what I term as art's instrumentalisation of education. For Aguirre, the 'reductive formalism' of recent educational art projects, echoing Malik's sentimentality, can be summed up by the idea that 'equate[s] the disordering of the chairs in a classroom or re-arranging them in informal groupings or in small circles with the production of more direct and transparent communication between participants'.¹¹⁵ Then, to turn Malik's question around and rephrase it, I am interested in asking additionally through this research, how discourse on the Educational Turn might conceptually move beyond questions of sentimentality, gatekeeping and inclusion at the level of art and its institutions, and instead conceive of a foundation for dismantling contemporary art's authority and autonomy over what constitutes arts education.

Within the discourse on art's Educational Turn, there is an assumption that more or less presents alternative forms of art education as democratic and socially and politically progressive, and perhaps this emerges out of the same assumption Malik makes about contemporary art. With Malik's argument as a point of departure, arts education (its institutions and its alternatives) is categorically misunderstood. If contemporary art is exclusive and traditional art schools are exclusive and are instrumentalising, and alternative forms of arts education are also exclusive and are the objects of an instrumentalising art world and art school system, then together the argument for progressive alternative forms of arts education within the context of the Educational Turn in art is theoretically impossible. The assumption that alternative forms of arts education advocate and carry with them the supposed autonomy of contemporary art towards a public good is here made redundant.

It is not my intention to discuss the nature of contemporary art's autonomy, nor its democratic status, but to allude to this as a critical discussion is key insofar as examining the role that contemporary art has in relation to alternative arts education. Not only are the alternative practices of the Turn tethered to the problematic status of contemporary art, but also the traditional institutions of education that they attempt to critique. Not all explicitly profess to offer such a clear-cut alternative to either, but it can be said, echoing Malik, that most at least actively attempt to position themselves

114 Aguirre, *ibid.*

115 *Ibid.*

according to the principles of ‘democracy, anti-institutionalisation and commonality’. For the most part they fail to do so, since their combined nature, positioned within art and adjacent to education, amounts to a whole series of politically and ethically opaque contradictions, which I discuss as part of a process of ‘double instrumentalisation’, in part one of Chapter Three.

Educational complex

To further contextualise this notion of sentimentality, I now discuss Dieter Lesage’s problematisation of the Turn, through his positing of the ‘Black Mountain Complex’ in relation to the Bologna Process. Lesage’s thinking evolves the discussion away from the specificity of contemporary art as a problematic site and moves closer to thinking about the Educational Turn in relation to how it has come to romanticise the historicity of alternative arts education, through the lens of the Black Mountain College. Through articulating a paradox of the Educational Turn, Lesage makes a critical statement that exemplifies how the trend of arts education works to instrumentalise it negatively through its over-theorisation. This ‘paradox’ is outlined by Lesage in his essay, ‘The Academy is Back: On Education, the Bologna Process, and the Doctorate in the Arts’ and discussed in his lecture, ‘Black Mountain Syndrome’ in 2015. He discusses the idea that much of the theoretical work of the Turn continually refers to Europe’s Bologna Process as the neoliberal spectre steadily dismantling the agenda of European higher education in the arts. This reference is often held as a critical placeholder for a wider concern that critiques the integration of aspects of the knowledge economy into higher education institutions. This refers to the standardisation of degree levels across European institutions, credit systems that connect these institutions, protocols of quality assurance marked by assessment models, and so on.

Lesage’s observations show us that such a surface-level recourse is problematic as discussions concerning arts education and its alternatives rarely make it beyond rhetorical statements that posit critique of this integration. Even though the discourse does elicit questions concerning the responsibilities of the art school and art academy insofar as the content and pedagogies of institutional arts education, the theoretical discussion rarely attends to considering the issues of Educational Turn in relation to these institutions themselves. They project concern from other perspectives, for example, the

status of artistic practice, art historically and paradigms from within contemporary art theory, to name a few. Further, Lesage’s position helps towards framing thinking about the Turn that could attend to the realisation of these ideas and practices in formal debates on arts education, outside contemporary art’s discourse.

Lesage discusses this problematic in a way to reveal that these discussions might be best had in conjunction with the debate in artistic research and the doctorate in the arts in mind. Europe’s Bologna Process and the establishment of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in 1999 and 2010 respectively, is a useful general illustration of the idea of knowledge mobility in formal institutional arts education. The Bologna Process demonstrates the limitations of a condition of ‘knowledge mobility’¹¹⁶ as an apparatus of horizontality. In this way, to some degree, the entailing process from 1999’s Declaration to embolden a ‘Europe of Knowledge’,¹¹⁷ to make comparable, standardise and re-evaluate education, promote mobility and co-operation in ensuring its quality, and institute the appropriate dimensions in higher education across Europe, has paradoxically incited much of the theoretical material of the Educational Turn.

Yet opinion is divided as to what degree the Turn can be seen to be retaliatory critical work in response to it. Rogoff has spoken of her involvement with the A.C.A.D.E.M.Y project as one that ‘aimed to develop a counterpoint to the professionalisation, technocratisation, and privatisation [...] that result from the Bologna reforms.’¹¹⁸ Wilson and Lesage contest this in a way that attends to the nuance of what Bologna is actually asking in a changing landscape of higher arts education. Wilson focuses on the idea that the effects of the Bologna Declaration are part and parcel of a mutable landscape of higher education and importantly references the notion that it is the economies of time within arts education which are changing. Wilson cites, ‘the flexibilisation and precarisation of public and private labour’, ‘always ‘on’ and everywhere ‘reachable’ communications’, and an ‘ever-extending period of adolescence that undermines the emergence of personal agency’¹¹⁹ as three key concerns which could

116 A critical term which this research has derived as a means to account for the way in which knowledge is discussed in relation to the Educational Turn. This is discussed in detail in part one of Chapter Three.

117 ‘The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999’, https://www.eurashe.eu/library/bologna_1999_bologna-declaration-pdf/ [accessed 18 October 2017]

118 Rogoff, ‘Turning’, *Curating and the Educational Turn*, p. 36.

119 Wilson, ‘Blame it on Bologna!’, *Metropolis M!*, 2 (2013), http://www.metropolism.com/en/features/23191_blame_it_on_bologna [accessed 18 October 2017] N.B. no page numbers

begin to shed light on what the function of arts education might need to be in context of discussion on alternative models. However returning to this idea of retaliation is something of a misnomer, as although it is referenced across the literature as a dominant factor motivating discourse on the Turn, it logically figures as a process that advocates some of the same principles and concepts that the work of the Turn is based on. Here lies another paradox. Such principles and concepts roughly amount to ‘interdisciplinarity, experimentation and self-organisation’,¹²⁰ which, in their sentiment, are not far removed from Malik’s ‘democracy, anti-institutionalism and commonality’.

Where the Bologna Process is referred to as the neoliberal spectre in relation to arts education in Europe, Lesage states that it manifests in function as the opposite. By instituting a state-led apparatus of comparability between the countries involved in the Bologna Declaration, it advocates interdisciplinarity, experimentation and self-organisation, and adds a ‘fourth dimension’¹²¹ of quality control. For Lesage, this fourth dimension is considered to be problematic insofar as the discourse on the Educational Turn is concerned, for it comes to represent the looming threat of a managerial class distributed across institutions of arts education, which presents the Bologna Process’ weakness insofar as it ‘tends to kill that of which [it] is supposed to control the quality’.¹²² Here what emerges is the idea that institutional forms of arts education are bound to facilitating an instrumental type of arts education. Lesage’s remarks come to define much of the motivation *against* the direction of travel of Europe’s higher education institutions in the arts under the Bologna Declaration.

The problem for Lesage is in the detail of this misaligned opposition between the work of the Educational Turn and the Bologna Process, and additionally in the correlation and association of the principles and concepts (interdisciplinarity, experimentation and self-organisation) of the Turn with its historical precedents and future imaginary. Where, for example, art schools such as the Black Mountain College ‘seem to have acquired the status of a myth’,¹²³ as part of the Turn’s discourse, they have done so under slightly false, or paradoxical pretences. From which, Lesage has derived the ‘Black Mountain

120 Dieter Lesage, ‘Black Mountain Syndrome’, *Black Mountain – Educational Turn and the Avant-Garde* lecture, Hamburger Bahnhof, Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin, 26th September 2015

121 Ibid.

122 Ibid.

123 Ibid.

Complex’.¹²⁴ This educational complex is marked by the Educational Turn’s reverential claims to a type of arts education that is founded on the above concepts and also in theory would be granted, from the state, a form of trust that permits its autonomy from apparatus such as the Bologna Process. This complex is based on the discourse’s citation to historical institutions such as Black Mountain College, founded in 1933 in North Carolina and Staatliches Bauhaus, founded in 1919 in Weimer, that are both considered as formative and progressive examples of artist-led or experimental arts education in Western Art History.

For Lesage, this complex bears another paradox, which conflates politically and economically contrasting institutional models with the sentimentality of zeitgeist and imaginary of autonomy from the mechanisms of the state. Black Mountain College was self-organised insofar as it was artist-led and the Bauhaus was the conflation of two state-led institutions; Black Mountain College was privately funded; the Bauhaus was state funded. This distinction is important: the act of mythologising Black Mountain College through the Educational Turn implies, in short-hand, that the discourse in effect endorses what Lesage refers to as the ‘privatisation of education’¹²⁵ by nature of such mythologising, and therefore Black Mountain College ‘becomes a trojan horse imposing Capitalism’s laws and [...] organisation’¹²⁶ at the point of these models of arts education. My point however is not to enter into a debate that for better or worse adds to what is essentially a body of criticism about educational apparatus in Europe. Instead, it is to draw on how Lesage frames this paradox between the Bologna Process and the Educational Turn, in a misaligned opposition, to highlight the potential wider implications of instituting alternative arts education beyond the remit of the Turn. For Lesage, the challenge is to continue working within institutional frames and build on them.

A further consideration in light of Lesage’s critique corresponds with my outline of ‘double instrumentalisation’; in the idea that ‘the alternatives’ produced through the Educational Turn often manifest as replications of the institutions or structures to which they are opposing. They are therefore not really transformative or any different, particularly when they are produced by the same actors (curators,

124 Ibid.

125 Ibid.

126 Ibid.

educators) who simultaneously sustain these traditional institutions of education. When ‘the alternative’ is used as a trojan horse to, as Lesage states, gain funding or reputation in the contemporary art world, then these practices are by nature paradoxes. Further, because they exist in abundance, almost to the point where ‘the alternative’ has become an institutionalised armature, they cumulatively contribute to the same process of desubjectification that the Bologna Process is critiqued for imposing. Therefore, the Educational Turn (re)produces a saturated field of alternativeness, where institutions of art are also co-opting the alternative educational form, as the second stage of instrumentalisation. If the first, as is described previously, is by artists, then the second is by curators and cultural producers (who are commonly bound to arts institutions which are tethered to the protocols of the Bologna Declaration). Now the institutions of art are instrumentalising the myth of ‘the alternative’ to their own ends.

Aestheticisation/academicisation

The above sections work to frame some of the key discussions that chart the problematic nature of the Educational Turn in terms of how its conceptual alignment to arts institutions, and the boundary between contemporary art and formal educational structures populate much of the Turn’s discourse. A further key issue is rooted in the way that the Turn is framed to the ends of contemporary art. I identify this as problematic in that if the field of alternative arts education intends to enact a transformation of arts education at a social, political and cultural level, then these discussions need to be considered outside the frame of contemporary art.

The following sections examine the literature that reinforces this perspective with the intention of highlighting its problematic nature. Here we can refer again to Kenning who, through outlining the paradoxical nature of alternative arts education within the frame of contemporary art, has referred to a form of aestheticisation having taken place, through education’s ‘appropriated, mimicked, aestheticised’¹²⁷ handling by contemporary art. For Kenning, this marks the process of art turning in on itself, which is exemplified by its attempt to move out into the ‘social terrain’ of education through the

127 Kenning, ‘Refusing Conformity and Exclusion in Art Education’, <http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/refusing-conformity-and-exclusion-art-education> [accessed 18 October 2017] N.B. no page numbers

Educational Turn, only to serve back into the domain of art as ‘recognisable artworks, exhibitions, or curated events.’¹²⁸

A site of extensive talking

In their introduction to ‘Curating and the Educational Turn’, O’Neill and Wilson remind us that gathering, discursivity, organising and exchange have always played a supporting role to the positions, presentation and participation of art. Moreover, these forms function as devices of sustaining, means of realising, forming positions, critiquing and permeating the unending domain of contemporary art. They state, ‘[h]istorically, these [types of] discussions have been peripheral to the exhibition, operating in a secondary role in relation to the display of art for public consumption. More recently, these [forms] have become central to contemporary practice; they have now become the main event.’¹²⁹

O’Neill and Wilson introduce their volume speaking of a particular type of discursive practice (gathering, organising, producing, exchanging), which goes hand in hand with the Educational Turn’s agenda of being in conversation with education. Further supported by Rogoff in her claim that ‘the art world [has become] a site of extensive talking – talking [has] emerged as a practice, as a mode of gathering, as a way of getting access to some knowledge and some questions, as networking and organising.’¹³⁰ While posited critically, in the context of her text ‘Turning’, the type of talking Rogoff refers to has become one of many modes of critical address at the locus of expanded educational practices of contemporary art. More generally, the permission to speak in the combined fora of education and contemporary art instantiates a productive mode of inclusive address. Speaking, according to Monika Szewczyk, is both political and aesthetic in this way on the basis of its capacity to reveal ‘who we want to see, who or what we admit into a world order.’¹³¹ She continues, ‘if, as an art, conversation is the creation of worlds, we could say that to choose to have a conversation with someone is to admit them into the field where worlds are constructed [...] Art and conversation share this space of invention’.¹³² Emily Pethick has spoken about conversation as ‘a way of thinking [...]

128 Ibid.

129 O’Neill and Wilson, ‘Introduction’, in *Curating and the Educational Turn*, p. 12.

130 Rogoff, ‘Turning’, p. 43.

131 Monika Szewczyk, ‘The Art of Conversation part 1’, http://worker01.e-flux.com/pdf/article_37.pdf [accessed 18 October 2017] p. 2.

132 Ibid.

producing a special social space where no single language of truth is prevalent.¹³³

Returning to Rogoff and Raunig, can we question whether the Educational Turn is in fact a site upon which notions of unauthorised truth have produced the conditions (commitment, responsibility) that permit and facilitate new and alternative forms of education? Both have drawn from Michel Foucault's interpretation of the Greek *parrhēsia*¹³⁴ – in which 'free speech'¹³⁵ and its being 'courageous enough to disclose the truth about oneself'¹³⁶ is compelled by a combined will to 'frankness', 'truth', 'danger', 'criticism' and 'duty'.¹³⁷ Rogoff and Raunig discuss this idea as it relates to the wider landscape of arts institutions. Each negotiate a type of institutional or educational practice of *parrhēsia* in a way that is defined through the act of speaking the truth freely as a mode of acting politically, and in the way that the project of alternative education insofar as arts institutions are concerned, might offer up a newly configured mode of self-questioning and self-reflexivity.

I take Foucault's discourse on *parrhēsia* as a means of illuminating this notion of self-reflexivity. If self-reflexivity can be understood as an organisational strategy in the context of self-organising arts education, which can potentially be considered to be an alternative mode of its quality assurance, it is worth noting how the project of Institutional Critique too, from Raunig's perspective, can be considered to employ a similar method of reflective self-criticism. It is through Raunig's concept of 'instituent practice' that we learn of the value of being positioned at the threshold of the institution; that is, both existing in dissent and within the institution's orbit. Raunig is interested in drawing across two versions of *parrhēsia* in Foucault, which disclose a shift between the public and private. One is determined by 'truth-telling' to others, where one is

133 Emily Pethick, 'Resisting institutionalisation', in *Nought to Sixty*, (London: ICA, 2009), p. 251.

134 Michel Foucault discussed the Greek term *parrhēsia* in his 'Government of Self and Others' and 'Courage of Truth' lectures between 1982 and 1984. He developed this notion from classical Greek literature, which designates the act of free speech as simultaneously a 'quality' to obtain, a demonstrable 'duty' and a 'technique' to be utilised. Foucault, '12 January 1983: First Hour', in *The Government of Self and Others Lectures at the Collège de France 1982–1983* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 43. This is developed in line with the idea that to speak freely – with 'frankness', about the 'truth', risking 'danger', with 'criticism' and with 'duty' is an act toward courageously inhabiting a life of self-care, where accounts of one's life match up to the lived reality of one's life.

135 Michel Foucault in Rogoff, 'Turning', p. 46.

136 Foucault in Raunig, 'Instituent Practice Fleeing, Instituting, Transforming', http://eipcp.net/transversal/0106/raunig/en/#_ftnref2 [accessed 18 October 2017]

137 Foucault, 'The Word *Parrhesia*', in *Fearless Speech*, ed. by Joseph Pearson (LA: Semiotext(e), 2001), pp. 9–19.

'courageous' enough to speak the truth despite the risk associated with doing so. The other is concerned with the act of 'disclos[ing] the truth about oneself'.¹³⁸

This distinction between public criticism and personal self-criticism for Raunig is key to understanding how arts institutions can take from Foucault's notion productively. He continues that the importance of reconfiguring this notion lies in its capacity to institute the relationship between what he calls 'rational discourse' and the 'lifestyle of the [...] self-questioning person'.¹³⁹ This loosely translates in Foucault as his interpretation of the way in which the Greek *parrhēsiastes* (those who use *parrhēsia*,¹⁴⁰ or educators) sought to inspire 'listeners to give account of themselves and lead them to a self-questioning that queries the relationship between their statements (*logos*) and their way of living (*bios*).¹⁴¹ For Raunig, it is in this specific distinction and relationship between the *logos* and *bios* in Foucault that engenders a potentially new type of institutionality. Such is determined through conceiving *parrhēsia* as a 'double strategy'¹⁴² that moves between refusal (taking account) and self-questioning (their existence), at the point of the institution. Here the two preceding stages of Institutional Critique, which, according to Raunig mirror the two stages of *parrhēsia*, have taken on both 'strategies' of making public statements and being self-reflexive.

Reconsidering the above question concerning the Educational Turn as a site that has produced conditions of commitment and responsibility, we might also ask if such conditions permit conversation as a producer of worlds where no single voice is privileged over another. This question is important as it asks how education can be brought into dialogue with contemporary art, particularly when Malik has stated that neither can neutralise the other on account of contemporary art's failure to be truly democratic, anti-institutional or for the public good.¹⁴³ As 'modalit[ies] of movement',¹⁴⁴ speaking and learning as forms of art practice have become hallmarks of the turn to education. What this means is that this type of discursivity now accounts as a form

138 Foucault in Raunig, *ibid.* [Italics in original]

139 *Ibid.*

140 Foucault, '1 February 1984: First Hour', in *The Courage of Truth (The Government of Self and Others II) Lectures at the Collège de France 1983–1984* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 7.

141 Raunig, *ibid.*

142 *Ibid.*

143 Suhail Malik, 'Educations Sentimental and Unsentimental: Repositioning the Politics of Art and Education.' N.B. no page numbers

144 Ricardo Basbaum in Pethick, p. 251.

for a set of artistic agendas composed of a diverse body of praxes and discourse that conceptually and pragmatically use the acts or spaces of education and the acts or spaces of discussion as autonomous and critical modes of contemporary aesthetic enquiry. However, it is my intention to pick this apart; as I argue that while this may be the case initially insofar as education and discursive practice permitting such autonomy, the abundance of ‘the alternative’ and the spaces of discursivity produced through it render such autonomy impossible owing to the way in which ‘the alternative’ has become yet another trope of contemporary art through the Turn.

Concretisation

Art historian Johan Pas suggests that the defining moment of the Educational Turn is marked by the culmination of the art world’s ‘academicisation’¹⁴⁵ via the A.C.A.D.E.M.Y project in 2006. Which, according to Pas, concretised the art world’s co-option of the arts education, in a way that eclipsed the consistent interest by artists in the site and politics of the art school throughout the twentieth century. Under the aegis of a confrontational yet rhetorical title ‘You talkin’ to me?’, O’Neill and Wilson’s panel at the ICA in 2008 attempted to ask exactly what it was compelling artistic practitioners at the time to the domain of education; what it was compelling the artists, curators and educators specifically within the expanded domain and reaches of art to the co-option of forms of educational practice and to the places of education as spaces of and for critical practice.¹⁴⁶ Address to this question invariably charts the scope of the turn from its inherent political agenda of alternative, informal, critical and radical pedagogy,¹⁴⁷ through to its tendency to replicate the forms that it supposedly rejects: its reproduction of the institution. Further, artist Dave Beech claims that modes of pedagogy and education, in the project of neoliberalism, have become inextricable forms of cultural apparatus themselves. Beyond the commonplace understanding in the context of the school, university or academy, where he describes the way in which ‘education’ is understood as a form of ‘consumerism’.¹⁴⁸

145 Johan Pas, ‘The Artist in Search of an Academy Radical Pedagogies of the Sixties and Seventies’, in *Pro-Positions Art and/as Education 2363–2013*, ed. by Els De Bruyn and others (Ghent: AsaMER, 2014), p. 279.

146 O’Neill and Wilson, ‘You talkin’ to me? Why art is turning to education’, *Nought to Sixty*, p. 147.

147 Addressed by Phillips, Dave Beech and Liam Gillick, ‘You talkin’ to me?’, pp. 147–154.

148 *Ibid.*, p. 150.

Specifically, by drawing on the paradigm of master-pupil, he refers to culture that draws on the trope of such exchange hierarchy through educational forms, through ‘informing’ or ‘teaching’ in ‘education-as-entertainment’.¹⁴⁹ For example, he cites television programmes such as ‘What Not To Wear’ and ‘How To Cook’¹⁵⁰ informing an automatic configuration of consumers as learners and vice versa. In his 2013 article ‘Cuts’ Beech discusses this as the neoliberal ‘doctrine of consumer sovereignty’.¹⁵¹ For Beech, consumer sovereignty marks the dominance of capital over social value. He posits that this must be opposed via the ‘defence of political sovereignty’,¹⁵² arguing that education’s marketisation must be countered through taking on the ‘assumptions, doctrines and principles’ of neoliberalism¹⁵³ and not only via modes that he states to be ‘economically illiterate’ and ‘romantic’.¹⁵⁴ He perceives these to be based on a common sentiment across campaigning at that time against funding cuts and its associated changes,¹⁵⁵ distinguishing between what Beech terms ‘economic and humanist values’. In a second iteration of the discussion ‘You talkin’ to me? Why are artists and curators turning to education?’ that took place at VU University Amsterdam, Wilson introduces the panel with some useful remarks. One of which posits the hope that:

[Here] questions of education are being contested, not in order to act as a curative, or a palliative or [...] corrective measure to the formal of institutions of education, but rather as an assertion of an absolutely other cultural domain, which is not there in order to [...] address the deficit of institutional education but rather to constitute another domain of cultural production, meaning, value, where [...] the contest of value [is] happening in a way that is unhooked from the formal apparatus of the State, while at the same time attending in part to the dynamics of the State.¹⁵⁶

Wilson’s point raises a useful context for how work on the Turn is considered in relation to contemporary art; where educational forms are appropriated in an attempt to consolidate contemporary art’s own autonomy, through an ‘absolutely other cultural

149 *Ibid.*

150 *Ibid.*

151 Beech, ‘Cuts’, *Art Monthly*, no. 366 (May 2013), 1–4 (p. 3.)

152 *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4.

153 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

154 *Ibid.*

155 Beech cites 2010’s ‘Save the Arts’ campaign, artist Bob and Roberta Smith’s 2012 letter to then Education Secretary Michael Gove and writer Michael Rosen’s 2013 open letter to Gove.

156 Wilson, ‘You talkin’ to me? Why are artists and curators turning to education?’, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHJ0OnQnn_M [accessed 18 October 2017]

domain' where systems of cultural value are rethought. The artist Hassan Khan further discusses this point, where the nature of these oppositional praxes – the construction of 'the alternative' organisational model – becomes the act and inhabitation of a new position or means of structuring a domain of survival around the artist or cultural worker in relation to how value is negotiated in contemporary art.¹⁵⁷ What Khan means by this is that value structures in contemporary art are entirely contingent on the values of the art market at a given time, which is composed largely of institutions that exist to maintain a power play, or hierarchy, between systems of value and production. In other words, as a space of fluctuation and speculation, it is an unfixed and precarious landscape for those who partake in it. The efforts to realise 'the alternative' then are means of necessarily navigating through or inhabiting this unfixed and precarious space. And, such a space, we are reminded by both Malik and Bourriaud, is governed in quite a considerable way by the institution of the art school in the first instance.¹⁵⁸

In his text 'The Artist in Search of an Academy', Pas denotes the Educational Turn also as an appendage of the 'fashionable methodology'¹⁵⁹ of Relational Aesthetics. He means by this that the type of artistic practices that permit the site of exhibition to be a site of knowledge and experience,¹⁶⁰ permit also the transformation of the process of its organisation and realisation. For Pas, among others, a turn in art to education is correlated with an educational turn in curating. Meaning that 'the curatorial' as an organisational strategy becomes a methodological site for an educational turn to be sanctioned by both the contemporary art world and from a scholarly perspective. Pas cites both 1997's Documenta X's '100-day museum and 100-day cultural event'¹⁶¹ and the A.C.A.D.E.M.Y project in 2006 providing the conceptual and temporal frame around the most recent period of art that set-in motion the Educational Turn. In Pas, we can locate this tendency as early as the early European Avant-Garde¹⁶², but for others, including Rogoff and Lesage, the Bologna Process across Europe and the professionalisation of arts education via instrumentality of the prevailing knowledge economy, combined with

157 Hassan Khan, 'A Simple Turn: Notes on an Argument', in *Curating and the Educational Turn*, pp. 119–23.

158 Nicolas Bourriaud, 'Revisiting the Educational Turn ...', p. 184, and Malik, 'Educations Sentimental and Unsentimental' N.B. no page numbers

159 Pas, 'The Artist in Search of an Academy Radical Pedagogies of the Sixties and Seventies', p. 279.

160 Ibid.

161 Ibid.

162 Ibid., p. 280.

institutional pressures felt from the research and teaching excellence frameworks for quality assurance in the UK, has offset systematic resistance among practitioners aligned to the art school.

Creativity dispositif

The naming of the Turn, perhaps defined as with Pas, as its moment of 'academicisation', presents its consolidation as discourse and informs the negotiation of an aesthetics of education, as noted by Phillips¹⁶³ and Rogoff.¹⁶⁴ Together their contributions to O'Neill and Wilson's anthology demarcate some of the central critical arguments of the Educational Turn. Phillips discusses Angela McRobbie's alignment of creativity, higher arts education institutions, and immaterial and affective labour. Between these, the degree of precarity in self-exploitative labour is marked by what Phillips calls the 'portfolio of occupations'¹⁶⁵ among young art school graduates. McRobbie asks what happens when the whole domain of art, in the context of its education, becomes wrapped up and instrumentalised as a domain of creativity, when it is 'absorbed under the couplet of immaterial and affective labour?' Further asking, how we can 'join forces to invent other worlds?'¹⁶⁶ that have the capacity to function outside of the reigns of late capitalism's¹⁶⁷ 'creativity dispositif',¹⁶⁸ as proposed by McRobbie in her writing on the instrumentality of 'creativity'.

This resonates with the survivalism that Khan outlines for and by artists and cultural workers, and in the effort of projects like The Whittingdale Residency which is discussed in the following chapter. With hindsight, the Educational Turn has gone to significant lengths towards addressing the absorption of art and education by what McRobbie terms as the 'creativity dispositive'. In addition, what we are left with as the Turn has moved from practice to discourse but nevertheless remains to be an urgent

163 Phillips, 'Education Aesthetics', in *Curating and the Educational Turn*, p. 84.

164 Rogoff, 'Turning', p. 33.

165 Phillips, p. 89.

166 Angela McRobbie in Phillips, p. 90.

167 Referencing New Labour as a foundational political context for the emergence of the 'creative economy' in the UK.

168 McRobbie's 'creativity dispositif' is discussed in Appendix 2. The term refers to a 'self-monitoring, self-regulating mechanism' that emerges when creativity is co-opted by institutions such as governments and business.

set of concerns¹⁶⁹ is a form of extended mulling over of this question about joining forces collectively towards the invention of other worlds; put in another way, of how we work together with arts education. Readers of Phillips and McRobbie are referred to sociologist Maurizio Lazzarato's imperative to 'co-invent values which resist the market and the forces which harness and pollute our minds.'¹⁷⁰ This infers that collective action must question the nature of the instrumentalisation of the 'creativity dispositif' from the perspective of policy; for example, how the Bologna Process plays out at the level of higher education in the arts, specifically through the European Higher Education Area, and also from the perspective of contemporary art as a market-driven domain. McRobbie's 'creativity dispositif' is resonant to the process of art's instrumentalisation of education and 'the alternative' through the Educational Turn, which renders many of these practices to be at odds with their perceived politics, as discussed by both Malik and Lesage. Methodologically, I am concerned with turning this idea on its head by asking how can alternative arts education move beyond the reigns of such an instrumentalised complex?

Rogoff considers the role of education as one of transformation for art. She claims that the Educational Turn has granted art access to the conceptual and pragmatic instruments and spaces of education as sites for artistic transformation. Where education is a model for operating, for the reinvigoration¹⁷¹ of art, she refers to the transformation of 'spaces of display',¹⁷² which we can take to refer to as the then-emergent province of 'the curatorial' as an equally complex infrastructural domain. For Rogoff, this sense of opening up and the potential of education as a model of operating politically is what is important. This in turn implicates and demands of the spaces of education 'to be more active, more questioning, less insular and more challenging'¹⁷³ through their placement within artistic sites. Between the positions that Phillips and Rogoff conceptually inhabit, a diverse topography is presented of discourse ranging cultural (participation in and framing of cultural spaces) and political (considering the effects of creativity socially)

169 Marked recently by Pioneer Works' Alternative Art School Fair; Art Licks 2016's discussion, Education: Finding an Alternative; Antiuniversity 2017; School of the Damned's 100% Official Unofficial Open Day for Alternative Art Education.
 170 Lazzarato in Phillips, 'Education Aesthetics', p. 90.
 171 Rogoff, 'Turning', p. 43, n. 7.
 172 Ibid.
 173 Rogoff, p. 43.

concerns in the light of the economic climate in the UK. When inhabited together, art and education come to figure as the foundation of new discourse on educational aesthetics.

A long history

It is also important to consider how this complex is not new; art's education as a site of political negotiation between the institutions of art and education has historically played a significant part in forming current discussion. The construction of alternatives and new, innovative ways of instituting arts education and its critical theory contributing towards numerous educational turns in art have been in circulation in the UK since the post-war period. For example, the efforts to unify art and industry after Josiah Wedgwood and William Morris' combined, if not tumultuous 'vindication of the artist in the age of science',¹⁷⁴ of Morris' London County Council's Central School of Arts and Crafts under William Johnstone; Walter Gröpius' modelling of the Bauhaus on the Central School; the Frank Lloyd-Wright Foundation in America. This long foundation to a sustained, inclusive and comprehensive arts education in the UK established a shift in the so-called sector of education in art and design that consequently shaped the century's discourse on expanded arts education in the UK.

In 1960 William Coldstream published the 'First Report of the National Advisory Council on Art Education' that controversially marked a significant break from Johnstone's bid to unify industry and art, and to set the study of art and its critical contexts apart with its own set of 'complementary studies' and disciplines.¹⁷⁵ With a view to revolutionise and re-administer a scheme of value attributed by and for art and design as both educational and vocational pursuits in a post-arts and crafts, post-industrial and post-war culture, the 1960s was a transformative period for arts education. From amid the beginning of the never-ending milieu of Conceptual Art, paired with Coldstream's report, to Anton Ehrenzweig's radical Art Teacher's Certificate course at Goldsmiths in 1964, the Antiuniversity of London in early 1968, the undulating fracas and legacy of the Hornsey Art School affair of May 1968, this period marked a substantial shift in art and its educative initiatives.

Institutional Critique, New Institutionalism, Relational, Dialogical, Socially-

174 William Johnstone, 'Unity of Art and Industry', *Times Review of Industry*, December 1948, p. 7.
 175 William Coldstream, 'First Report of the National Advisory Council on Art Education' (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1960), p. 8.

Engaged Aesthetics each come into dialogue with this seemingly endless discourse on radical, new, innovative and alternative forms of art education, finding forms of alternative artistic structures and forms to construct and inhabit which permit both the liberation of communicative, social, dematerialised and educative practice and the subsequent spaces to experiment in creative practice. These examples provide a short historical précis to the critical positioning of the turn of the last decade in the broader domain of the contemporary art project. It is generally quite difficult to locate a time when conceptually and explicitly art was not of, for or part of some form of education process. It could be argued that if education is the practice or process of knowledge production and its circulation, the artistic form has always been one channel of communicating a thing of knowledge, a form of knowledge, a means to knowledge and education. Additionally, it is quite difficult to locate a time when both conceptually and politically arts education was not being fought for polemically, (re)imagined in some other way, or under attack. The question of alternative arts education is something that has always been proximate to movements within the art world and within the formal manifestations of the art school, when the art school itself was something of a progressive novelty. Records of the Hornsey art school protests in May '68, read 'like [the] last outpost of necessity trying hard not to slip down the steep slope into the great suburban ocean [...] squeezed into crumbling old schools and tottering sheds miles apart.'¹⁷⁶ The documentation of the 'Hornsey Affair' in 1969 bears a striking resemblance to much of the literature in circulation on the contemporary politics of arts education, 'Notes Towards the Definition of Anti-Culture', 'Participation', 'Network: or How We Beat the Gallery System', 'The Educational Debate'¹⁷⁷ and analogies of the art school as outpost to the suburban ocean, resonating with Pascal Gielen's illustrative 'ships on a flat sea' metaphor,¹⁷⁸ all could feasibly parallel Anton Vidokle et al's 2006 'Notes for an Art School' volume: 'Exhibition as School in a Divided City', 'Each One Teach One', 'Practice of Indecisiveness', 'Drawing Out & Leading Forth'. This discussion is not new, and contributes to a broad historical domain on the practices and cultural shifts of arts education.

176 T.N., 'Notes Towards the Definition of Anti-Culture', *The Hornsey Affair*, p. 15.

177 All titles from a selection of essays in *The Hornsey Affair*.

178 Pascal Gielen, 'Artistic praxis and the neoliberalisation of the educational space', *InSEA regional conference, Art and Design Education in Times of Change* lecture, University of Applied Arts, Vienna, 22–23 September 2016

Reputational economy

Wilson and O'Neill discuss the changed status of traditional sites of arts education through the alignment of a 'reputational economy' in contemporary art and its educational sites. Stating comparatively that 'the contemporary art world has [...] operated as an informal reputational economy through the way in which 'different roles hav[e] different priority at different times and in different places: artists, artists unions, critics, journals, collectors, curators, gallerists, auction houses, academies [...] being in relatively stronger or weaker positions in appropriating, negotiating, allocating and managing the fluctuating stakes of reputational status.'¹⁷⁹ Where the domain of higher education operates as 'a more formalised reputational economy with very specific protocols for managing and distributing [its] reputational status'¹⁸⁰ through forms of institutional apparatus that are contingent on educational policy and reform highlighted by the Bologna Declaration and so on. Further, Malik also has commented on the effects of arts education's dialogue with the reputational economy, 'art schools are now increasingly and primarily a necessary feeder channel for the conservative reputational economy of a professionally organised field.'¹⁸¹ In turn this produces a type of professionalised education that replicates to the producer-consumer relationship between 'the institution' of arts education and its subjects. For Malik, the nature of such professionalisation leads to an instrumentalisation of criticality that is both symbolically attributed to the experience of art school, and simultaneously the demand of such professionalisation. What is meant by this is that the essence of art school – which can loosely be attributed to what he terms 'sentimentality' elsewhere – is also co-opted by this reputational economy. When practices of expanded art learning that contest this co-option also become objects of the reputational economy, as outlined by Wilson and O'Neill in how they describe contemporary art's own subsumption, then both 'institution' and 'alternative' suffer the same consequences. This goes some way towards describing the instrumental paradox of the Turn.

This is important to note as I posit that the Educational Turn has worked to collapse these distinctions, insofar as its production of 'the alternative' arts educational

179 Wilson and O'Neill, 'Curatorial counter-rhetorics and the educational turn', p. 188.

180 Ibid.

181 Malik, 'Art Education and the Predicament of a Professionalised Criticality', in *Politics of Study*, ed. by Sidsel Meineche Hansen and Tom Vandeputte (London: Open Editions 2015), p. 50.

model which is positioned between both contemporary art on one hand and the domain of higher arts education on the other. In collapsing such distinctions, in the context of how Wilson and O'Neill have defined the reputational economy, 'the alternative' mode becomes an object of an *informal* reputational economy, and the objective of a *formal* reputational economy. In pragmatic terms this can be traced in how various other institutional modes in contemporary art, such as the biennial model, have co-opted education both manifestly through the inclusion of its formats, and also symbolically, in the way that Wilson and O'Neill describe how 'discursivity' and the Educational Turn are 'capable of condensing into a 'mere' formalism devoid of critical import and consequence, but perhaps the greater risk is in the disavowed formulas of [...] rhetorical production of marginal reputational differentiations.'¹⁸² A shift in the exposition of contemporary art and higher education, is described by Vidokle as he references the simultaneous up-rise and demise (in effect) of the biennial model, as a product of global art world mobility:

[T]he incredible proliferation and homogeneity of such events [biennials] had rendered them largely meaningless. Once offering an alternative to the conservatism of the art museums, [...] biennials had begun to resemble white elephant type government projects, which drain local budgets for cultural production while offering a rather formulaic digest for participants and content from the international contemporary art field.¹⁸³

The model of the biennial is here presented as yet another site of homogeneity, in terms of the discrepancy between its potential as a site of transformation and actuality as an appendage of the art market. A timely example of this is the Alternative Art School Fair previously mentioned:

Art education is a reflection of social and cultural evolution; it engages with structures of meaning-making and considers different frameworks for experience. The impetus to create an alternative art school is rooted not only in a desire to create "better" art, but to create the conditions for greater freedom of expression. Often run as free, artist-run initiatives, the values and visions of alternative art schools vary widely in methodology, mission and governance. But even when they are relatively small in scale they provide vital models of cultural critique and experimentation.¹⁸⁴

182 Wilson and O'Neill, 'Curatorial counter-rhetorics and the educational turn', p. 190.

183 Anton Vidokle, 'Exhibition to school: unitednationsplaza, in *Curating and the Educational Turn*, p. 149.

184 Alternative Art School Fair, pioneerworks.org/alternative-art-school-fair/ [accessed 18 October 2017]

As 'white elephant type government project[s]'¹⁸⁵ or relics, these frameworks more or less function in the same way as the apparatus of creativity, introduced by McRobbie.

What is particularly striking with the Alternative Art School Fair in the context of the above discussion of the reputational economy to which it contributes, is that it is difficult to read in the context of this research. On one hand, it embodies yet another take on the biennial model; on the other hand, it figures symbolically as an art *fair* for alternative art schools. In conversation with Anna Colin of Open School East (OSE), Colin commented on how the school was invited to feature as part of a side project highlighting alternative education at the Gwangju Biennale, that intended to exhibit an international network of alternative educational institutions as part of an online resource. She stated that incentives like this, are forms of 'appropriation'¹⁸⁶ and present a form of imaging or blind aestheticisation of the actual labour¹⁸⁷ that goes into setting up and sustaining serious educational projects such as Open School East.

These two examples of the Alternative Art School Fair and the Gwangju Biennale, implicitly present the crux of my argument concerning the instrumentalisation of education by contemporary art. This leads me to question how my research can work to propose a form of movement away from this type of instrumentality exhibited by the Alternative Art School Fair which is so inherent to the domain of contemporary art. Here the art world's institutions (Pioneer Works, Gwangju Biennale) instrumentalise (constructs, co-opts and represents) both the image of alternative arts education and its essence as an anti-instrumentalising movement; the notion of 'alternative' in this context is always already a reaction to this type of mediation at the level of the institutions to which it is alternative to. The case of the fair is remarkable in that the motivations listed on its website read along the lines of it providing a public service: the opportunity for 'better visibility', to 'improve access', and to 'demystify the process of creating an art school.'¹⁸⁸ I wonder to what degree alternative art schools in this context are considered:

- 1 Objects of art.
- 2 Social and cultural phenomena.
- 3 Political actions.

185 Vidokle, *ibid.*

186 Anna Colin, telephone interview with the author, 21 April 2017

187 *Ibid.*

188 Alternative Art School Fair, <https://pioneerworks.org/programs/alternative-art-school-fair/> [accessed 18 October 2017]

4 Experiments in new forms of education for the greater public good.

The only point, in my opinion, that would warrant the instantiation of an art fair, would be if alternative arts schools were considered to be objects of art. This is precisely where the polemical issue of the Educational Turn lies.

This attention to alternative education from the perspective of contemporary art has become so central to the workings of its organisations and institutions, to the extent that it is proliferate in discourse and practice. This is a saturated domain; this double instrumentalisation is the Turn's hallmark.

Agents

The above discussions begin to outline some questions around the social and cultural demographics of contemporary art and its education. As Janna Graham posits in her text 'Between a Pedagogical Turn and a Hard Place: Thinking with Conditions', the importance of this questioning comes to figure 'in relation to the deeply troubling developments that conjugate creativity and education with the policies and practices of neoliberalism'.¹⁸⁹ Felicity Allen adds to this by stating that a 'cultural apartheid'¹⁹⁰ has taken place, whereby the shifts in recent education policy in the UK mean that arts and humanities education is purchased at source rather than socially.¹⁹¹ This leads to a consideration of just how forms of alternative arts education, especially those which are not on the surface positioned within an economic valuation system that parlays on the virtues of the 'rhetoric of creativity',¹⁹² might translate these ramifications upon a potential public.

Graham describes a potential explanation as to why these spaces of art and education have come into communion, given that the Educational Turn in art has in fact produced a form of dialectics of these previously distinct dimensions, as sectors, with separate agendas, means of institution and users. With this unification comes a new set of problems or ways of conceptualising the type of shift it induces, not least from how each perspective can come to utilise the other to its own ends. This is a circular set of

189 Janna Graham, 'Between a Pedagogical Turn and a Hard Place: Thinking with Conditions', in *Curating and the Educational Turn*, p. 125.

190 Felicity Allen, 'Art: Education' in *EDUCATION*, ed. by Felicity Allen (London: Whitechapel, 2011), p. 15.

191 Ibid.

192 Graham, *Curating and the Educational Turn*, p. 133.

problems, as Malik has also framed, insofar as the UK's changed political and economic backdrop in parallel to the Turn is concerned. Sites and encounters of art might permit and merit the articulation of alternative modes of education. This is to say that they seek to constantly redefine the culture in which they operate by means of challenging and transforming the distillation or flatness of the reality of the landscape of arts education, heeded by measures of bureaucracy and professionalisation. These other or peripheral spaces – those specifically that have emerged through the Educational Turn – are in the most part formed, led and actualised by cultural and artistic agents that predominantly act once removed from the top-down verticality of regular institutional education. We can refer to the concomitant move towards self-organised models of institution as exemplars of these instances of redefinition via posing challenge to them by way of transformation.

However, Graham also points out that the idea that actors within the frame of contemporary art are perceived to be better placed to imagine alternative realities of arts education is something of a misnomer.¹⁹³ As her text suggests that it is in fact those already positioned within the frame of education who might be able to offer something other to the field. Further, spaces of education are also sites from which to struggle against the 'technocratic exercises and forms of standardisation'¹⁹⁴ that increasingly have become commonplace through the prevailing institutional education model that in turn, subject creativity – artistic autonomy, practice, thinking epistemology – to such neoliberal violence. For Graham, these two positions present the artistic and educational subject – practitioner, knowledge worker – in opposition.

Educator Nora Sternfeld additionally remarks in her text, 'Unglamorous tasks: What can education learn from its political traditions?' that the role of educators is omitted from much of the discussion surrounding the Educational Turn, in the way that the 'small, tedious, unrepresentable, and strenuous aspects of the educational, with which all mediators and educators are familiar [...] rarely find their way into discussions and theory.'¹⁹⁵ She continues that these figures, so intrinsic to the project of arts education are not always affiliated to the so-called 'glamorous tasks' aligned to being a curator of arts institutions – who are often involved in the organisation of alternative projects

193 Ibid., pp. 125–26.

194 Ibid., p.133.

195 Nora Sternfeld, 'Unglamorous tasks: What can education learn from its political traditions?', http://worker01.e-flux.com/pdf/article_8888125.pdf [accessed 18 October 2017], p. 11.

of education, particularly those which claim the status of the ‘para institution’. It is in this way, in Sternfeld’s framing of the Educational Turn in relation to the domain of the ‘glamorous task’ of curating, that we can observe a further issue surrounding the role of the actors in relation to alternative education projects. Where the idea of the artist-genius plays out elsewhere, the figure of the curator-as-organiser is equally a status to be contested.

It is such a contestation that characterises part of the instrumentalising tendency of the Turn, in its elevation of figures such as artists and curators. This is in part indebted to Institutional Critique in the way that it for better and worse has simultaneously collapsed and conflated these roles as examples within ‘the institution’. We can observe this tendency also from the perspective of alternative arts education, where organisers of projects within this remit often come from specialisms that are not aligned to the conventional fields of education. This is to some extent positive, in that it implicitly opens up the field of alternative arts education to new domains, specialism and knowledge, particularly insofar as many of these projects aim to dispel disciplinary delineation. However, this often works in the reverse, with the effect that figures such as the artist or curator, in the context of these practices, become hyperbolised which is problematic. This is because attention is often placed on the organisers, and their stake in proximity to contemporary art. This is problematic insofar as it shifts a balance from something that can be deemed to be of political action to something that presents recourse to the symbolism of the genius figure.

Zolghadr exemplifies this idea by returning to Vidokle’s unitednationsplaza project in his text, ‘The Angry Middle Aged...’, stating that ‘[t]he project, in and of itself, was discreetly framed as an Anton Vidokle artwork.’ This echoes a great deal of Lesage’s comments that frame art’s ‘educational complex’ in mythic terms. In his text ‘Refusing Conformity and Exclusion in Art Education’, Kenning continues on this line, by framing the project of the Turn as one that worked to feed the ‘art world validation system [...] attracting a largely readymade public who can self-identify though the shared recognition’¹⁹⁶ of its subjects, emphasising its resolutely inward-facing agenda.

196 Kenning, ‘Refusing Conformity and Exclusion in Art Education’, <http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/refusing-conformity-and-exclusion-art-education> [accessed 18 October 2017]

Further, he problematises this at length by explaining the ‘smokescreen’¹⁹⁷ effect of the Educational Turn highlighted by projects such as unitednationsplaza, which he argues has worked to perpetuate the levels of exclusions existing between formal and alternative education forms when mediated through the lens of the contemporary art world.

Alternative art school models and education forms and events taking place in an art contexts [sic] are in danger of becoming a pseudo-critical pose [...] unless they are capable of confronting real conditions on the level of the social space in which they are carried out.¹⁹⁸

This is because they tend to lack an account for the wider exclusionary status of education and contemporary art world as two distinct, yet entangled domains in the context of the Turn. For Kenning this issue is at the heart of the Turn. He cites artist John Beagles’ sentiment that so-called pedagogical innovation, both formally and in the context of ‘the alternative’, is limited providing it continues to neglect issues pertaining to social exclusion, since, ‘[t]ackling exclusion and transforming the culture of art schools are two inextricable sides of the same coin.’¹⁹⁹ This ideological double function of alternative arts education, both quelling exclusion and transforming the culture in and of arts education is then key to a possible future for its alternative formations. However, Kenning questions this as a feasible possibility to be carried out within the aegis of contemporary art, claiming there exists a tipping point ‘between art-related educational practices which [do] confront social mechanisms of conformity and exclusion in order to offer real alternatives, and those which slide back into education-themed art events.’²⁰⁰ He further posits that the issue is whether these educational-artistic ‘experiments’²⁰¹ can function with the ‘wider social picture in view, or whether they remain contained within pre-established cultural and institutional limits.’²⁰² Here, concerning the social status of alternative arts education, we can begin to see parallels between Raunig’s instruction to flee from the ‘fixity’ and ‘paralysation’ of ‘the institution’ and Malik’s concerns regarding the cyclical nature of the expanded forms of art learning feeding the project of

197 Ibid.

198 Ibid.

199 John Beagles, ‘In a Class all of *their* own The incomprehensiveness of art education’, *Variant*, http://www.variant.org.uk/39_40texts/comp39_40.html [accessed 18 October 2017]

200 Kenning, *ibid.*

201 Ibid.

202 Ibid.

contemporary art. To press Kenning's points further, he surmises that the questions that will surmount the problematic nature of the Turn revolve less in the 'how' and 'what' of alternative arts education, but with the 'who'.²⁰³

Phillips and McRobbie approach a similar discussion from a different but equally critical perspective; one which subjects creative workers (generally artists, educators, organisers, administrators) to the struggle of survival in the creative – or innovative²⁰⁴ – industries. Drawing back to Lazzarato's strategy for creative workers to 'co-invent values which resist the market',²⁰⁵ McRobbie states specifically that women have always done this, through forms of autonomous social intervention²⁰⁶ and notes this function of 'social other' as a strategy for artists and creative workers. Inhabiting and utilising the pedagogical or organisational medium is both a critical approach and aesthetic decision for creative workers, or creative entrepreneurs²⁰⁷ in this sense. This type of autonomous social intervention is something I correlate with the instantiation of alternative education, particularly as it can be considered to be work towards strategies of survivalism, as is touched on above. Usefully, McRobbie introduces this politically engaged, rhizomatic body of cultural producers as the artist-preariat,²⁰⁸ as the new 'normalised political and economic strategy'.²⁰⁹ The artist-preariat is formed of nomadic, swimming characters who are 'totally incommensurate with the [stringent] vocabularies [and] toolkits'²¹⁰ of the entrepreneurial, neoliberal education system, whose infiltration has encouraged this turn to 'the alternative'; of activism, teach-ins, assemblies and self-organising. For McRobbie these spaces conceived of by the artist-preariat facilitate the 'most innovative and dynamic'²¹¹ set of radical alternatives. Phillips concedes with Lazzarato and McRobbie, that the combined efforts of joining forces to resist the market through autonomous social intervention, as is described above, are taken on by the artists associated to the practices of the Educational Turn. This in turn manifests as either a gesture of a social aesthetic or as a gesture of compliance with the project of creative entrepreneurship. This is sold as

203 Ibid.

204 McRobbie, 'The Artist As Human Capital: New Labour, Creative Economy, Art Worlds', in *Be Creative Making a Living in the New Culture Industries* (Cambridge: Polity, 2016), p. 63.

205 Lazzarato in Phillips, 'Education Aesthetics', *Curating and the Educational Turn*, p. 90.

206 McRobbie, *ibid.*

207 *Ibid.*, p. 61.

208 *Ibid.*, p. 84.

209 Isabell Lorey in McRobbie, p. 85.

210 *Ibid.*

211 *Ibid.*

both survival strategy from the perspective of those creatively extrapolating alternative means of survival, and then as it plays out, as an attractive lifestyle opportunity, formed by the types of work/leisure spaces addressed by artist Yuri Pattison (whose work is discussed in the next chapter). In turn this presents the fine line between, on one hand, critique and action towards an identified common good, and on the other hand, perpetual contribution to the capitalist project through the (re)production of (new) forms of cultural value. These include alternative education forms as artwork, produced by artists and cultural practitioners, that can be co-opted by 'the institution', and represented at an art fair.

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Chapter One has served to outline a problematic conceptual afterward of the Educational Turn, in accordance to the existing literature. This works to formulate the space of omission that my research addresses, namely one which frames the imperative to move outside of the immediate field of the Educational Turn held within contemporary art, as a means of addressing the key issues raised by existing discourse. These issues are concerned with problematising the role and proximity of arts institutions in relation to alternative arts education; the sentimentality of forms of expanded art learning held within the aegis of contemporary art; the paradoxes of the Educational Turn identified as the romanticisation of historical models of arts education and the often misaligned critique of apparatus such as the Bologna Declaration; and the problems inherent to the aestheticisation of education and the academicisation of contemporary art.

As a means of addressing my research questions, this chapter reveals the critical necessity of moving outside of the remit of contemporary art to ask what an alternative model might be to the abundant model of the alternative art school held within the domain of the contemporary art world. Further, the discussion of material in this chapter begins to outline the value of stepping outside of the domain of contemporary art: to avoid the 'fixity', 'paralysation', 'homogenisation' and 'instrumentalisation' of the art world; and to avoid the misalignment of education's 'democracy', 'anti-institutionalism' and 'commonality' with the domain of contemporary art as a site for alternative arts education. In order to ask what an alternative mode of conceiving arts education might

be and specifically how this research addresses this, it is necessary to examine existing organisational modes and practices related to the domain of the Educational Turn.

Chapter 2 – Contextual review

The following chapter presents a contextual review of a cross-section of contemporary artistic and organisational praxes that come close to constituting a set of alternative organisational practices and forms that address, critique or instrumentalise educational models or modes and locations of knowledge production. This section is not intended as an exhaustive survey of alternative forms of arts education held within the remit of the Turn. Instead it introduces key examples that help to articulate three main demarcations of existing examples of alternative arts education that I have found through researching the literature: ‘from within the institution’; ‘led by the institution’; and ‘artist-led/self-organised’.

Following from this I focus discussion on a single artist’s research project into co-working spaces, an artist group’s temporary residency programme, an institutionally commissioned alternative art school, an artist-led alternative art school and an exhibition programme held within an art institution. These examples are charted in a way to present an overview of the scope of some artistic (organisational) practice that comes close to addressing what I define as an alternative to the abundant model of the alternative art school which is discussed in detail and in its variation in ‘The (many) alternatives’ section in part one of Chapter Three. These examples discussed do not necessarily propose or position themselves as alternatives to the existing models of alternative arts education, but approach the broader notion in discrete artistic and organisational ways. The inclusion of a contextual review in this research serves to function towards framing the scope of existing alternative artistic and organisational practice. This begins to formulate the critical space that my research makes contribution to. These practices are constituted by critique of the phenomena of spaces of knowledge production, critique of

the institutions of art education, critique of the status quo of higher education in the arts in the UK, critique of the instrumentalisation of practices of knowledge in relation to contemporary art, each through taking different approaches to organisational practice. As my aims for this research concern organisationally hybrid and speculative proposals, it follows that the thesis should present a discussion of the contextual practices that have informed my thinking, in addition to a literature review of the theoretical and discursive material included in the previous chapter. This chapter serves to evidence that my approach to proposing an alternative to ‘the alternative’ has not yet been addressed in practice.

From within the institution

In 2003 artist and educator David Blamey conceived of a critical forum in the Communication Art and Design School at the Royal College of Art (RCA) which would conceptually form a ‘school within a school’.²¹² The programme sat adjacent to the formal academic curriculum at the college, but took place within the college and emerged on the basis of what Blamey pertains to ‘the level of critical engagement in the department [being] alarmingly low.’²¹³ The project took form as a critical and discursive programme that attempted to bridge the space between thinking and making. It became student-led insofar that as the project evolved, Blamey’s students decided how to conceive and programme the sessions, and in turn Blamey would invite guest practitioners, teachers, thinkers to present and facilitate work and discussion. This formed an interstitial space between the institution – curriculum – and the project of education – knowledge – and set in motion criticality, discursively.

The group was regarded as something of a menace [...] what [they] were doing was politically sensitive at that time and also an ‘oxymoronic’ power dynamic can develop when something independent and oppositional expresses itself with the blessing of the organ that it sets out to critique.²¹⁴

This ‘oxymoronic power dynamic’ alludes to how ‘the institution’ can be both object of

212 Alex Coles, ‘School of Thought’, in *Curating and the Educational Turn*, p. 287.
 213 David Blamey, *ibid.*
 214 *Ibid.*

opposition and site of transformation; here the RCA is both a site of contestation and site of transformation. For Chantal Mouffe, existing institutions are the sites within which acts of ‘subverting their form[s] of articulation’²¹⁵ take place. Mouffe cites a ‘strategy of “engagement with institutions”’²¹⁶ as opposed to withdrawal from them, that enables critical artistic practices to ‘characterise [a] counter-hegemonic politics’²¹⁷ through its capacity to rearticulate institutional forms and hegemony from within. Blamey points out in this vein that the programme managed to rearticulate the ‘traditionally accepted hierarchies between disciplines and [...] students and lecturers.’²¹⁸ This presented a move towards a redefinition of otherwise implicit institutional rules, that of the conventional dynamic between student and teacher, which could be framed by Mouffe as institutional hegemony. This rearticulation can be seen as a reaction to the effective hierarchisation incurred in part by standardisation and insistence upon the protocols within the academic institution that, for instance, the Bologna Declaration arguably sets to reinforce; the symbolic order of the project of education. However, in spaces of art and design education at graduate level, a motive to move beyond these orders is imperative: to work towards, with and about knowledges and not with numbers or mechanisms.

Moving beyond thinking and operating in terms of difference, the project was positioned to establish and evolve a shared space of learning, offering up a variety of paths to follow, on the basis of the exemplification of the widely-cast student body’s experiences, skills and knowledge. Importantly, Blamey emphasises the significance of the shift in the power equilibrium,²¹⁹ presenting a ‘two-way street’,²²⁰ that the process informed towards the realisation that the resonance between both teaching and learning, in the right environment, can really be one and the same thing.

Another project, Department 21, emerged in 2010 also at the RCA, but was led by the collective desire of a group of students to open up and make use of empty and unused space within the college. Though Department 21 was a means of inhabiting physical space, its proximity to Blamey’s ‘Critical Forum Programme’,²²¹ both in location and

215 Chantal Mouffe, ‘Institutions as Sites of Agonistic Intervention’ in *Institutional Attitudes: Instituting Art in a Flat Wet World*, ed. by Pascal Gielen (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2013), p. 66.
 216 *Ibid.*
 217 *Ibid.*, p. 67.
 218 *Ibid.*, p. 289.
 219 *Ibid.*
 220 Alex Coles, *ibid.*
 221 Coles, p. 286.

sentiment are noteworthy. The Critical Forum Programme was a conceptual space that was born from a feeling of disenfranchisement about the level of criticality and context in relation to practice within the school, led initially by Blamey, as educator, who noticed that some form of transformation needed to take place. Blamey's capacity to initiate such a programme was generated from the vantage point of his academic and intellectual position, but nonetheless is interesting insofar as it presents the distinction between the institution manifest as curriculum and the symbolic project of education manifest in knowledge. For Blamey, the Forum's success lay in its accessibility, and the students' own capacity to 'address the prevailing culture of silence'²²² and, 'as an open resource. [They] were collectively concerned that [their] actions weren't interpreted as rebellious, and [they] hoped that [others] would be attracted by the quality of [the Forum's] work.'²²³

Blamey elaborates on this culture of silence as the mark of 'the institution's' dominance over experimental forms of pedagogy, stating that as long as they (students and teachers) remained silent, the implication was that they were complicit, 'in agreement with the prevailing working conditions, [of the institution] which [they] collectively felt weren't demanding or productive enough.'²²⁴ Here Blamey outlines the conditions of support that this project set out to achieve for his students, through the production of a school within a school. Such a concept is further examined by Blamey, in conversation with art critic Alex Coles, where they discuss the virtues of acting within the institution in order to transform it. What is striking about this example is that it neither framed itself as a rebellious or oppositional act, but its impact was drawn across the collective mediation of speaking, listening and institution. This resonates with Henk Slager's 2017 exhibition 'To Seminar'²²⁵ which manifests as a contemporary reading of Barthes' 1974 text, 'To the Seminar'. Blamey's inadvertent framing of speaking, listening and institution as the conditions of setting up the Forum, can be traced on to Barthes' designation of the 'institutional', 'transferral' and 'textual' spaces of the seminar. For Slager, this rereading of Barthes, in the context of the Educational Turn, questions how 'a collective pursuit of learning with a real relation to social praxis' can critically move beyond the 'ramifications of the [...] [E]ducational [T]urn in contemporary art.'

222 Blamey, p. 288.

223 Ibid., pp. 287–88.

224 Ibid., p. 288.

225 'To Seminar', <https://www.bakonline.org/en/Research/Itineraries/Future-Vocabularies/Themes/Instituting-Otherwise/Exhibitions/To-Seminar> [accessed 18 October 2017]

Paralleling Slager in this context is useful as it points towards a re-engagement with notions of the social that previous address to pedagogy by contemporary art has alluded to, Blamey notes the work of the '1990s curator-creator' and 'two-way street' learning that the Critical Forum Programme elicited, as examples. Additionally, for Blamey, models of 'social exchange [...] provide an interesting alternative to the go-it alone template so long preferred by the institutional power structures of the art world and education alike.'²²⁶ He means here that collectivity and models that foreground social-engagement, via the tropes of institution, listening (transference) and speaking (text), in a way that dissolves the institutionality of spaces of art and its education, are viable models of transformation that education and pedagogy's institutions should heed from.

Led by the institution

The curatorial and exhibition project, A.C.A.D.E.M.Y considered reconfiguration of the autonomy of the education and arts institution as being determinately under threat from the streamlining mechanisms of the State, for example the Bologna Process, and its implementation of uniformity and protocols of measurement. This is to the end that both sites are considered to interdependently offer the greatest potential for thinking how knowledge, education and art is facilitated, presented and made accessible to the widest possible public. A.C.A.D.E.M.Y was a cross-institutional arts education project that took place during 2006 and was intended to rethink notions of learning and teaching, and the criticality of arts education and pedagogy in the context of contemporary art practice and its institutions. It was initiated by the Siemens Arts Program, and co-ordinated between the Kunstverein Hamburg, Department of Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths, the Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerp and the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, from which a number of international thinkers, artists, curators and educators were enlisted to drive the project across workshops, exhibitions, lectures which culminated in an accompanying reader of the same name.

The project reinforces the positions of these above sites as embodying the greatest potential towards gaining institutional autonomy, and to necessarily defend their positions as progressive and generative bodies against what Rogoff frames as, '[t]he fear

226 Blamey, p. 295.

that is repeatedly expressed about this process [of education's professionalisation and marketisation] is that all individuality and possibility for a longer-term, more processional, reflective and less outcome-bound model of education will be lost.²²⁷ In the context of an evident institutional instability present in the Educational Turn's discourse, art historian Claire Bishop discusses the ways in which 'the curatorial',²²⁸ has taken on the role attempting to address these issues surrounding institutional homogeneity incurred by the bureaucratisation of arts and education institutions. For Bishop, the conflated and collective organisation of arts institution and academy, through this project, presents a clear attempt towards fighting the hegemony of '[a]cademic capitalism' which ultimately incurs 'changes in the roles of both students and teachers, and affects both aesthetic and ethos of an educational experience.'²²⁹ Further, Bishop explains the effects of such academic capitalism at the point of arts education institutions, where, '[t]oday the administrator rather than professor is the central figure of the university [and] [l]earning outcomes, assessment criteria, quality assurance, surveys, reports, and a comprehensive paper trail [...] are all more important than experimental content and delivery.'²³⁰ Bishop's explanation in her chapter, 'Pedagogic Projects: 'How do you bring a classroom to life as if it were a work of art?' in 'Artificial Hells', goes some way to impress the importance of projects like A.C.A.D.E.M.Y from the perspective of contemporary art and its education. It raises both the awareness of what is at stake from the perspective of 'the institution' and similarly from the perspective of those who enliven it. While attempts are made through projects like A.C.A.D.E.M.Y that are institution-led, there is an argument to be made about the capitalisation of experimental and alternative ways of practicing and organising by the very same institutions.

Equally these cross-institutional projects are also met with contestation, viewed rather as red herrings. In his text, 'The Institutional Conscience of Art', Slager notes the fine line between critical, awareness-raising, political institutional practice and the potential shortcoming of 'view[ing] the academy as a relic'²³¹ through these projects.

227 Rogoff, 'Academy as Potentiality', in *A.C.A.D.E.M.Y.*, ed. by Bart De Baere and others (Frankfurt: Revolver, 2006), p. 9.
 228 Claire Bishop, 'Pedagogic Projects', in *Artificial Hells* (London: Verso, 2012), p. 269.
 229 Ibid.
 230 Ibid., p. 268.
 231 Slager, 'The Institutional Conscience of Art', in *Art as a Thinking Process Visual Forms of Knowledge Production*, ed. by Mara Ambrožič and Angela Vettese (Berlin: Sternberg Press), p. 217.

He questions whether there is a direct relation between education institutions losing track of their responsibilities and their role of 'being able to offer a speculative space [...] accommodating a reflection that is able to withstand any quantifiable results'²³² and the notion of the 'expanded academy'²³³ and the Educational Turn. This is crucial, as he outlines something close to my problematising of the 'double instrumentalisation' of education by the project of contemporary art, through its co-option of educational forms and then its institutions' co-option of these alternative renditions of education. For Slager, this process places the academy, and notions of education, into a frame of objectification where 'an alternative modernity in the form of a deregulated multitude of practices'²³⁴ only further reinforces the impenetrability of the systems they intended to problematise and intervene with.

Slager notes the A.C.A.D.E.M.Y project as one example of a critical process that imbues the academy with such a status and parallels it with the 2006 Manifesta 6 School, which is discussed in the next section. As curatorial projects they work to bring about new collective spaces of thinking and presentation for the mediation of contemporary art. As propositions and alternative spaces of learning and teaching, they never thoroughly (re)constitute the spaces they are railing against. This is particularly so as they are conceived of from an entrenched position, located in 'the institution' of art, from which a perceived flexibility, insofar as authority is concerned, is utilised to imagine transformation, regardless of whether transformation actually takes place.

Rogoff asserts the importance – in the context of the A.C.A.D.E.M.Y project – of collapsing historical conceptions of educational and art spaces to reconstitute them as one, multidimensional space of experimentation capable of resisting the encroachment of their autonomy:

following in the footsteps of recent art practice's self-authorising to take on any format that works to circulate its questions and proposals [...] inhabiting them differently and in another modality, which is not aimed at usurping these tasks but at actualising their potential to do more than might be expected.²³⁵

Equally, Bishop points out that this same emphasis on freeness, or experimentation,

232 Ibid.
 233 Ibid.
 234 Ibid.
 235 Rogoff, 'Academy As Potentiality', p. 13.

can be perceived as rather ‘idealised’,²³⁶ from the position of the academy or institution. While we can observe through A.C.A.D.E.M.Y, institutions coming together in order to achieve that which they could not alone, Bishop reminds us that it is much less clear-cut or straightforward from the position of less established practitioners, or those outside of the institutional frame. Here Bishop alludes to the idea that those attached to institutions are clearly in the best possible position to lead these projects, as they act from the position of institutional privilege. Perhaps we can reconcile this with the acknowledgement that the privilege of the institution outweighs the realities of what it means to practice transformatively and productively in the wake of the Educational Turn.

The idea of privilege can be considered in this context through identifying the motivations behind projects where ‘the institution’ is a key player. The institution can be seen to mimic other alternative ways of organising against ‘academic capitalism’ through this tendency of pooling the resources of ‘the institution’ and its combined status. It is useful to consider the affects of the privileged institution on non-institutionally-aligned organisations that attempt to address the same critical issues of arts education. The Tate Modern’s ‘No Soul for Sale – A Festival of Independents’ in 2010, was intended to mark the ten-year anniversary of the Tate Modern. It was simultaneously positioned to celebrate the work of ‘the alternative’ or ‘independents’, and their contributions to discourse that institutions like Tate draw from to enrich their programming. This example, outlined by art historian Stine Hebert in the foreword to ‘Self-Organised’, presents the dilemma of such privilege. By inviting numerous independent initiatives, organisations and projects to exhibit, to reveal and expose their efforts towards establishing alternative and independent initiatives in the arts, Tate takes on ‘the alternative’ as an object of exposition. This resonates with Pioneer Works’ Alternative Art School Fair and Lesage’s analogy of the trojan horse, where ‘the institution’ permeates the imaginary and imagery of ‘the alternative’ to its own ends.

The Tate did not offer any financial support to the exhibitors or participants and Hebert points out that the important lesson taken from being involved in the festival was, on reflection, turned back to the resolute problem with ‘the institution’ at large. That is, Hebert noted how willing and accepting the participants were to even be involved with the Tate’s project and that the lack of support both financially and organisationally was

236 Bishop, p. 268.

irrelevant, regardless of how potentially difficult participation actually was – having to take time away from paid work, for instance. This alludes to the ways in which this sense of privilege is made manifest and capitalised upon through the apparatus of the art world via its institutions, ‘how the institutional art world sustains itself: the value of the institution’s embrace still offers enough prestige and power to compensate for the problematic conditions on offer.’²³⁷ That is, the affiliation was enough. Hebert also points out that this sense of privilege is somehow reversed when such dependency becomes mutual, certainly in the case of this festival and in terms of the overall point being made. The Tate’s own motivation to be affiliated to ‘the independents’ effected in the same way – the sense of experimentation, energy and spirit that can only be found outside of the confines of ‘the institution’ and through these other, independent and alternative manifestations, was what Tate aimed to embody through this festival.

Artist-led/self-organised

For Manifesta 6 in 2006, artist Anton Vidokle was invited to be part of the curatorial team of the biennial. Opting to transgress the conventional curatorial/exhibition model, Vidokle, with curators Mai Abu ElDahab and Florian Waldvogel, proposed to utilise the biennial framework to conceive of and institute a temporary art school. This digression, according to Vidokle was based around a disenchantment with what he terms, ‘the incredible proliferation and homogeneity of [other] such events [...] render[ing] them largely meaningless.’²³⁸ The school was to be based on the idea of a free, cultural-exchange and learning programme located in Nicosia, around the premise that the art school, for Vidokle is ‘one of the few places left where experimentation is, to some degree, encouraged, where emphasis is supposedly on process and learning rather than product.’²³⁹ However, ‘unlike exhibitions, schools are [...] closed to the public’²⁴⁰ and in light of their institutionality, where regulations of compliance to systems of ‘established rules and standards’²⁴¹ mean that art schools tend to reproduce students and the types

237 Hebert, ‘Foreword’, in *Self-Organised*, ed. by Stine Hebert and Anne Szefer Karlsen (London: Open Editions, 2013), p. 13.

238 Anton Vidokle, ‘Exhibition to School: unitednationsplaza’, in *Curating and the Educational Turn*, p. 149.

239 Ibid., p. 152.

240 Ibid.

241 Ibid.

of work produced, for Vidokle, the idea of a temporary art school, decontextualised and placed within the frame of a biennial could go some way to counter this trope of replication at the level of ‘the institution’. A ‘temporary and publicly accessible exhibition could meet with the ethos of experimentation and innovation of the art school and produce an alternative, radically open school’ towards ‘reinstating the agency of art by creating and educating a new public.’²⁴²

The Manifesta 6 School was conceptually formulated around three semi-autonomous ‘departments’²⁴³ that would each present a different kind of educational model across an online and nomadic programme between diverse locations, ranging across film theatres and bars in Nicosia. The school was to be entirely free and support was offered for various production and realisation purposes. There was a selection process, where 100 international cultural practitioners were chosen to participate in the programme. However, owing to political unrest between the Greek and Turkish sides of Cyprus, the school was cancelled months prior to the biennial, as negotiations between the Greek and Turkish authorities and the Manifesta 6 committee could not be agreed upon. The project was then taken on by Vidokle and many of the artists engaged in the project, to form the unitednationsplaza school project in Berlin, and on to New York City and Mexico City under the same aegis, and then as the ‘Night School’ in co-operation with New York’s New Museum, where it culminated. For Vidokle, the project’s capacity to move and thus constitute a flexible and mutable framework is key, as are the implications for the wider context of contemporary art’s capacity to institute the art school model, through aspects such as its distribution.

For Vidokle the production of such a framework, particularly emerging from a contested political and cultural context, renegotiates and rewrites the role of contemporary art. The temporary school commanded a type of commitment from the cultural practitioners engaged in it, meaning that they were ‘forced [...] to articulate a position in relation to the project’,²⁴⁴ and its political context. Further, this positioning, according to Vidokle, gave those engaged in the project a stake in it, a form of ‘ownership’²⁴⁵ which explains his own position as artist-curator in terms of what he

242 Ibid.
243 Ibid.
244 Ibid., p. 156.
245 Ibid.

hoped the project would achieve. The project ‘enabled the kind of productive engagement that is still possible if spectatorship is bypassed and the traditional roles of institution/curator/artist/public are encouraged to take in a more hybrid complexity.’²⁴⁶ This presents Vidokle’s framing of the importance of collapsing conventional notions of institution (of art and education) towards what he calls, the ‘resurrected’²⁴⁷ public, where a socially engaged and participatory contemporary art form is the means of producing such public.

There is a huge body of literature surrounding critical discussion of the political implications and responsibilities of contemporary art, in light of this project. Vidokle posits that if social change and transformation is the new project of contemporary art, then conventional modes such as the exhibition or biennial models are no longer the places to institute such art or effect these premises, even though the ‘exhibition as school’ project intended to utilise such spaces in order to achieve social change and transformation. By turning to hybrid art school models, one can begin to rebuild the case for the social and transformative agency of art. He has pointed out that the art school model holds the most potential for ‘experimentation’²⁴⁸ and is arguably one of the few remaining sites where prominence is or at least should be given to process, criticality and learning among its subjects. Lesage echoes these sentiments in his statement that ‘the art academy is going to be *the* defining innovative institution within the art field in the next twenty years.’²⁴⁹

In his text, ‘Exhibition as School in a Divided City’ as part of the Manifesta 6 publication, ‘Notes for an Art School’ where he speaks more specifically about education within the frame of contemporary art, Vidokle states that the perpetual crisis of education, addressed through the work of the Turn, is one based on distribution and not of homogenisation. I argue that homogenisation is in effect a problem but, further, in terms of alternative arts education specifically. I believe the Educational Turn as an artistic phenomenon works to concretise and homogenise these forms from the position of contemporary art, which then works to veil the nuance and plurality of these practices, programmes and organisations. For example, the alternative art school has become a

246 Ibid.
247 Ibid.
248 Ibid.
249 Lesage, ‘The Academy is Back: On Education, the Bologna Process, and the Doctorate in the Arts’, http://worker01.e-flux.com/pdf/article_45.pdf [accessed 18 October 2017], p. 8. [Italics in original]

neologism for a wide range of alternative educational forms, whose motivations and models are distinct. For Vidokle, the problem is one of distribution where ‘radical, experimental and advanced institutions are clustered in Europe and North America’, which results in a focus on a particular set of ‘homogenous concerns’²⁵⁰ that are directly related to specific political, cultural, social and economic contexts by which these alternatives are determined.

This comment, as a point of critique of the Educational Turn, does contribute to my framing of the Turn’s problematic instrumentalising capacities, and though I agree that there is simultaneously a problem of distribution in the way that Vidokle frames, I would maintain that this is not to the degree that would override an equal problem of homogenisation. Returning to Vidokle’s argument, this ‘clustering’ refers to the saturated domain of alternatives I draw on as being the main reason why cumulatively most of the work and alternative forms of arts education emerging from the Educational Turn are no longer transformative. They are doubly instrumentalised by contemporary art and this implies a need to move outside of art, and beyond its institutionalising tendency resulting from such instrumentalisation. For Vidokle, what is striking is the way in which ‘the alternative’ can exist in multiples simultaneously, side by side, with what he calls a ‘constantly rethought, restructured and re-invented’ landscape of sometimes experimental arts education. Referring back to Lesage’s statement that the art school will be the defining innovative institution in the field of art, owing to its resolute nature of being a site of experimentation, Vidokle states that the alternative schools that have informed this Turn in art are really testament to ‘how far the nature of education has evolved in the past century.’ Citing that if organisations as radical as Jakobsen and Heise’s Copenhagen Free University can conceptually sit alongside the symbolic institution of the Beaux-Arts, founded 331 years apart, then a complete picture is presented of the inevitable and unavoidable institutionalisation and also the relevancy and potential of these institutions and their alternative counterparts.

If the symbolic form of the art school holds the potential of being truly democratic in its nature and operation; ‘where discourse, practice and presentation can

250 Vidokle, ‘Exhibition as School in a Divided City’, *Notes for an Art School*, <http://manifesta.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/NotesForAnArtSchool.pdf> [accessed 18 October 2017] p. 3.

co-exist without necessarily privileging one over the other’,²⁵¹ it is useful to problematise Vidokle’s claims elsewhere. He offers the notion that education’s democratic potential is the reason behind his decision to attempt to reconstitute the biennial as art school in form. On this basis, it is clear that his concerns are projected from the position of being established in the field of contemporary art; seeking resolve for art’s own shortcomings in and through educational forms. This is opposed to the position of this research, which is based on the perspective of alternative arts education as both a mode of art practice and means of reconceptualising arts education for arts education. This distinction in position is crucial; where Vidokle asks what education can do for art, this research is asking what else can be done for alternative arts education beyond art.

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Yuri Pattison, ‘user, space’

Artist Yuri Pattison’s 2016 presentation at the Chisenhale Gallery London, ‘user, space’, was the culmination of an eighteen-month research residency where he came to critically investigate community-led, co-working, hack- and maker-spaces in London.²⁵² These spaces are characterised as sites of and for the development of knowledge and skill, exchange and circulation, new ways of working and living, and the construction and incubation of communities. The aim is to seamlessly configure working and living environments and produce and move knowledge between like-minded individuals and collectives. In effect, they tend to conflate conditions of work and life, in a way that manifests a world-in-one-place ethos that can be exemplified by The Collective’s Old Oak co-living site in London, and Second Home’s network of co-working spaces steadily taking up residence across Europe. Between these two examples, these new live/work environments are variably positioned ranging between, as writer Tom Harrad claims, offering a ‘solution to [the] housing crisis’²⁵³ on one hand and as economics academic

251 Vidokle, ‘Exhibition to School: unitednationsplaza’, p. 152.

252 ‘Enquire to Annotate’, <http://enquire.work> and <http://www.chisenhale.org.uk/archive/exhibitions/index.php?id=179> [accessed 18 October 2017]

253 Tom Harrad, ‘this new co-living space is the dystopian symptom of a london failing young people’, https://i-d.vice.com/en_uk/article/43xgx9/this-new-co-living-space-is-the-dystopian-symptom-of-a-london-failing-young-people [accessed 18 October 2017]

Peiro Formica puts it, likening co-working spaces to the workshops of 15th-century Florence on the other. According to Formica:

The Renaissance put knowledge at the heart of value creation, which took place in the workshops of these artisans, craftsmen and artists. There they met and worked with painters, sculptors, and other artists; architects, mathematicians, engineers, anatomists, and other scientists; and rich merchants who were patrons. All of them gave form and life to Renaissance communities, generating aesthetic and expressive as well as social and economic values.²⁵⁴

This correlation is useful towards placing Pattison's work within a wider cultural discussion about the social and cultural effects of such spaces, particularly in terms of how contemporary work/life balance is constituted.

What is striking about Pattison's work, 'user, space', is that it produces what can be considered to be an aesthetics of knowledge, which is not so far removed from Phillips' elicitation of an 'education aesthetics', whereby a similar set of concerns that frame the latter are put forward by Pattison in a way to politicise these spaces. Where Phillips discusses the role of ethics in the context of education and pedagogy's utilisation within spaces of exhibition, Pattison's work similarly questions and problematises the ways in which we can critically consider these knowledge spaces or infrastructures to be a new social and cultural norm. For instance, Phillips problematises the idea that 'the use of pedagogy as a utopian socialised site by organisations and individuals outside orthodox educational structures'²⁵⁵ is paradoxical on the basis that such a practice yields division between what is intended to unify; the agents of artist, curator and educator and sites of the gallery, arts institutions and education. In Pattison's work, the idea that knowledge infrastructure derived from an aesthetic and ideal of co-working, and as the object of co-working, becomes a mechanism of a similar utopianism intended for all through open-door policies and a 'flattening, bland, homogenising aesthetic'.²⁵⁶ Though this idea of utopianism is presented through co-working's social and cultural image, which Pattison alludes to through its alignment to the genealogy of the Internet, non-hierarchical

254 Peiro Formica, 'The Innovative Co-working Spaces of 15th-Century Italy', <https://hbr.org/2016/04/the-innovative-co-working-spaces-of-15th-century-italy> [accessed 18 October 2017]

255 Phillips, 'Education Aesthetics', p. 84.

256 Yuri Pattison, 'Chisenhale Interviews: Yuri Pattison', http://www.chisenhale.org.uk/images/exhibitions/Chisenhale_Interviews_Yuri_Pattison.pdf [accessed 18 October 2017]

organisational structures for working and co-production and the sharing-economy.²⁵⁷

According to Pattison these are 'being formalised or monetised in a way that is very much defined by [...] very strict membership fees and very strict access.'²⁵⁸ In turn, what this produces is a skewed sense of community: on one hand, groups that are specialised but isolated, 'creat[ing] a physical filter bubble so that they encounter less and less people from outside of their viewpoint and from outside of their politics',²⁵⁹ and on the other hand, '[t]here is a dissolving of community'²⁶⁰ according to Pattison. Further, he explains that there is 'a disengagement with the fabric of the city. This results in a class of people who are privileged and are in a global set where they can move freely without thinking about wider aspects of community and the [other] people living in their city.'²⁶¹

In effect, these spaces work to simultaneously produce and isolate communities of knowledge through this flattening aesthetic of utopianism, which for Pattison is also a paradoxical utopianism that is predominantly driven by a type of consumerism that goes hand-in-hand with the mechanisms of being connected and being visible. The two sides to the type of community these spaces facilitate, as outlined by Pattison, can be likened to the dilemma observed with the types of alternative forms of education produced within the remit of art's turn to education. They are inward-facing and exclusive to a particular group, and so alternative discourse is produced by and in the interest of those who are already part of contemporary art discourse. This in turn questions such a discourse's efficacy on the wider remit of arts education. This resonates with Graham's point that producers of alternative arts education are deemed to be in a 'better' position to be able to conceive of and realise alternative models of education, than those who are actually and actively involved in the formal structures of state-led education.²⁶² This point is useful as what Graham implies is that it retains the assumption of the distinction between the 'free' or 'autonomous'²⁶³ or privileged position of the contemporary artist or cultural producer. In which case, education is 'the work of public servants, bound in their lack of agency by the rules and regulations of the state, the methods and understandings of which

257 Ibid.

258 Ibid.

259 Ibid.

260 Ibid.

261 Ibid.

262 Janna Graham, 'Between a Pedagogical Turn and a Hard Place: Thinking with Conditions', in *Curating and the Educational Turn*, p. 125–26.

263 Ibid.

are elementary and populist.’²⁶⁴ Further suggesting that ‘artistic autonomy and political autonomy are not the same thing’,²⁶⁵ because the type of artistic autonomy that is being performed through alternative education is that which is simultaneously being co-opted or instrumentalised by its institutions, which perpetuates such an echo chamber.

‘user, space’ is beyond visually compelling, which is testament to Pattison’s capacity as a practitioner to simultaneously critique by (re)production this flattening, homogenising organisational language of technology and knowledge community. This form of aesthetic is so striking as a critique because Pattison completely captures the ontological paradox of these spaces of knowledge with a language of immersion and performance. This in turn transforms these spaces again and again at the point of their reproduction and not solely through their representation. It is this concept of an aesthetics of knowledge – augmented and presented through infrastructural and technological media, through detailed attention to physical and symbolic references of the materiality of infrastructure to the surveillance culture it masks – that follows through Pattison’s work and can be traced back to his co-founding of the School of Global Art in 2012 with the artist group Lucky PDF.

The realisation of this alternative art school, though manifestly embodied by its ridiculing and hyper-dramatised reproduction of institutional forms and devices deriving from the contemporary art world, marks another aesthetic moment that illustrates the fine line between forms that seek to reproduce to move beyond,²⁶⁶ and forms that reproduce to critique. The School of Global Art required an awareness on the part of its participants that they were collectively engaging in an en masse critique of the institution that both produced and sustained it. It drew on the visual language and rhetoric of the art-business world that arts education and its institutions were perceived to have become subsumed by, fortifying Lucky PDF’s post-internet imaginary. Perhaps Pattison’s work can be understood as a form of hermeneutics whereby his critique becomes completely indistinguishable from original form, as with the School of Global Art.

In the case of co-working, maker- and hack-space culture, the proposition of a new work/life balance that is reimaged and produced through these spaces offers to

264 Ibid.

265 Ibid., p.127.

266 Something which Irit Rogoff refers to as criticality, whereby one inhabits a problem rather than simply looking at it. Rogoff, ‘Academy as Potentiality’, in *A.C.A.D.E.M.Y.*, p. 18.

‘users’ of Pattison’s work – by nature of their engagement – a form of education or a window through to these spaces. These actually exist as spaces of extended education whichever way one engages with them. Resonating with the work of artist Stephan Dillemath’s précis to ‘The Academy and Corporate Public’, Pattison has inhabited these spaces to produce them anew, using the scrutiny of critique to accurately present them from within the context of contemporary art. Dillemath’s ‘culturepreneurs’²⁶⁷ are Pattison’s new ‘users’. Pattison signals to a collective feeling of critique that is composed in part by the paradoxical nature of the capacity of these knowledge-work-life spaces as real knowledge-work-life spaces, such as Google’s London Campus, Second Home and The Collective residential complex, to have transformed the ways in which people come to imagine themselves as creative professionals in an accelerated, connected, knowledge society. A feeling of critique, because Pattison’s work reproduces and presents these sites as ideological infrastructures that are reputable, repeatable but emptied of their users, composing an aesthetic he repeatedly refers to and generates across his practice, whereby the act of reproduction is his form, and emptied infrastructural or organisational frames are rendered open and ambiguous. His physical reproductions of slices of knowledge infrastructure as compositions of these spaces, bring to light the heavily monitored and controlled systems that one physically inhabits in order to produce and to create knowledge.

On the surface, referring to this particular work might seem peripheral in its unintended alignment to spaces of education. I argue via Pattison, that a new series of common values are in formation outside of contemporary art, attributed to open, dialogic infrastructures whose purpose is to create and incubate knowledge, through the creative entrepreneur. Here, Pattison grants access to some of these alternative sites through his work. Whether through the model of alternative art schools, post-art school survival strategy residency programmes, or the sprawling networked infrastructure of hack-, maker- and co-working spaces, knowledge in these contexts is becoming increasingly defined by its manifest constitution in organisational form.

267 Defined by the London Evening Standard from Friday 22nd March 2002, as ‘brokers who peddle culture’ and reflected on by Dillemath to be yet another iteration of critique-being-subsumed-as-marketing device, owing to its apparent coining by Simon Ford and Antony Davis to describe the brokering of ‘economic alliances between public institutions, private corporations and the media.’ Simon Ford and Antony Davis, ‘Art Networks’, www.societyofcontrol.com/research/davis_ford.htm [accessed 18 October 2017]

The Whittingdale Residency

The Whittingdale Residency programme was similarly conceived with a double function, manifest as the object of art and the simultaneous placement of it into its own critical and productive framework. The Whittingdale Residency was organised of by a group of newly-graduated artists under the aegis of the Cultures of Resilience (CoR) project during the summer of 2015, grappling with the precarity of being an artist amidst the political-economic climate, in addition to locating the incentive to find motivation to act against – but with – this climate. The project critically addressed the issue of being an artist and creative worker in London and also produced artwork: a short-lived, critical, if ironic, residency framework, under the instruction of the following programme:

Fun, Fun, Fun
Alternative graduation
A place to go
Choir, Choir, Choir.
Group crits
Football matches
Selfie tour
Cover letter scrutiny
Dinner with Anne
Closing show.²⁶⁸

The Whittingdale Residency was organised by a small artist-led breakaway group from the larger, institutional research project, CoR, based at Central Saint Martins (CSM). CoR's research questioned the role of culture at large and cultures towards building systems and conceiving of methods of resilience and survival in times of economic complexity. In particular, it sought to build on or 'improv[e] the resilience of the socio-technical systems',²⁶⁹ which the project actively aimed to redefine collectively from the position of the art school, to cultivate and sustain the plurality of voices in an academic setting. The Whittingdale Residency emerged as a space to continue critique outside of the formal academic institution, and specifically in the domestic setting of a garden shed as part of London's Art Licks weekend in 2015. By nature of appropriating certain themes of the wider CoR project – CSM/the traditional academic institution and its role in

268 Whittingdale Residency 2015, <http://cargocollective.com/cawresilience/Whittingdale-Residency-2015> [accessed 18 October 2017]

269 Cultures of Resilience Aims, <http://culturesofresilience.org> [accessed 18 October 2017]

critiquing such systems that engender the need amongst its subjects to find survival tactics upon leaving such an institution – there is a resonance in approach to Pattison's work, that of replication and representation as a means of critique and cultural production.

Considering the Whittingdale Residency as an artist-led project outside of its initial affiliation to CSM, it can be aligned to a wider movement amongst artist groups that actively question the efficacy of moving between (domestic and leisure) time and space to produce and work. Conversely, as in the case of the Wapping Project's site in Berlin, which states in its aims that 'a condition of the residency [is] that NO work is produced',²⁷⁰ it can also be about being productively 'unproductive'.²⁷¹ This shift in focus, which correlates work/leisure time/space, goes some way in resonating the sentiments offered by increased discourse in the obsolescence of the conventional, productive working day – the critical imperatives to 'slow down', 'take time', 'stop working'. In a similar vein, Anna Colin, co-director of Open School East, has discussed how the artist Andrea Franke during her time as an associate at the school 'protested against the "need to be productive" and to "try to make everything public instead of creating a bubble of protection where [the artists could] experiment with no defined objective or outcome in sight."' ²⁷² For Colin this is important in terms of how the school could accommodate both the conditions of opacity and publicness that the associates required, and additionally would ensure that Open School East could counter the impression of 'the secluded, navel-gazing art school'.²⁷³

To some degree Colin's comments parallel with Pattison's critique of the inevitable isolationism of co-working communities. As paradoxical motivations to, and symptoms of, artistic work this inward-outward paradigm or state is also discussed by Gielen when he attests the four-part schema an artist or creative worker must aim towards in order to successfully survive a post-2008 art world. He calls this schema the 'artistic biotope',²⁷⁴ the attainment of which, can be aligned to how McRobbie describes the plight

270 Ibid.

271 The Wapping Project Berlin, <http://thewappingproject.org/berlin/> [accessed 18 October 2017]

272 Anna Colin, 'Open School East, London/Margate (2013–)', in *School A Recent History of Self-Organised Art Education*, ed. by Sam Thorne (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2017), p. 326.

273 Ibid., p. 325.

274 Gielen, 'Artistic praxis and the neoliberalisation of the educational space', *InSEA regional conference, Art and Design Education in Times of Change* lecture, University of Applied Arts, Vienna, 22nd–23rd September 2016

of the ‘creative entrepreneur’²⁷⁵ as part of a greater portfolio culture, encompassing the ‘permanently transitional’²⁷⁶ nature of ‘self-entrepreneurship’²⁷⁷ which is governed by the pursuit of what she calls ‘passionate work’.²⁷⁸ Gielen’s biotope (see following page) is composed of four sections each delineating a field, or ‘dogma’²⁷⁹ that compartmentalises an artist or creative worker’s working and domestic, public and critical life. This biotope is representative of the abstract and material spaces an artist or creative worker must inhabit in order to function ‘well’; however, Gielen also addresses, through this biotope, the condition of repressive liberalism that it is born from. This is to say that functioning ‘well’ is far from commensurate with wellness, hence the maxims of ‘slowing down’ and ‘taking time’ offsetting much of this same motivation to be mobile between each of the domains listed in the biotope, and yet rooted in residence almost as a form of validation of such mobility, in terms of taking stock, simultaneously.

Art historian Lucy Britton speaks of gentleness as a mode of operating, of time-taking and slowing down. For Britton, art’s tendency in the past decade towards the presentation of openness and inclusion – social-engagement – places us into a condition of what she calls, ‘resigned, tough love’²⁸⁰ further, ‘by which exhibitions and festivals – As Slow As Possible, Hospitality, I Know Something About Love, Joy In People – are gaining significance through [gentleness]’ expression.²⁸¹ The expression of this ‘resigned, tough love’ by these institutional manifestations opens up discourse to the sentimental, but not in the same way in which Malik frames it. What Britton alludes to in this way is a discourse on self-care and the simultaneous communities of care that frame such acts. A gesture also of indeterminacy and open-endedness is something Britton posits as an ideal in contemporary art, one whose political reach goes farther beyond the conceptual fluidity of an ‘anything goes’ mentality. Rather, this is in parallel to artist Michael Schwab’s thinking of the indeterminate in relation to expositiveness as an epistemological mode in the production of art as research,²⁸² where for Schwab, with



Figure 1, Susannah Haslam, *Pascal Gielen’s Artistic Biotope* (diagram), 2017

275 McRobbie, ‘The Artist as Human Capital’, *Be Creative*, p. 85.

276 Ibid., p. 37.

277 Ibid., p. 35.

278 Ibid., p. 36.

279 Gielen, ‘Artistic praxis and the neoliberalisation of the educational space’

280 Lucy Britton, ‘Take Your Time’, *JOURNEY 004* (February 2012), p. 7.

281 Ibid.

282 Michael Schwab, ‘Imagined Meetings’, in *Why Would I Lie?*, ed. by Peter Le Couteur and Susannah Haslam (London: RCA, 2015), p. 10.

indeterminacy ‘there [is] no criteria to include or exclude something.’²⁸³ Instead, Schwab exemplifies a type of negotiation encountered with such a state of indeterminacy, where questions such as ‘where do I find myself in relation to it, what do I get out of it, and, actually, what is the “what” I am getting? Is it an experience? Is it a propositional piece of knowledge?’²⁸⁴ all allude to an idea of the capacity of contemporary art to perform as ‘objects or agencies [...] that change what we think, what we know, and who we are in those situations.’²⁸⁵ Here, Britton’s call to gentleness and Schwab’s indeterminacy throw methodological lines of survival, by virtue of time and localisation to its subjects.

Between Pattison’s infrastructures, The Whittingdale Residency programme and Britton’s gentleness, a vocabulary of survival is positioned as a raft upon which Gielen’s horizontal waters are navigated. If survival is the aim of the creative worker, then perhaps ‘the alternative’ is one of the potentially many sites of survival. As mentioned in Chapter One, ‘the alternative’ has become a condition of this type of artistic practice towards the formation of alternative forms of education and a rhetorical device, reference and currency in the contemporary art world in the wake of the Educational Turn.

Open School East

Open School East has taken on the hybrid role of a community-led organisation meeting a self-organised art school. It can be interpreted as another organisational mechanism of survival in the context of an increasingly expensive and privatised London, where space and time for artists is increasingly at odds with high cost and limited accessibility to sites of education, learning and exhibition. First established in De Beauvoir town in East London between 2013 and 2016, Open School East currently operates in Margate in Kent. I focus on its first iteration in London for this discussion.

Open School East was first ‘commissioned by Create London and the Creative Learning department at the Barbican’²⁸⁶ as part of an annual grant for ‘participatory art projects’ based in East London. Operating out of the Rose Lipman library and community centre, it was centred around a series of questions intended to generate a new foundation

283 Ibid.

284 Ibid.

285 Ibid.

286 Sarah McCrory, ‘Open School East, London/Margate (2013–)’, p. 319.

for arts education. These questions were: ‘[h]ow could you make an art school that was more porous? That was rooted in its neighbourhood in a meaningful way? Where the learning was collaborative and self-directed?’²⁸⁷ It has facilitated an MA-level equivalent learning environment for small groups of associates (between twelve and fourteen across its four years of operating).²⁸⁸ The physical space that Open School East inhabited over its first three years informed a great deal of its initial ‘participatory’ ethos and social engagement. From its technical and programmed resources to its relationships and outreach to the wider community of De Beauvoir town, where ‘[i]n lieu of paying fees, [the associates] give the equivalent of one day a month of their time to help [the organisers] in [their] mission to make OSE an active site for social, cultural, and intellectual exchanges between a range of communities-artistic, local, and otherwise.’²⁸⁹ Speaking specifically about the location in Hackney, co-founder Laurence Taylor notes that ‘Hackney has had a lot of radical social and community spaces over the years that [Open School East is] following in the footsteps of.’²⁹⁰

The historical precedents of these educational projects seem to be something that is continuously drawn on across the literature. In East London alone, Taylor may refer to the Antiuniversity of London based on Rivington Street which opened in February 1968²⁹¹ and has in 2015 resurfaced as a festival of radical alternatives. The Hornsey School of Art’s protests, also in May 1968, additionally provide an example proximate to Open School East’s initial base in De Beauvoir town. What is striking about Open School East is that operationally it seems to exist in a continuous state of movement, or as Taylor and McCrory note, ‘experimentation’,²⁹² meaning that it is continuously expanding on both its public-facing and internal programming.

In 2017 it moved sites out of London and is working on numerous ways to develop and expand on its original form as an art school, while always structured on a small-scale, to ensure flexibility and longevity, as both Sam Thorne and Anna Colin

287 Sam Thorne, *ibid.*

288 Open School East, <http://www.openschooleast.org/category/people/> [accessed 18 October 2017]

289 Anna Colin, ‘Open School East, London/Margate (2013–)’, *ibid.*

290 Laurence Taylor, ‘Inside The Radical Hackney Art School That’s Shaking Up The Fees Culture’ *Hackney Post*, <http://hackneypost.co.uk/2016/03/03/inside-the-radical-hackney-art-school-thats-shaking-up-fees/> [accessed 18 October 2017]

291 *The Antiuniversity of London* (London: Trigram Press, ca. 1968), p. 1.

292 Taylor and McCrory, ‘Open School East, London/Margate (2013–)’, p. 322.

have pointed out, in line with their historical predecessors.²⁹³ One instance of this is the development of a foundation year adjacent to its original remit of providing Masters-level arts education.²⁹⁴ For Taylor, Open School East is now less framed as an alternative art school and more ‘a study program that [is] self-directed, collaborative, and [...] equip[s] artists with the tools to be resourceful in the world beyond their time [there].’²⁹⁵

Its co-founders, Thorne, Colin, Taylor and Sarah McCrory (Colin and Taylor also co-direct Open School East in Margate) were all previously and continue to be embedded within the contemporary art world, as writers, curators, researchers and organisers. As cultural practitioners, they are aligned to institutions such as *frieze*, Nottingham Contemporary, Tate, Glasgow International, Studio Voltaire. I mention the co-founders in this way, because unlike the following example of School of the Damned (SOTD), initially, one could rarely read about Open School East without mention of its founders’ own positions in relation to the organisation. This is important as it presents the question as to whether the project’s success is conditional upon its founders’ positions. Further, to what degree can Open School East, as an example, rely on its status or proximity to the contemporary art world to assure its position as a key alternative art school? In conversation with Colin, we discussed this. For Colin, Open School East’s organisers’ proximity has been key in the project’s visibility in relation to both the contemporary art world and the wider remit of alternative education. Any proximity to the institutions of the contemporary art world has been about taking the opportunity to capitalise on these connections for the benefit of the project and its associates.²⁹⁶

Interestingly, Open School East’s move out of London flags up a series of questions about its sustainability and commitment to the project of alternative education and building communities of artists and associates. On one hand, we can observe a reliance on the formal systems of value attributed by the art world on to the project – both monetary and symbolic, exchange and physical placement. On the other hand, the move out of London could feasibly suggest the imposition and pressures of the London rental market, and thus present the absolute commitment to sustaining the project by its current directors, Colin and Taylor. In both senses, the example of Open School East

293 Sam Thorne, telephone interview with the author, 5 April 2017 and Anna Colin, telephone interview with the author, 21 April 2017

294 Thorne, *ibid.*

295 Taylor, ‘Open School East, London/Margate (2013–)’, p. 323.

296 Colin, telephone interview with the author, 21 April 2017

presents the progress made regarding the status of ‘the alternative’ in relation to education and its forms adjacent to contemporary art, in such a short period of time. Open School East has evolved in organisational terms and in terms of its function in relation to both contemporary and alternative education throughout the course of my research. I posit that its proximity to the institutions of art have significantly aided its position and its capacity to develop in form, however, this does not degrade its efficacy as an alternative form of arts education. I assert that its challenge, however, is in terms of its scalability and of its capacity to evolve in its scope as an education institution. It is currently limited in its placement in one location, and to practicing artists who have the means of being able to commit to a year of ‘study’ under the proviso that they give time to contributing to the school’s community-driven ethos, that is, establishing itself as both a site of education and community practice.

School of the Damned

In its fifth cohort, School of the Damned is an artist and peer-led alternative art school, set up also in 2013. Positioned as a radical alternative to both the formal incarnations of arts education (traditional art school) and to other alternatives such as Open School East, School of the Damned considers itself to be ‘horizontal’,²⁹⁷ as a ‘pseudo-institution without an internal hierarchy [where] the student body share roles and the responsibility to aid each other’s education as well as the development of the programme.’²⁹⁸

The premise of School of the Damned is that each cohort of students rewrites the organisation anew, meaning that each cohort, every school year takes on the role of reorganising, administrating and participating in the programme. This is important as it positions the project as one that does not rely on institutional memory, meaning that its previous incarnations are ephemeral and do not altogether inscribe the school with an institutional identity, other than that of temporality. How this has played out in practical terms is that each year’s programme more or less reflects the cumulative interests of the group of students of a particular year. In effect it has operated quite consistently across each year so far in that each cohort has continued writing its own manifesto and operated

297 FAQ, <http://schoolofthedamned.com> [accessed 18 October 2017]

298 Class of 2016, *ibid.*

under similar principles, is active for twelve months, meets monthly on Sundays and holds public projects and exhibitions around the UK.

This is an aspect that sets School of the Damned apart from other alternative art schools. Sara Nunes Fernandes, a founding member of the school, stated in correspondence that the founding year did not enjoy being called an ‘alternative art school’, as a focus for the students was primarily to build the provision of an MA-equivalent educational structure that would simultaneously expose the ‘lack of [readily available access to] legitimate MAs.’²⁹⁹ It has been based between several temporary locations in central London and around the UK: the Horse Hospital (an events space), the Function Room (a gallery above a pub) and from 2017 at the Deptford X office space, and relies location-wise on the generosity and invitation of its voluntary hosts. The only fixed addresses are its website, Google Drive, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages, which operate as the main public channels of disseminating its public-facing aspects.

Unlike Open School East, School of the Damned’s students meet once a month and do not rely on a consistent technical and spatial provision of the organisation itself. Instead the organisation operates as a form of support structure, while attempting to provide as much of an educational infrastructure – as close to the conventional MFA structure – as is possible without any financial exchange. ‘The school does not receive any money, pay for any resources using funds, or charge its students admission. The school runs outside institutional systems of funding as an active political position. Guests are invited on a pre-agreed exchange of time for labour’,³⁰⁰ which is organised around the ‘range of skills and resources’³⁰¹ of the student body.

The 2017 cohort were invited during the summer to take up residence at Guest Projects, artist Yinka Shonibare’s project space in East London. During this time the cohort facilitated a week-long public programme that was centred around the questions: ‘[w]hat is art school? In the current economic climate, how do we afford to learn new skills? Can we reinvigorate arts education through self-organisation?’³⁰² These questions present the pressing need among practices of self-organisation to self-identify and self-validate publicly, paralleling Open School East’s initial configuration around the question

299 Nunes Fernandes, email interview with the author, 5 April 2017

300 FAQ, <http://schoolofthedamned.com> [accessed 18 October 2017]

301 Ibid.

302 ‘School of the Damned: Common Room’, <http://www.guestprojects.com/past/2017/7/30/school-of-the-damned-common-room> [accessed 18 October 2017]

of how an art school can be conceived to be more porous. As part of their residency at Guest Projects, ‘Common Room’ was positioned as a ‘space to congregate and collaborate, experiment and elaborate, relax and rehabilitate.’³⁰³ This corresponds with the above-mentioned examples across Pattison’s practice in the reproduction of the spaces that facilitate collaboration, Whittingdale and Britton’s attention to self-care and Open School East’s experimentation.

What emerges is a tendency to provide space and immediately reflect upon the feasibility and capacity to do so. Referring back to the Preface and Aguirre’s questioning of ‘how educational formats within contemporary art could, and should, reflect upon their own forms of self-representation and how pedagogy can be embedded in art practices without the inevitability of merely producing statements ‘about’ education or pedagogy’,³⁰⁴ it is worth observing the persistence of this tendency to produce statements in order to self-represent and reflect. School of the Damned’s continual reimagining and representation of itself is in part due to each cohort taking on the responsibility of not only their own course of education, but the responsibility and subsequent imprint of the organisation too. This self-awareness plays to Britton’s instruction of gentleness, Whittingdale’s survivalism, Gielen’s encompassing biotope and Open School East’s measures of commitment to providing the associates with the appropriate conditions in the same way, where issues around privacy, opacity, publicness and openness are pitched to (perhaps subconsciously) alleviate the responsibility of continually remaking the organisation. Then, how can the questions of responsibility and commitment be met on organisational terms at the level of alternative arts education, when self-organisation alone brings with it a broad series of issues of representation? What is public and what is private? And who is such publicness and privacy for?

School of the Damned was initially set up by a group of artists whose agenda was in tune with the oppositional rhetoric of ‘the alternative’ as a political act seeking to establish a network of peers, through organisation, who both advocated free education and by doing so ‘demand a universal acknowledgement of education as a fundamental right.’³⁰⁵ Nunes Fernandes has additionally stated that the founding cohort ‘were angry’

303 Ibid.

304 Aguirre, ‘Education With Innovations: Beyond Art-Pedagogical Projects’, pp. 184–85.

305 Class of 2014, *ibid.*

and ‘felt excluded and disgusted at the price of studying in the UK.’³⁰⁶ She continues that most of the cohort had previously studied at bachelors level, but masters study did not seem like an option.³⁰⁷ She explains that:

[they] were trying to mimic as much as possible [an] idea of an art MA during [their] Sunday convenors: the room with chairs, screen, students and artworks; three short presentations each followed by long discussions; other artists and teachers invited to moderate and help with the discussion; the [...] lectures, etc.³⁰⁸

Nunes Fernandes continues that the school’s symbolic and manifest distinction from formal academic institutions was an act of political necessity ‘because the [then] current system increasingly restrict[ed] access to such institutions.’³⁰⁹

Observing some of the students of the class of 2017 speak as part of the 2016 Art Licks weekend discussion, ‘Education: Finding an Alternative’, it was enlightening to note how their tone seemed to be significantly different to the first cohort. The class of 2017 presented as one whose focus was resolutely on the making of artwork, studio time and the provision of opportunities for exhibiting work. This is a useful point of comparison as I have observed that, throughout this period of my research, there has been a gradual acknowledgement of the limitation of ‘the alternative’ as an instrument of opposition, or supplement, or substitute. This is exemplified by the change of tone of each cohort through the years of School of the Damned; from the radical confrontation of the class of 2013 to the admission by 2017’s class that it functioned for the benefit of its students and its students only. The class of 2018, meanwhile, position themselves as somewhere between this, opting to engage in a series of public events focussed on alternative arts education, that are constellated by their private Sunday monthly meet-ups. This variation from confrontation to admission of its limit, reinforces the scope and plurality of ‘the alternative’ (see figure 2 in part one of Chapter Three), and testifies to the rootedness in conceptual terms of ‘the alternative’ as a more permanent, established status of arts education. Further, it is useful to consider to what degree these shifts in tone are down to the ever-changing political landscape in the UK, or to an acknowledgement that

306 Nunes Fernandes, email interview with the author, 5 April 2017
307 Ibid.
308 Ibid.
309 Class of 2014, *ibid.*

‘the alternative’ might no longer function as autonomously as was the case when these projects were first conceived in 2013.

Unlike Open School East, School of the Damned is entirely peer-led, which means that it could just cease to operate, or manifest in a compromised or totally new way according to the intentions of its current students. While Open School East is artist-run insofar as emerging and established artists predominantly tutor and facilitate the work of its associates, it is still governed by two co-founding directors and is contingent on forms of community engagement and funding. Open School East and School of the Damned both sit between the delineations ‘alternative-oppositional’ and ‘alternative-additional’³¹⁰ categories of Duncan Fuller and Andrew E.G Jonas’ three-part schema of ‘the alternative’ presented in ‘The (many) alternatives’ section in part one of Chapter Three, and illustrated in figures 2 and 3. These categories are distinct in that the ‘oppositional’ infers the ‘embod[iment] of something ‘different in value or operational terms [...] representing a rejection of more non-alternative, or ‘mainstream’ forms and their identities.’³¹¹ ‘Additional’ refers to supplementary forms to existing institutions. However, both schools also mark out their own places respectively across and outside this formula, which sit at two distinct points. In this sense, it could be suggested that an additional category could be added to Fuller and Jonas’ schema, on the basis of this discussion. This might be best described as something new that does not reject other forms by its inherent opposition to them; that does not supplement other forms by embodying choice; and that does not substitute other forms by replacing them or filling a gap. What this suggests is something similar to Slager’s ‘delta’³¹² category of knowledge, whereby these alternative practices come to instantiate a new critical space, one that defies the logic of opposition or conventionally separatist nature of ‘the alternative’.

Open School East and School of the Damned sit on this schema between being ‘oppositional’ and ‘additional’. They also inhabit this new ‘delta’ space, one that quite literally and laterally establishes its own frame whereby there is no criteria to include or exclude on the basis that these organisations operate on mutable ground. This is both in

310 Duncan Fuller and Andrew E.G. Jonas, ‘Alternative Financial Spaces’, in *Alternative Economic Spaces* ed. by Andrew Leyshon and others (London: SAGE, 2003), p. 57.
311 Ibid.
312 Henk Slager, ‘Delta Knowledge’, in *The Pleasure of Research* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2015), p. 73.

terms of the political context in the UK and on the basis that both ascribe experimentation and flexibility to their organisational and programming structures.

Here notions of agonism, alterity and being of the opposition come into play, which in thinking around self-organisation is being overruled, for, as curator Anne Szefer Karlsen points out, being too ‘conventionally separatist’.³¹³ Additionally, she posits that while the traditional principles of self-organisation – networks of individuals, collectives and groups working together to create other, alternative realities and structures – remain at the heart of this recent wave of thinking, when contextualised by the practices discussed above this ‘oppositional dichotomy’³¹⁴ is no longer possible.³¹⁵ Owing to the limitations of describing something as being ‘alternative’ and ‘in opposition to’, Karlsen suggests that placing self-organisation into a solely oppositional category, is preventative of an honourable execution of integrity in self-organised practice; that is, of common interest, over ‘obligation’.³¹⁶ Rather, through acknowledging the complexities (of the choice to self-organise, of responsibility, of common interest) and thus the realities of self-organised practice, Karlsen conceptually moves beyond this separatist, oppositional approach, and with this move comes an attitude of potentiality, of possibility.

Really Useful Knowledge

A final example in this section considers the exhibition ‘Really Useful Knowledge’ at Madrid’s Museo Reina Sofia between October 2014 and February 2015 and two historical and political contexts to frame the exhibition, the notion of really useful knowledge from the perspective of critical pedagogy, and the role of horizontality as a political practice of exodus. The exhibition sought to question the implications of knowledge and education in the context of a short contemporary social and cultural history, through contemporary art practice and in relation to contemporary arts institutions. The exhibition saw the transformation of Museo Reina Sofia into a working laboratory for education, pedagogy and ideas.³¹⁷ This referred to increasing discourse in contemporary art *on* education and

313 Anne Szefer Karlsen, ‘Foreword’, in *Self-Organised*, p. 11.

314 Ibid.

315 Ibid.

316 Ibid.

317 Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport statement, *Really Useful Knowledge*, (Madrid: Museo National Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, 2014), p. 3.

knowledge and the ‘information societies, in which discourses flow, [and] knowledge expands’,³¹⁸ thus framing and critiquing the implied knowledge economy as is understood in relation to art and as a contingent factor of the Educational Turn.

‘Really Useful Knowledge’ as a critical concept has its origins in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century radical education discourse, which signified attempts at the emancipation of the working classes through education. The capacity of education as a means by which class structure could be levelled was addressed through its democratisation. The exhibition frames this as an attempt towards such democratisation via the institutional apparatus of education³¹⁹ and sought to recompose these ideas and ‘reassess education’³²⁰ in the context of the arts institution structure, by producing what is termed to be a ‘thesis exhibition’.³²¹ The institution was considered to be a catalyst for this type of critical reflection on knowledge and education. This, we can observe, places this particular example back into the fold of how ideas around New Institutionalism are framed according to Farquharson and Bourriaud as a means of constructing an ‘organic link’ between spaces of art and education. This is particularly the case insofar as the exhibition more or less claims to hold testament to the ways in which knowledge flows from various sources, in art, discourse and its institutions, moving outside and between the worlds of academia, art and public institutions.

Curators, What, How & for Whom (WHW) state that the exhibition intended to reposition this thinking from the perspective of the contemporary moment, where questions amounting to the transformative capacities of ‘critical pedagogy and materialist education [signify the] crucial elements of struggle.’³²² This struggle is located within what WHW term the ‘ongoing crisis of capitalism’³²³ and the numerous oppositional organisational demonstrations intended to counter it, which to a degree, some of the work of the Educational Turn can be considered to be part of. For example, opposition at the level of (self-)organisation, specifically in terms of alternative forms of arts education and community-building, manifest in the exhibition, is something that is presented here as being a key and commonplace response in the domain of contemporary art. As curators,

318 Ibid.

319 Manuel Borja-Villel, *Really Useful Knowledge*, p. 6 and Philip Cohen, *Really Useful Knowledge* (London: Trentham Books, 1990), back cover

320 Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport statement, p. 3.

321 Ibid.

322 WHW, p. 19.

323 Ibid.

WHW make it clear that they wished to examine the ways in which collectivity and the production of sociability in art practice and arts educational contexts address some of the issues at stake in arts education. This includes the paradigm of ‘useful’ and ‘useless’ knowledge derived between material and intellectual labour and its social infrastructures in light of the crisis of capitalism, drawing significantly on the geographically immediate context of Spain.

Questions of social transformation were addressed in respect to collective action where, among other things, it becomes the methodology for acting politically together; ‘building new systems for renegotiating and redistributing power relations in all spheres of life³²⁴’ even though, working together is not always a guarantee for such transformation³²⁵, drawing on their thinking elsewhere, which cites sociologist Siegfried Kracauer’s notion of the ‘idea of the collective’.³²⁶ Where, the ‘corporeality of a socially effective idea³²⁷’ is constituted by the individualities of the group, the idea ultimately ‘imposes itself on [the] group and in turn creates individualities.’³²⁸ This is useful as it helps develop an understanding of the criticality and sometimes problematic nature of the inextricability of idea and idea ‘bearer’,³²⁹ which encompasses the sometimes precarious nature of the work discussed previously. For WHW, Kracauer’s thoughts on the cyclical nature of group work, collectivity and the subsequent life-span or limitation of ‘the group’, designates the importance of inhabiting criticality and acting in the moment. According to Kracauer, ‘[w]hile the group individuality then goes about intervening in reality according to the terms of [the] program, that reality itself changes (to some extent also as a result of the group’s actions) and new situations arise that demand a different stance on the part of the group.’³³⁰ Then, for WHW, the necessity to ‘rethink the singularity of each particular situation in relation to its adopted [...] methods³³¹’ is critical. Various organisational methods, such as the redistribution of power and its spatial relations, dialogue and radical forms of education, were the modes through which the exhibition began to engage pragmatically with the above contexts. The accompanying

324 Ibid., p. 20.

325 Ibid.

326 WHW, ‘Defining the Enemy and Post-Fordist Business as Usual’, in *Self-Organised*, p. 118.

327 Siegfried Kracauer in WHW, *ibid.*, p. 119.

328 Ibid.

329 Ibid.

330 Ibid.

331 WHW, *ibid.*, p. 120.

volume states that ‘Really Useful Knowledge reiterates the necessity of producing sociability through the collective utilisation of existing public resources, actions, and experiments, either by developing new forms of sharing or by fighting to maintain the old ones, now under the threat of eradication.’³³²

This idea of ‘producing sociability’ is something that has emerged across the previous examples discussed in this section. It is then critical to reconsider the role of sociability in the context of education and its alternative sites, at least in regard to how the art institution, in the case of this exhibition, has taken on the responsibility of critiquing itself in this way. Really Useful Knowledge’s instruction-like address of the ‘collective utilisation’ of resources, implicates Museo Reina Sofia as being one such resource. This self-criticality is pertinent as it places itself into the discourse it subjects through the exhibition. Much of the material surrounding the exhibition places these questions in relation to the historical social context of the concept of ‘really useful knowledge’. As such it is useful to briefly address this context over analysing the work constituting the exhibition, as a means of acknowledging how and why this exhibition sits in relation to the Educational Turn and its wider social, political, cultural and economic alignments.

In his project ‘Really Useful Knowledge’, which shares both its name and historical reference with the Reina Sofia exhibition, cultural studies scholar Philip Cohen reports on an experimental photography project he undertook as a propositional pre-vocational education model with young people. ‘New Vocationalism’,³³³ is a form of social policy predecessor to knowledge exchange that sought to bridge education and the economy through supporting and prioritising employability and transferable skills at the level of compulsory education. At the time, New Vocationalism was in effect streamlining and narrowing career prospects and options for young people who were not entering into college or university-level education. Cohen describes the project he set out as one that encouraged the students with whom the project engaged, to ‘question the ‘common sense’ of [then] many current occupation ideologies.’³³⁴ In other words, those ideologies that enforce, through the idea of hegemonic consciousness, a one-track slip-stream into working life.

332 Really Useful Knowledge, http://www.museoreinasofia.es/sites/default/files/exposiciones/folleto/un_saber_realmente_util_en.pdf [accessed 18 October 2017]

333 Cohen, *Really Useful Knowledge*, p. 6.

334 Ibid., back cover

Cohen's 'common sense' imperative resonates with political theorist Antonio Gramsci's derivation of 'common sense' being represented through civil society's hegemonic 'consented'³³⁵ allegiance to the dominant ruling class. Gramscian 'common sense' is the prevailing model by which ideology in civil society is commonly justified; in the form of how subjects understand the world as is, how it functions as a constructed reality, where subjectivity is negotiated and discretely constructed according to cultural and political systems. In this case, the system for Cohen is New Vocationalism. For Gramsci, common sense is a 'philosophy for non-philosophers',³³⁶ or in relevant terms, useful knowledge for non-users.

For Gramscian scholar Peter Mayo, common sense alludes to the people's 'quotidian experience'.³³⁷ It functions as a form of worldview that is 'uncritically accepted',³³⁸ thus not questioned 'within the various social and cultural environments that help develop a person's moral individuality'.³³⁹ The transformation of 'nonproductive'³⁴⁰ knowledge described by the director of the Reina Sofia, Manuel Borja-Villel and equally by Cohen, in different cultural contexts and towards very different experimental pursuits, is the very enactment of the transformation of 'powerful knowledge',³⁴¹ described by Mayo. With broader reference to the wider project of radical and critical forms of education throughout the twentieth century, making powerful and nonproductive knowledge 'really useful' for public good, is a maxim of emancipation. Really useful knowledge refers to the plight of the issue of accessibility to such emancipation.

These examples are used to present the contrast between what is otherwise the useful and productive knowledge of workers in industry, where 'intellectual' and nonproductive forms, were considered to be the domain of the elite, and were considered to be 'arcane', 'magical'³⁴² and hidden. Towards emancipation, the figure of the working class was given the task of transforming this secret, hidden knowledge from being seemingly unproductive to being *really useful*; through the will to 'become active subjects

335 Peter Mayo, 'Gramsci and the politics of education', *Capital & Class*, vol. 38, issue 2 (June 2014), 385–98 (p. 388.)

336 Mayo, p. 393.

337 Ibid.

338 Ibid.

339 Ibid.

340 Borja-Villel, p. 6.

341 Mayo, pp. 395–98.

342 Ibid.

of the society in which they lived.³⁴³ This describes Gramsci's constructed forms of subjectivity in civil society, or broadly towards an 'ethical state'³⁴⁴ whereby 'invisible pedagogies' become the way in which education – knowledge – is transformed and permeates in society. This is something that we can categorically compare to Illich's deschooling theory, when a deschooled society is one that permits and nurtures invisible pedagogy as one and the same part of the State's educational apparatus, via Illich's 'convivial institutions'³⁴⁵ discussed in the 'Institutions, subjectification and subversion' text in Appendix 2.³⁴⁶

The exhibition at Museo Reina Sofia shared its set of references with the above discussion, but to return to some practices of 'the alternative' within and aligned to the Educational Turn, it is useful to consider how and with what methods can alternative arts education correspond to these discussions? And in the context of the exhibition the question that remains is whether Museo Reina Sofia is critiquing its own position while questioning its own responsibilities in relation to its subject? I would assert that it is, and these wider discussions are crucial as they present the reality that issues of instrumentality between 'the institution' and 'the alternative' are present outside of the remit of contemporary art.

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343 Ibid.

344 Ibid., p. 388.

345 Illich, 'Institutional Spectrum', in *Deschooling Society*, p. 53.

346 For Gramsci, education evolves through and in relation to ideology. At the heart of his thinking however is the belief that education is itself a capacity to challenge hegemonic ideology which is contemporaneously played out through the structuring of education and art institutions alike, hence why an examination of the Educational Turn in art is a crucial step towards challenging the status quo in the context of the art world. Where the Educational Turn as a project in contemporary art might fall short however, is where it limits itself by being overly inward facing, permitting its own instrumentalisation by its own institutions. Drawing on Gramsci et al, I intend to contextualise these discussions to try to understand how education's capacity as an instrument to challenge hegemony towards social transformation plays out, but on the very specific and micro level of alternative education organisation; how projects ranging Yuri Pattison's infrastructural reproductions, to the Reina Sofia's critical appropriation of really useful knowledge, via Open School East and School of the Damned function as in-the-world maxims of this thinking on one hand, and on the other, how they are inherently limited by their proximity to the instrumentalising capacities of contemporary art's institutions. While this discourse is a crucial context for current discussion on alternative forms of education, it is not a focus in my work and it is not my intention to understand how Gramscian socialism distilled through his projects of hegemony and education can further my research on alternative forms of arts education in the context of the Educational Turn.

Concluding chapters one and two, what has emerged is that the frame of the Educational Turn, within the domain of contemporary art, reveals a number of issues concerning *instrumentalisation, the nature of 'the alternative', and an ambivalent notion of knowledge*. In order to address these issues. The first part of the following chapter discusses and problematises each of these notions in detail. It does so in a way that begins to outline how the field of alternative arts education might benefit from moving away from the confines presented by contemporary art, as is discussed by Malik in the 'sentimentality' of expanded forms of art learning, Lesage and Kenning as the 'paradox' of the Educational Turn and as I have framed through the Turn's aestheticisation and academicisation of art as/and education.

Chapter One has worked to survey the scope of these issues as a means of presenting the field's lack of examination of models outside of the remit of contemporary art. Chapter Two has worked to present a cross-section of critical artistic practice, either manifest in exhibitionary or organisational contexts that comes close to addressing and traversing another potential space for the realisation of alternative arts education. However, these practices remain to exist within an orbit of the domain of contemporary art at each level. They range from Yuri Pattison's critical artistic practice; the artistic collective's endeavours in the Whittingdale Residency; Open School East, led by curators and cultural practitioners; School of the Damned, led by a group of artists; and the exhibition Really Useful Knowledge, which attempts to frame and critique the instrumentalisation of knowledge and education by the conditions offset by the prevailing knowledge economy from the perspective of the arts institution.

Between this presentation across the key literature and contextual practice, it is clear that a gap in the field can be addressed by stepping outside of the field of the Educational Turn to examine other potential organisational models for alternative arts education. These chapters mark the formation of critique and the following chapter begins to outline and propose conceptual movement away from the field in order to address the research questions: what are the alternatives to models of the alternative art school having emerged through the Turn? And specifically, how might dialogic engagement with organisations outside of the Turn propose something other for the future of alternative arts education?

Chapter 3 – Methodology

The following chapter is split into two parts. Part one assesses the key ideas that form the critique that my research practice proceeds to address through 'the dialogic' and conversation in the following chapters. These key ideas form the critical vocabulary of 'double instrumentalisation', 'the (many) alternatives' and 'knowledge mobility'. The purpose of part one is to frame the conceptual space omitted in the overarching discourse discussed in chapters one and two. The specificity of the Educational Turn's *double* instrumentalisation of education in contemporary art, and the actual plurality of alternative practices which are rendered relatively fixed through the commonplace delineation of the alternative *art school*, each contribute to the formation of critique encompassed by 'knowledge mobility'. Notionally, knowledge mobility works to foreground the act of stepping outside of the critical discourse of the Educational Turn to realise a new set of alternative organisational models.

Part two presents and discusses 'the dialogic' as a rationale to the act of stepping outside of the field of the Educational Turn and as a means of taking a dialogic approach to addressing my research questions. Here 'the dialogic' is understood as both a structuring metaphor for the research practice and as the act of sustained speech, through conversation. This part introduces the research method of conversation, as a means of forging sustained and long-term relationships with organisations that my research engages with and draws from.

Part one: Critical vocabulary

The previous chapters chart some of the key issues raised through critical discussion of the Educational Turn, from the perspectives of its theoretical and practical work. It has been my intention to elicit and present the issues that have motivated this research and that have come to frame how it proceeds as research practice. The key problems addressed in the first chapter pertain to: the role of art's institutions, the 'sentimentality' of alternative arts education, paradoxes of the Turn, and its aestheticisation and academicisation, as they relate to the burgeoning field of alternative arts education.

The key practices and organisations examined in the second chapter present the wide-ranging scope of alternative practices held within or proximate to the Educational Turn that have begun to frame a new conceptual space of alternative arts education, or practices of knowledge, from within the remit of contemporary art. However, these often manifest as (re)configurations of their historical and traditional counterparts, or artistic interventions that critique phenomena in ephemeral or limited ways, while simultaneously offering collective space for critical reflection, through the (re)organisation of existing education or knowledge structures.

Cumulatively, what the literature and contextual practices seem to neglect is offering up something altogether more permanent insofar as genuine propositions for arts education more broadly. While categorically diverse in their approaches to addressing what is to be understood as a crisis in arts education, particularly through the lens of the Educational Turn,³⁴⁷ this combined review reveals another space that is yet open to investigation. That is, the consideration of other types of organisation that sit outside the immediate frame of contemporary art, in particular other organisational models that do not necessarily position themselves as alternative forms of education.

Though a plurality of alternative practical approaches is presented in Chapter Two that frame a wide-ranging take on many models of 'the alternative', several issues remain at stake. While the work of the Educational Turn has indeed carved out a significant space between arts institutions and arts education institutions, configuring 'the alternative' as a serious and substantial vernacular and practice, this space still

³⁴⁷ This is in addition to some of the more nuanced frames of, for example, contemporary art's autonomy, technological and infrastructural acceleration and its impacts as part of a wider knowledge society, survivalism in relation to organisation based around economic and political factors, to name a few.

tends to be insular and exclusive, as it relies on a great deal of awareness on the part of the prospective candidate/student/associate/participant/viewer. In the case of Open School East and School of the Damned, these models have recapitulated the same openness, experimentation and communality that we can observe through Malik, when its abundance is rendered sentimental, or as in Lesage, as paradoxical, insofar that they circulate within and rely on the frame of contemporary art. There appears to be a disjuncture still, between intention and sustainability and the means by which to address these in alternative educational form, which leads to questioning whether this is contingent to contemporary art.

It is clear that the frame of the Educational Turn (in contemporary art) both widens *and* limits the scope of these practices in terms of their proximity to it. Across these projects and within the discourse on the Turn, there is a tendency to conflate notions of knowledge with education, education with art, alterity with politics, and the institution with capitalism. I propose that moving beyond these associations might elicit a new way of thinking the purpose and function of alternative arts education beyond the rhetoric that the Educational Turn has produced. In its manifestation and conceptually, the Turn is a space wrought with many agendas, from the individual to the public, and its institutional and educational domains. Combined, what these previous two chapters reveal is presented across three further problems, which are discussed in detail below. These are:

1 The idea that alternative arts education within the Educational Turn has undergone a process of 'double instrumentalisation', first in the co-option of educational forms by artists, and then in the co-option of 'the alternative' by art's institutions.

2 This instrumentality has a homogenising effect on the scope and potential of alternative arts education held within the remit of the Turn, when in actuality such scope and potential is plural and nuanced in its abundance. This indicates that there are many variations on 'the alternative', but through their containment within a frame of contemporary art, and its institutions, they become bound to its market logic and, I argue, to art's own ends.

3 A notion that critically elicits knowledge mobility emerges across this discourse and practice, which is less considered epistemologically and manifests more as a signifier of the social and collective capacities of alternative arts education to institute a changed landscape for tertiary arts education.

These three points have led me to question what moving beyond the remit of the Educational Turn might do *for* the field of alternative arts education. Questioning contemporary art's limitation, insofar as a possible future for alternative arts education is concerned, involves making a significant diversion from well-trodden discourse to reconfigure my research questions outside of their home ground. The following discussion across the terms 'double instrumentalisation', 'the (many) alternatives' and 'knowledge mobility' presents the critical necessity of conceptually stepping away from the idea of the alternative *art school* model, and considering other organisational models. This begins to evolve the idea of how alternative arts education might configure in the longer-term.

Double instrumentalisation

'Double instrumentalisation' is a term I have derived through the research that recognises and problematises the two consequential stages of the Educational Turn described in Chapter One; one of praxis and another of its theorisation and institutionalisation. I introduce this term to refer to the set of consequences, that I argue, have emerged resultantly from contemporary art offering itself up as a domain of resolution for the crisis in education.

1 Artists and contemporary art practices co-opt and appropriate educational forms such as teaching, exchange, knowledge production, lectures, seminars and workshops and present these as artistic forms, as in the case of Vidokle's unitednationsplaza, and the Whittingdale Residency. This co-option of forms produces and constitute some of the practices, projects and organisations of the Educational Turn to challenge and offer respite from the monetary and temporal cost of formal arts education or art school. These forms often manifest explicitly as alternative art schools or alternative art education programmes and mirror traditional modes of learning that often become inalienable, by extension, from the institutional modes that they critique.

In constituting an Educational Turn, educational forms that are appropriated by artists derive a form of educational aesthetics. I have developed from this a notion of knowledge that can be described as the function of a specific set of relational social forces coming together. These relational and social forces are specifically the components of the Educational Turn: the practice of the alternative art school, its organisers, the sites

of exchange and learning produced and facilitated – the formation of environments for knowledge to be produced, exchanged and disseminated. In turn, this notionally reveals a spectrum of 'the alternative', where on one side, critical and radical manifestations of arts education, such as the self-organised and administered School of the Damned, are put into dialogue with organisations that are more closely aligned to arts institutions, such as Open School East. In comparison, the two examples of School of the Damned and Open School East present this scale in a way that shows, on one side, a focus on the artist-organiser and on the other a focus on the social capacity of the organisation in relation to the wider cultural and educational landscape. As such, I interpret this scale to be one that ranges organisations that are inward-facing (to their own ends) and organisations that are outward-facing (for public benefit).

2 The art world (its institutions comprising galleries, museums, collections, biennials, residency programmes, literature, contribution to academia, discourse and its agents, curators and directors) co-opts and appropriates this idea of 'the alternative' as means of attempting to inhabit and take on a self-reflexive, inclusive and democratic status. On one level this promotes an anti-institutional ethos and, on another, alternative education for common public good.

In this instance, 'the alternative' becomes a popular vernacular, reference point and rhetorical currency in and for contemporary art. Alternativeness becomes replicable and reconstituted by institutions that in turn imbue the notion of 'the alternative' with cultural value. With the Educational Turn we can observe social formations becoming instrumentalised forms, which supports Phillips' claim of a problematic aesthetics of education, whereby the utopianism of these formations is misaligned to an ethics of contemporary art practice. Further, the analogy of ships on a flat sea and institutional 'horizontalities'³⁴⁸ presented by Gielen appropriately describes this form as currency and implicates artists', cultural producers' and creative workers' inescapable collective imagined fate of existing precariously as though at sea,³⁴⁹ i.e., competing, static, within an existence of flatness, instability and sameness. Additionally, presented as having an

348 Gielen, 'Institutional Imagination Instituting Contemporary Art Minus the 'Contemporary'', in *Institutional Attitudes Instituting Art in a Flat World* (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2013), p. 20.

349 Taken from personal notes: Pascal Gielen, 'Artistic praxis and the neoliberalisation of the educational space', *InSEA regional conference, Art and Design Education in Times of Change* lecture, University of Applied Arts, Vienna, 22nd–23rd September 2016

‘anarchic and tongue-in-cheek sensibility’³⁵⁰ the Tate Modern’s ten-year anniversary, ‘No Soul For Sale A festival of Independents’³⁵¹ in 2010 is a comparable illustration of how ‘the alternative’ becomes co-opted by ‘the institution’ of art.³⁵²

Another example is the instance of the Alternative Art School Fair, the exhibition of alternative art schools, which, according to Colin of Open School East who was invited to participate, presented a number of highly problematic contradictions. These included that ‘experimental art school[s] don’t necessarily produce objects and [...] don’t necessarily have something to show’³⁵³ in and of themselves, and the nature or format of a fair quite simply ‘objectif[ies] these practices’.³⁵⁴ The example of the Alternative Art School Fair goes some way to extend the motivations of this research. This echoes Aguirre’s negation of statement-making; namely, that if arts education can be considered to be an object, or producer of objects, to be presented in this way, at the point of art as a cultural institution, then there is a categorical urgency for arts education to be rethought and reimagined from another set of perspectives.

In light of this, some questions to consider are: to what degree does this ‘double instrumentalisation’ render ‘the alternative’ redundant in terms of its short-lived capacity to effectuate change or embody resistance or refusal? And, can this instrumentality, Malik’s sentimentality, and Lesage’s paradox be considered one of the same thing? How can ‘the alternative’ educational form resist its unavoidable instrumentalised trajectory as part of the project of contemporary art? Can alternative arts education forms exist outside of the remit of contemporary art in order to avoid their alternative status becoming compromised by such instrumentalisation? It is useful to note that the alternative manifestations of education and the formal institutions of education discussed here operate as a sort of organisational ouroboros by nature of a feedback loop: the ecology of alternative arts education relies on the institutions of art and education, in its political

350 ‘Tate Modern is 10’, <http://www.tate.org.uk/about/press-office/press-releases/tate-modern-10> [accessed 18 October 2017]

351 ‘No Soul For Sale’, <http://www.nosoulforsale.com> [accessed 18 October 2017]

352 Institution here refers in the plural to the symbolic institution, i.e., the umbrella term for the hierarchical and vertical infrastructures of the art world, which are mostly commercial, or foundations, both private and public places. This symbolic institution refers to what Gielen calls ‘classic institutions’ where the image of a stepladder is used to reflect their vertical hierarchical structures, this is the same for both art museum and academy. This is also discussed in detail in the next section, ‘The (many) alternatives’. Gielen, ‘Institutional Imagination Instituting Contemporary Art Minus the ‘Contemporary’’, p. 14.

353 Anna Colin, telephone interview with the author, 21 April 2017

354 Ibid.

complexity and in the current economic climate, to exist. The case of Open School East as conceived of and sustained by CREATE London and the Barbican exemplifies this. Here lies an issue surrounding the proximity of ‘the alternative’ to ‘the institution(s)’ of contemporary art and education.

This ‘double instrumentalisation’, I argue, might prevent any real, sustainable transformation or change at the level of both the positioning of art making – when manifest as educational – which engenders little impact or resolve on the wider crisis of education, and also, the capacity of alternative educational forms to democratise contemporary art, in the same vein as Malik’s argument. This is, I believe, to be the double premise, or paradox, of art’s Educational Turn and the point at which my research is contextualised. This contextualisation affirms the need to ask at this point, what an alternative mode of instituting arts education might be, to the now abundant and instrumentalised model of the alternative *art school*.

The (many) alternatives

As part of this discourse there exist numerous renditions of ‘the alternative’ as modes of political and aesthetic address to the crisis in arts education. An important question to pose is: alternative to what exactly?³⁵⁵ There is a suggestion across much of the discussion on alternative arts education that the practices, projects and organisations of the Educational Turn are alternative in response to a number of institutional conditions of higher education in art and the arts and humanities today. These conditions include, but are not limited to, an incremental increase in tuition fees in the UK from between 1998 and the present; the gradual marketisation of education institutions; the withdrawal of governmental funding to these institutions. ‘The alternative’ exists across the work of Turn both conceptually and manifestly as a designation that encompasses artistic intervention, political actions and novel articulations of alternativeness. This reflects Malik’s distinction between alternative education that is either unsentimental (political) or sentimental (novel), in addition to the scale of instrumentalisation that I refer to in the previous section on ‘double instrumentalisation’. Some further specific distinctions presented as ‘alternative’ examined in my research are:

355 See Appendix 2 for a contextual discussion that outlines the distinctions between my discussion of ‘the alternative’ and ‘the institution’ in a way that presents the theoretical positions that prompt making address to a notion of ‘the alternative’ in this way.

1 Alternative concepts and programmes *internal* to existing education institutions as was the case with Department 21 at the RCA, London, whose aims were to ‘salvage’³⁵⁶ existing institutional space towards building ‘a new kind of conceptual and social space’³⁵⁷ that would be truly interdisciplinary both conceptually and socially. Department 21 was presented as a cross-departmental, student-led and experimental initiative and was sanctioned by both the RCA’s rectorate, and its Learning and Teaching Committee during the academic year 2010/11.

2 Organisational alternatives *aligned* to existing institutions such as the previously mentioned Open School East, whose combined social and cultural premise frames the organisation as sitting between the institutions that support it (in the first instance, CREATE London and the Barbican) and the communities that it inhabits (originally the neighbourhood of De Beauvoir Town in East London, and more recently the seaside town of Margate in Kent). Open School East is a foundational example of an alternative *art school* emerging from the period of my research.

3 Alternative cultural organisational practice on the political left, which tends to be commensurate with the radical and critical pedagogical material and thinking emerging from the 1960s that, through collectivity and radical structuring, aim(ed) to disrupt the status quo and inequality in arts education preceding that period. These practices are *distinct* from existing educational institutions. A foundational example of this is London’s Antiuniversity formed in 1968 by a group of disenfranchised academics, and its contemporary incarnation, the Antiuniversity Now! Festival. Additionally, the Common House, MayDay Rooms and DIY Space for London act as cornerstones for an increasingly prominent shift towards ‘commoning’, where practices of collective institution building are being integrated into the landscape of alternative and radical education.

4 Alternative social and economic frameworks such as the timebank model, where alternative economic infrastructure is utilised within small communities, such as residential neighbourhoods, creative and corporate communities and industry. As part of this infrastructure, skills and knowledge are exchanged using time as a medium of exchange; time becomes the prime currency over money. Early manifestations of the use

356 Note that this is distinct from the Critical Forum Programme discussed in the Contextual review. Department 21, ‘Final Proposal’, *Department 21* (London: RCA, 2010), p. 12.

357 Ibid.

of time as currency emerged during the early nineteenth century via the anarchist Josiah Warren in America and the philanthropist Robert Owen in the UK. Some of the first of its current incarnation were conceived of for the use of communities, by law academic Edgar Cahn and community organiser Paul Glover. Some contemporary examples include the e-flux Time/Bank, which is for the cultural community of its readership, and Timebanking UK, which is the umbrella organisation for regional, local and community-based timebanks in the UK.

5 Alternative workspace culture defined by a recent trend in co-working, hack- and maker-space communities. As a phenomenon that was arguably offset by the global economic crash in 2008, co-working spaces initially emerged to provide new and innovative work and social spaces for burgeoning entrepreneurial and start-up cultures sweeping urban centres and in part aligned to the combined phenomena of gentrification, digital economy, smart cities and the dissolve of the eight-hour working day. Co-working can be now considered a sector that has permeated the digital economy and surrounding industry in a bid to reimagine and realise new forms of living and working environments. Examples in London are Second Home and Google’s London Campus.

These five distinctions come to loosely categorise some of the most prevalent variations of ‘the alternative’ in organisational form, drawing from a cross-section of practices, programmes and organisations of the Educational Turn. Some are peripheral to its remit, as is the case with distinctions 4 and 5 above, which I have added to present the potential of models outside of the Educational Turn. My research is concerned in part with presenting and problematising the abundance of ‘the alternative’ as it exists both as a condition and principle of the Educational Turn. It is not concerned solely with defining and comparing the collective status of alternativeness that these practices account for, but finds these loose distinctions useful in attempting to understand how conceptually moving beyond those that exist as part of the Turn might offer something additional to the discourse, which numbers 4 and 5 above point towards. However, in order to qualify the inclusion of ‘the alternative’ as a terminology that is frequently referred to in this work, the following diagrams (figures 2 and 3) outline its use in this research, unless otherwise stated.

THE SCALE OF 'THE ALTERNATIVE' DERIVED FROM THE EDUCATIONAL TURN

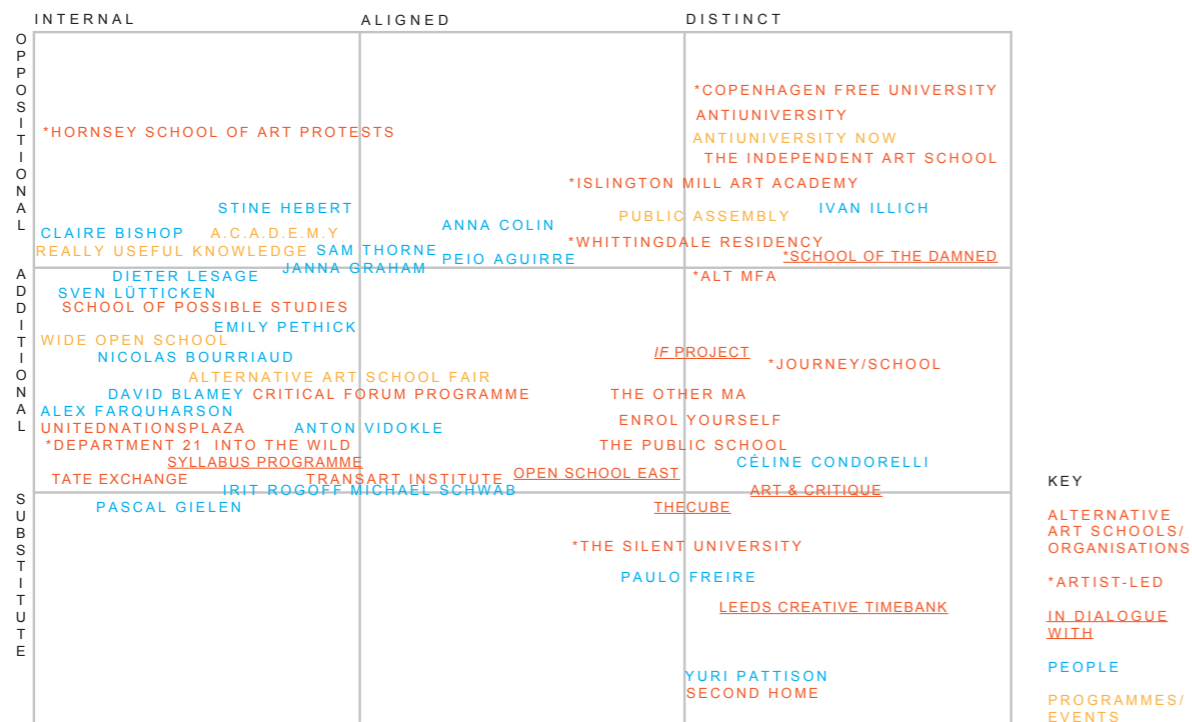


Figure 2, Susannah Haslam, *Plurality of the alternative* (diagram), 2017

'THE INSTITUTION' AND 'THE ALTERNATIVE' ARE SPATIALISED BELOW USING TYPICAL EXAMPLES FROM EACH CATEGORY OF: THE INSTITUTION, AND THREE VARIATIONS OF THE ALTERNATIVE — INTERNAL, ALIGNED, DISTINCT (UNDERLINED). OTHER EXAMPLES FROM FIG. 2 ARE USED TO SHOW THE RANGE. THE GOLD LINE SIGNIFIES THE SYMBOLIC DISTINCTION BETWEEN 'THE INSTITUTION' AND 'THE ALTERNATIVE'; PROXIMITIES BETWEEN ORGANISATIONS/INSTITUTIONS ARE MADE ON THE BASIS OF KIND. CLUSTERED TO THE BOTTOM ARE EXAMPLES OF ART INSTITUTIONS OR PROJECTS/ORGANISATIONS DERIVED FROM ART INSTITUTIONS: TATE EXCHANGE/TATE; CENTRE FOR POSSIBLE STUDIES/SERPENTINE GALLERY; THE PUBLIC SCHOOL/TELIC ARTS EXCHANGE. CLUSTERED TO THE RIGHT-HAND SIDE ARE ARTIST-LED PROJECTS/ORGANISATIONS.

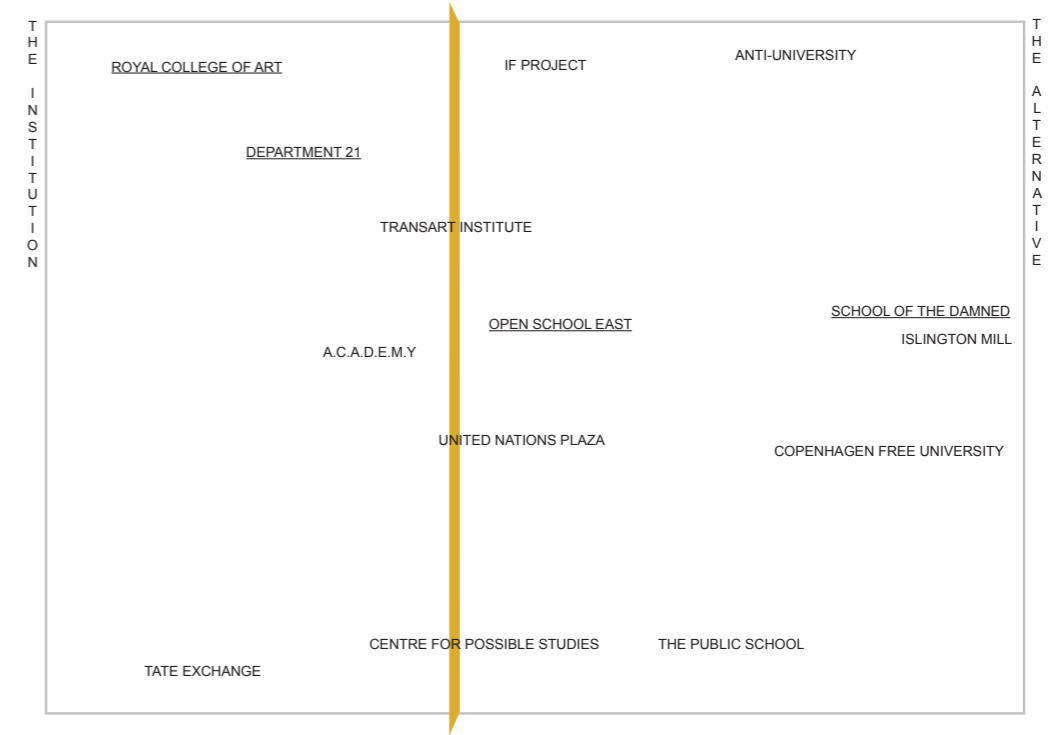


Figure 3, Susannah Haslam, *The institution/the alternative* (diagram), 2017

Figures 2 and 3 present two sketches of ‘the alternative’ that I have drawn together following critical geographer Duncan Fuller and institutional economist Andrew E.G. Jonas’ schema of ‘the alternative’ from their text ‘Alternative Financial Spaces’. I have used their schema to guide and support my own delineations outlined above between distinctions 1, 2 and 3, where 1 represents practices *internal* to existing institutions, 2 represents practices *aligned* to existing institutions, and 3 represents practices *distinct* from existing institutions. Referring to Lütticken’s distinction of practices of para- and alter-institutionality, points 1 and 2 would be para-institutional practices and point 3 would encompass alter-institutional practice. Figure 2 presents the correlation between Fuller and Jonas’ schema and my own using examples of key alternative practices, programmes and organisations of the Educational Turn referred to across my research. These examples are plotted to detail the distinctions between key people, institutions and events, with the additional inclusion of some organisations external to discourse on the Educational Turn. Figure 3 presents another perspective that sketches illustrative criteria that constitutes a typical example of an existing, formal art school that ‘the alternative’ exists in relation to.

The nature of ‘the alternative’ as part of the Educational Turn throws up political and organisational issues around *whose alternative* and *alternative to what*. As such, it is important to clarify that its use here builds from Fuller and Jonas’ three-part schema, which is a useful reference to compare against my own delineations, *internal*, *aligned* and *distinct*. Drawing from their model has been invaluable in its allusion to a wider critique of economic institutions, particularly as it offers another perspective on how to rethink the idea of critiquing institutions that make up the domain of contemporary art, and in its reference to the unavoidable persistence of ‘the alternative’ in relation to the one-track model of global capitalism, across domains ranging education to finance. In their text Fuller and Jonas illustrate a three-fold articulation of ‘the alternative’, these are: the notion ‘alternative-oppositional’³⁵⁸ which describes forms that ‘actively and consciously’³⁵⁹ embody the alternative ontologically; forms that enact their difference to others’ non-alternativeness. This enactment represents a rejection of other mainstream forms. The notion ‘alternative-additional’³⁶⁰ describes supplementary or ancillary forms;

358 Fuller and Jonas, ‘Alternative Financial Spaces’, in *Alternative Economic Spaces*, p. 57.

359 Ibid.

360 Ibid.

those that present a choice in relation to other, existing forms and those that do not negate or actively reject those other forms. The notion ‘alternative-substitute’³⁶¹ describes forms that enact replacement. These substitute those forms that either no longer exist and therefore can both embody being a form of new alternative, or that exist on the basis of a necessity when there is a clear need for such a form.

Each of these distinctions can be used to categorise what I describe above as a general designation of the alternative as is observed across the practices of the Educational Turn. Referring to figure 2, my appropriation of Fuller and Jonas’ schema can be observed by placing a cross-section of examples from between c. 2000 and the present. The second set of categories I have added (the dimension across the top) account for the alternatives’ proximity to and from the formal education institution (the criteria for which is detailed in figure 2). ‘The alternative’ is to be read in the diagram according to the following terms:

1 As a condition and principle of a set of practices under the aegis of the Educational Turn.

2 These practices do not adhere to a clear-cut ‘in or out’ designation of ‘the alternative’ in relation to traditional institutions of arts education. Instead, a plural definition has emerged that includes: those *internal* to the institution, those *aligned* to the institution and those *distinct* from the institution. Note: lack of original or new organisational models held under the aegis of the Turn, bar those located in the bottom right dimension ‘substitute-distinct’ (see: figure 2).

3 Following Fuller and Jonas’ three-part schema and my variations on the alternative taking organisational forms articulated as ‘alternative-opposition’, ‘alternative-additional’ and ‘alternative substitute’.

In figures 2 and 3, ‘the institution’ is defined as educational (unless otherwise stated, for example, as arts institution) and by the following criteria:

1 Access is conditional on tuition fees: engendering issues of elitism and accessibility and marks education’s inclusion into a market.

2 Access is conditional on degrees of academic attainment and evidence of a standard of work, engendering issues of meritocracy and accreditation which enforces and sustains an academic culture of intellectualism.

361 Ibid.

3 Status and hierarchy often informed by historical precedence promotes a culture of tradition that continues the foundation of education and the formal principles of the university, schooling and pedagogy.

4 Symbolic and structural ideals of the institution(s) of education are sanctioned by government, instituted through policy and are limited by complex bureaucratic measures, which are at odds with education's status as a human right and for common public good.

The two definitions of 'alternative' and 'institution' are illustrated in figure 3 drawing on typical examples from each category, with a few examples presented as a scale between them (underlined). Most of the entries in figure 2 are defined by their rejection or projected dissatisfaction with traditional institutions of education (art schools and arts and humanities education broadly). They reject or are dissatisfied with the criteria of the institution listed immediately above (1–4). They actively embody critical alternatives in variation to these conventional criteria. To refer back to Malik, it is useful to consider to what degree these manifestations of rejection and embodiment in figure 2 can be defined as sentimental or political. If what distinguishes the sentimental from the political, according to Malik, is a misleading claim to contemporary art, via its 'democratic', 'anti-institutional' and 'common appeal', then those held by this status are logically sentimental in nature. However, to be *for* contemporary art is different from being *of* it; and many of these examples, in principle, they are *for* contemporary art and in most cases, claim to be and are democratic in their organisation, are anti-institutional in principle, and for the common good. Then, how are these distinctions clarified and to what ends?

Some of the entries in figure 2, for example, Enrol Yourself, the *IF* Project and the Leeds Creative Timebank, exist outside of the contemporary art world, in order to present a wider set of contexts and put forward their combined capacity to be considered as speculative models for arts education without the inference of sentimentality. These largely feature in the bottom-right corner, where other entries are part of the contemporary art world across education, public galleries, organisations, etc. Each entry shares a commitment to other possible realities and constituencies in and of arts education; there appears to be an inherent acknowledgement that these schools and organisations or programmes can currently (or only) exist *in addition to* formal examples

of education. Further, perhaps to substitute, after Fuller and Jonas, is to completely recompose the landscape of arts education, to avoid Malik's sentimentality. In figure 2 it is useful to note the distinctions between the entries in the 'substitute-distinct' section and those elsewhere (which are either affiliated to the academic institution or are operating in the domain of contemporary art). These examples embody difference from others and the institution to which, through my research, they figure as alternatives, through innovative organisational structures offering something new, or by replacing something that either was not working or did not previously exist. For example, Dockray's Public School began as a radical grassroots learning network, and is now a radical international learning network; Jonny Munday and Barbara Gunnell's *IF* Project was conceived to both substitute and supplement the demise of/existing foundation year structure, but instead of being aimed at art and design programmes, it encompasses the wider disciplinary remit of the arts and humanities, as such offering something new; Enrol Yourself presents a combination of both, building from the organisational structures/networks in the co-working sector and provides a niche, tailored 'learning marathon'³⁶² for adults that presents itself as 'affordable, flexible, customisable lifelong learning.'³⁶³

One of the most striking revelations in figure 2 is that, as a generalised overview of some of the most frequently referenced projects, programmes, organisations and figures mentioned in the literature of the Educational Turn, there are few (at least those which have been examined in my research), that present themselves as long-term arts education substitutes. While some do come close, particularly in the current context of 2017 as my research and the landscape have evolved, few of these alone make contribution by way of substitution, if at all, to the wider landscape of arts education. However, when considered together, what is presented is a new collective domain of alternative arts education.

It is useful to refer to what Colin of Open School East mentioned in conversation, that the role that these organisations play is 'minor',³⁶⁴ relative to the wider landscape of arts education, and at the time of Open School East's conception in London in 2013, there only existed 'a few very small [projects] that were very confidential'³⁶⁵ and '[...] all

362 Enrol Yourself, <https://www.enrolyourself.com> [accessed 18 October 2017]

363 Ibid.

364 Colin, telephone interview with the author, 21 April 2017

365 I understand this to mean that they were largely inward-facing and distinct from one another.

about the art world and art and the position of the artist'.³⁶⁶ While this has changed, and there exists a collective frame around these projects through the Educational Turn, my research has worked to focus on another set of alternatives, namely those existing in the 'substitute-distinct' dimension of figure 2. This is in order to examine how these might offer something new for alternative arts education, that together form something propositional in the longer-term. As there is categorically not an 'in or out' alternative status among those exemplified in the figures, it appears that this alternative scale is representative of volume and plurality, or abundance, but not homogenisation, on closer examination. From this conclusion, my research proposes working towards conceiving a new substitute, following Fuller and Jonas' distinction.

Knowledge mobility

A demarcation can be made around three loose distinctions of how a concept of knowledge can begin to be articulated in relation to the work of the Turn as discussed in the previous two chapters:

- 1 A structural and methodological understanding of knowledge.
- 2 A conceptual understanding of knowledge.
- 3 An epistemological and institutional understanding of knowledge.

Each of these distinctions are drawn from the sometimes-abstract reference to knowledge as a placeholder for educational forms and their critical appraisal in relation to wider discussions of formal arts institutions that concern their professionalisation through apparatus such as the Bologna Declaration. As a means of addressing the problems of 'double instrumentalisation' and the issues surrounding 'the alternative' of alternative arts education, I have derived the critical term 'knowledge mobility'.

As a notion that has emerged through examining the literature and contextual practices of the Turn, it is conceptually concerned with the idea that contemporary art has instrumentalised educational forms that work to produce and facilitate knowledge. As such, the work of the Turn has obliquely co-opted an idea of knowledge (via education), which is premised on its capacity as a means of and to organisational activity. Such organisational activity is educational, by definition. This term is arrived at through critiquing the Educational Turn as an artistic phenomenon, on the basis that its practices

366 Ibid.

and discourse have elicited this ambivalent subject of knowledge. This has emerged predominantly from the surrounding intellectual culture, not least through the Turn's association to the institutional and epistemological framing of knowledge(s), which this research does not focussing on, but nonetheless acknowledges. This subject of knowledge is rendered ambivalent insofar that it is less an epistemological field, instead a form of socialised knowledge drawn from the types of practices that constitute contemporary alternative arts education, which premise constituents coming together *with* and *around* shared knowledge.

This notion can be framed by three existing perspectives in the literature: between what Holert has called a 'knowledge politics', which is defined 'broadly as epistemic activity, be it individual or collective, human or non-human [...] as the self-organisation of the social brain.'³⁶⁷ For Holert, this socialised formation is understood as a means of delineating what has been the conflation of knowledge, art and politics as an effect of the imposition of the knowledge economy on practices of contemporary art. In particular, as these come to be aligned to questions of epistemology through aesthetic projects such as the Educational Turn, a second perspective refers to the way that Rogoff has discussed 'unframed knowledge' that is conditional on its capacity to function as something that 'does rather than is',³⁶⁸ which is therefore active and not concerned solely with simply making statements. For Rogoff this functional knowledge is distinct from its bound, or objectified rendition:

[where it] is not geared towards "production," it has the possibility of posing questions that combine the known and the imagined, the analytical and the experiential, and which keep stretching the terrain of knowledge so that it is always just beyond the border of what can be conceptualised.³⁶⁹

A third perspective connects Phillips' 'education aesthetics' which critically questions the efficacy of forms and sites of alternative knowledge production, pedagogy and education that are conceived as 'utopian socialised site[s] by organisations and individuals outside

367 Holert, 'Margins of (Re)presentability Contemporary Art and Knowledge Politics', <https://www.onlineopen.org/margins-of-re-presentability> [accessed 18 October 2017]

368 Rogoff, 'FREE', p. 1.

369 Ibid.

of orthodox educational structures',³⁷⁰ to the questions raised through eliciting knowledge in this way from the practices of contemporary art.

This triangulated notion is framed through finding that consistent recourse to such a cumulatively abstract conception of knowledge is present across much of the defining literature of the Turn. As such, my research has developed 'knowledge mobility' as the critical terminology, which the following presentation of the research practice in Chapter Four employed as a vernacular to address and discuss a possible alternative model to those discussed in the previous chapters. If this notional understanding of knowledge is what is at the heart of alternative forms of arts education, is the central marker of coming together around knowledge that is not institutionally defined, then it stands to serve in this research as a central constituent factor of alternative educational forms.

Moving forward through the thesis with this notion of knowledge mobility, the research shifts its focus from critiquing the work of the Educational Turn, to identifying a set of alternative models outside of its remit that similarly produce and facilitate knowledge as part of their organisational capacities. This shift allows me to contribute thinking to the field in a way that is distinct from focusing on the idea of education as an artistic medium, or equally by producing an exhaustive, historical survey of these practices. Through recognising that part of the claim that the Turn works to instrumentalise education to the ends of contemporary art, knowledge mobility is formulated as a term that is defined by its capacity to foreground the social and organisational *act* of alternative arts education, as a *mode* of organisational practice. By highlighting knowledge in this way, as a constituent component of the practice of alternative arts education, I critique the existing discourse on the basis that it has neglected a set of other organisational formations that I identify in timebanking, co-working, foundation year and artist-development models.³⁷¹ I have identified these models on the basis of how they each come to manifest this notion of knowledge mobility, as a form of collective organisation, that in their own ways have begun to formulate models of education that are concomitant to the production, facilitation and movement of knowledge, even though they do not always explicitly present as educational. My intention then is to highlight the capacity of these other organisational models as potential

370 Phillips, 'Education Aesthetics', p. 84.

371 These are presented in figure 2 in the previous section.

spaces of alternative arts education, through this *act* and *mode* of knowledge mobility in collective organisation.

After Holert's framing of epistemic activities, I propose that knowledge mobility after the Educational Turn describes the *activity* specific to alternative practices of education. Their formats often originate in conventional applications of education institutions, which are understood as locations or means to knowledge. This rudimentary understanding is universal insofar as common sites of formal education – school, university – are associated with an epistemological or disciplinary concept of knowledge that is often attributed as a process of giving and receiving. However, in formal sites, knowledge becomes an object of exchange and part of a culture of transaction, which is defined by the critical pedagogue Paulo Freire as the 'banking' model of education. Freire understands the banking concept as a process limited to depositing, where a 'narrating Subject'³⁷² (teacher), fills the 'listening objects'³⁷³ (students) with knowledge, around which a bureaucratic framework of education ensures that education is enacted around a series of transactions: knowledge in exchange for a monetary fee.

This model is one that is administered by most higher education institutions, reinforcing the idea that education is contingent upon economic exchange and the systemic values that are implicit within this. In the Educational Turn's attempts to contest and alleviate this culture of transaction, it instrumentalises education and the type of knowledge it produces in a way that subjects it (education and knowledge) to a cursory culture of circulation bound to either the art market or art's institutions. Education and knowledge become then forms of artistic object or ephemera, or are read against aesthetic frameworks that grant this discourse with the negotiation of representation and permit its logic into a historical genealogy. If the work of the Educational Turn simultaneously produces this notion and binds it, then as a form of critique, knowledge mobility must figure in pragmatic terms that bridge the motivations and intentions of the work of the Turn to organisational practices beyond its remit that would work to avoid its framing according to aesthetic value.

In framing a form of deregulated knowledge that is emergent across conflated domains of knowledge, art and politics, Holert proposes that a way to understand this type of knowledge is through its 'compris[ing] usage and enactment/enacting language,

372 Paulo Freire, 'Chapter 2', in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (London: Penguin, 1996), p. 52.

373 Ibid.

speaking, writing, lecturing, thinking, discussing, teaching, learning, programming, writing code, archiving, organising, being creative' where 'knowledge is [...] irreducible to rational cognition.'³⁷⁴ What is meant by this is that knowledge and its associated practices need to be acknowledged as an operative set of actions. Not least this emergent redefinition, according to Holert, is to be read through the lens of the knowledge economy and its demands,³⁷⁵ particularly in the way that the project of the Educational Turn can be seen as a retaliatory gesture to such demands. The conflation of knowledge, art and politics see propositions such as the re-emergence of the (knowledge) commons holding a stake in how, for instance, contemporary art and its educational formats can begin to resist its continued shaping by the knowledge economy, or its withdrawal from it.

For Holert, the current exhibitionary apparatus of the contemporary art world manifest in the 'art/knowledge compound'³⁷⁶ are defined by a shift in this subjugation of knowledge, where the 'display' and 'performance' of knowledge, through 'research, documentation [and] the normalisation of para-academic and educational formats' have worked to confuse and conflate the fields which it straddles. In the context of the Turn, these are contemporary art and the field of education, and between them, this idea of knowledge mobility is raised in attempt to move away from this confusing conflation, where knowledge is reconfigured as an active mode of education and not an object of it.

If knowledge mobility functions as a mode of critique, it has also been at various stages the subject of my research, before realising that it figures and functions pragmatically. Both conceptually and terminologically the derivation of knowledge mobility has been a means of attempting to write into my work what might come after the Educational Turn by way of alternative arts education. Knowledge mobility is a development and departure from the problematic vocabulary of 'knowledge exchange' as an institutional mechanism of the knowledge economy that capitalises on the exchange of bodies or objects of knowledge. Knowledge exchange as a terminology is insufficient both in terms of the implication of transaction and its lack of critical agency about that which it seeks to exploit at the level of education. It is limited as a term to appropriately describe what alternative educational models do, insofar as their organisational capacities,

374 Holert, 'Margins of (Re)presentability Contemporary Art and Knowledge Politics', p. 7.

375 Ibid.

376 Ibid., pp. 8–9.

through its affiliation to a process of capitalisation of the type of knowledge (through educational practices) that my research aims to move away from.

In his text, 'Art in the Knowledge-based Polis', Holert contextualises these distinctions by drawing on a range of contemporary contexts that subject and attribute knowledge to the discourse on contemporary art. Holert refers to Simon Sheikh's thinking, that 'the notion of knowledge production implies a certain placement of thinking, of ideas, within the present knowledge economy.'³⁷⁷ Holert discusses how, in light of this, it is useful to consider how locations of contemporary art can in fact work towards making a productive distinction from the rhetorics and impositions of such a knowledge economy, towards understanding how a particular type of knowledge can be articulated that emerges specifically from the 'actual situations and meanings of art, artistic practice, and art production.'³⁷⁸ Sheikh continues by stating that the 'repercussions of such a placement [in relation to the knowledge economy] within art and art education can be described as an increase in "standardisation," "measurability," and "the molding [sic] of artistic work into the formats of learning and research."³⁷⁹ In this way, Sheikh's examination serves to clarify how both this notion of knowledge and its expanded frame of education (formats of learning and research) become co-opted by apparatus of the knowledge economy that seek to 'standardise', 'measure' and 'mould'.

In terms of my research, the danger is that artistic work *as* alternative arts education, as self-organised political and organisational gestures and the institutions of education, become conflated and fold into one complex discourse. This counters Holert's claim that asserts contemporary art as a space wherein the rhetorics of knowledge and education become unhinged from such a knowledge economy. Further, to consolidate this, Holert references how the work of the Educational Turn in particular, through its 'discursive formats of the extended library-cum-seminar-cum-workshop-cum-symposium-cum-exhibition have become preeminent modes of addressing and forms of knowledge production.'³⁸⁰ In light of this we can observe how these practices have worked to embody a new notion of knowledge that is at once inherently connected to

377 Simon Sheikh in Holert, 'Art in the Knowledge-Based Polis', http://worker01.e-flux.com/pdf/article_40.pdf [accessed 18 October 2017], p.1.

378 Holert, *ibid.*

379 *Ibid.*

380 *Ibid.*

the prevailing knowledge economy; the apparatus of institutional education; and the specificity of discursive and educational practice that the Turn produces.

It is between these demarcations that I have arrived at the term knowledge mobility. Through engaging my research across positions in the surrounding literature of the Turn, a new organisational notion of knowledge begins to take shape that functions as a mode of critique as ‘knowledge mobility’. This often-oblique notion is not defined by what it is or what it is not, but rather how it functions as a capacity towards the constitution of a type of organisational practice. This manifests as the act of constituting ‘the alternative’. Following the Educational Turn, this is spurred on in part by the desire to find other alternative forms of education towards their instantiation as modes of ‘public good’³⁸¹ which operate outside of the limiting contexts of contemporary art as described across the previous chapters. Therefore, knowledge in this research must be understood as a function or capacity, not as object or novel commodity, of the Educational Turn (contemporary art). Then, this function is something that is substantiated by its own capacity to act in the context of arts education and its organisations, to critique and propose by nature of it being a response in action. In part two of this chapter, I discuss ‘the dialogic’ as the methodological means of configuring this response in action, and the discussions which follow in Chapter Four are premised on this response *in action*.

Part two: The dialogic

It is to the reality which mediates men, and to the perception of that reality held by educators and people, that we must go to find the program content of education. The investigation of what I have termed the people’s “thematic universe” – the complex of their “generative themes” – inaugurates the dialogue of education as the practice of freedom. The methodology of that investigation must likewise be dialogical, affording the opportunity both to discover generative themes and to stimulate people’s awareness in regard to these themes. Consistent with the liberating purpose of dialogical education, the object of the investigation is not persons, but rather the thought-language with which men and women refer to reality, the levels at which they perceive that reality, and their view of the world, in which their generative themes are found.³⁸²

381 My conversations with Sue Ball, Araceli Camargo, Anne Fritz, Johnny Munday, Lotte Juul Petersen and Chelsea Pettitt each discuss the idea of public good, via their motivations behind their respective organisations.

382 Freire, ‘Chapter 3’, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, pp. 77–78.

Implicit in such an understanding of knowledge mobility as introduced in part one, is ‘the dialogic’ or a process of ‘dialogisation’. As I have posited the notion of knowledge mobility to be contingent on the socialising capacities of knowledge that can be manifest through alternative arts education, I introduce a discussion of ‘the dialogic’ as the methodological approach I have taken to proceed with the research practice. This part of the research considers that if an alternative to the alternatives produced as part of the Educational Turn can be found outside of the frame of the Turn, then it addresses just how dialogic engagement with organisations outside of the Turn might propose something other for the future of alternative arts education. In order to address this, the research draws on the principles of dialogue as both a structuring metaphor for the rationale this research takes, and as the literal act of sustained speech, or conversation, as a method by which I explore the capacity of organisations outside of the Turn to propose an alternative model of arts education to those discussed in the previous chapters. Following Freire who ascribes the ‘people’s “thematic universe”’ to the emergence of freedom *through* dialogue, then it follows that a dialogic approach to this part of the research will help frame the way in which new models of alternative arts education become a possibility outside of the Educational Turn.

Structuring metaphor

Dialogisation is taken from twentieth-century philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin’s understanding of how dialogue as a form of speech action and artistic device constitutes a process of relativisation between its constituents and the things (subjects, objects and concepts) to which it refers. What is meant by relativisation is to highlight the way in which an understanding and application of ‘the dialogic’ can elicit and model a process of connecting and relativising constituents (concepts, voices, objects). Explicitly, this refers to the people and organisational models that I aim to bring together through my research. In this way, I am focussing on the notions of speech and language as potential organisational phenomena that encompass one such component of organising forms of education around knowledge as is described in part one of this chapter.

Taking these notions further, I understand the process of dialogisation as a means of permitting and interrelating the many voices and propositions that this research brings into its orbit, from both the established domain of the Educational

Turn and the organisations outside of it with which my research practice engages. Not least, I understand this process of dialogisation as being a form of articulating the notion of knowledge mobility that the above-mentioned triangulation of ‘epistemic activities’, ‘unknown knowledge’ and ‘utopian socialised sites’ encompass as criteria for the constitution of alternative arts education. In methodological terms, dialogisation describes the process by which my voice as a researcher, the many voices that constitute the field of alternative arts education and additional voices that exist externally to the field, but which none the less speak of the same subject (knowledge mobility), are brought together. For, ‘[a] word, discourse, language or culture undergoes “dialogisation” when it becomes relativised, de-privileged, aware of competing definitions for the same things’.³⁸³ In light of the above articulation of knowledge, it follows that ‘knowledge mobility’, as a central component to alternative arts education, is defined in part through its socialisation. The acts of organising around knowledge all form around a notion of the social that encompasses collective acts of coming together, and working together around knowledge; it is an active organisational component of educational practice. From Bakhtin, ‘the dialogic’ is then the condition that permits a process of the dialogisation³⁸⁴ of knowledge and education in organisational terms.

Bakhtinian dialogue is central to his discourse on the novel,³⁸⁵ which is understood as a condition of its heteroglossia. In this context heteroglossia is taken as an artistic phenomenon; the moment where the ‘compositional unities’ of speech (specifically ‘genre’ in Bakhtin’s work on the novel) ‘permits a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships’.³⁸⁶ In this research, such ‘compositional unities’ are marked theoretically and practically in its intertextual approach to researching in a way that aims to transpose its arguments with action (critique with proposition). With reference to the way in which Bakhtin understands ‘the dialogic’ as a process of ‘relativisation’ and ‘de-privileging’ through heteroglossia,

383 Michael Holquist and Caryl Emerson, ‘Glossary’, in *The Dialogic Imagination*, trans. by Holquist and Emerson (London: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 427.

384 The term dialogisation specifically is not Bakhtin’s own, but is derived from his translator, Michael Holquist’s understanding of Bakhtin’s theoretical project. Michael Holquist, ‘Existence as Dialogue’, in *Dialogism* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 15.

385 On the novel, Bakhtin states that ‘it orchestrates all its themes, the totality of the world of objects and ideas depicted and expressed in it, by means of the social diversity of speech types and by the differing individual voices that flourish under such conditions.’ Mikhail Bakhtin, ‘Discourse in the Novel’, in *The Dialogic Imagination*, p. 263.

386 Ibid.

this research understands it as a form of world view and rationale to the research that acknowledges the plurality of positions about its subject, and one that acknowledges the capacity of language, text and voice as modes of constituting the world. The plurality of positions in this research reflect Bakhtin’s notion of ‘competing definitions for the same thing’,³⁸⁷ that is, critical practices that are located both within the frame of the Educational Turn and outside of it that attend to the idea of ‘knowledge mobility’ and that model alternative forms of arts education. This notion of ‘de-privileging’ from Bakhtin is one that I understand to be located in the act of research that permits the unhinging of discourse from the confines of the Educational Turn within the remit of contemporary art.

I take Bakhtin’s dialogue (of relativisation) in conjunction with Freire’s framing of an applied use of ‘dialogics’³⁸⁸ in relation to his theory of critical pedagogy, which he developed during the 1960s. His project against the use of pedagogy as an oppressive instrument worked to actively critique the colonisation of societies through the use of education as a means of oppression, towards the liberalisation of the oppressed in part through dialogue. For Freire, dialogue is achieved through praxis, which neither figures solely through ‘verbalism’ *nor* ‘activism’³⁸⁹ but through a combination of ‘reflection *and* action directed at the structures to be transformed’.³⁹⁰ From Freire, my research engages in this conceptual framing of reflection and action as a means to and capacity of alternative arts education. When read in relation to Bakhtin, what emerges is a process of relativisation *and* reflection and action. Freire’s educational approach rejects the widespread ‘banking’ model of education mentioned previously, which is premised on its capacity to maintain distinction and hierarchy between teacher, student and object of knowledge. That is, ‘[i]nstead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorise, and repeat.’³⁹¹ Cumulatively this contributes to sustaining apparatuses of power, through educational forms, which can be paralleled with Illich’s discussion of the distinction between ‘manipulative’ and ‘convivial’³⁹² institutions. These are examined in ‘Institutions, subjectification and subversion’ in Appendix 2. For Freire, dialogue is constituted by

387 Holquist and Emerson, p. 427.

388 Freire, pp. 68–75.

389 Jones Irwin, ‘Developing an analysis of pedagogy of the oppressed’, in *Paulo Freire’s Philosophy of Education* (London: Continuum, 2012), p. 65.

390 Ibid. [Italics my own]

391 Freire, p. 53.

392 Illich, ‘Institutional Spectrum’, in *Deschooling Society*, p. 53.

this process of reflection and action, as methods of pedagogy that work to unhinge this ‘banking’ model of education from its recourse to the transaction of knowledge-as-object to student-as-container, in return for a monetary exchange.

This research works to parallel Freire’s notions of reflection and action with Bakhtin’s notion of de-privileging and relativisation, and posits that an alternative to the alternative art school model can be explored through the *act* of conversation, as the practice of reflection and action. Freire’s conception of a dialogic education is premised on ‘communication and intercommunication among active subjects’,³⁹³ where a dialogic relationship is ‘indispensable to knowledge’,³⁹⁴ it is also the formation of social nature. In ‘Pedagogy of the Oppressed’, Freire speaks of the ‘human phenomenon’³⁹⁵ of dialogue whose composition of reflection and action is governed by ‘*the word*’,³⁹⁶ and which is pre-eminently based in actions that transform the world, through work³⁹⁷ and praxis. Such a transformative action in the world is instituted through what he calls ‘authentic education’,³⁹⁸ which he argues to be based on dialogue in the distinction that an education is carried out by “‘A’ with ‘B’”³⁹⁹ and not ‘for’ or ‘about’⁴⁰⁰ B. Freire’s dialogue, as a programme for authentic education, is mediated by the world that ‘impresses and challenges both parties, giving rise to views or opinions about it’.⁴⁰¹ This model of authentic education, which is mediated by the world, reflects Bakhtin’s heteroglossia,

393 Freire, ‘Dialogism’, in *Pedagogy of the Heart*, trans. by Donald Macedo and Alexandre Oliveira (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), p. 54.

394 Ibid.

395 Ibid., ‘Chapter 3’, in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, p. 68.

396 Ibid. [Italics in original] Freire presents ‘the word’ as equal to work which is equal to praxis. ‘Thus, to speak a true word is to transform the world’ (p. 67) that is, by the imprint of practicing. Such a transformation for Freire is contingent upon the naming of the world which means to change it. Which is ‘the right of everyone’ (p. 68). Where this type of work or praxis is dialogic, is in encounter, and through the forging of commitment, it is loving, humble, full of faith and hope and contrived through critical thinking. It is also ‘the reality which mediates men’ which is the reality that education must be based upon, it is contingent to any given present, which Freire describes as ‘the people’s “thematic universe.”’ (p. 77)

397 Though Freire and Barthes come from the distinct traditions of education and literature, their categorisation of work is useful here for my research: for Freire, work is constituted equally through praxis and reflection and action, that is, it is the work which qualifies the true word which is the essence of dialogue. For Barthes, work is the ‘finished object’ of text, where work is defined in terms that are heterogeneous to language and where text remains homogenous to language. Between Freire and Barthes, we encounter work that is commensurate to the true word of work and practice, and work that operates both within and outside of language.

398 Freire, p. 74.

399 Ibid. [Italics in original]

400 Ibid. [Italics in original]

401 Ibid.

whereby a subject is formed through the compositional unities – voices and perspectives – that refer to its *in the world* contexts, which in turn constitutes the contemporaneity of such education.

The dialogic is understood in this research as a means of permitting an intertextual approach to research, as a method of transposing discrete elements of the research (across its theoretical and practical positions). I have drawn, in addition to Bakhtin and Freire, on Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes’ framing of intertextuality, after Socratic dialogue as an act of syncretism,⁴⁰² which ‘confront[s] different discourses on the same topic’,⁴⁰³ in order to present the scope of this research and as a means of being able to read across and present different perspectives of the research and its findings. Kristeva and Barthes imply through their thinking on intertextuality that the practice of transposing different elements of things (texts)⁴⁰⁴ progresses meaning and understanding simultaneously. Kristeva draws from the Socratic method through its levelling of confrontation and correlation or ‘a question and testing, through speech, of a definition.’⁴⁰⁵ Whereby a type of linguistic network is formed that categorically opposes the monologic ‘ready-made truth’⁴⁰⁶ claim of conventional institutional power play, this is emphasised with reference to alternative arts education, in terms of what it seeks to do and how its various forms can be understood as social, networked formations. Kristeva’s analysis of ‘syncretism’ (the confrontation of different perspectives about the same thing) and ‘anacrusis’ (the act of correlation through the accumulation or ‘prompting’ of another thing or perspective) of the linguistic network from the Socratic dialogue method is key to understanding the process by which my research seeks to negotiate a set of propositions outside of the Educational Turn *with* its existing discourse. To methodologically situate intertextuality, I understand a plurality to its function in this work: to correlate the theoretical and practical work of the Turn; to synthesise and transpose disciplinary and critical difference as new and original argument (through critiquing the Turn and through proposition in its movement away from the Turn); and

402 Julia Kristeva, ‘Word, Dialogue, and Novel’, in *Desire in Language A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 81.

403 Ibid.

404 Here text is understood in relation to Barthes’ text as ‘methodological field’ where ‘text is held in language,’ it is the ‘surface and ‘fabric’ of literature and words respectively. Barthes, ‘Theory of the Text’, in *Untying the Text*, ed. by Robert Young (London: Routledge, 1981), pp. 32–45.

405 Kristeva, *ibid.*

406 Ibid.

to account for the contributions made by the research dialogues by such a transposition towards the whole project of the research.

Returning to Barthes, texts become the sites that ‘redistribute language’⁴⁰⁷ and, in epistemological terms, intertextuality is ‘the condition of any text’ which ‘cannot be reduced to a problem of sources or influences’ on the basis that text ‘is a tissue of past citations. Bits of codes, formulae, rhythmic models, fragments of social languages, etc., pass into the set and are redistributed within it.’⁴⁰⁸ Further, he claims that to the text, the transpositional function of intertext permits ‘a volume of sociality’⁴⁰⁹ where ‘the whole of language, anterior or contemporary, comes to the text.’⁴¹⁰ Barthes’ framing of the site of the text as one of social configuration provides more than a metaphor for how I understand its correlation to organisation. His idea of transposing inscriptions, forms that interrelate and correlate, that frames how I perceive the function of this work.

The artist Céline Condorelli’s notion of friendship as a condition for working practice, where practice ‘involves putting fragments in relationship to each other, so that the cumulative sum of [...] things – words, ideas – somehow proposes something that each part alone could not’,⁴¹¹ is key to understanding what Bakhtin, Freire, Kristeva and Barthes put forward through the dialogic, heteroglossia, reflection and action and intertextuality. Here, I have taken these concepts from the domains of literary theory, from Barthes who draws from Kristeva who has drawn further from Bakhtin’s configuration of dialogism, from critical pedagogy in Freire, and from Condorelli’s artistic practice, which elicits the idea of ‘friendship in action’ as a methodological approach to working together. The dialogism (plurality) or conceivable friendship (relationality) of this discourse is not written to be read as one whole object of plurality, but to be read as a synchronic account charting the potential social and cultural affects of a contemporary moment, the collective phenomena of alternative arts education.

Condorelli’s understanding of friendship transposes on to this discussion in the way that it is positioned as a condition of working practice, and functions here as a way of understanding two things methodologically: ‘how we work together’ in the world

407 Ibid., p. 39.

408 Ibid.

409 Ibid.

410 Ibid.

411 Céline Condorelli, ‘Too Close to See: Notes on Friendship, A Conversation With Johan Frederik Hartle’, in *Self-Organised*, p. 64.

with texts, objects, subjects, people, ideas, so dialogically, and also as the invitation by Condorelli to expand the discourse on friendship.⁴¹² This work intends to do through drawing together a set of otherwise disconnected organisations outside of Turn which are premised on similar motivations and attend to the facilitation, production and mobilisation of knowledge in organisational terms. Across these points, Condorelli’s idea of friendship is additionally put into conversation with Schwab’s notion of the exposition,⁴¹³ where ‘expositionality’ is understood as a methodological action within the frame of artistic research, as the simultaneous production of a thing and its own epistemological framework. Specifically, as discussed by Schwab and Henk Borgdorff, the exposition functions as an ‘operator between art and writing’⁴¹⁴ – in essence a mode of communicating research. I understand both friendship and exposition as modes of instituent practice and infrastructural critique, which essentially present themselves as principles of inhabitation and communication through my research.

Bakhtin speaks of this moment of heteroglossia⁴¹⁵ as that which marks the formation of ‘the set of utterances that constitute the verbal life of community.’⁴¹⁶ Importantly, while I take this approach to research, reading and writing from other disciplinary locations, I have attempted through this work, to put them into relation with other iterations of dialogue and contemporaneity. It is at once the methodological approach that this research takes and an advocacy of this approach to research work which transposes theory and practice, particularly in the context of my subject, where the subject has unfolded throughout the process of research. This is discussed more specifically by Rogoff in relation to the field of the Educational Turn, where she speaks about the methodological act of criticality; about the contemporary, that is, the occupation, or the living out and immersion of the field.⁴¹⁷ This inhabitation in turn generates a form of locating or positioning from which to gain ‘heightened awareness’⁴¹⁸ of the greater implications and affects of such positioning, instead of seeking forms

412 Condorelli, ‘Notes on friendship’, in *The Company She Keeps* (London: Book Works, 2014), p. 8.

413 See Appendix 3 for a contextual discussion of this association.

414 Henk Borgdorff and Michael Schwab, ‘Introduction’, in *The Exposition of Artistic Research Publishing Art in Academia* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2014), p. 15.

415 Bakhtin, ‘Discourse in the Novel’, p. 263.

416 Tzvetan Todorov, ‘Theory of the Utterance’, in *Mikhail Bakhtin The Dialogical Principle* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 56.

417 Rogoff, ‘Academy as Potentiality’, p. 18.

418 Rogoff, ‘Smuggling’ – An Embodied Criticality’, <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0806/rogoff1/en> [accessed 18 October 2017]

of resolution that formulate the judgement and exclusion of criticism and critique.⁴¹⁹ Furthermore, for Rogoff, the sense that acting with criticality is commensurate to contemporaneity is defined through criticality's implicit understanding of relationality, particularly insofar as the address of contemporary 'urgent issues'.⁴²⁰ Such issues are alluded to by Rogoff through her notion of permission: the threshold by which one self-authenticates access to unknown and unformulated knowledge, which is located "right here and right now" and embed[s] issues in a variety of contexts, expanding their urgenc[ies].⁴²¹

This part of the research functions in its production of a series of critical and propositional intertexts – dialogues – through which it locates its original contribution in its putting into practice a combined scholarly and practical method of critique and proposition, through conversation, through which to articulate and transmit the research.

Critique/proposition

The critique/proposition function of the research is put forward as a dialogic methodology. This draws across a range of disciplinary locations, highlighted above, that are made proximate through my research. In their volume, 'Artistic research: theories, methods and practices' Mika Hannula, Juha Suoranta and Tere Vadén delineate conversation and dialogue as methods for artistic research. They present a 'methodological trinity'⁴²² comprised of 'contextuality, indexicality and autobiography'.⁴²³ This trinity takes the form of a 'discursive literature',⁴²⁴ in the context of their discussion about the scope of 'methodological pluralism' of variations of artistic research. Though my research is not exclusively embedded in the field of artistic research, it has drawn from its methodological underpinnings that advocate for a research practice of 'methodological pluralism' and relationality as described through 'discursive literature.' The task of a discursive literature according to Hannula, Suoranta and Vadén is to

419 Ibid.
 420 Rogoff, 'FREE', p. 1.
 421 Ibid., p. 9.
 422 Mika Hannula, Juha Suoranta and Tere Vadén, 'Methodological Faces of Artistic Research', in *Artistic Research Theories, Methods and Practices* (Gothenburg: ArtMonitor, 2005), p. 70.
 423 Ibid.
 424 Ibid.

'develop the languages of critique and hope; in other words, to recognise problems and propose solutions for them.'⁴²⁵

As an approach to producing research, the practice of producing a discursive literature is not so much bound to a literary tradition. Instead it is a way of conceptualising and realising a type of research that is both *of* practice and theory in an artistic sense, but is within or proximate to arts disciplines that rely on the writing (discursive literature) of the research to communicate the research in an academic context. Hannula et al, discuss the 'dialectic of the unattainable'⁴²⁶ as the idea of attaining an 'invisible aim that can be identified and sensed but which is not [first] experientially present.'⁴²⁷ Further and importantly, here language is premised as a means of 'determin[ing] what is being talked about, what is being looked at and how it is being looked at.'⁴²⁸

I attribute this mode of conceptualising research to how I have carried out my research practice; through conversation, I began with a sense that evolved through conversation to the manifestation of critically informed dialogue. Hannula et al continue that 'the issue [of the dialectic of the unattainable] is about the tension between the unknown and the known [...] the uncertain and the certain'.⁴²⁹ In pursuit of research this can be understood as a tool for modes of artistic research when language is also the means by which research is carried out, evolved and communicated, and when '[t]he use of language does not only describe things but also literally builds and changes the world, influencing the consciousness of people.'⁴³⁰ In this way, conversation fulfils the space between critique and proposition as a means of building and transforming the research. In this writing of research, in accordance with Hannula et al's methodological trinity, 'contextuality' refers to the 'frameworks of the activity through which the (social) reality [of the work] is made clear, and where meanings are constructed',⁴³¹ which in my work are the sites of the research conversations. 'Indexicality' is the 'temporal-spatial and local expression'⁴³² of the work, which is located within the sites of organisations

425 Ibid., p. 71.
 426 Ibid., p. 68.
 427 Ibid.
 428 Ibid., p. 69.
 429 Ibid.
 430 Ibid.
 431 Ibid., p. 70.
 432 Ibid.

outside the Educational Turn. ‘Autobiography’ links the two together through a ‘narrative-experiential whole’,⁴³³ via the sites of theoretical intertexts that interrelate the conversational research practice, as a conceptual framework.

Building on Hannula et al’s definition of discursive literature, I define this as a methodologically hybrid approach to research, which has conflated and evolved some of the principles of practice-led research, as identified by Henk Borgdorff following Christopher Frayling, Hannula et al, Hazel Smith and Roger Dean and Linda Candy. Though this research is not categorically practice-led, it has been useful to outline the research practice against its distinctions. Sitting somewhere between ‘research on the arts’ and ‘research for the arts’⁴³⁴ after Borgdorff and Frayling, and guided by ‘hermeneutical knowledge-constitutive interests’, which ‘open up new interpretations into some questions or phenomena’⁴³⁵ after Hannula et al, and understand forms of practice ‘leading to research insights’⁴³⁶ after Smith and Dean, the research is concerned with that which has emerged from the conversational research practice which ‘advance[s] knowledge *within* [the] practice’.⁴³⁷ This is as opposed to *about* the practice, a distinction that Candy makes, which distinguishes research practice that makes contribution in theory, as this research does, from modes of practice-based and -led research, in that practice is used to contribute to discourse rather than contributing to a field of what is conventionally understood as, artistic practice.

Act of sustained speech/conversation

In light of the above discussion of dialogue, this research has drawn on conversation as its primary method, which constitutes the overarching research practice that facilitates a set of dialogues with organisations outside the Educational Turn. A distinction between dialogue and conversation here is crucial in distinguishing the rationale from the method. From Bakhtin, Freire, Kristeva and Barthes we can understand dialogue as a means and process of *relativising* and forming intertextual *relations* between subjects, objects and

433 Ibid., p. 71.

434 Henk Borgdorff, ‘The Debate on Research in the Arts’, in *The Conflict of the Faculties Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2012), pp. 37–38.

435 Hannula et al, p. 67.

436 Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean, ‘Introduction’, in *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p. 5.

437 Linda Candy, ‘Practice Based Research: A Guide’, <https://www.creativityandcognition.com/resources/PBR%20Guide-1.1-2006.pdf> [accessed 18 October 2017] [Italics my own]

concepts. Conversation is the constitution of the *communicative* practice of attaining such relativising relations, which as a research method is drawn from Hannula et al’s framing from artistic research, and Maurice Blanchot’s notion of ‘infinite conversation’.⁴³⁸ Conversation operates as the research practice that unifies the overall critique and proposition function of the research. It also premises the development of long-term dialogues with the organisations presented in Chapter Four. I understand conversation’s use as the practice of reflection and action, after Freire’s ‘dialogics’, and one which correlates, articulates and transmits the research both in the context of constituting the thesis, and in the sense that it has initiated long-term relationships, as dialogues, that work to evolve the research, which ensures that the research can be continued beyond the PhD.

Conversation is to be understood less as a prescribed structure, as discussed according to the methods of ‘focussed conversation’ and ‘interview’, whereby those involved are directed through a limited set framework, according to sets of questions framed to derive specific answers, and bodies of analysis, but instead as a method that formulates relationships that are made, developed and sustained through an ongoing practice of conversation. To this end the value in the conversational research method has been in its sustained facilitation, through which findings are subject to the conversation and context’s own evolution, necessarily are changed and reflected on through time. This aspect is framed in the previous section on ‘critique/proposition’, which refers to Hannula et al’s discussion of the ‘dialectic of the unattainable’, where I interpret conversations to work to describe and document, and work to construct and shape their own content. Hannula et al continue by stating that conversation and dialogue together necessitate a ‘research and writing style that values the individual experience’⁴³⁹ through which a ‘discursive literature’ is produced.

In relation to conversation, I take from this discussion of methods permission to step into the field *in conversation*, to work collaboratively *with* organisations as opposed to *about* them. In a discussion on the nature of collaborative case studies, Hannula et al explain that the act of participating, collaborating ‘in the activity of the community [the researcher] strives to solve a certain problem together with the

438 Maurice Blanchot, ‘Interruption As on a Riemann surface’, in *The Infinite Conversation* (London: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), p. 75.

439 Ibid., p. 70.

members of the community.⁴⁴⁰ Stating further that ‘the basic idea of the research is to include those people who are influenced by the research as full members of the research project’.⁴⁴¹ Then, the object of conversation in this research has been conceived of collaboratively and can only be evolved through a commitment to such collaboration. Such a commitment is outlined further by Hannula et al when they describe the issues facing research after conversation has taken place; for example, ‘if there is any significant fixing afterward, results are no longer actual conversations; they have become something else.’⁴⁴² As such, the discussion of the conversations in the following chapter are presented as dialogues that mark the work of the conversations’ longevity, which form propositions to take beyond the work of the PhD.

Conversation as a site to discuss knowledge mobility

A conversational research practice has simultaneously attended to my research aims of stepping outside of the remit of the Educational Turn in order to speculate towards an alternative to the alternative *art school*, and has discursively and critically contributed to the organisations with which the research has engaged through such conversation. These organisations are the Leeds Creative Timebank, THECUBE co-working space, the *IF* Project and Syllabus programme. Conversations with these organisations were formed through observing that existing literature on the Educational Turn has not addressed these models as potential sites of arts education. As is presented in chapters one and two, models that predominately manifest within the frame of the Turn tend to re-articulate formal and existing models of the art school through exhibitionary or artistic means. The conversations presented in the next chapter with founders of these organisations are built around the critical negotiation of knowledge mobility as a tool with which to formulate long-term dialogues. Components of knowledge production, exchange and mobility have been identified through examining the motivations and practices of these organisations, for example:

1 Leeds Creative Timebank: where knowledge mobility describes the practice of how knowledge, skills and ideas are distributed and shared, where knowledge

440 Ibid., p. 89.

441 Ibid.

442 Hannula et al, ‘Face-to-Face, One-to-One: Narrative Interviews’, in *Artistic Research Methodology Narrative, Power and the Public* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2014), p. 49.

is mobilised through time-based exchanges between users of the Timebank. Here, knowledge is used as an alternative form of currency in the context of a specific creative community of members of the Timebank. For example, users of the Timebank, as part of a limited community of creative practitioners, trade skills, knowledge and time with one another; they ‘earn’ and ‘accumulate’ time when ‘jobs’ are completed. Time is accrued as jobs are completed and then spent or traded when skills or knowledge are required. This is administered by a steering group.

2 *IF* Project: knowledge mobility describes the political and economic conditions that have invoked the crisis in arts and humanities education in the UK and motivated organisations like the *IF* Project to provide a possible alternative framework for arts and humanities education at the level of the foundation year. As a potential replacement for the traditional foundation year model, *IF* is an experimental, unaccredited university that has so far organised a series of introductory courses and programmes in the arts and humanities disciplines. Initially these took place across London in free, existing cultural spaces, for example, the Tate galleries and empty classrooms at UCL, and more recently at Toynbee Hall in Whitechapel. This project reflects on the concept of knowledge mobility as a political and economically unstable condition.

3 THECUBE: knowledge mobility becomes a hypothesis that ‘knowledge needs to be mobile’ because ‘we exist in an age of abundant knowledge’,⁴⁴³ according to its founder, Araceli Camargo. Knowledge, for THECUBE, is understood as the composite of cognition (process) and data (object) which, when applied, becomes a tool for education or business. For Camargo, an age of ‘knowledge abundance’ is projected from the combined perspectives of neuroscience and co-working culture, through the observation that modes of access to knowledge are abundant, which is problematic because we can observe through this abundance a culture of compromised, or unfounded, truth and fact. For Camargo, if knowledge is to be mobile, it should be in a way that it is ‘curated’,⁴⁴⁴ meaning that it is the responsibility of new organisations such as co-working spaces to ensure that sustained, foundational connections between education and business, as examples, are made to curate and distribute knowledge appropriately. As a critical and contentious point of discussion that, for THECUBE, describes a

443 Araceli Camargo, conversation with the author, 12 February 2015

444 Ibid.

possible movement in the co-working space sector which is to be made most visible in its organisational structuring, I found it useful to consider how knowledge mobility, taken explicitly, is an effective description towards the critique of organisation and space.

4 Syllabus at Wysing Arts Centre: knowledge mobility is a mode of conceptually addressing the potential role of arts organisations in relation to the crisis of arts education in the UK. Knowledge mobility refers to the symbolic and structural capacities of small–medium arts organisations as new and alternative sites of arts education. Wysing’s position as a charitable arts organisation, a site of arts research, practice, exhibition and professional development for artists presents an innovative and progressive configuration that offers something altogether substitutive in terms of the landscape of alternative arts education. It does so in a way that draws across its own remit to produce a new perspective on the function and value of arts education. (Conversations with Syllabus were primarily evaluative, towards thinking speculatively how future alternative arts education might be realised; hence I acknowledge Wysing’s proximity to the domain of contemporary art.)

These conversations have formed distinct and long-term dialogues (between the research and organisations outside of the Educational Turn) that together, and through discussion in the next chapter, present a set of speculative propositions about a possible future of alternative arts education. It is important to note that knowledge mobility is interpreted and conceived of differently between each organisation. The nature of conversation as a research method accounts for this plurality in perspectives, which has proven invaluable for my research as it informs the wide-ranging scope of propositions derived from the dialogues.

Practice of conversation

Director of The Showroom in London, Emily Pethick’s delineation of conversation’s function is useful to underpin the rationale for using conversation as a research method. Pethick has discussed conversation as a generator of ‘forms of exchange that are not fixed or static, but rather sustain ongoing processes of engagement, responsiveness and change.’⁴⁴⁵ Here I interpret Pethick’s idea as putting forward conversation as a form of infrastructure, or framework. She cites the artist Ricardo Basbaum’s notion that

445 Pethick, ‘Resisting institutionalisation’, in *Nought to Sixty*, p. 251.

conversation is a ‘modality of movement’⁴⁴⁶ on the basis of its transformative capacity – in other words, present in conversation are varying degrees of mutability and chance that culminate in perpetuity of the unknown. This notion of perpetuating the unknown via conversation and its transformation is discussed in another way by Blanchot through his conception of ‘infinite conversation.’⁴⁴⁷ For Blanchot, this is constituted through the act of interruption, which he argues is the basis for progressing conversation, through what he terms ‘subordinated alternation.’⁴⁴⁸ Blanchot’s thinking notionally draws from the pragmatics of conversation; he writes, ‘the very enigma of language [is]: pause between sentences, pause from one interlocutor to another, and pause of attention.’⁴⁴⁹

This parallels Hannula et al’s statement that ‘[a]s an act, [conversation] is not an act about just listening, and it is not a conversation that talks about something.’ It is also ‘a meeting of both being with and talking with – seriously being willing and able to get into the argument, get into the groove of a give-and-take exchange of nonsecure views and positions.’⁴⁵⁰ I take from Blanchot that which resolves to interrogate and correlate *thinking*, *writing* and *speech*, as discourse, for it is this triptych of forms that have underwritten my research practice and in effect, work towards realising Kristeva’s ‘linguistic network’⁴⁵¹ comprising acts of syncretism and anacrusis. For Blanchot, ‘the definition of conversation [is] when two people speak together, they speak not together, but each in turn: one says something, then stops, the other something else, then stops.’⁴⁵² The necessity of interval, interruption, alternation for Blanchot defines the infinity of conversation. For this research, and to parallel Freire, it defines the productive, propositional capacity of dialogue as a model itself by which alternative forms of pedagogy and education can be organised around, first in its mediation (as in my research practice) and then its realisation (as that which my research aims to speculate on). This works further to correlate Freire’s ‘dialogics’ of radical and critical pedagogy towards substantiating a potential model that could be considered more aligned in alternative terms to something of a substitute. In a very basic sense, conversation provides a framework for continually generative proposition and formation.

446 Ricardo Basbaum in Pethick, *ibid.*

447 Blanchot, ‘Interruption As on a Riemann surface’, p. 75.

448 *Ibid.*

449 *Ibid.*

450 Hannula et al, p. 44.

451 Kristeva, *ibid.*

452 *Ibid.*, p. 75.

An argument against this could follow that if the aim of the research is to find a substitute, then surely that would be an end in itself. However, as my research has so far outlined, the objective is not to reach an end point, by way of a final categorical alternative form, but instead to find a conceivable framework from which a set of substitutes might be drawn. Therefore, a framework that is continually generative is sought to counter what Vidokle has termed to be an issue surrounding homogenisation, in terms of the work of the Educational Turn. Conversation then is constituted conceptually through Blanchot's act of interruption, and my research practice is premised on the dialogic potential of interruption or 'alternation'⁴⁵³ as an act of organisation that is to be continually generative, relative, and a capacity. Blanchot's interruption is what permits knowledge to conversation; is what moves conversation to discourse and dialogue and ensures the possibility of unknown knowledge. Conversation's infinity is premised through its capacity to alternate, and thus to be dialogic and continually relativised. Conversation as a research practice gives to the research a series of continually generative dialogues towards realising potential alternative models of education.

Considering conversation as a site, Blanchot's anecdotal designation of 'interrupted' or 'infinite conversation'⁴⁵⁴ is the space that perpetuates dialogue. This can be paralleled to the way in which Holert appraises commoning, discussed in Chapter One, as a potential site that could establish knowledge as a "rebel" resource,⁴⁵⁵ after Alfredo Macias Vazquez and Pablo Alonso Gonzalez. This is to be understood as a means of countering the onslaught of effects upon the institutions of education by its 'financialisation',⁴⁵⁶ which encompass its 'commercialisation' and 'privatisation',⁴⁵⁷ noted by Janna Graham, Valeria Graziano and Susan Kelly in their essay 'The Educational Turn in Art Rewriting the hidden curriculum.' Blanchot's framing of conversation is as radical insofar as it aims to function as a space of 'common speech',⁴⁵⁸ that is, a site of and for common speech. This is as opposed to one which bears the imposition of the

453 Ibid. Alternation is suggestive of a motion and mobility; this movement of knowledge and its organisation, in conversation, dialogue and education is characteristic of the alternative forms of arts education of the Education Turn at the level of their organisation.

454 Blanchot, *ibid.*

455 Alfredo Macias Vazquez and Pablo Alonso Gonzalez in Holert, 'A *Politics* of Knowledge in Contemporary Art?', *Performance Research*, p. 59.

456 *Ibid.*, p. 58.

457 Janna Graham, Valeria Graziano and Susan Kelly, 'The Education Turn in Art Rewriting the hidden curriculum', *Performance Research*, 29–35.

458 Blanchot, p. 76.

'monologue', as that which is without pause and where the 'power' that entails from 'the only one [able] to speak' lies in the 'rejoic[e] in [the] possession of his high solitary word' and is forced 'without restraint as a superior and supreme speech upon others.'⁴⁵⁹ Blanchot's reckoning of dialogic speech with monologic speech holds a fortuitous analogy to the reckoning of alternative educational forms with institutional forms of education, and what he puts forward, through the idea of interrupted speech, is a process of making knowledge common, via the art of conversation, through conversation's alternation and inclusion.

Holert makes the proposition of the knowledge commons as a serious 'institutional structure'⁴⁶⁰ via his positing that

the multitude [...] is increasingly being identified as the subject of the knowledge commons. [It] has also reached parts of the art world. [Where] it is considered as an issue to be dealt with not least in the context of the continuing crisis in education that affects art schools and higher education in general.⁴⁶¹

Between this and Blanchot's interrupted conversation, we can begin to imagine a possible space of education that is configured to, for and by this idea of knowledge commons, insofar as it is conceived of as an alternative institutional structure. While my aim is not to compare Blanchot's treatment of conversation with Holert's problematising of a knowledge politics in contemporary art, I am taking from Blanchot what I deem to be an ethically appropriate and configured method to research. This is ultimately towards understanding and proposition: 'interruption towards understanding [and] understanding in order to speak'.⁴⁶² Further, the importance of interruption as the basis of actual conversation is also discussed by the philosopher Alva Noë, who refers again to the Socratic approach to conversation as an 'organised activity'.⁴⁶³

Noë claims that philosophy begins in dialogue, and by returning to Socrates we can understand further that such a dialogue is activated first through 'interruption'.⁴⁶⁴

For Noë, Socratic dialogue is pertinent towards understanding how we relate and what

459 *Ibid.*, p. 75.

460 Holert, 'Margins of (Re)presentability Contemporary Art and Knowledge Politics', p. 7.

461 *Ibid.*

462 Blanchot, *ibid.*

463 Alva Noë, 'Getting Organised', in *Strange Tools Art and Human Nature* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2015), p. 6.

464 *Ibid.*, 'Art Loops and the Garden of Eden', p. 36.

we do when we relate; the act of interruption is ‘an interrogation [...] And the aim of the interrogation is to call conversation itself into question.’⁴⁶⁵ This calling conversation into question is how I have approached conversation as a method of research, ‘to exhibit its limits, to bring what we take for granted – into focus as a problem’⁴⁶⁶ which I add as a means of addressing such a problem. In relation to this research, this means that it aims to permit the speech (action or writing) of others (disciplinary locations and sites explored through the dialogues) to the wider conversation about what it means to institute education in alternative ways and modes. Specifically towards an alternative model of education, as a method and as an approach to organisation, the act of conversation draws in part from the JOURNEY / SCHOOL programme outlined in the Preface, that foregrounded conversational form as a modality of knowledge exchange and unformed, expanded ideas of education. This additionally corresponds with how Freire frames the dialogic in relation to his own thinking on education; as the essence of education and the practice of freedom,⁴⁶⁷ whose constituents are ‘loving’, ‘humble’, ‘full of faith’, ‘hopeful’ and think ‘critically.’

Summary and reflections on the method in practice

Early on in my research I decided that taking a conversational and dialogical approach to addressing my questions was an appropriate means of accessing fields outside of the immediate frame of the Educational Turn. It was appropriate insofar that my experiences organising JOURNEY / SCHOOL presented to me the value of the fluidity, fortuity and informality of conversation as a way of both facilitating knowledges in alternative educational environments and a means of organising around knowledge. As I was configuring the approaches to addressing my research, I was introduced to Sue Ball, co-founder of the Leeds Creative Timebank, who invited me to be in residence with the Timebank for a week in May 2014 as a researcher examining alternative education models. The nature of our encounter permitted and provided me with a set of invaluable conversations with the timebank’s users, from which I decided to build on this method to apply in other organisational contexts.

465 Ibid.

466 Ibid.

467 Freire, ‘Chapter 3’ in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, p. 77.

My conversations with Ball and the timebank users were limited insofar as they were organised over the period of a week and, it being an early stage in my research, meant that the focus of our conversations was predominantly orchestrated around learning about the timebank model, in its capacity as an alternative economic structure for the creative community in Leeds. As a researcher, my position in these conversations with the timebank’s users was acknowledged as one who was eliciting knowledge about the organisational structure, and as such my critical reflections on this dialogue are limited to it functioning as a form of pilot conversation for the research practice.

From here, I initiated two separate conversations with co-founder of the *IF* Project, Jonny Munday and co-founder and co-directors of THECUBE, Araceli Camargo and Anne Fritz around the time that I was developing the notion of knowledge mobility as a critical vocabulary. These conversations were initiated as I recognised their capacity to be models that could be considered as alternative options to those emerging within the context of contemporary art. It quickly became evident that our discussions would be more valuable conducted over a longer period of time than a week, as with the Leeds Creative Timebank, and as such, a decision was made to continue our conversations in order to see how they could productively manifest for the benefit of both my work and for the organisations themselves. This is key, as I was conscious that I did not want to position myself as a researcher simply gleaning knowledge from organisations at a distance, but felt my position could effectively contribute to the organisations’ critical reflection of their own work, on the basis of my experiences as an organiser of JOURNEY / SCHOOL. In turn, each collaborator with whom my work has engaged has commented on our dialogues as valuable means of critical reflection, where my research has revealed a set of perspectives, concerning alternative education, for each organisation to build on.

Knowledge mobility and its development as a critical terminology became the central narrative through our discussions, across which we established different lines of thinking according to each organisation. To this degree the conversations were initially mediated by critical discussions of knowledge mobility: how each organisation interpreted it, and how these interpretations would inform my own conceptualisation of it. For example, with *IF*, knowledge mobility became the critical vernacular to describe the condition of crisis in higher education in the UK. With THECUBE, there tended to be a focus on how knowledge mobility could be hypothesised as a working

methodology for its organisation as a co-working space. A collective decision was made with *IF* and THECUBE that we would work towards producing a means of manifesting and communicating our discussions, which in both cases took the form of co-written texts using Google Docs; a dialogical essay and report respectively. In addition to the presentation and publication of mine and Munday's work together as part of 2016's InSEA conference on 'Art and Design in Times of Change', with THECUBE, I co-convened two round-table discussions on knowledge mobility and during 2017 THECUBE used knowledge mobility as its working thesis.

During these two dialogues, which spanned two years each, a further dialogue was initiated with Chelsea Pettitt and Lotte Juul Petersen, organiser of Syllabus and curator at Wysing Arts Centre, respectively. This dialogue built on and followed a similar path to the three previous dialogues, the endpoint of which was marked with the co-production of a dialogic text that presented the key points of our discussion. Though the Syllabus programme at Wysing has recently emerged as a key alternative arts education programme, it is important to note that when I first was in conversation with Pettitt and Juul Petersen, the programme was configured as an artist-development programme with less explicit reference as an alternative *art school*. Additionally, it is important to note that Syllabus' proximity to contemporary art, through its alignment to arts institutions across the UK, is acknowledged as a domain that I have aimed to make a departure from through my research practice. Nonetheless I made a decision to pursue a dialogue with Syllabus, owing to what I observed to be a critically invaluable organisational model at the time of initiating our conversations.

This realignment to an organisation proximate to contemporary art, is further marked by a decision to conduct a series of smaller conversations during the latter stages of my research in the spring and summer of 2017. These took the form of conversational interviews with three further alternative arts education models, in order to critically assess and analyse the distinctions between organisational models operating outside of the frame of the Educational Turn, and established alternative arts education models in the field. These further conversations were with Anna Colin and Sam Thorne, co-director and co-founders of Open School East, Sara Nunes Fernandes, founding member of School of the Damned, and two students from its 2017 cohort, Ralph Pritchard and Ellen King, and

co-founder of Art & Critique Sophia Kosmaoglou. These are presented and discussed in the final section of Chapter Four.

The most valuable evaluation pertaining to the use of conversation as means of addressing my research questions resolutely lies in its capacity to chart and keep pace with an evolving field, which is theoretically underpinned by Bakhtin's heteroglossia and Rogoff's criticality addressed previously. Specifically, this refers to the way in which the field of alternative arts education has developed throughout the time of my research. The field has drastically altered, in that it has carved out a space that is now widely acknowledged as a genuine alternative space to formal tertiary education, through its popularity as an alternative option, and through the volume and plurality of models currently available as exemplified in figure 2. This goes some way to support the imperative to step outside of the field of contemporary art to examine how other organisational models might contribute to this burgeoning field.

Through facilitating these long-term conversations and presenting them as dialogues, I have been able to develop lasting relationships as a research practitioner with organisations whose work significantly contributes to the field of alternative arts education. Additionally, the capacity of conversation as a research method, in the context of a burgeoning and mutable research subject, has given the work the conceptual space to critically reflect and keep pace with such a changing field. For example, drawing on the Syllabus dialogue, I recognised the potential of the Syllabus model in its early stages as one which held the capacity to develop as a long-term alternative arts education model. Being in conversation with Pettitt and Juul Petersen from its conception has enabled me to chart its progress as such an alternative model. Had I employed a different research method, such as interview, the material produced from such a method would be limited to a particular stage of its development. In which case, the process of its analysis would not have permitted my research the depth of the conversations had with Pettitt and Juul Petersen over time, nor the first-hand knowledge of its development amid a quickly transforming field.

In facilitating these conversations, I have found that their limitation lies in their capacity to unendingly explore such a wide-ranging body of thinking and material. While conversation's organic nature and openness has afforded my research with meaningful and critical material that has significantly shaped my research, it encounters difficulty

in its evaluation. This can be presented by two reasons that are made more complex through the nature of the subject's field. Firstly, the volume of material covered in conversation relied on note-taking by both parties and in the case of THECUBE, *IF* and Syllabus, its distillation in Google Docs. The precarity of these modes of documentation meant that commitment, trust and genuine engagement became means of navigating and referencing material previously covered. This is only problematic insofar as navigating through material, as our co-written texts and mutual understanding of how I was to use the material covered was clarified from the beginning.⁴⁶⁸ A second reason that presents difficulty in using conversation as a method has been through working out where to draw a line to end our dialogues for the purposes of my research, this is particularly problematic insofar as the field is in continual transition, where I would be compelled to continue our discussions, in order to keep pace with such transition.

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Concluding this chapter, I have established the methodological frame of critique and proposition and discussed the position of 'the dialogic' as a two-fold rationale, comprising its use as: a structuring metaphor, drawing from the work of Bakhtin and Freire's understanding of dialogue and dialogues as a relativising construct of reflection and action; and the practice of conversation as a research method, drawing from its use in artistic research from Hannula et al, and from Blanchot's notion of infinite conversation. From here, the following chapter presents four dialogues with organisations that operate outside the immediate domain of the Educational Turn as introduced above, from which a series of propositions are drawn on to take the research forward. The final section of

468 Concerning ethics, from the outset I made clear to each of my collaborators how I would use the material generated through conversations in my research and in this thesis, providing each with the option to remain anonymous and/or to withdraw the use of material at any point. With Sue Ball and users of the timebank, we agreed verbally that I would use the material generated including the use of names. With Jonny Munday, Araceli Camargo and Anne Fritz, I used two consent forms to underwrite the use of material generated and names, as these conversations marked a transition to long-term conversations and included co-written material. With Chelsea Pettitt and Lotte Juul Petersen, we agreed over email that I would use material generated and names. With Anna Colin, Sam Thorne, Sara Nunes Fernandes, Ralph Pritchard and Ellen King we agreed over email that I would use material and names. With Sophia Kosmaoglou, we agreed verbally that I would use material and name. Part of this approach premised the importance of ensuring that the conversations worked to contribute to both my research and my collaborators' own work. It was important for me to ensure that commitment, genuine engagement and trust were clarified from the outset, and as such these informal approaches were deemed appropriate.

the following chapter relocates the overall discussion of the research practice back into the fold of the Educational Turn, by presenting a further set of shorter conversations with founders of organisations proximate to the domain of contemporary art. In doing so, the dialogues with organisations outside the Turn are reconciled with a to-date discussion of the current field of alternative arts education in order to account for the evolution of the field throughout my research.

Chapter 4 – Research dialogues

... if the art field becomes an academic one, then what an academy has to offer can also be found elsewhere, at other institutions and self-organised initiatives constituting the field of expanded academia.⁴⁶⁹

The following chapter chronologically presents and discusses the research dialogues undertaken with Sue Ball of the Leeds Creative Timebank, Jonny Munday of the *IF* Project, Araceli Camargo and Anne Fritz of THECUBE and Chelsea Pettitt and Lotte Juul Petersen of Syllabus at Wysing Arts Centre. These are to be read as four propositions to be considered as alternative education models outside of the discourse on the Educational Turn, to those produced within or aligned to the Turn. They chart the material produced in conversation with each organisation, spanning the period of my research practice between early 2014 and early 2017,⁴⁷⁰ with contextual discussion pertaining to the scope of each organisational model.

It has been my intention to correlate the capacity of these organisations as potential models of alternative arts education with the discussions in chapters one and two in order to test the efficacy of stepping outside of the Educational Turn, as a means of finding new forms of alternative that might resist the instrumentalising effects of contemporary art. Specifically, this means that I observe that these organisations as discussed in this chapter might offer something other in organisational terms to those within the discourse on the Turn, on the basis that they are not answerable to the dominant systems of critique and market as inscribed to contemporary art. Further,

I observe that each model premises notions of knowledge production, exchange and mobility as an objective of their organisation. By this I mean that ‘knowledge mobility’ has been a means of selecting such organisations, where the notion is interpreted uniquely and subject to the individual manifestations of each. Three further conversations with organisations more closely aligned to the field of contemporary art, with Sam Thorne and Anna Colin of Open School East, Sara Nunes Fernandes, Ralph Pritchard and Ellen King of School of the Damned and Sophia Kosmaoglou of Art & Critique, are discussed together at the end of this chapter to reconcile findings from each dialogue back into the domain of the Educational Turn.

469 Lesage, ‘The Academy is Back: On Education, the Bologna Process, and the Doctorate in the Arts’, p. 1.

470 Note the distinction in timeframe that my conversational research practice took place. This differs from the period of the Educational Turn (2006–2016) that my research otherwise charts in the most part.

Leeds Creative Timebank

Ethics Values and Aims

The Leeds Creative Timebank is a working alternative to a failing cash-based economy and value system

It aims to build a new sustainable economic structure that can operate inside the shell of a fast-failing, money-led economy

LCT is for the Leeds-based creative community. Its ethics include flexibility, transparency, free sharing of information, critical reflection and the production of alternatives to existing economic models

These ethics reflect its values

We uphold a non-hierarchical, decentralised and contingent ethos that allows for and expects, the maximum participation of those who join

The Timebank is both the critique of and creation of an alternative to a system we believe is unsustainable. As such it should not be seen as a stop-gap measure during the recession but instead as an ambitious project to be appreciated as a thing-in-itself, not a means-to-an-end

These underlying ethics and core-values should themselves be understood as mutable and open to debate by participants in the scheme

www.leedscreativetimebank.co.uk

Leeds Creative Timebank (May 2014)⁴⁷¹

The Creative Exchange's 'Time & Motion' exhibition at FACT, Liverpool took place between December 2013 and March 2014 and culminated with a symposium at the RCA titled, 'Time & Motion: Redefining Working Life', that addressed the underpinning notion of the exhibition, how digital transformation specifically is redefining working life. Attending the symposium marked the first turning point for my research as it became clear that notions of work and time were key to understanding the wider crisis of education in the arts and humanities where I was initially broadly situating the focus of my research on alternative arts education. I was introduced to Sue Ball, co-founder of the Leeds Creative Timebank,⁴⁷² who invited me to partake in a residency with the Timebank in Leeds.

During this period in my research I had spent some time looking into the function and capacity of the timebanking model as an alternative and innovative site of knowledge exchange alongside other models that generate knowledge, or at least circulate and exchange knowledge in public fora. I was interested in pursuing a dialogue with Ball and the Timebank model, as its work around alternative economic and community infrastructures was politically inspiring to my research, which was underpinned in the most part by a desire to counter and challenge the post-2008 precarity for creative practitioners in urban centres. With the model of the timebank generally, I was interested in considering the following aspects, under the aegis of value and knowledge exchange through the working structures and practices of such an alternative economic system of exchange and value. These aspects are:

- 1 Situated value: as a site of knowledge production, exchange and mobility.
- 2 Objects of value: where time is the object of value (currency) as opposed to a monetary-based currency system.
- 3 Agents of value: as a site whose componential value as a whole is greater than the individual value of its components, that is, value is accrued through community and not through the individual.

⁴⁷¹ The following discussion draws across material from conversations with members of the Leeds Creative Timebank and a report I wrote after these conversations in May 2014.

⁴⁷² I refer to the Leeds Creative Timebank as Timebank (capitalised) and timebank models generally as timebank (lowercase).

In practice, Ball organised a series of conversations with the Timebank's users, time brokers and steering committee. These included Ben Dalton, Paul Miller, Sarah Spanton, Ewa Pawlata and Zoe Parker, whose use of the Timebank ranged from frequent to occasional, for example, those who use the time bank weekly as opposed to those who use it a couple of times a year. I was concerned with focusing on the various perceptions and practices of knowledge exchange taking place through the Timebank and as a result of the Timebank. Our conversations were framed around the following points: how the Timebank can facilitate knowledge exchange and how precisely the Timebank's alternative exchange structure and system informs such facilitation. This might include, for example, subsequent opportunities emerging from being involved; the Timebank's capacity to problem solve; its sense of community; and the relationships forged between practitioners, academics and industry. In addition, I was concerned with the visibility of the Timebank and in particular how its explicit reference to the systems of exchange it claimed to reject are recast in linguistic terms. Some key points addressed in conversation with Ball were: how does the Timebank function as a working alternative? Is it efficient and productive in contrast to using a monetary-based exchange system? What are its benefits? Is it rather a complementary system to the commonplace monetary-based system? Is the Timebank a service and if so, how? These points were positioned with the intention of defining its status as an alternative organisation that has the capacity to be an educational model.

The intention behind our conversations was to consider if and how the timebank model could manifest as a viable model of alternative education, insofar as its capacity to locate and facilitate communities of practice, through which a system of trust and friendship produces an alternative currency in time. I was interested to explore the theoretical contexts of the timebank model, to further consider its wider social capacities for creative communities. To this end conversations with Ball and the Timebank's users revolved around the nature and composition of the creative community in the East Street Arts area in Leeds, concerning issues surrounding, being marginalised by the more prominent circles of contemporary art aligned to the art school, and in comparison to models emerging through institutions of art. For many of the users, the Timebank is a site upon which things can get done and where users can advertise their skills, to the effect of a socially dynamic notice board. For example, *I need someone to help me with some*

*graphic design for my website; I have a car and am available to drive every Monday and Wednesday afternoon; I have experience in local council governance and am free to help write funding applications.*⁴⁷³ The Timebank in this way helps to build and nurture the local creative community, bringing practitioners and their skills together as a collective resource; it manifests as both a skill service and peer-to-peer learning body.

My initial understanding of the timebank model was as a form of extended collective social practice, citing the e-flux time/bank,⁴⁷⁴ the UK's national timebank framework,⁴⁷⁵ and some of its historical social contexts in Robert Owen's National Equitable Labour Exchange reform that sought towards the institution of fairer conditions of exchange for workers in the nineteenth century. While this triangulation is one contextual foundation for projects like the Leeds Creative Timebank, I was unsure as to its technical and actual manifestation as a substitution for monetary exchange. The generic national timebanking structure is limited as a true working alternative to monetary exchange insofar as it functions as a supplement to it, regardless of its size and scope nationally. This is also the case with the e-flux model, which exists as a supplementary resource to existing communities who already utilise the e-flux network, this being a comparatively exclusive group. While alluding to an ideal or sentimental alternative economic system, in practice it seems to remain ancillary to creative practitioners who can afford (time and money) to utilise such a system (of virtue and good will), as supplementary to the capitalist system of exchange.

In practice, drawing on the Leeds Timebank as an organisation for communities of creative practitioners, the network produced through the Timebank functions as an effective, composite system of exchange and transaction. It is an evolving database offering sector-specific skills, knowledge-based or mentoring skills and general, practical skills, cumulatively reaching beyond the idea that it functions solely as a novel approach to replacing money with time. However, the Timebank in Leeds is relatively limited in its effective functionality, to a regulated number of creative-only users – creative practitioners only, not students⁴⁷⁶ – its users needed to be capped at around 100,⁴⁷⁷ in order

473 Hypothetical examples to illustrate the Timebank's functionality.

474 e-flux time/bank, <http://www.e-flux.com/timebank/> [accessed 18 October 2017]

475 As a national framework to be applied in different contexts. <http://www.timebanking.org/?resource=setting-up-a-timebank> [accessed 18 October 2017]

476 Sue Ball, conversation with the author, 12 May 2014

477 As was the case in 2014, the Timebank in 2017 has 180 active members. <http://leedscreativetimebank.org.uk> [accessed 18 October 2017]

for the then existing administrative system composed of three, part-time time brokers to be able to work with the administrative traffic and management of the database. This is interesting, if slightly problematic. I find the idea that limiting the number of users of a Creative Timebank perhaps strays from its ethos of being an all-inclusive system of value and exchange. A question here is that if the cap was lifted, what could be done to ensure that the necessary administrative work could be carried out effectively? Employing more time brokers would mean that all time brokers would need to continuously liaise with one another to ensure that there were no discrepancies in communication to the users and also that there were no overlaps. Switching to a digitised system would mean that a monetary investment would need to be made to build and maintain software and would strip away the human element that drives the system.

In conversation with Ball in 2014, I found her thoughts about how the project emerged, reckoned against how the project actively evolves in practice, were crucial towards this idea of understanding the role of offering an alternative system either as an alternative-as-substitute or alternative-as-addition.⁴⁷⁸ Ball referred me to Andrew Leyshon et al, 'Alternative Economic Spaces' text to unpick this idea further. In my research, where I consider the distinctions between 'the alternative,' and 'the institution,' I have found the differences tend to get less clear when considering the linguistic, political and social implications that emerge around the notion of 'the alternative'.⁴⁷⁹ It is useful to consider these linguistic distinctions between the types of alternative both in the context of the Timebank, as an attempt towards practicing an alternative value system, and in a wider cultural context. The Timebank was founded as a working alternative economic system in opposition to the economic system that was categorically failing or at least causing significant effects on the creative communities in Leeds in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis. The idea that the Timebank would function in opposition is then crucial, yet it equally maintains the position of that which it is opposing, through its resistance.

Referencing Fuller and Jonas' alternative triptych, Ball described that the Timebank initially materialised as an 'alternative-oppositional' model that built on historicised peer-to-peer networks of guilds, local exchange trading systems (LETS), societies and clubs;⁴⁸⁰ taking form as a critique of formal economic bodies. Issues of

478 Referring to Fuller and Jonas' delineation.

479 See figure 2 for the distinctions in, for example, alternative forms of arts education.

480 Ball, *ibid.*

value and productivity are at the heart of the project, over money and profit. Taking a cue from other community-based projects in the creative and social circles in Leeds, paired with an invested interest in the political implication of setting up such a potentially radical project, what emerged between Ball and her colleagues was an organisation that could potentially and gradually shift the local social and cultural profile of creative practitioners in Leeds. At the time the creative community was relatively disparate and, with the realisation of this, the project began with several attempts at trying the timebank model, and with additional research in 2011, the Timebank was beta-tested with approximately 50 users⁴⁸¹ and grew to approximately 90 users in 2014.⁴⁸²

A recent case study on the Leeds Timebank by design theorist Guy Julier, states that the number of users in 2016 was at 147.⁴⁸³ In 2017, it is at 180, meaning that in the three years since my residency with the Timebank the user-base has grown and the cap of 100 users has been lifted. Julier explains that now the Timebank is administered by the external database, Timebanking UK.⁴⁸⁴ In conversation with Ball, we discussed the potential shortcomings of capping the number of users versus the longer-term aim of lifting the cap; in 2014, the limitation to the number of users was owing to the volume of administrative labour, and at that point, time brokers would volunteer to administrate the Timebank in return for hours.⁴⁸⁵ Lifting a cap on users meant the volume of administration would be too great for three time brokers; when asked about how this could change in the future, Ball explained that the intention would be to move to an external administrator,⁴⁸⁶ which is how most of the national models in the UK operate.

What underpinned much of the motivation to set the Timebank up was that Ball wanted to emphasise, cohere and make accessible to wider groups, the social capital accruing in smaller communities in Leeds. In turn, such social capital is manifest as a form of networked culture that is built across values of trust, neighbourliness, goodwill, skills, aptitude and knowledge. In its organisational composition, these values are distilled through the following delineations into a serviceable model: 'sector-specific skills',

481 *Ibid.*

482 *Ibid.*

483 Guy Julier, 'Informal and Alternative Economies' in *Economies of Design* (London: SAGE Publications, 2017), p. 138.

484 *Ibid.*

485 Ball, *ibid.*

486 *Ibid.*

‘mentoring and consultancy-based skills’ and ‘general skills’.⁴⁸⁷ What this achieves is a new perspective on the value and application of its users’ skills and knowledge, to the end that they become distributable and part of a currency that reframes uncoded knowledges in a way that conserves, applies and celebrates them. As an education proposition, what emerges through the Timebank is a reconceptualised sense of value placed on to the action of reciprocity. Where, in much of the discourse on the Educational Turn, models of transaction are shed within a negative light, the Timebank frames reciprocity in a way that recognises community-oriented value systems effectively and beyond novelty.

Part of my research is concerned with understanding the longevity and sustainability of alternative models of arts education, and working with the Timebank raised useful questions in this vein, such as how far could this model be developed beyond its initial remit of the East Street Arts community in Leeds? The national timebank organisation offers a generic model to resituate in different contexts, and as such it is worth considering whether a generic model for alternative arts organisations could be distributed in such a way and what the limitations would be to this approach. How do the combined values of trust, neighbourliness and goodwill scale-up in practice? Would there be a risk of misappropriation and institutionalisation of these values? And would such misappropriation embody Phillips’ claims to a ‘logical fault of commoning’ but for the unique value system that creative community timebanking has established; what is its logical fault?

Following five hour-long conversations with members of the Timebank, in addition to a series of longer conversations with Ball, I produced an informal report to be presented back to the group to cohere and navigate some of the key themes that emerged during our conversations. Below is a presentation of some of the key themes as they relate to my research questions:

Giving and receiving

The acts of giving and receiving skills, knowledge and time were often perceived to be at odds with one another; where some users felt that they could categorically offer lots to others, some found it difficult to conceptually work out how to utilise the Timebank to their own ends. The effect of this is in the accrual of hours – becoming time-rich

487 Ibid.

– without being able to spend them. In light of this, the use of the Timebank may be limited to users who treat it as a service, compared with those who utilise the network infrequently,⁴⁸⁸ as is the case of many practitioners. Artist Paul Miller explained that he struggled with working out how he could draw from the resource base of the Timebank and mentioned he had accrued tens of hours, but often felt at a loss as to how to spend them.⁴⁸⁹ Often the Timebank is used to supplement the work of artists, either through making work, consultation, development, or through invigilation, technical work or transport. For artists, this network of labour is so often required, but can only be accessed through monetary exchange, which increasingly means working supplementary jobs to earn money, to pay for the space to work and for the tasks to be fulfilled, which renders minimal the time to actually make artistic work. In this respect, the Timebank offers something unique to its users, that practitioners often struggle to find. However, if these forms of labour are not required and users are found to be time-rich, a question would be, how can these hours be effectively spent or contribute back into the system? Here, issues surrounding the network’s benevolence are tested; could the timebank model operate as a non-reciprocal network?

Value

The egalitarian nature of the Timebank allows for an inclusive experience for all users (providing users are active). For example, transactions, exchanges and jobs are dealt, or selected on the basis of representable skill as contained within the database. A relationship is forged on this basis, and as such is entirely democratic. Value is assigned to skill and not the user (irrespective of experience or any previous relationship between users). Design researcher Ben Dalton expands on this idea, where generally it is difficult to ask someone for help, models such as the Timebank – which he likens to social media such as Twitter – attend to this, by providing a system that frames the idea of help as a contribution to a community.⁴⁹⁰ Further this framing of contribution assists in the act of making visible or making public such community. The egalitarianism of the timebank model is conceptually interesting for Dalton, as it oddly reverses the status quo of social and cultural hierarchisation according to wealth and job status. With sites such as the

488 Paul Miller, conversation with the author, 13 May 2014

489 Ibid.

490 Ben Dalton, conversation with the author, 13 May 2014

Timebank or Twitter, for example, a childcare worker's skills or knowledge might be considered more 'higher ranking'⁴⁹¹ than those of a banker, whose skills and knowledge may not be directly applicable or relevant for the community of the Timebank.⁴⁹² This thought bears the question of whose time is more valuable and on whose terms? The timebank model for Dalton in this sense offers a system that redistributes value⁴⁹³ in a way that is preferable for the types of communities that otherwise might be excluded from those of banker, etc. Here conventional notions of time, status and career collapse and are reorganised; for Dalton, deferring conventional values of time to a system where it becomes the only mode of currency, allows time to become a trusted object.⁴⁹⁴ Using the illustration of 'cutting out the credit card and interest'⁴⁹⁵ contingent upon a cash-based system, Dalton surmises that instead of the physical manifestation of the bank informing – rupturing – the social interaction of its users who need to withdraw cash, friendship itself, in its networked form, becomes the rupture or bearer of social interaction;⁴⁹⁶ the timebank model reissues time as social model.

Friendship

An aspect of the Timebank that seems to be resolutely valuable to its users is that it manifests importantly as a social space. Relationships are forged on the basis of goodwill and develop into both friendships and working-relationships.⁴⁹⁷ These relationships create new networks and opportunities⁴⁹⁸ and additional sub- or extended communities within the greater creative community. Relationships emerge from successful (or equally, unsuccessful) working exchanges or partnerships and create new collaborative scenarios and opportunities for individuals, both socially and in terms of work and practice. One pairing of users may take on new directions for a particular project and initiate new ways of working and acquiring new skills, and with these types of relationships comes the element of the unknown, risk-taking and chance. The timebank model goes some

491 Ibid.
 492 Ibid.
 493 Ibid.
 494 Ibid.
 495 Ibid.
 496 Ibid.
 497 Sarah Spanton, conversation with the author, 14 May 2014
 498 Ewa Pawlata, conversation with the author, 13 May 2014

way to effectuate the model of friendship that Condorelli subjects through her work, one manifest in a support structure.

For steering group member and co-founder of the Timebank, Sarah Spanton, the idea of friendship in relation to the timebank model manifests in numerous ways. Where friendship is largely unintentional,⁴⁹⁹ such unintention illustrates structurally, how users are brought together, that is, fortuity plays a key role in how people and ideas are brought together. In another way, unintentionality refers to the idea that the Timebank is a practical service, where the relationships engendered are less to do with the formation of friends and more to do with professional connections.⁵⁰⁰ To frame it another way that helps us understand the wider social implications, the relationality between people is one of camaraderie, the working towards an effective production of community.⁵⁰¹ Equally, for Spanton, the Timebank supports creative practitioners' visibility,⁵⁰² where in DIY communities this is often difficult as there is the assumption from the institutional creative or cultural scene that the subjects of DIY scenes prefer to stay unnoticed. Yet, for Spanton, the reality is the opposite, particularly in an age of economic precarity, where notions of value and human capital need to be rethought.⁵⁰³ Taking on friendship in the context of the Timebank as a mode of networking then, what emerges is how the timebank model can be considered to be a crucial linchpin to the wider institutional context of the creative and cultural scenes in urban centres such as Leeds.

Work/time

In conversation with Ewa Pawlata, we discussed the implications and framing of 'work' in the context of the Timebank, drawing on the idea of how you can come to conceptualise working with friends, and consequently what defines work.⁵⁰⁴ This correlates to the above idea of reconciling the value between child-care worker and banker, where one is paid significantly more than the other. There is an insinuation of value attached to both occupations through how much each earns; is work defined by money, or who is doing it, or how much one works? This is also useful insofar as

499 Spanton, *ibid.*
 500 *Ibid.*
 501 *Ibid.*
 502 *Ibid.*
 503 *Ibid.*
 504 Pawlata, *ibid.*

considering whether time and work can be considered as synonymous. In discussion with Ball, we considered whether the timebank model actually means work when it talks about time; is the Timebank actually a workbank for instance? Returning to the issue of the appropriation of language and the inherent complexity of language attached to the timebanking, it is useful to consider what is at stake and what the discrepancies are between these two seemingly distinct terms. On one hand, we can begin to understand time as being synonymous with work, when we return to the idea of assigning equal value to a thing or skill rather than a user of the Timebank; on the other, work and time are polarised in that they are both bound by a series of predetermined notions of and about value which are underwritten commonly by labour exchange. In effect, it is through the timebank model that they become interdependent.

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As a model of co-production that generates a relationship between care and desire, support structures and a model of exchange that exceeds reliance on a cash-based system, timebanking works as a sustainable option for getting things done in small communities that are based on reciprocal relationships. Edgar Cahn founded this model in the late 1980s to forge a practicable connection between the productive capacities of communities and the unmet needs in such communities. Cahn writes that a ‘function of an economic system, market or non-market, is to mobilise resources productively in order to meet needs’.⁵⁰⁵ He cites co-production as being one such alternative way of understanding how the needs of community can be met by alternative systems of exchange that do not desensitise or devalue the ‘universal capacities’⁵⁰⁶ of communities:

[...] caring for each other, coming to each other’s rescue, rearing infants, protecting the frail and vulnerable, standing up for what is right, opposing what is wrong, coming together to reach agreement, acting as guardian of whatever we feel is precious and want to pass on to our children and their children.⁵⁰⁷

505 Edgar S. Cahn, ‘The Dark Side of the Force: The External Costs of Money’, *No More Throw-Away People The Co-Production Imperative* (Washington: Essential Books, 2004), p. 63.

506 Ibid., ‘Introduction’, p. xiv.

507 Ibid.

For Cahn, the type of co-production that serves to underpin the timebank model, presents the imperative to value these above capacities. It is important to note that Cahn developed the timebank model as one based on reciprocal, in-kind exchange in this way after personally experiencing the levels of his own dependency on others when in hospital.⁵⁰⁸ His experiences of care from those in hospital encouraged him to think about systems of instituting care through places like hospitals and schools. His focus on being able to equip those who are deemed vulnerable by society with the means of being able to draw on resources that is not governed by a market-based system of exchange, furnishes the timebank model with a humanistic foundation.

In conversation with some of the users of the Leeds Creative Timebank, I observed that Cahn’s sentiment is not lost. Ball explained how the Timebank in Leeds shifted from being about giving, in the sense of commodity, to being about facilitating a community of reciprocal exchange⁵⁰⁹ that is, based on the above-mentioned universal capacities of humanism and community. Further, in the introduction to his text, ‘No More Throw-Away People’, Cahn explains the efficacy of integrating the timebanking ethos with sites of education, particularly in terms of tuition, work experience, higher education students and between university workers, where ‘Time Banking and Co-Production change the role of staff and professionals from dispensers of scarce services into catalysts who empower and enlist clients.’⁵¹⁰ There is resonance with this when considering alternative and future iterations of alternative arts education, specifically for instance in terms of the low levels of work security for creative practitioners, or early-career educators working in universities. Cahn’s method of co-production and exchange in this way provides a form of thinking towards resolving such precarity. For instance, a structural component of an alternative form of arts education might utilise this means of co-production through the advocacy of co-produced or shared curricula, or assessment criteria.

In the context of existing structures of alternative arts education, questions might be to ask how quality assurance is assessed, and further, whether quality assurance is commensurate to the ways in which alternative forms of arts education aim to institute. For Cahn, co-production is a construct that negates the values of producer and consumer

508 Ibid., p. 3.

509 Ball, *ibid.*

510 Cahn, p. xvi.

which underpin market economics.⁵¹¹ Where commonly, it is employed as a means of sustaining unpaid labour,⁵¹² for example in volunteer work, where such work or time spent doing work is not remunerated. In relation to the timebank, it ‘insists that labour be elevated, that the capacity of labourer to be acknowledged, and that the contribution be valued.’⁵¹³

On the basis of my conversations with Ball and members of the Timebank, and in light of these reflections, I am drawn to considering how and what this model can offer to the domain of arts education. My conversations variably charted a range of conceptually quite similar ‘themes’ akin to motivations often surrounding alternative arts education, particularly issues deriving from the scalability of the projects, its organisers’ criticality and reflexivity, and issues pertaining to mimicry and changing work/time values and subsequent demands from users. Perhaps this model can be realised as a model of education in smaller communities, such as those described already by Ball and Cahn. However, could this be possible on a scale greater than small communities? What happens to the time economy, when money is taken away? Equally what would happen to alternative arts education if formal institutions of education met with the challenges raised by alternative arts education? Through these questions and in the context of my research, it is hoped that cumulatively these ideas will work towards the idea of a hybrid⁵¹⁴ alternative education model. This could be through the co-production of an evolved system that is adaptable and flexible enough to facilitate educational communities in a way that coincides with a move to hybrid educational organisations and where systems of value shift to accommodate specific needs of its users, as with the timebank model.

511 Ibid., p. 31.

512 Ibid.

513 Ibid.

514 The designation of hybridity here is to account for the combined capacities of the organisations my work is engaged with.

THINKING WITHOUT BORDERS

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE PRESENT

Thinking Without Borders: A Short History of the Present is a free 10-week course in university-level humanities. It will explore contemporary concerns such as truth and lies, power and freedom, nations and rights, culture and identity as seen from the perspective of writers, historians, philosophers and artists.

Students will gain an understanding of how the disciplines of history, philosophy and literature work, and how they provide tools for analysing, interpreting, and understanding the forces that shape the world today.

How the course is taught

Thinking Without Borders includes lectures from academics, seminars (guided discussion groups) and sessions in galleries and other cultural institutions.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the course students will have gained experience of

- Thinking critically about the concerns of the day using the methods and insights of humanities disciplines
- Reading, analysing and interpreting works of history, literature and philosophy
- Presenting arguments based on evidence
- Studying and learning independently

Lecturers include

Professor Brian Cathcart, Kingston University London

Dr George Hoare, formerly Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Leiden University College, the Netherlands

Dr Michael Hrebeniak, Lecturer & Director of Studies in English at Wolfson College, University of Cambridge

Katherine Da Cunha Lewin, PhD researcher in English at the University of Sussex

Dr Lucie Mercier, Research Fellow in Philosophy, Kingston University London

Matt Phull, MA, The Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy, Kingston University London

Professor David Robey, Emeritus Fellow, Wolfson College Oxford, and Emeritus Professor of Italian, University of Reading

Dr Charlotte Riley, Lecturer in Twentieth-Century British History at the University of Southampton

Tom Sperlinger, Reader in English Literature and Community Engagement at the University of Bristol

JD Taylor, Associate Lecturer at Goldsmiths, University of London



THINKING WITHOUT BORDERS A SHORT HISTORY OF THE PRESENT

MONDAY 6.30PM - 8PM	THURSDAY 6.30PM - 8PM
	20 APRIL - INTRODUCTION DIORAMA ARTS CENTRE, REGENT'S ROOM What to expect and how to get the most from the course
24 APRIL - OPENING LECTURE DIORAMA ARTS CENTRE, REGENT'S ROOM PROFESSOR DAVID ROBEY The Idea of the Humanities in History	27 APRIL - PHILOSOPHY LECTURE DIORAMA ARTS CENTRE, REGENT'S ROOM JD TAYLOR Power to the People? Populism, freedom and self-determination
1 MAY - USE THE CITY A chance to visit suggested exhibitions, galleries and museums relevant to <i>Thinking Without Borders</i> , and to read for the seminar on 4th May	4 MAY - PHILOSOPHY SEMINARS MAYDAY ROOMS, SCREENING ROOM AND READING ROOM DIORAMA ARTS CENTRE, ACADEMY ROOM Discussion: Populism, freedom and self-determination
8 MAY - LITERATURE LECTURE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, BLOOMSBURY CAMPUS Reading without borders: What does literature do?	11 MAY - PHILOSOPHY LECTURE DIORAMA ARTS CENTRE, NAVAJO ROOM DR LUCIE MERCIER Frantz Fanon's <i>Black Skin, White Masks</i>
15 MAY - LITERATURE SEMINARS MAYDAY ROOMS, SCREENING ROOM DIORAMA ARTS CENTRE, ACADEMY ROOM Reading without borders: discussion of texts	18 MAY - PHILOSOPHY SEMINARS MAYDAY ROOMS, READING ROOM DIORAMA ARTS CENTRE, ACADEMY ROOM Discussion: Frantz Fanon's <i>Black Skin, White Masks</i>
22 MAY - HISTORY LECTURE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, BLOOMSBURY CAMPUS DR CHARLOTTE RILEY Human rights: a history	25 MAY - HISTORY SEMINARS MAYDAY ROOMS, SCREENING ROOM AND READING ROOM Discussion: Human rights
29 MAY - USE THE CITY A chance to visit exhibitions, galleries and museums relating to <i>Thinking Without Borders</i>	1 JUN - HISTORY LECTURE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, BLOOMSBURY CAMPUS PROFESSOR BRIAN CATHCART Lies
5 JUN - LITERATURE LECTURE DIORAMA ARTS, KODO ROOM DR MICHAEL HREBENIAK Reading without borders: The beats and interdisciplinarity	8 JUN - LECTURE CAMDEN PEOPLE'S THEATRE Borders, power and freedom
12 JUN - LITERATURE LECTURE CAMDEN PEOPLE'S THEATRE TOM SPERLINGER Reading without borders: Doris Lessing's <i>Mara and Dann</i>	15 JUN - SEMINARS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, BLOOMSBURY CAMPUS Discussion: Borders, power and freedom
19 JUN - LITERATURE SEMINAR MAYDAY ROOMS, SCREENING ROOM Discussion: Doris Lessing's <i>Mara and Dann</i>	22 JUN - PHILOSOPHY WORKSHOP MAYDAY ROOMS, SCREENING ROOM MATT PHULL Sovereignty and its limits
26 JUN - WORKSHOP DIORAMA ARTS CENTRE, NAVAJO ROOM DR GEORGE HOARE The history of the idea of Europe	29 JUN - WRAP-UP WORKSHOP AND CELEBRATION MAYDAY ROOMS, SCREENING ROOM

The IF Project (2014–2016)

I approached the *IF Project* in early 2014 to discuss the premise by which its organisers, Jonny Munday and Barbara Gunnell, had come to found an alternative experimental and free university, manifest in the form of a foundation programme in the arts and humanities subjects. What they were initiating was a radical and sustainable model to fill a space marked previously by the art and design foundation year, only they were proposing to conceive of a foundation year in the subject areas across the arts and humanities.⁵¹⁵ As a potentially pivotal example of an alternative education model in London, in parallel to my own research, the *IF Project* has been directly engaged in realising a sustainable, ethical alternative model of higher education, to what Munday describes as the 'marketisation of higher education'.⁵¹⁶

This is a crucial example to draw on for my research as it encompasses an effective alternative model to those produced within the frame of the Educational Turn in contemporary art. It has no affiliation to the institutions of contemporary art or to the Turn insofar as it was conceived of as a charitable organisation that responds directly to the increase in tuition fees in university-level education broadly. In addition to public discourse surrounding the value of arts and humanities education at the time, in response to cuts to funding and resource and the withdrawal of these subjects from education curricula nationally, it positions itself within a critical public context. In terms of my research, I understand *IF* as an alternative model that sits outside the domain of contemporary art, as an organisation whose work seeks to contribute to the wider domain and discussion about the future of arts and humanities education in the UK. Our dialogue has traced the project's realisation and transformation from its initial aims to found a free, nomadic alternative education syllabus in the arts and humanities, to the manifest and varied foundation programme it currently organises,⁵¹⁷ and towards the realisation of a longer-term and sustainable form of organising free education.

This dialogue from its outset focused on the specific climate of higher education in the UK, as it has traversed, through recent years under a Conservative

515 Jonny Munday, conversation with the author, 26 March 2014

516 Ibid.

517 Two four-week humanities summer schools, a charitably funded ten-week course that focussed on critical-thinking techniques deriving from humanities study and a literature study group.

government, periods of transformation that have engendered resolute instability in the case of the humanities, in combination with the rise in fees and subsequent levels of inaccessibility to a wider public. This has, among many other reasons, such as the steady professionalisation of arts-orientated education, through protocols of measurability via the output-based research excellence framework (REF)⁵¹⁸ and illustrated by the incoming teaching excellence framework,⁵¹⁹ incurred what is described elsewhere as the neoliberalisation⁵²⁰ and marketisation, to use Munday's term, of the formal education institution. As such, this can be paralleled to the now abundant and saturated domain of alternative art schools in the frame of the Educational Turn.

The IF Project cites the following points as motivations for its existence: the imbalance of access to and funding for liberal arts, in opposition to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects, compromising the study of the humanities as a 'human right'.⁵²¹ An undercurrent to our conversations and the project for Munday has been the defence of the worth and value of arts and humanities education against the odds of, what he describes as the capture and measure of these subjects

by market value and in terms of economic return. The commodification of higher education, embodied by the neo-liberal reforms to university finance in the UK in recent years, is not only problematic because it prices young people out of an education worth having, entrenching inequality of access [but also] on a deeper level; in relation to how you define the value of that education.⁵²²

Further stating that *IF* works to foreground this notion of value that is categorically distinct from the reductive and instrumentalising levels at which education is reckoned against according to 'the economic return on investment accruing to an individual who has paid for that education'.⁵²³ Munday elicits from this the idea that *IF* works against this 'atomised version of value',⁵²⁴ which ultimately marginalises the foundation of its public good. While politically and structurally resonant with some organisational practices under the charge of the Educational Turn, *IF* sits outside this domain, and is not directly

518 What is the REF?, <http://www.ref.ac.uk/about/whatref/> [accessed 18 October 2017]

519 TEF outcomes, <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/tefoutcomes/#/> [accessed 18 October 2017]

520 Thorne, 'New Schools', <https://frieze.com/article/new-schools> [accessed 18 October 2017]

521 Munday, *ibid.*

522 Munday, 'In dialogue— knowledge: its movement value and organisation or, its criticality, values and struggle', <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B501ssnZYQFVbIJNMm9SNTdXalk/view?usp=sharing> [accessed 18 October 2017] p. 10.

523 *Ibid.*

524 *Ibid.*

answerable to another such market that governs either its criticality or terms of practice. Instead, *IF* is answerable and bound in its present existence to a failing higher education system,⁵²⁵ which effectively states that should it not be the case, the project would not exist.⁵²⁶

IF argues for a type of education system (which is also the inhabitation of a condition and the enactment of a shift in consciousness) that is currently being violently dismantled and so exists both despite and because of the failings of our current system.⁵²⁷

The project actively stands against the current metric-based value system in place in higher education in the UK⁵²⁸ and moreover it aims, so long as this system is the status quo, to challenge it by enacting a practice of refusal, stating that it will produce alternative means to education in spite of such a status quo. In the context of the aims of my research, *IF* comes the closest to a manifest alternative that honourably addresses, by refusal, a working alternative arts education. This means that it proposes something that is the categorical replacement of the diminished model of the foundation year, by finding an alternative mode of (re)producing it. This alternative mode is instantiated initially through first its charitable status and then through its alignment to existing education institutions. It is *IF*'s striking transparency with its motivation and distinction from the instrumental locations of contemporary art that positions it as a progressive alternative from which, I argue, the practices framed within art's own contexts could draw from.

As part of my research, this collaboration with the *IF* Project has addressed some of the wider implications of conceiving of and establishing a free, alternative arts education programme, today in the UK. These include the realities, limitations and virtues of enacting a politics of and through the alternative, and simultaneously advocating both the structural and symbolic ethos of the formal institutions of education. In conversation, Munday and I have come to understand the *IF* Project as a mode of address to the current education climate in the UK, and what is particularly interesting to me is that this exists and can only exist within this perceived state of crisis in education. Further,

525 Munday, conversation with the author, 30 September 2015

526 *Ibid.*

527 Haslam, 'In dialogue— knowledge: its movement value and organisation or, its criticality, values and struggle', <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B501ssnZYQFVbIJNMm9SNTdXalk/view?usp=sharing> [accessed 18 October 2017] p. 8.

528 *Ibid.*

for my research, this tenet leads me to question the reality concerning the long-term viability of alternative practices, similarly to the timebank model. What would happen to these practices should their challenges be met from their institutional counterparts? To reiterate, what would *IF*'s future be, should higher education abolish its tuition fees, for example? This acknowledgement by its founders is quite a testament to the fact that their investment in the project is not only political and critical, but also positioned truly towards the defence of the arts and humanities for the greater good.

There have been many motions at play across our conversations, to the backdrop of the simultaneous development of both my research and the *IF* Project itself, as an organisation in a particularly precarious cultural and political climate. What has interested us towards the end of our conversations has been to consider just what it means to execute a political action *and* simultaneously honour the subject, particularly when education is concerned. What this means more explicitly is: how might we consider what is appropriate in terms of 'the alternative' existing productively and for the greater good, and what this appropriateness actually addresses.

Our conversations provided a framework for a collaborative dialogical essay Munday and I have produced titled, 'In dialogue– knowledge: its movement, value and organisation or, its criticality, values and struggle'.⁵²⁹ It addresses these ideas at the point of formal arts education and its non-institutional counterparts through the lens of the *IF* Project. This essay was conceived of as a means of distilling the scope of our conversations into a form of co-writing that is comprehensive and works to frame some of the surrounding contexts of our cumulative dialogue. It serves for both my research and the *IF* Project as a resource that marks the time in which we have both been grappling with the problematic domain of alternative arts education. The essay was reconceptualised for its presentation and publication as part of InSEA's 2016 conference on 'Art and Design Education in Times of Change.' Our conversations have continued to an end of exploring the scope of alternative arts education as modes of addressing a politics of education.

The essay addresses four sequential components according to key themes that emerged during our dialogue: 1. symbolic and structural value, 2. systems of value, 3. the honourable execution of the political act, and 4. futures of knowledge and education. The

529 Ibid.

following section discusses and reflects on these themes in relation to the way in which knowledge mobility has been used as a lens through which to contextualise *IF* according to my research aims.

1 Symbolic and structural knowledge – which considers the grounding of our conversation in conceptualising 'knowledge mobility'; understanding why *IF* emerged out of the recent and current cultural and political context of arts education since 2008.

Munday has explained that *IF* can be considered as something of a 'living pamphlet',⁵³⁰ where it constitutes the image of what arts and humanities education could be. With this in mind, it simultaneously functions as a type of advocacy for the reconsideration of value attached to such an education. As a form of 'direct action' it was first formed around the free use of a number of existing cultural and educational spaces in London, including the Tate and UCL, drawing on in-kind 'donations of time and expertise'⁵³¹ by established academics attached to existing higher education institutions. In this way, *IF* takes from 'the institution' in a productive tension, in its principled advocacy of it, while simultaneously resisting in opposition to the conditions (fees, accessibility) that its educational manifestations are becoming increasingly bound by.

Initially conceived as a nomadic model, (re)situating in various locations across London, it seemed to operate in the margins and appear at the very sites which many alternative arts education programmes would negate on the basis of their institutional status. *IF* was and is about the facilitation of an education that premises 'studying for-its-own-sake rather than studying as an accredited, certified instrumental exchange.'⁵³² Locating such a willing student cohort was not a given however and Munday recalled at the beginning of the project a time when he and Gunnell were concerned about finding students. In many cases of the projects attached to the Educational Turn, these projects have been conceived for the immediate use of those configuring them. The project was originally configured around the premise that it would accept a student cohort providing they had not already experienced a university-level education. Increasingly this was found to be limiting and while priority is given to those who have not experienced university-

530 Munday, p. 5.

531 Ibid.

532 Ibid., p. 3.

level education, it is now open to anyone over the age of eighteen.⁵³³

For Munday, the fact that *IF* has produced four independent courses, is testament to a willingness existing on the part of an as yet to be defined public and its students to access and participate in the production and exchange of lateral and non-commodifiable forms of knowledge, through studying the arts and humanities in ways that are not demonstrably codified according to measurable outputs, through forms of assessment, for example. What this shows is that there exists a space that redefines the terms under which what Rogoff has called ‘unbound knowledge’ and furthermore this socially grounded approach to knowledge – knowledge mobility – can circulate. For *IF* this is not to negate the value of the university as an institution of codified knowledge, but to say that other modes of experiencing education are necessary and desired.

Further in this vein, Munday has alluded to an enlightening maxim of disciplinarity, through *IF*, which concerns how bodies of knowledge, in alternative education contexts, must necessarily be considered in relation to the self, as individuals in relation to collective learning. In terms of disciplinarity, Munday outlines that the notion of ‘study as practice’⁵³⁴ refers to the double meaning of ‘discipline’, where the arts and humanities are considered to be intellectually and socially transformative; ‘discipline’ refers to a subject of study – a body of knowledge – and a bundle of disciplinary approaches [and] refers to ways of corralling, training and shaping the self.⁵³⁵ As such a learning process and training are contingent on the collective pursuit of knowledge in education for a more or less universally, what is implicit here is an understanding of knowledge that is mobile, in its sociality, that is, contingent on learning and forming the self through others. Essentially this notion of knowledge, insofar as its methodological framing in disciplinarity, is a point that works towards reframing the worth and value of an education in the arts and humanities that *IF* sets in motion.

2 Systems of value – which considers the intrinsic and inherently problematic systems of value part of the marketisation of higher education, while simultaneously advocating the intrinsic values of arts and humanities higher education as a public good.

533 *IF* Apply, <http://www.ifproject.co.uk/apply> [accessed 18 October 2017]

534 Munday, p. 11.

535 Ibid.

Such a notion of value that is put forward by *IF* is one that is addressed from many varied perspectives through the project of the Educational Turn, which is often to an end however of claiming the space of art as a space wherein such value is not only implicit but equally autonomous. The problem with this is that the symbolic site of art is subject to its own mechanisms and systems of value, which are intrinsically linked back to a marketised system, where art claims its autonomy to its own ends. When the ends of this discourse are at the point of art, then education in all its forms becomes simply a means. However, *IF* sidesteps this problem in the context of my research, by simply stating that the value of arts and humanities education is in itself a public good,⁵³⁶ and not one which is or should be contingent to reconciling and measuring its impacts through its effectiveness concerning outputs and so on, which funding and reputation are so often attached to. Munday explains that ‘[t]he value of a humanities education is manifold’ as it ranges through its impact on the transformed individual, to economic return.

A set of principles I am drawn to through *IF* is its enabling of the ‘individual to critically analyse the category of everyday life as they know it, in order to better grasp their position within society and to act with a greater sense of agency as a result.’⁵³⁷ For Munday, this point resounds with *IF*’s foregrounding of being free to use and in its stake of criticality. These thoughts also refer back to the sentiments of Freire in his dialogic education theory, and in Illich in his emphasis of the public good of ‘convivial institutions’.⁵³⁸ Further this goes some way in supporting a discussion Munday and I had for the ‘Art and Design Education in Times of Change’ conference. This outlined the idea that it could be argued that society is in need of the criticality and consciousness of the methodologies of arts and humanities disciplines now more than ever; as the prevailing discourse rooted in political conservatism’s austerity and its impact on society has functioned to denigrate the type of values that *IF* supports. A recent article by writer Morgan Quaintance touched upon the same note but from the perspective of how ‘the institutions’ of the art world in particular come to benefit from this political and social imbalance. Where Quaintance makes a call to create ‘avenues for funding separate from exploitative networks, organis[e] gallery space with a sense of civic responsibility, and

536 Ibid., p. 10.

537 Ibid., p. 11.

538 See Appendix 2

devis[e] opportunities for new critical voices⁵³⁹ to establish a self-sustaining field that is not answerable to the exploitative networks of ‘neo conservatism’,⁵⁴⁰ *IF* equally makes a claim to find such a space of and for education. I argue that *IF* should not be held in the margins as it offers something unique, by bridging both the symbolic principles of what an education should be, in its values, with a radical and mutable approach in its structuring.

3 The honourable execution of the political act – which describes the nature of the alternative and the practice and plurality of the alternative; how it exists, how it is formed and unfolds itself as alternative higher education.

Some questions Munday and I considered have concerned the constitution of ‘the alternative’ as a mode of address; where and how do small-scale actions manifest and to what ends? Additionally, how does ‘the alternative’ carry the reconceptualised value outlined above? For Munday in framing *IF*, an underpinning question to the project, in light of our dialogue, is simply, ‘what is the point of this organisation doing what it does?’⁵⁴¹ This emerged through the reception of external critique that the project has so far elicited, where some have posited its apparent ‘utopianism’ to underwrite an overall naivety to the project. In response, Munday explains that by framing *IF* as a utopian project, this functions to actually frame and illuminate perceived flaws in society, which works productively for *IF*. It does so in a way that confirms *IF*’s public disavowal of the commodification of mainstream education, through the presentation of an alternative vision. Additionally, this critique works pragmatically; not only does the project present an alternative vision in its reconceptualisation of the values of such an education in its critique of the current system, but it actually offers an alternative model. In this sense, the value carried through this idea of utopianism is both practicable and symbolic, the honourable execution of an alternative vision. This idea of execution is key, as it can be understood in relation to the plurality of ‘the alternative’ outlined in figure 2, according to Fuller and Jonas’ schematic and further, in accordance to the ‘internal’, ‘aligned’ and ‘distinct’ delineations.

539 Morgan Quaintance, ‘The New Conservatism: Complicity and the UK Art World’s Performance of Progression’, <https://conversations.e-flux.com/t/the-new-conservatism-complicity-and-the-uk-art-worlds-performance-of-progression/7200> [accessed 18 October 2017]

540 Ibid.

541 Munday, p. 14.

IF sits as a supplementary organisation to existing higher education institutions, and is, in part, in opposition to them ‘by producing a learning community that is similar to, but [...] different from, those being produced within universities today.’⁵⁴² *IF* is a supplement by definition of lack, but also acknowledges that it does not propose a solution; instead it is a means of communicating the nature of a problem through action. This is key, because it does not simply contribute as a critique but, in effect, critiques *through* a set of in-the-world actions. In this sense, *IF* begins to enact Freire’s proposed praxis of reflection and action. Further, commenting with a wider reference to the increasing plurality and abundance of alternative education in recent years, Munday and I discussed the framing of the Educational Turn and other organisations sitting between mainstream education and self-organised actions. He posited a perspective on such an abundance that is useful in how it reframes the notion and problematisation of abundance, where instead abundance can be considered as ‘strength in numbers.’⁵⁴³ When projects such as *IF*⁵⁴⁴ are considered together, what is clear is the reinforcement of an alternative agenda, that though disparate in geographical manifestation, they are unified by their overarching claims and aims to a transformed landscape and consciousness about higher education in the UK and further afield. For Munday, this speaks to the idea that strength in numbers can cumulatively work towards change, where the importance becomes less about the unique approaches to alternative forms of education and more about the volume, the abundance of these actions.

Regarding such a plurality, as with my research, and volume, as with my conversations with Munday, we developed the idea that these projects, as ‘fragments’,⁵⁴⁵ can be defined as the constellatory process that produces a thing and simultaneously its own framework, or political action. Where Schwab has discussed elsewhere the critical value of considering the process, act and function of ‘the exposition’ as a means of both producing and epistemologically framing. In this light, we can observe how the notion of expositiveness, can be understood in relation to practices such as *IF*, which illuminates

542 Ibid., p. 16.

543 Ibid., p. 17.

544 Munday cites the Free University Brighton; People’s Political Economy project; AgainAgainAgainAgain; Lincoln Social Science Centre; Melbourne Free University. Munday, p. 17.

545 Ibid.

this idea of the cumulative worth and effect of independent fragments being viewed together as a collective vision.

4 Futures of knowledge and education – speaks to our identified problem by making a proposition out of a direct action, which we have come to reconcile as understanding the *IF* Project as a mode of address. It therefore functions in propositional terms towards one possible future of non-instrumentalised arts and humanities education.

We were compelled by the promise of the alternative; what it is, how it functions, how it retains its alterity, whether it needs to, what happens when external factors and bodies have a stake in it, how we can move beyond the discourse and into action, that is, the alternative is parasitical, but so too is that to which it is alternative. Drawing on this, it is key to note that though our dialogue has formally come to an end in research terms, the wider discussion that Munday and I began to formulate is ongoing. In the UK context, the 2017 general election initiated political recourse to re-evaluating the terms by which education is instituted because the leader of the Labour party, Jeremy Corbyn, outlined the party's intentions to reform higher education policy foregrounding the urgency of educational debate in the context of the political sphere in the UK.

This brings to bear a speculative light on the longevity of projects such as *IF* in the sense that Corbyn's policy to abolish tuition fees brings into question the efficacy and need for projects like *IF*, when 'Labour believes education should be free, and [...] will restore this principle [as] [t]here is a real fear that students are being priced out of university education.'⁵⁴⁶ Then, in the context of instability in the UK where the institutional future of arts and humanities education is relatively unknown but the perceived direction of travel is one that works to denigrate the value of this type of education, we can observe two points. One is that projects such as *IF* need to be transparent in their motivation and approaches to conceiving of alternative models. Another is that they need to acknowledge their own instability and limitation by actively existing in the present, through collective action. Together this means that conceiving of a future is complex; in order to honourably execute a politics of alternative education, these projects need to work against the logic of simply making critical statements, and work towards a future of continuous address.

546 Labour Party Manifesto, <http://www.labour.org.uk/page/-/Images/manifesto-2017/labour-manifesto-2017.pdf> [accessed 18 October 2017] p. 43.

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The plurality of alternative models of education that this research examines, and claims to be problematic, insofar as their positioning within the context of contemporary art, in effect comes close to formulating its own space in relation to the education sector. It does so hypothetically, on the basis that through this research these otherwise disparate fields are brought into dialogue, when they would otherwise not be. In doing so, my research aims to have established a set of other possibilities for education that designate the productivity of this plurality. While in the immediate domain of the Educational Turn, this might be problematic: so long as its practices are retained by art, they cannot do so much to effect change at the level of the wider education landscape, but their abundance, in reality, has at least made visible and possible the capacity of 'the alternative' in working towards a changed consciousness about education. This is what we referred to when we discussed the *IF* Project as mode of political address. By understanding alternative arts education as a mode of address, we can begin to realise the possibility and social, political and cultural value of these organisations, as a collective movement, *towards* change rather than as the sites of transformation itself.

If then this dialogue has worked through a means of articulating what these projects do, how they fit into and inform the wider context of education, through the lens of *IF*,⁵⁴⁷ then perhaps thinking of these alternative models outside the frame of the Educational Turn as modes of address is one such principle to apply back to the home ground of this research, as one component of a hybrid, sustainable form of alternative arts education. Our dialogue, from the perspective of art's Educational Turn, particularly with reference to the now abundant models of the alternative, has placed *IF* into a wider critical discourse. Noting the abundance in this context, conversations with the *IF* Project have intended to make critical distinction between the kind of artist-led practices that have emerged out of the Educational Turn and organisations such as *IF*. These can be distinguished by being described as attending more to the fulfilment of praxis or social-engagement in art, and attempting to transform the status quo by offering an alternative vision to an otherwise (and arguably) irresolvable arts education climate, to the ends of education. Hence this idea of 'the alternative' as a mode of address, or strategy towards acting as educator, facilitator, organiser begins to take shape.

547 Outside of the frame of art.



Figure 7, Josh Artus (photographer), *THECUBE co-working space*, 2017

THECUBE (2015–2017)

The phenomenon of co-working has established a culture of new approaches to working communities internationally, since its initial conception catching a general ‘fall-out’⁵⁴⁸ of start-up companies and entrepreneurs, after the global financial crash of 2008.⁵⁴⁹ My interest in co-working spaces is in their capacity to offer an alternative physical site for education. Building from the ideas presented through speaking with Ball of the Leeds Creative Timebank, where ideas of community, co-production and exchange are re-evaluated through the form of an alternative economic system, the co-working space model offers another logical step to consider as a site in which co-production, knowledge mobility and the facilitation of community is realised, in another domain outside contemporary art. Paralleling the counter-institutional practices of the Educational Turn, the co-working sector emerged in a similar way, as a direct response to the loss of faith in corporate institutions that secured a conventional understanding of work, in response to the economic crash in 2008. In a similar way to the practices of alternative arts education, co-working as a model offers a practicable and conceivably sustainable alternative to the now blurred tropes of work; the eight-hour work day and the distribution of a worker’s time between work, rest and recreation. The practices and organisation of alternative arts education under the remit of the Educational Turn offer a set of viable alternatives, but are limited in their scope to impact the higher education sector owing to its binding to the art world. In the light of this co-working spaces might offer a model that could be put forward in conceiving a new model of alternative arts education.

I started speaking with Araceli Camargo and Anne Fritz, co-founder and co-directors of THECUBE in late 2014. These conversations began in parallel with the dialogue presented above with the *IF* Project, and so together they reflect two diverse strands of thinking concerning the different organisational models. The initial conversation intended to discursively consider the idea of knowledge mobility in the context of co-working. This was to attempt to open up some of my ideas amounting to the critique of the locations of art as possible sites of education. I had previously worked with THECUBE, co-programming their Brainplay discussions, under the aegis of JOURNEY / SCHOOL, and it was from this experience that I observed its investment in the following

548 Araceli Camargo, conversation with the author, 12 February 2015

549 Ibid.

two areas. Firstly, the facilitation of knowledge production and exchange as a means of reconfiguring structural conventions of educational forms, attempting to situate education away from its formal and exclusive alignment to the university. Secondly the process of building and sustaining working communities around specific urgencies; those in the orbit of THECUBE's remit include the built environment, healthcare, education, technology, to name a few.

THECUBE was founded as a co-working space for entrepreneurs, organisers, artists, designers, academics in 2009⁵⁵⁰ and was one of the first in its kind in London.⁵⁵¹ It positioned itself uniquely as a site within which its users could work, collaborate and network, while contributing to an evolving and mutable 'ecosystem'.⁵⁵² It presently exists as a two-fold co-working and research organisation, whose collaborative partnerships with local government and academic institutions reflect its intentions to both keep pace with a growing sector in London and its capacity to claim a new form of working, research and education infrastructure that is future-facing. This form of hybridity, in its manifold objectives, significantly challenges what it means to institute work and education while contesting and re-evaluating the types of institutions that the sectors of business and education currently reside within.

Our early conversations offered both my research and THECUBE a space of critical and comparative reflection on the notion and application of knowledge mobility. THECUBE has from its inaugural stages considered the practice of knowledge exchange to be a foundational mode of co-working⁵⁵³ in the present climate, between sectors. Camargo believes that 'we exist in an age of knowledge mobility'⁵⁵⁴ and to accommodate this, the sector should take responsibility in its network and capacities to facilitate and nurture a new type of flexible and collaborative workforce.⁵⁵⁵ A step towards this type of accommodation might be in curating knowledge communities,⁵⁵⁶ according to Camargo. During our conversations throughout 2015, THECUBE was in the middle of setting in motion its move towards becoming a smart workspace, intending to integrate and apply the technology and business focus and expertise of a large proportion of its members

550 Ibid.
551 Ibid.
552 Ibid.
553 Ibid.
554 Ibid.
555 Ibid.
556 Ibid.

with the neuroscience backgrounds of both Camargo and Fritz. In 2017 THECUBE has taken its first steps toward this status by conceiving of the Centric Lab,⁵⁵⁷ a research lab in collaboration with UCL, which sits separately from the co-working space, and additionally by configuring the Cognitive Academy.⁵⁵⁸ This aims to 'cater to industry professionals and businesses which are increasingly interested in how neuroscience can be applied to industry'.⁵⁵⁹

These moves parallel some of the processes of expansion in the co-working sector more generally. Adjacent in both physical location and in ethos, Second Home for example, positions itself as a 'social business with a mission to support creativity and entrepreneurship in cities around the world'⁵⁶⁰ and since its emergence in 2013 has become one of the most visible and recognisable brands in workspace culture in London. Its founder, Rohan Silva was instrumental in setting up Google's London Campus, equally as prominent in the popular culture of co-working in terms of its visibility in the London co-working scene. What is striking about Second Home in particular is its desire to permeate and expand; in 2017 its geographical remit spans Europe, with two more sites in London under construction, in addition to an experimental take on the bookshop format, as Libreria, adjacent to its Brick Lane site. The point is that co-working spaces have not only transformed the tropes of work – where, how and what – but have also contributed to the construction of a lifestyle that advocates for mobility, community, flexibility. These types of indeterminate, or fluid, principles of a burgeoning culture can be found in alternative forms of arts education, and are also those which are critiqued by Pattison's artistic practice discussed in Chapter Two. In light of this, what can be observed is a wider cultural tendency that engenders a condition of knowledge mobility, which Camargo identified through her articulation that 'we exist in an age of knowledge mobility'.⁵⁶¹

In dialogue with THECUBE, our conversations charted a wide-reaching critical space, which is analysed in a working report⁵⁶² co-written with Camargo and Fritz titled,

557 Centric Lab, <https://www.thecentriclab.com> [accessed 18 October 2017]
558 Cognitive Academy, <https://www.thecubelondon.com/about-2/> [accessed 18 October 2017]
559 Ibid.
560 Second Home, <https://secondhome.io> [accessed 18 October 2017]
561 Camargo, *ibid.*
562 The two co-written texts presented through *IF* and THECUBE go some way to manifest what Hannula et al have termed a 'discursive literature' as is discussed in part two of Chapter Three, whereby text is used to communicate the practice of research back into the academic field of the research.

‘Structuring Knowledge Mobility from Co-working to Smart Space’.⁵⁶³ In the same way as the dialogical essay co-written with Munday, this report aimed to manifest the breadth of our discussions so that both my research and THECUBE could benefit from it. We discussed both conceptually and pragmatically the potential of knowledge mobility as a working method and speculative concept for the future of co-working, where co-working is understood as an alternative site of knowledge (production, exchange, mobility and circulation) and education. Over nine months we held a series of focussed conversations, co-hosted two Brainplay discussions, co-wrote the working report and co-hosted a final roundtable discussion that simultaneously launched THECUBE’s hypothesis of knowledge mobility for 2017. THECUBE has taken on knowledge mobility as both a speculative approach to conceiving of structuring future workspace and a form of hypothesis to extend their programming through. Our working together has offered this aspect of my research a physical and tangible location, where it exists independently from my thinking and research; in that it has been taken on and as such challenges my research, in terms of framing its limitation. Not least, THECUBE’s thinking and perspective is positioned relatively obliquely to my research, in comparison to the other organisations discussed in this chapter. In this way, it contributes a set of perspectives that would have otherwise been unrealised.

The following sections represent a summary of the conversations taking the form of an analysis of the key themes emerging from our overarching dialogue towards outlining what the co-working model might offer to the field of alternative arts education. Combined, these sections locate and draw together some of the main ideas that have come to constitute our shared concerns, drawing specifically on the ways in which knowledge mobility can be considered as a mode of infrastructuring, taking into account the multiple perspectives implicit to co-working communities, cultures of exchange and value, the notion of structural hybridity, and the future of co-working.

Multiple perspectives

Acknowledging and building productively on the polarised perspectives between my research and the work of THECUBE, we recognised the need to define a shared language

563 Araceli Camargo, Anne Fritz, Susannah Haslam, ‘Structuring knowledge mobility from co-working to smart spaces’, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B501ssnZYQFVby1TeDcybEpQY0k/view?usp=sharing> [accessed 18 October 2017]

without being prescriptive. Proposing an initial discussion concerning the interpretations and applications of knowledge mobility in relation to our respective thinking, our conversations began by charting the territory between the Educational Turn and alternative arts education and the co-working sector; THECUBE’s motivations, how it functions as a community, the critical and conceptual evolution of knowledge mobility.⁵⁶⁴ We discussed different perspectives on the constitution of knowledge, its production, exchange and mobility in practice; where my work has located an ambivalent reference to knowledge insofar as the field of alternative arts education is concerned, for THECUBE, knowledge figures predominantly as-object.⁵⁶⁵ In this sense its conception is reckoned against its use value in terms of ‘information’ and ‘data’, and in terms of its distribution and the ethics of such. This latter point became an important lens through which to pursue our conversations, where we came to consider knowledge in ‘spatial, working and community terms.’⁵⁶⁶

Considering the disciplines, sectors and subjects that knowledge mobility might come into communion with in relation to the field of co-working, and whose perspectives it might shape, we attempted to pragmatically wrestle the term away from its initial critical conception in relation to the Educational Turn. THECUBE works closely with the fields of education, innovation, tech, design, workspace culture and creative community organisations.⁵⁶⁷ Drawing on THECUBE’s links to these sectors then offers my research the conceptual scope to consider how thinking from these fields could begin to help structurally inform our conversations concerning alternative arts education, through the lens of co-working. Through discussion in this vein we found that conceiving of the implications of knowledge mobility in spatial, educational, infrastructural, economic and technological terms, helped us to open up the conversation into the above fields. From here, a decision was made to enlist a number of other voices to critically consider how knowledge mobility as a structural tool could play out pragmatically. We therefore co-convened a roundtable discussion as part of THECUBE’s Brainplay programme in June 2015, inviting members of THECUBE’s co-working community who specialised in these fields to reflect on our conversations. Questions guiding this discussion were:

564 Ibid., p. 15.

565 Ibid., p. 7.

566 Ibid., p. 15.

567 Ibid.

How can we overcome the plurality and abstraction of knowledge as a concept in order to define what knowledge mobility might be practically?
 Does knowledge need to be mobile and how do we understand mobility in the context of knowledge?
 Mobility implies movement and space – what does knowledge mobility look like, and what might it come to inform in spatial and educative terms?
 Are our reference points to space and education limiting the scope of how we might define knowledge mobility?
 What is the future of knowledge?
 What kind of technical infrastructure do we need to support knowledge mobility?
 Do we need to teach or learn in different ways in order to encourage knowledge mobility?⁵⁶⁸

The ensuing discussion problematised conventional notions of knowledge and education and its interrelation, and focused on the ways in which this thinking could be better conceived in manifest spatial terms, in particular outside of academic discourse, and considered specifically in relation to design and technology. In light of this, a further roundtable was organised in September 2015 to focus on the notion of infrastructure in relation to knowledge mobility, drawing on the following questions:

How can we practically apply knowledge mobility to the co-working sector?
 What kind of infrastructure does knowledge mobility require?⁵⁶⁹

The group came up with some clear ideas concerning the use and role of digital and technically enhanced environments and the potential effects of these on education and work environments,⁵⁷⁰ and in particular the scalability of organisational models such as THECUBE, in relation to smart, flexible education and work space.

Cultures of exchange and value

Current cultures of informal exchange that emerge and operate from the fields outlined above, for example the burgeoning trajectory of ‘the sharing economy’ and

568 Ibid., pp. 20–21.
 569 Ibid., p. 21.
 570 Ibid.

‘the commons’,⁵⁷¹ present a wider cultural address to a changed consciousness about what it means to work against previously dominant top-down structures in business and education. In this vein, we considered the impacts of institutionally conceived mechanisms such as knowledge exchange (management, transfer) in relation to knowledge mobility, and as mechanisms instituted through policy to derive commercially viable knowledge-based relationships and objects across institutions of education and business. A consideration here was in the distinctions in vernacular between ‘transfer’, ‘exchange’ and ‘mobility.’ My research understands knowledge mobility to account for socially orientated configurations that permit the organisation of education, as distinct from the object-orientated implications of ‘transfer’ and ‘exchange’. For THECUBE, the distinction in terminologies surrounding processes of ‘sharing’ and ‘exchange’ are understood as micro-level acts of collaboration between disciplinary or sector-diverse subjects, for example, artist and educator,⁵⁷² such that THECUBE premises the diversity of its community through a curated selection process, to elicit and incubate new working relationships.

Identifying knowledge as a form of currency in this way, led our discussion to the constitution of new forms of value systems associated to co-working. We began to outline distinctions between a monetary system and a system premised on the exchange of knowledge, as identified in the previous discussions with Ball and Munday. Camargo stated that in principle ‘knowledge is the central currency’⁵⁷³ of THECUBE in that collaborative work undertaken within its community is where value is placed on its capacity as a new, innovative organisational model. Equally, Camargo is clear that THECUBE is sustained through membership fees that are contingent to differing levels of access its community has to the space and to its facilities. THECUBE’s transparency insofar as its interdependency between knowledge-based and monetary currency presents the difficulty in putting to practice an ethos that undermines a money-based system of exchange in favour of one that rejects it. Comparatively THECUBE and the Leeds Creative Timebank, in principle, work towards a similar ethos, but where THECUBE is rooted to a high-cost physical location in central London, the Timebank exists nomadically in time and in situ, according to demands and needs of individual

571 Ibid., p. 16.
 572 Ibid.
 573 Ibid., p. 17.

exchanges. A question for my research is how could these two models work together effectively towards reducing monetary exchange on the part of THECUBE, particularly when THECUBE premises itself as an incubator of collaboration which requires the inhabitation of space by its community, where time is valued contingent to the use of such space? Further, how is this reconciled with issues surrounding current formal education institutions and those highlighted through existing alternative models?

Hybridity

Considering co-working as a new form of institutional practice, it is useful to ask what it would mean to institutionalise co-working culture in the way that existing arts institutions have co-opted the ethos of the Educational Turn? THECUBE has evolved as a 'grass root organisation'⁵⁷⁴ in 2009, to establish itself as a formative body in the co-working scene in London. It has evolved in line with responding to a need for these types of 'flexible working environments that can accommodate new and mobile ways of research, work and production',⁵⁷⁵ and reflecting its communities' needs. Camargo and Fritz explained that it has always been an intention of THECUBE to progress from 'small-scale, to local community scale, to city scale'.⁵⁷⁶ Towards this aim, it has established a set of working relationships with external partners that range from education institutions such as University of the Arts London, Loughborough University and UCL, to the Greater London Authority and Hackney Council.⁵⁷⁷ These institutional partnerships are balanced with continuously building their co-working community of entrepreneurs, scientists and artists, which in turn has encouraged THECUBE to evolve its scope of facilities and services, including the use of desk space, its network and access to a wide-ranging programme of events and mentoring schemes.

Importantly, this has engendered a hybrid approach to its presentation as a co-working space, which necessitates the 'undertaking of a new language that can be understood by all corners of their reach'.⁵⁷⁸ In this vein Camargo introduced the concept of 'big collaboration' which represents a scaled-up version of the mechanism of Knowledge Exchange, through the experimental resolve of increasingly complex global

574 Ibid., p. 18.
575 Ibid., p. 7.
576 Ibid., p. 18.
577 Ibid.
578 Ibid.

issues where 'Science, Technology, Art, Design and Business'⁵⁷⁹ converge together. 'Big collaboration' aims to capitalise on processes of bridging and sharing research, knowledge and expertise between institutions of academia and industry. For example, Camargo highlighted the Crick Institute (UCL, King's College London, Wellcome Trust and Cancer Research), Nike and Nasa's Launchpad in the USA, and Here East in London as current examples.⁵⁸⁰

As far as alternative education is concerned, THECUBE posits that education needs to be considered in collaborative terms, whereby it is taken out from the remit of formal institutions such as the university and is conceptually recomposed in infrastructural terms, in relation to other sector/community-specific organisations. From the perspective of THECUBE, this means that education needs to be evolved through conceiving of it in terms of space, and in its functionality in relation to the specificity of educational demands; for example, the difference between studio provision for artists and laboratories for scientists and in the way in which *IF* has developed the model of the foundation year from its initial conception for art and design disciplines. Further, THECUBE interprets this as a need for smart work and educational space, whereby a structure is adaptable to its changing users' needs and one which keeps pace with the requirements of an increasingly mobile and increasingly multidisciplinary body of learners and educators. This latter point leads me to question the potential capacity of the co-working model as a site of progressive alternative education; is then co-working 'a place for education, or a place of education beyond academia?'⁵⁸¹ The Brainplay programme is one such testing ground for THECUBE's speculative approaches to education, where it has been able to explore methods and forms of educative practice on a small-scale that pertain to the ethos behind 'big collaboration'.

Future of co-working

In light of the above summary of key themes raised through conversation with Camargo and Fritz, a conclusive and critical focal point that I take forward with my research, is in identifying the possible future and scalability of co-working. I posit that its capacity to structurally constitute how a new model of alternative arts education might be conceived

579 Ibid., p. 19.
580 Ibid., p. 20.
581 Ibid., p. 19.

of lies in the way in which it advocates for structurally flexible and mutable spaces that attend to its users. Further, its focus on communities of practice across disciplines and sectors accounts for the shifts in work/life balance that an increasingly entrepreneurial workforce demands. From the perspective of learners and educators, this is key. As with the Leeds Creative Timebank and *IF*, THECUBE can be understood as an organisation that has identified a problem and works, through reflection and action, to resolve it.

The nuance in the different approaches to co-working is key, as they tend to align to differing communities of practice, ranging corporate, business-focused and entrepreneurial bodies on one hand, and creative communities on another. Specifically, THECUBE aims to straddle these communities through evolving into a smart space that can accommodate the scope of support and facilities each need. Camargo considers this as the act of building and sustaining an ecology⁵⁸² and through our conversations we have considered how conceptually this could be scaled, for example through the application of ‘big collaboration’ on both a local and institutional level. This is a difficult and contentious point however, which is also addressed in relation to both the Timebank and *IF*. It is by drawing on THECUBE’s ideas in terms of infrastructure that it becomes clear how these models could conceivably be configured together.

Considered together the *IF* Project and THECUBE, for example, both begin to outline how each model manifests as a mode of political address. *IF* addresses the marketisation of higher education through providing a substitutive alternative, and THECUBE in practice addresses the pressing need to accommodate a continuously shifting landscape in workspace culture, by anticipating its future in the present. This is exemplified by Camargo’s intentions to build on THECUBE’s existing foundation in co-working, through sustaining the research lab with UCL, developing the Brainplay programme and its educational partnerships towards ultimately evolving into a mutable and modular structure that can be distributed and applied across sectors.

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This dialogue with THECUBE shapes one potential approach to instituting an alternative form of arts education; some of the motivating principles of THECUBE and the co-

582 Ibid.

working sector broadly engage with those currently being discussed in the context of alternative arts education. In light of this, we can observe similar organisational principles between the timebank and co-working models: privileging the needs of small communities of practice, which encourages a more humanistic approach to and manifestation of organising; employing methods of collaboration and facilitating co-production, both in terms of the conceptual focus of Condorelli’s friendship and Bakhtin’s dialogue; and organisational hybridity across forms of organisational structure, such as membership and collaboration. Then, to return to the fold of my research questions, not only can a similarity be observed between some of the conditions of and approaches to organisation in timebanking, foundation year and co-working models, but also, these conditions and approaches are beginning to take shape as a new model of arts education for the longer-term.

It is important to note that the above summary drawing from the report produced as part of this dialogue reflects the scope of conversations from the perspective of THECUBE as one such potential model to explore as a site of alternative arts education. The inclusion of this material intends to present the triangulated positions formed between Camargo, Fritz and I through my research, to convey the way in which my research is interpreted and applied through its engagement with organisations operating outside of the field of the Educational Turn.



Figure 8, Chelsea Pettitt (photographer), *Syllabus II Wysing Arts Centre retreat 1*, 2016



Figure 9, John Bloomfield (photographer), *Syllabus II Wysing Arts Centre retreat 2*, 2016

Syllabus, Wysing Arts Centre (2015–2016)

In August 2015 I visited Wysing Arts Centre to meet with the participants of the Leverhulme scholarship programme and was subsequently introduced to Chelsea Pettitt, Head of Partnerships and Lotte Juul Petersen, Curator at Wysing to discuss the arts centre's education programming. Earlier in the summer in June Wysing launched the Syllabus programme, which is more recently referred to as an alternative art education programme,⁵⁸³ or artist-development programme⁵⁸⁴ organised currently between the non-profit arts organisations, Wysing, Eastside Projects, S1 Artspace, New Contemporaries, Studio Voltaire and Spike Island. I was compelled to initiate a dialogue with Pettitt and Juul Petersen as my previous dialogues with organisations explicitly outside the field of contemporary art had formulated three unique organisational approaches that my research considers to be potential modes of alternative arts education. Syllabus presented a means of building on these dialogues, but in closer range to the domain of contemporary art, not least in its articulation and development of a new model within the field that has appeared from the outset to be proposing a new model from the perspective of a small-medium arts organisation. As such, I acknowledge Syllabus' proximity to the art world, but found in it a refreshing alternative to the alternative *art school* model developing elsewhere, with Open School East and School of the Damned, as examples.

Syllabus began as a partnership between each of the above organisations that built upon the retreat-style programming that Wysing has historically developed. It aims to 'reach artists from a wide geographic spread within the UK and, mindful of the current economic climate and changes within higher education, offers an intensive and cost-effective learning programme.'⁵⁸⁵ It was conceived to make accessible sometimes hidden or otherwise inaccessible resources to emerging artists, in the form of established artists and curators as mentors,⁵⁸⁶ a network of art spaces and a time period of a year. In conversation with Pettitt, it

583 Chris Sharratt, 'The Syllabus: A Peer-Led, Non-Prescriptive Postgraduate Alternative', http://www.artandeducation.net/school_watch/the-syllabus-a-peer-led-non-prescriptive-postgraduate-alternative/ [accessed 18 October 2017]

584 Surmised to be distinct from the alternative status of the alternative *art school* on the basis of discussions with Pettitt and Juul Petersen which made distinction between the alternative *art school* models of the Educational Turn and education programming in arts organisations. Chelsea Pettitt and Lotte Juul Petersen, conversation with the author, 20 October 2016

585 The Syllabus press release, http://www.wysingartscentre.org/images/uploads/The_Syllabus_PR.pdf [accessed 18 October 2017]

586 Pettitt and Petersen, conversation with the author, 5 October 2015

became clear that, from the start of this project, the programme's organisers across its partner institutions were aware of ensuring that what they were offering to artists was something that at the time was not being offered elsewhere⁵⁸⁷ and as such are particularly mindful of being part of a growing culture of instituting arts education in alternative ways. To note: Wysing's proximity to the art world proper, presents a shift in the nature of this organisation in comparison to the Timebank, *IF* and THECUBE models. My conversations with Pettitt and Juul Petersen emerged as a final dialogue insofar as my research practice is concerned. As Syllabus was initially positioned as something closer to a model of professional development for artists over an *art school* explicitly, it felt an appropriate step to engage with an organisation that, while aligned to the art world, is distinct from the surrounding discourse of the Educational Turn. Not least, Syllabus offers a unique frame for conceiving of an education model as part of an existing network of other arts organisations.

In a recent article for *Art and Education*, Chris Sharratt describes Syllabus as a means by which artists can experience 'real-world, in-person social interaction that allows for the depth and breadth of discussion many artists crave'.⁵⁸⁸ He contextualises this by referring to the idea that even though artists are 'more connected than ever due to the ubiquity of social media',⁵⁸⁹ the sociality of the art school is what is deemed important; the development of a student's practice as part of a community is why many people want to experience art school.⁵⁹⁰ Given the issue of tuition fees, narrowing of course options⁵⁹¹ and 'institutional rigidity'⁵⁹² of formal incarnations of arts education, many feel as though committing to formal programmes is out of the question. Director of Wysing, Donna Lynas states that owing to this struggle, a motivating factor was simply to 'offer something to people who haven't really got the finances to go and do an MA.'⁵⁹³

This resonates with one of the motivations Munday of the *IF* Project cites behind its formation. The focus on the discursive nature of the programme is also a significant aspect of its organisation; in its widest understanding, such discursivity is nurtured through the programme's peer-led approach. Rather than pre-determining a form of curricula for

587 Pettitt and Petersen, conversation with the author, 5 October 2015

588 Sharratt, *ibid.*

589 *Ibid.*

590 *Ibid.*

591 *Ibid.*

592 *Ibid.*

593 Donna Lynas, 'The Syllabus: A Peer-Led, Non-Prescriptive Postgraduate Alternative', *ibid.*

the artists in anticipation of them, a decision was made by Pettitt ahead of Syllabus II⁵⁹⁴ to let each artist contribute to its programming.⁵⁹⁵ This was in part informed by a decision to curate the group in a way that would ensure each student held a clear position within the cohort.⁵⁹⁶ This meant that the interview process would take into account the longer-term aims of the artists. The idea of curation, or the hand-picking of students, to form something of a complementary student body, refers to Illich's 'educational matchmaking' where educational groups are formed around a specific set of vocations, desires or interests. Additionally, this parallels the selection process described by Camargo of THECUBE in configuring its co-working community, opting to create the 'ideal' working group through its curation, than through open call. Illich's 'educational matchmaking' in part contributes to his ideas of new institutional arrangement, which are premised on the realisation of an educational 'service' or 'network' that can be illustrated by Syllabus' foregrounding of its participants' stake in programming and, further, in its alignment to other arts organisations.

Syllabus is initiated at Wysing where, at the beginning of each year, the group engage in a retreat, where agendas are set and devised collaboratively.⁵⁹⁷ It began its third year in autumn 2017, and has markedly forged its stake as part of the growing culture of para-institutional organisations in the UK. Syllabus represents an evolution from the types of artist-led education discussed in chapters one and two, in its alignment to small non-profit arts organisations; in a sense, it is both organisation and peer-led. Such a hybrid formation offers alternative arts education a more focused approach to teaching and learning, or professional and artistic development. Specifically, it sits somewhere between Lütticken's alter- and para-institutions that are autonomous from the (symbolic) institution and are adjacent to, or supported by the (symbolic) institution, respectively. Syllabus operates within both of Lütticken's approaches, as part of a wider group of organisations, and collectively as an autonomous constellatory body approaching and doing educational organisation differently. From its offset, Syllabus has sought to build and nurture community, education and professional development for artists in one unified programme. Paralleling other proximate gestures in alternative arts education,⁵⁹⁸ it is positioned both culturally and politically as part

594 Designating its second year.

595 Pettitt, conversation with the author, 20 May 2016

596 Ibid.

597 Pettitt, *ibid.*

598 Open School East, Alt MFA, The Other MA (TOMA), School of the Damned, Islington Mill as concurrent examples.

of a wider context that is critically and productively responding to an increasingly problematic remit of arts education in the UK.

Some early questions I had for Wysing were around the idea that the 2016 Wysing Poly programme, and the inaugural year of the Syllabus programme both signified a move towards confronting the increasingly problematic status quo of learning and education for artists in the UK. I was interested in thinking about how Wysing positioned itself as a small-medium arts organisation and simultaneously as a site of art education; asking what this new, conflated role is, constituted by the Syllabus programme, of the arts organisation in relation to alternative arts education. Wysing has a significant history as a progressive arts organisation; running numerous residencies, retreats and facilitating long and short-term studio space for artists, education programmes and critically aligned public events. In this sense, Wysing Poly and Syllabus figure as the next logical steps for an organisation committed to keeping pace with what artists want and need, in the context of building a continuously growing public.

The concept behind Wysing Poly as an overarching frame for Wysing during our dialogue carries with it a nostalgia for the skill and craft of artistic learning.⁵⁹⁹ This is something we can increasingly observe in the literature, as volumes are dedicated to the genealogy and evolution of the post-war art school, which, in the context of arts education today, might be at odds with the case for a transdisciplinary education, as is so often cited as part of discourse on the Educational Turn in art. Conceptually Wysing Poly seemed to critically question the ever-present paradigm of time and space for art⁶⁰⁰ and its realisation, versus recourse to an artist's or art's status and its certification or validation by an institution. It is through programmes such as Syllabus, that Wysing as an arts organisation really positions itself to keep pace with the political and economic climate that, though indirectly, sanction such a binary.

At the beginning of our conversations, I was engaged in comparing Syllabus and Wysing Poly, as arts education and exhibitionary models, with the work of the Leeds Creative Timebank, THECUBE and the *IF* Project, owing to their conceptual proximity as alternative practices. What could be determined to be the motivating factor in their collective realisation as alternative cultural practices, other than their status of such and their existence necessitated by various effects of economic instability? Instead, do they mark a collective effort at constituting a change in attitude about facilitated models, spaces, curricula and programmes

599 Petersen, conversation with the author, 5 October 2015

600 Ibid.

of learning? I was interested in thinking about this question in relation to Wysing; what does this change in attitude mean, require and effect? What is it? How does it sustain itself? Is it about time; taking it, moving through it, giving it? Does this attitude simply recourse to questions and intentions posited by the forebears of alternative education, such as the Antiuniversity of London, ‘to examine artistic expression *beyond* the scope of the usual academy and to promote a position of social integrity and commitment ...’?

Speaking with Pettitt half-way into the first year of Syllabus, she mentioned that the group of participating artists had spent a lot of time working out just how to be a collective; logistically negotiating an evolving and mobile group of artists working together under an aegis of alternative education, while being productive and building outwards from the experience.⁶⁰¹ This is crucial, as there is often an assumed identity inadvertently handed over to participants, associates, students, artists involved with alternative forms of learning, and these identities often play most to the institutions or organisations producing these programmes. For Pettitt, the Syllabus has always been about establishing a flexible balance that almost positions the programme as a framework of support in the background, or adjacent to the experiences of the artists which are in the foreground.⁶⁰² This aspect for me is really useful because it reveals the necessity for hybridity and, following Pettitt, balance as both approach and outcome, something which has emerged in relation to the other organisations I have been in dialogue with.

From Wysing’s perspective, though Syllabus and the Poly theme aimed not to formalise this idea of hybridity per se, it is an important part of the ongoing conversation of evolving both programme and thematic into a way about conceiving the arts centre as a whole.⁶⁰³ Pettitt and Juul Petersen have both mentioned that the Poly theme, as an organisational hypothesis, has changed the way in which Wysing’s general programme is planned and instantiated.⁶⁰⁴ Its many entry points and perspectives – hence polyphony – that necessitate and inform a totally flexible and adaptable method and ethos, have a great deal of effect when it comes to thinking about the experimentality of arts organisations, particularly in the context of arts education and its alternative manifestations. From both curatorial and programming perspectives, this alignment to an experimental approach affects each

601 Pettitt, conversation with the author, 6 January 2016
602 Ibid.
603 Ibid.
604 Ibid.

component of the organisation; visitors and audience’s expectations in different contexts; study days and study weeks; summer schools; residencies. Sharing knowledge and education are paramount across all of these. Though the Poly programme was presented as a year-long theme, it practically has affected the way in which Wysing functions, and will continue to function, as an arts organisation. The 2017 programme is held under the aegis of Wysing, of which foregrounds the idea of ‘many voices’,⁶⁰⁵ those that are over-looked in current political discourse⁶⁰⁶ and those that inform the arts centre at large as a progressive organisation combining exhibition, education, publication, residency and retreat formats.

During our conversations, Syllabus was represented in the wider discourse of alternative arts education and participated in several symposia on alternative art learning, alongside some of the parallel examples listed above. As a programme, it seemed to gain a lot of momentum very quickly, which led to it having such a significant call on a possible future of arts education. This of course can very easily become problematic for some organisations, as they keep pace with discourse while trying to maintain a rich education programme that does not become marred by its own status as an object or apparatus of the art world and or the education sector. Issues of representation come into play here, and insofar as my research is concerned, this is one of the issues I think generally proves to be very difficult for artist and peer-led education. However, Pettitt recognised this as part of her role as a facilitator of such a support structure; bringing her position as an organiser with Wysing’s as an organisation in proximity to the conventional roles of teacher/supervisor and institution.⁶⁰⁷

Wysing’s implication in this wider discussion has led to its consideration, as an arts organisation, about arts education beyond the formal institution, which is reflected in Syllabus’ cross-organisational structure. A question for me here is, how can Wysing as an arts centre, within this context of arts education, bridge an increasing gap elsewhere, between audience, education and exhibition-making. Perhaps though, it is not Wysing’s duty to pick up on other institutional failings, but instead to fill this gap.⁶⁰⁸

For Juul Petersen the Poly hypothesis marked a watershed moment for Wysing,⁶⁰⁹ a means of reflecting on the previous ten years of operating as an arts centre with an overall aim to establish itself as a site of learning, across a school format and building on its existing

605 Ibid.
606 Ibid.
607 Pettitt, conversation with the author, 20 May 2016
608 Ibid., 6 January 2016
609 Petersen, conversation with the author, 6 January 2016

retreat and residency series. The Poly concept stemmed from Wysing's engagement with artist David Toop, and the 1980s' polytechnic movement;⁶¹⁰ thinking what it is to function between a polytechnic and university at the level of arts education, specifically, from the perspective of a non-profit arts organisation. The inaugural exhibition as part of the Poly theme, 'Practice of Theories' aimed to present how for artists practicing today and historically theory is a significant component of art praxes more broadly. It presented a group of artists whose work seeks to share knowledge, stage research-based environments and offer alternative and alternating structural perspectives in which this type of theory–practice operates. The plurality and scope of the Poly theme translated in the exploration of technical skill and forms and extended to specialist courses in painting and casting, for example.⁶¹¹ This exposition of practice saw a broader conceptualisation of the idea of skill-sets and the accumulation of and experimentation with knowledge.

Together then, in the context of my research, these discussions focus on the distinctions between what alternative forms of arts education could look like and manifest as. Drawing on the alternative triptych that Fuller and Jonas posit in their text, we can observe a new rendition at play in the context of Wysing – alternative-oppositional, alternative-additional and alternative-substitute. The first permits hyper-specialised education, such as craft- or skill-based training, which would require significant financial resource. The second permits hyper-transdisciplinarity, for example, correlating art and science education and everything between, which is problematic as it entails a risk of dilution. The third permits hybridity and reorganisation, which requires a broader cultural shift in the conception and understanding of value of (alternative) arts education. The latter seems to be the most proximate variable according to what Wysing intends to offer, which follows both Pettitt and Juul Petersen's thoughts on the nature of hybrid, experimental education programming as part of the wider framework of an arts organisation.

As Syllabus moves forward with its third cohort, there have been some changes to its organisation. Where initially it was about building on the relationships that the organisation had to the artists with whom Wysing worked, it is now about providing a learning and educational environment for artists who would otherwise not have the opportunity to pursue traditional educational routes. It is now thoroughly peer-led after starting off with a pre-planned programme. The artists are selected, thus curated as a group who, it is understood,

610 Ibid.

611 Ibid.

will work together and complement one another; hence everyone has a place within it, and hence the struggle for recognising the importance of collectivity. There is some focus on public presentation; each partner organisation acts as a retreat within which the artists have the opportunity to present their work in different contexts. The role of its organisers remains plural and one that balances simultaneously protector, carer, host, teacher, colleague and friend; which is arguably an ideal set of characters to negotiate with alongside the pursuit of both education and an artistic practice.

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Concluding this section, I am interested to think about what the success of Syllabus as an alternative education programme and Poly as a conceptual theme entails both as independent phenomena and in the context of Wysing Arts Centre. It is complex, because on one hand, its acknowledged in-flux, malleable and mobile nature permits and requires an indeterminacy that is both refreshing and crucial in a time of perpetual change for arts education and its institutions, organisations and programmes. On the other hand, I am convinced by Wysing's model and I believe it to be moving in a clear and progressive direction insofar as the future of arts education is concerned, particularly insofar as it builds a bridge back to the wider discourse of the Educational Turn. If we can take alternative arts education, expanded forms of art learning, peer-learning and so on, as a series of conversations, then this discussion necessarily has to be about transformation and the means of engendering networked, hybrid space for this. My questions remain in this context: what is the responsibility of the arts organisation as a model, in terms of the future of arts education? And how can these alternative hybrid formations offer a type of arts pedagogy that differs in the longer-term from the proximate and institutional contexts of university, museum and gallery?

Each of these dialogues begin to outline a set of perspectives for my research that offer up new approaches towards conceiving an alternative mode of arts education to existing iterations of the alternative *art school* held within the frame of art's Educational Turn. Individually, these dialogues present perspectives that are resolutely distinct, in practice, but are relativised through committed, reflective and critical discussions centred around the notion of knowledge mobility. As such, knowledge mobility has functioned

as a means of critically stepping outside of the field of the Educational Turn in order to examine other models to then be aligned to the field of alternative arts education through my research. It has functioned as a means of constellating and anchoring my research between an otherwise disparate set of organisations. From these dialogues, some key themes are:

1 Leeds Creative Timebank – what emerges with the timebanking model is a reconceptualisation of *value* placed on to the action of *reciprocity*. This notion of reciprocity provides an alternative understanding of the role of exchange in relation to education.

2 *IF* Project – by understanding alternative arts education models as *modes of address*, the possibility and social, political and cultural value of these organisations operating outside of the field of the Educational Turn can be understood as a *collective movement*, that continuously works towards a changed landscape of education, rather than individually as sites of *transformation*.

3 THECUBE – bringing forward thinking that aims to configure flexible, adaptable smart space, and consider the necessity and value of *scale*, ‘small-scale, to local community scale, to city scale’⁶¹² and knowledge mobility in *spatial* or *infrastructural* terms.

4 Syllabus – outlines the importance of *existing networks*, both in organisational terms and in terms of communities of practice, which informs questions pertaining to the *role of arts organisations, educators and mentors* in relation to alternative education.

The final section of this chapter presents the discussion of and reflection on three further conversations with founders of existing alternative *art school* models more closely aligned to the domain of contemporary art, in order to contextualise the above dialogues with the evolution of the field of alternative arts education.

612 Camargo, Fritz, Haslam, ‘Structuring knowledge mobility from co-working to smart spaces’, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B501ssnZYQFVby1TeDcybEpQY0k/view?usp=sharing> [accessed 18 October 2017] p. 18.

Open School East, School of the Damned and Art & Critique (2017)

Provide spaces
For knowledge
= Education⁶¹³

Taken as propositions, the above four dialogues are to be read in relation to the following discussions with organisers from three alternative art schools, which are explicitly positioned as such, and are more closely aligned to the field of contemporary art. They differ from those addressed previously both in their admission as being alternative art schools and in the way that they utilise forms of public programming and exhibition making to present either the work of their ‘associates’, ‘students’ and members. I took the decision to engage a further set of voices from organisers of alternative art schools closely aligned to art’s Educational Turn on the basis that I felt it necessary to comparatively reconcile the material drawn from the above dialogues with the positions of these organisations. This was in order to reflect the changing face of the field, as well as to present the scope of the above organisations in relation to those existing within the frame of the Turn. As already mentioned, the discourse and volume of alternative models has expanded significantly since I initiated my research in 2013.

The notion of an ‘afterward’ of the Educational Turn is supported by the volume of literature and discussions emerging across both institutional sites and discursive fora. As mentioned previously in the thesis, the Alternative Art School Fair in 2016, *Performance Research*’s issue on Radical Education also in 2016, Thorne’s survey of self-organised art schools published in 2017, and the proliferation and embeddedness of ‘the alternative’ as a model goes some way to evidence the criticality, value and relevancy of my research being carried out now. By placing the above dialogues (as propositions) in further dialogue with additional correspondence with the founders of Open School East, School of the Damned and Art & Critique, my findings begin to take shape. As three key alternative art school models that I take to represent the wider domain of alternative arts education situated within the frame of contemporary art, they encompass the same distinctions outlined in part one of Chapter Three, as having emerged according to the following demarcations: ‘aligned to’, ‘distinct from’, and ‘from within’ ‘the institution’.

613 Personal note, 2013

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Overview

Open School East is currently framed as a ‘space for artistic learning that is free, experimental, collaborative and brings together diverse voices’.⁶¹⁴ Housed in Margate, among a wide-ranging remit of functions it ‘provide[s] tuition and studio space to emerging artists, run[s] learning activities for children and adults, commission[s] artists to develop participatory projects, and produce[s] and host[s] cultural events and social activities for and with everyone.’ School of the Damned, based in Deptford in London is currently presented as a year-long alternative art course directed by its students’ comprising ‘presentations from guest visitors, crits and a business meeting [...] also organis[ing] and collaborat[ing] on other projects, exhibitions, meetings, talks, interviews, workshops which all form part of the study programme.’⁶¹⁵ Art & Critique has taken a slightly different approach in its formation, taking on the role as a form of facilitator or incubator model:

[as an] alternative art education network dedicated to practice, research, education and critical engagement with contemporary art. [It] foster[s] alternative models of art education and bring[s] together artists, curators, researchers writers and organisations in a series of free and open-access public events.⁶¹⁶

While the example of Art & Critique comes close to what my research has aimed to conceptualise, it is worth including its perspective as part of my research. It argues for an overarching model that cooperatively facilitates other alternative arts education models, unlike Open School East and School of the Damned which are presented independently as organisations in and of themselves.

Together, these three organisations come to reflect the ways in which the field has become an established one, operating as a set of alternatives to formal arts education. However, I argue that each of the organisations with whom my work initially engaged in dialogue offers up additional potential models of alternative education in ways that cumulatively propose something distinct from these latter three examples. Through the presentation of all seven models as part of my research, it is hoped that they not only

614 Open School East About, <http://www.openschooleast.org> [accessed 18 October 2017]

615 FAQ, <http://schoolofthedamned.tumblr.com/FAQ> [accessed 18 October 2017]

616 Art & Critique About, <https://artandcritique.uk/about/> [accessed 18 October 2017]

cumulatively present the urgency of this research now, but also begin to outline the capacity of them all as a body of organisations that propose a new way of conceiving alternative arts education in the longer-term.

In initiating further correspondence with Open School East and School of the Damned I drew up a series of questions (see appendices 4 and 5)⁶¹⁷ that reflected the aims of my research, to establish this distinction between alternative arts education that operates within the frame of the Educational Turn and that which exists outside of it, as a means of conceiving of another alternative on the basis of my research. These questions are commensurate with the development of my research during spring and summer of 2017, and so are positioned in evaluative terms. A chance introduction to Sophia Kosmaoglou, founder of Art & Critique in the summer of 2017, led me to build on a conversation we had which evaluated the field and its recent evolution more generally, to conceptually and critically place my research into its ‘urgent’ contemporary context. The correspondence with Same Thorne and Anna Colin of Open School East took place on the telephone; with Sara Nunes Fernandes, Ralph Pritchard and Ellen King of School of the Damned, over email and with Sophia Kosmaoglou, in person. These correspondences differ in form owing to practical restraints, but nonetheless have produced a further body of critical material that is to be understood as a means of drawing out comparison to the dialogues examined previously in this chapter.

Across the presentation of dialogues with the Leeds Creative Timebank, the *IF* Project, THECUBE and Syllabus, it is clear that some of their motivations behind producing what I interpret to be alternative education models in various formats, resonate along similar lines to those organisers of alternative art schools, practices and programmes of the Educational Turn. Specifically, the Leeds Creative Timebank and THECUBE co-working space explicitly state that their founding was, in part, a response to the economic crisis in 2008. Further, they state that they were set up in order to provide an alternative model to the prevailing cash-based economy,⁶¹⁸ and to provide work space where ‘new means and ways of working’⁶¹⁹ could be developed collaboratively ‘to

617 Note the slight distinction in framing the questions owing to the status of students of School of the Damned Ralph Pritchard and Ellen King.

618 Sue Ball, conversation with the author, 12 May 2014

619 ‘Structuring knowledge mobility from co-working to smart spaces’, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B501ssnZYQFVby1TeDcybEpQY0k/view?usp=sharing> [accessed 18 October 2017] p. 7.

account for the loss of jobs and work spaces⁶²⁰ as induced by the crisis. Additionally, the *IF* Project's motivations were to provide free, educational spaces and experiences to those for whom access to higher education was limited either by funds, location or lack of adequate information about studying arts and humanities subjects.⁶²¹

IF's view that access to arts and humanities disciplines is a 'human right',⁶²² and when arts and humanities studies are often presented on the surface as nothing more than material of a 'finishing school for the elite',⁶²³ *IF* is positioned as not only an organisation of benevolence, but as one of political action. The Syllabus programme continues this line of thinking by explicitly positioning itself as a development programme for artists who would not otherwise have access to arts education.⁶²⁴ Additionally, it exists as a programme that provides artists with a level of educational experience that sits on a par, in terms of experience, with models of 'formal education'⁶²⁵ which charge £9000 tuition. Between these four examples what is evident is an incentive, on the part of each organisation, to provide a form of alternative space⁶²⁶ for those who have been identified as needing it. This need is identified owing to either financial or other circumstantial reasons such as needing space and access to a community of like-minded people, and to provide a form of alternative space as a political or social gesture. In this case it is useful to return to Fuller and Jonas' alternative schema where:

1 The notion *alternative-oppositional*⁶²⁷ describes forms that 'actively and consciously'⁶²⁸ embody the alternative ontologically, forms that enact their difference to others' non-alternative status. This enactment represents a rejection of other mainstream forms. (Timebank, THECUBE initially.)

620 Ibid.

621 Jonny Munday, conversation with the author, 26 March 2014

622 Ibid.

623 Ibid.

624 Donna Lynas, 'The Syllabus: A Peer-Led, Non-Prescriptive Postgraduate Alternative', http://www.artandeducation.net/school_watch/the-syllabus-a-peer-led-non-prescriptive-postgraduate-alternative/ [accessed 18 October 2017]

625 'Knowledge mobility: Syllabus + Wysing Poly – evaluating a conversation in three parts', <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B501ssnZYQFVOUtHY19LRFhhNWs/view?usp=sharing> [accessed 18 October 2017]

626 For the exchange of skills and knowledge, for collaboration and co-working, for a foundation education in the arts and humanities, and for the time and mentoring for the development for artists.

627 Fuller and Jonas, 'Alternative Financial Spaces', p. 57.

628 Ibid.

2 The notion *alternative-additional*⁶²⁹ describes a form of supplement or ancillary, forms that present a choice in relation to other, existing forms and those that do not negate or actively reject other forms. (*IF*, Syllabus, Open School East and School of the Damned.)

3 The notion *alternative-substitute*⁶³⁰ describes forms that enact replacement. These quite literally substitute those forms that no longer exist and therefore both embody a form of new alternative, or exist on the basis of a necessity when there is a clear need for such a form. (Art & Critique.)

In summary, Open School East and School of the Damned were both founded in 2013, in London in response to the rise in fees in traditional education institutions;⁶³¹ the limited free space for artists to practice in London;⁶³² a feeling of disenfranchisement of the status of higher and tertiary education in art in the UK; interest in how community-led spaces can form through art and education;⁶³³ conceptual and historical interests in self-organised artists education,⁶³⁴ to name a few reasons. My questions to these organisations were framed in a way to address the specificity of the two respective organisations as two categorically distinct examples of the alternative *art school*. Specifically they aimed to address the following eight points:

- 1 The motivation behind setting up an alternative art school.
- 2 How these schools have met their original aims.
- 3 What the possible effects of the surrounding conversations of art's Educational Turn had on the founding of such an alternative.
- 4 How important proximity to the art world is.
- 5 What has changed between the founding of the school and the present.
- 6 Organisational strategies of alternative education.
- 7 Whether there are any perceived limitations to reproducing 'the institution.'
- 8 Longer-term ambitions of the school.

629 Ibid.

630 Ibid.

631 Sara Nunes Fernandes, email to the author, 5 April 2017

632 Anna Colin, telephone interview with the author, 21 April 2017

633 Colin, *ibid.*

634 *Ibid.*

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The following discussion presents the responses to the above points from the perspectives of Open School East and School of the Damned in addition to material taken from conversation with Art & Critique. They are presented thematically according to the delineations of ‘founding’, ‘evolution’, ‘visibility’ and ‘organisation’ as four key themes having emerged from the questions and correspondence.

Founding

Open School East emerged in response to an open call between Create London and the Barbican, between a group of established cultural practitioners who were already connected to existing arts institutions such as *frieze*.⁶³⁵ In particular Sarah McCrory and Laurence Taylor were both involved in work with Frieze Projects, and ‘began to talk about what it would be like to have a studio complex that had more to it – a space where you could have critical discussion about your work’.⁶³⁶ These conversations quickly coalesced with Thorne and latterly Colin, when the open call was suggested to them to put forward a participatory art project in East London.⁶³⁷

School of the Damned emerged under different auspices. Nunes Fernandes explained that the school emerged ‘at a time where a few of [her peers] felt excluded and disgusted at the prices of studying in the UK.’⁶³⁸ One founding member of the school had vocalised their dissatisfaction with this on social media, which subsequently garnered significant attention. The artist Tai Shani who at the time was programming the Horse Hospital in central London offered the group a space to continue the discussion, which ‘seemed to materialise [the founding of] a group.’⁶³⁹ This led to their putting together a manifesto and meeting at the Horse Hospital every Sunday. From Nunes Fernandes’ account, it seems that ‘discussion’ became a ‘school’ very quickly. She notes that had the Horse Hospital not been offered to them immediately, the project would have taken longer to materialise, particularly insofar as the group were not focused on or ‘interested

635 Ibid.
636 McCrory, ‘Open School East, London/Margate (2013–), p. 319.
637 Ibid.
638 Nunes Fernandes, *ibid.*
639 Ibid.

in creating a new formula for a school, or a new way of teaching’,⁶⁴⁰ inasmuch as they were intent on ‘mimicking’ the ‘idea of an art MA.’⁶⁴¹ This resonates with the current cohort, as student Ellen King has pointed out that ‘[i]t has always been quite similar to an MA in structure (crits, tutors, application process, etc) so in that sense [it] has never been a huge break from conventional education.’⁶⁴² The founding cohort ‘accepted the traditional structure of legit[imate] MAs but wanted to construct [their] own protest from that illegitimate imitation’.⁶⁴³ This point is crucial, as it comes to frame School of the Damned’s principal concern over the perceived exclusivity and inaccessibility of what Nunes Fernandes calls ‘legitimate MAs’.

Further, the notion of ‘illegitimate imitation’ is interesting insofar as it implicitly *others* their mode of practice, acknowledging that School of the Damned’s value is placed in its manifest form of protest. Current student of School of the Damned Ralph Pritchard continues on in this vein when they explain that their motivation for being involved in the school was on the basis of being involved in ‘an autonomous collective within the art world’.⁶⁴⁴ Pritchard states further that the social aspect, ‘of feeling belonging, status, amongst [sic] other artists’ in the context of working as an artist in London, where there is a perceived tendency to ‘fall out of sync with events, circles, trends without a base’⁶⁴⁵ is crucial towards viewing the school as a ‘structure to return to between waged work and personal ‘practice.’⁶⁴⁶ King further emphasises that School of the Damned ‘feels like more of an explicitly social [organisation]’⁶⁴⁷ where she was initially motivated to be part of the school while ‘looking for a reason to make art, [and meet] a group of people and a space [...] to share ideas [...] mostly just somewhere to go and an excuse to meet other people in a similar position, seeking self-directed guidance.’⁶⁴⁸

Art & Critique emerged differently as an organisation, as an arm of short courses led by Kosmaoglou in her teaching appointment at Chelsea College of Arts, University of the Arts, London. As such, Kosmaoglou has framed what Art & Critique do as ‘para-

640 Ibid.
641 Ibid.
642 Ellen King, email to the author, 29 September 2017
643 Ibid.
644 Ralph Pritchard, email to the author, 30 August 2017
645 Ibid.
646 Ibid.
647 King, *ibid.*
648 Ibid.

institutional⁶⁴⁹ practice, which means that it has emerged through or in relation to an existing institution. For Kosmaoglou, this underwrites its criticality and difference to other existing alternative structures. Additionally its members are, in part, Kosmaoglou's previous students from Chelsea, and others who have participated in the organisation through its book club and other public manifestations. Art & Critique cites its founding principles as a belief that 'learning is not limited to certain places and times but it takes place in ongoing meaningful interactions.'⁶⁵⁰ Equally, it states that it primarily emerged in response to the 'financialisation of higher education'⁶⁵¹ and its effects. These impact on both students and academics working in formal institutions of higher education, which arguably works in opposition to the kind of arts education that Art & Critique, School of the Damned, Open School East work to highlight and advocate.

Evolution

For Colin, the four years in which Open School East has been active have significantly transformed its focus. Not least in its relocation from East London to Margate in early 2017. In relation to its current funding strategy, to maintain its Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation status, it was required to move away from London, owing to the city's 'over-saturation'⁶⁵² of small-scale projects within the very broad category that conjoins arts education with community-focused arts organisation. With this move, Colin states that the project has evolved its priorities since 2013. Where it initially modelled itself on the UK's historic 'community art centre'⁶⁵³ models and took on the guise of an experimental research project, it has now become an organisation that draws a balancing act between studio and pedagogical provision for artists. This combines a broader critical and intellectual interest in the history and contexts of alternative arts education, and bridges this with the realisation of continually developing community-engaged programming.⁶⁵⁴ Examples of these are its ongoing 'open crit' sessions and exhibition programme, which aim to foster interaction with the artistic and local communities in Margate.

649 Taken from personal notes: Sophia Kosmaoglou, conversation with the author, 27 July 2017

650 See Appendix 1, [ART&CRITIQUE], *Art Skool Co-op* (poster), October 2017

651 Ibid.

652 Colin, *ibid.*

653 Ibid.

654 Ibid.

Both Colin and Thorne cited in conversation that Open School East has always been, and will always be about facilitating 'small-scale projects with longevity'.⁶⁵⁵ This is a critical part of its organisation, though it has gained its National Portfolio status, it ensures that its long-term planning is resolutely framed by its activities in the present and through its continued engagement as an open platform for a wider public. Colin added that she is currently involved in planning a 'young associates' programme for 17–21 year olds and additionally considering incorporating a 'foundation year' to the current programme.⁶⁵⁶ This is a useful comparison to *IF*, as it reinforces *IF*'s foresight in establishing itself uniquely in this way; in other words, it recognised the value of the foundation year model for arts and humanities higher education. For my research, both *IF* and Open School East's acknowledgement of this evidences the foundation year model's wider relevance insofar as formal education is concerned.

For Nunes Fernandes, School of the Damned's long-term view is resolutely limited to each cohort, on the basis that its organisation is passed on each year as a 'live organism.'⁶⁵⁷ This is an insightful perception on how an organisation can work to account for both the diverse needs of its users and the changing status of arts education; the school is wholly contingent on how each year takes on and considers the value of the organisation. Interestingly, both Nunes Fernandes and Pritchard comment on how the model of School of the Damned could be replicated and distributed. Nunes Fernandes was interested in the way that the school could operate akin to 'freeware', where 'it could [...] evolve into plural, self-led groups, [as] the idea of excluding or selecting people [for] the course sound[ed] nonsensical.'⁶⁵⁸ Pritchard as a current student, explains how the current cohort have considered the idea of the school's distribution, '[t]he previous open call garnered 100 applicants [and they have] toyed with the idea of accepting every applicant and creating [what would be] five new schools.'⁶⁵⁹ However, they note that could potentially be detrimental to the opportunities presented to the forthcoming cohorts, as 'the prestigious material opportunities' this year's cohort has encountered, namely a week-long residency at Shonibare Studio's Guest Projects and numerous other public

655 Ibid.

656 Ibid.

657 Nunes Fernandes, *ibid.*

658 Ibid.

659 Pritchard, *ibid.*

platforms, are contingent on the school's uniqueness,⁶⁶⁰ 'if there were five schools [each] would be competing for a fifth of the resources.'⁶⁶¹

This is an important point, as it brings me to question the limitations of conceiving of a hybrid model between aspects of the organisations my work has been in dialogue with. It further leads me to question whether something of a hybrid nature could only conceivably work well insofar as the group is limited to a capped number, in the same way that Syllabus and *IF* can only ever take on a limited cohort for their respective programmes and in the way that the physical space of the THECUBE and administration of the Timebank necessarily permit a specific number of members and users. On this note, speaking on behalf of Art & Critique's co-operative model, Kosmaoglou explains a similar issue around selection processes. She proposes that ideally, a starting point would be to facilitate an open workshop for 24 hours, where members' acceptance onto the programme would be contingent to their endurance over the 24-hour period.⁶⁶² While on the surface this seems a particularly novel approach to self-selection, for Kosmaoglou the contention attributed to who selects who and to what end, is where the co-operative model departs from other tried, more conventional approaches to the admission and selection processes of alternative organisation models.

Visibility

The notion of visibility and proximity to the contemporary art world go hand in hand in relation to the work of the Educational Turn. It has been a point of contention throughout my research defining what such proximity entails and how an alternative model's alignment to the art world proper can be understood as being a factor of its success or a hindrance. My research argues that providing alternative arts education models are held within the remit of contemporary art, their efficacy as socially transformative and politically engaged organisations is compromised by the criticism and market-driven art world that both produces and sustains them. We have seen that the art world functions to both produce and instrumentalise 'the alternative' through its co-option of education from both the perspective of artistic practice and from the perspective of its institutions. However the issue has become clouded as organisations such as Open School East and

660 Ibid.
661 Ibid.
662 Kosmaoglou, *ibid.*

School of the Damned are two of a host of alternative models that have succeeded in functioning as viable alternative models across at least a four-year period, with a clear intention to continue into the foreseeable future. This is not without precarity: Open School East is dependent on funding, first through charitable and corporate organisations such as Create and the Barbican, and more recently through Arts Council England. School of the Damned relies on its continued visibility in the art world as a radical and self-organised art school existing across, what King has cited to be, the 'margins of the art world'⁶⁶³ to sustain itself as a 'free at the point of use' model, relying on the benevolence of others located proximate to the art world to support it.

For Colin, Open School East's proximity to the art world's institutions such as *frieze*, with whom McCrory, Taylor and Thorne had previously been aligned, has implicitly aided the project's reputation. Most notably for Colin, this was more to do with having learned from these institutions in professional capacities, in terms of the skills to conceive of and establish a project than anything else. She cites that they were 'us[ing] [these] credentials'⁶⁶⁴ but not much more, and that as a group they were not interested in the art world proper, insofar as the project was concerned, but wanted to focus on artists making work and the project's impact on its surrounding neighbourhood.⁶⁶⁵ This is a difficult notion to contend with in comparison to School of the Damned, which has not relied on any funding, but only the good will of others lending their time and space for labour exchange according to the cohort's skill- and resource-bases. Arguably the two organisations currently contend with a status pertaining to visibility in ways that have benefitted both. Colin has cited invitations to participate in the Alternative Art School fair and Gwangju Biennale, and Pritchard and King have both commented on their visibility, stating '[it] is a bit odd, and makes you quite aware of yourself'.⁶⁶⁶ This sense of awareness is key, as it brings into question the level of expectation ascribed to its organisers/associates/students: to what degree are those involved with alternative education projects expected to maintain the project of alternative arts education? And is this awareness implicit to participation? A great deal of responsibility is put on those involved, and such an awareness should be implicit, certainly from the perspective of its

663 King, *ibid.*
664 Colin, *ibid.*
665 *Ibid.*
666 King, *ibid.*

organisers, which is evident in the way each of the organisations discussed earlier in this chapter enact a politics of intervention through their very existence. From the perspective of students and associates, perhaps this is less of an imperative.

In the context of Art & Critique, their poster presented at School of the Damned's 'First 100% Official Unofficial Alternative Education Open-Day' in October 2017 outlines this idea of responsibility in clear terms, by asking, 'Do alternative art schools have social and political obligations?' and 'Are alternative art schools expected to resist and reform institutional models of education and pedagogy?'⁶⁶⁷ Further stating that through the act of inhabiting the status of 'the alternative', they acknowledge and 'affirm the social role of art and the political responsibility of artists'.⁶⁶⁸ This issue surrounding the responsibility of alternative arts education in relation to the wider field of education and contemporary art is key, and is continually problematised at the level of the paradigm of aesthetics and politics.

As discussed in Chapter One, thinkers such as Holert and Rogoff have made a claim for art's capacity to frame alternative education and knowledge structures in a way that directly attends to the social and political implications of accessibility, exclusions and transformation at the level of formal education. However, the field of contemporary art is equally continually cited to be one that lacks wide-ranging access and is exclusionary, questioning its autonomy. Returning to Malik, contemporary art has effectively worked to sentimentalise the notion of education through the Educational Turn and ambivalent status of 'the alternative'. It has done so through its perceived incapacity to truly reckon with the 'democratic autonomy'⁶⁶⁹ that 'the alternative' intends to advocate through its resistance to formalised and institutionalised traditional art schooling.

With reference to the timebank, foundation year, co-working space and artist-development models discussed previously, it is useful to overlay these points onto their respective contexts. For example, how these models come to address their own politics as models that resist formalised and institutional traditions in their respective domains. The timebank attends to the 'failing cash-based economy' through reconceptualising a

667 See Appendix 1

668 Ibid.

669 Malik, 'Educations Sentimental and Unsentimental: Repositioning the Politics of Art and Education', <http://www.bard.edu/ccs/redhook/educations-sentimental-and-unsentimental-repositioning-the-politics-of-art-and-education/> [accessed 18 October 2017] N.B. no page numbers

traditional and embedded value system. By replacing cash with time, an exchange system is formed around a new system of value, which abolishes the designation that money equates to success, in the context of a small creative community. *IF* makes a claim that its alternative status is a mode of addressing a wider crisis in higher education; it exists solely on the basis of a perceivably exclusionary formal system that denigrates the critical value of arts and humanities education as a public good through its marketisation. Through inhabiting 'the alternative' status, *IF* works against this marketisation of higher education by producing a free foundation programme of arts and humanities study open to anyone. Further, THECUBE and Syllabus attend to these issues in ways that have formed new organisational frameworks that work less in explicitly oppositional terms, but rather through the establishment of 'additional' models that work in relation to existing models.

Organisation

In comparison to Open School East, whose organisational strategies have developed and relied on Colin and Taylor's experience professionally in arts management and as project manager respectively, School of the Damned rely on holistic and situational approaches that require the whole cohort's input at every stage. Similarly to Nunes Fernandes' statement that the project snowballed very quickly as an organisation, Pritchard also states that this year's group 'very quickly established agreements about how [they] would establish [strategies of] agreement.' For example, they 'use Slack, a collaborative productivity app for offices [with] multiple threads and emoji reactions which mean[s that] people can communicate and agree to things very easily.'⁶⁷⁰ Pritchard emphasises further that 'antipathy and impatience are to be avoided at all costs. Efficiency is crucial. In practice, good-natured humour and back-channelling'⁶⁷¹ are helpful and human methods in aiding consensus, and towards ensuring a positive atmosphere among the group. This distinction is marked by School of the Damned's peer-led ethos, where tight, close-knit relationships are formed around practices of support and generosity. The 2017 cohort acknowledges the need for this in that they rely on the whole group to function well as an organisation, in order to efficiently utilise the school as independent practicing artists. In the case of Open School East, a more vertical hierarchy ensures that

670 Pritchard, *ibid.*

671 *Ibid.*

the associates of the school can be part of the school without additional concern over the bureaucratic measures described above by Pritchard. In this sense, Colin acknowledges that Open School East has appropriated methods of organising from its institutional counterparts, with an end of being financially sound, and maintaining support from the institutions to which it is aligned, for example, the Arts Council.

This ethos extends additionally to its programming; combining public programming including reading groups, lectures and workshops, to internal programming for its associates, by way of introducing, for example, the foundation year model in the longer-term. As observed in *IF*, this ambition is not met without difficulty. When I first initiated conversation with the *IF* Project, their intention was to programme a full foundation year. Owing to limitations concerning funding, and the overarching bureaucratic complexity of programming a year-long course between its two organisers, this would involve renting spaces and employing educators, and so this idea has so far manifested in a series of short-term courses.

Open School East have a physical location, are on the Arts Council's National Portfolio list, and have been operating as an art school for four years, as such they are perhaps in a better position to now undertake such an addition to their main programme. Art & Critique propose organising according to a cooperative model to move the project forward; Kosmaoglou has noted the problematic nature of their active pursuit of a workable model of collectivity for an alternative arts organisation. For Kosmaoglou, this is emphasised when such organisations command different requirements according to those involved within it, and also to reflect the changing nature of the field, where its ambitions of universality are constantly met with the demands of locality.⁶⁷² The cooperative model will enable the organisation to focus on the issue of continuity, which she cites as being the area most susceptible to falling by the wayside, when the status of 'the alternative' is first and foremost concerned with existing in the present, reflexively and contingent to its politics.

In conversation, we discussed the nature and necessity of self-reflexivity in relation to self-organising alternative arts education. Kosmaoglou asserted as part of Art & Critique's work that this necessity is almost always contingent upon what it is organising against or in relation to.⁶⁷³ Self-reflexivity becomes a necessary organisational

672 Kosmaoglou, *ibid.*

673 See Appendix 1

strategy when one's reference points are manifest in the traditional institutions of education that are not working.⁶⁷⁴ This discussion is particularly pertinent in relation to the discussion in the Preface about JOURNEY / SCHOOL's temporary suspension – in that it was an over-commitment to being continuously and critically reflexive that saw its shift from being an organisation of action to being an object of discussion.

When a self-initiated organisation's reference points are held between pragmatic but critical self-reflection and a theoretical discourse that critiques the institutions that are perceived to be not working, it becomes important to ask whether such reflexivity is in fact unavoidable and also potentially detrimental when practicing autonomously from 'the institution'. For example, from the perspective of alternative educational strategies, self-reflexivity could constitute an alternative means of quality assurance and a means of verifying such an alternative form, in terms of its contribution to the landscape of alternative arts education. The artist David Barrett in his 2013 article 'Disrupting Art Education' discusses the problematic nature of validation and accreditation in relation to alternative arts education models, citing the benefits of space and networks in lieu of official institutional qualification. Barrett asks, 'why not [take] a pick-n-mix approach to curating a portfolio art education?'⁶⁷⁵ With such an approach, self-criticality and self-assessment, particularly in the type of collective arrangement proposed by Kosmaoglou through Art & Critique, could begin to function as a useful alternative form of validation, especially in light of the plurality of those organisational structures addressed through this research.

For Kosmaoglou and Art & Critique's development as a co-operative art education model, the issue of reflexivity designates the fine line between acting or organising *with* criticality, and acting or organising *for* the purpose of acting or organising.⁶⁷⁶ The latter, according to Kosmaoglou, encounters a problem common to practices of self-organisation, when in the absence of clear-cut overarching structures, organisations of collective address rarely attend to the idea of continuity.⁶⁷⁷ Within such a designation 'time and continuity'⁶⁷⁸ for Art & Critique are the operative constituents. Given that alternative – radical, critical and self-organised – educational models do not

674 Kosmaoglou, *ibid.*

675 David Barrett, 'Disrupting Art Education', *Art Monthly*, no. 366 (May 2013), 34 (p.34.)

676 Kosmaoglou, *ibid.*

677 *Ibid.*

678 *Ibid.*

simply appear through institutional forms of demand, bureaucracy and financial support, they necessarily need time to work and potentially fail, through critical reflection and comparison to sustain themselves.

In order to address this, Art & Critique is presently working on an open-education programme that will constitute its public-facing educational form. The Art and Critique model presents itself as a ‘para-institutional organisation’,⁶⁷⁹ according to Kosmaoglou, and is positioned as an organisation that has emerged from an existing education institution – Chelsea College of Arts, University of the Arts London – made up in part of students from short courses led by Kosmaoglou. Art & Critique suggests a dissatisfaction, or dissent, with the arts education system proper, through its act of moving away from it. Unlike Lütticken’s designation of the ‘para-institution’ which ‘work[s] in collaboration *with* more traditionally established institutions’,⁶⁸⁰ in the way that Ögüt’s Silent University was initially supported by and founded in collaboration with London’s Delfina Foundation, Tate and The Showroom⁶⁸¹ in 2012, and in the way that Open School East was initially founded, via the support of Create London and the Barbican.⁶⁸² For Kosmaoglou the importance of this act of emerging *from* the institution lies in the idea that Art & Critique would propose a type of education that ‘equips artists for a changed art world’,⁶⁸³ in contrast to her assertion that most ‘current art schools and alternative programmes equip [artists] for the current art world.’⁶⁸⁴ This concern about continuity and of the nuance in distinction, between ‘para-’ and self-organised forms of arts education continue to further my thinking about what it means to actually institute alternatives and the pressures that come with doing so, amid a saturated and potentially problematic landscape of alternatives.

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To conclude, in principle each of these organisations attend to a similar ethos of attempting to claim a space between the institutions of contemporary art and education,

679 Ibid.

680 Sven Lütticken, ‘Social Media: Practices of (In)Visibility in Contemporary Art’, p. 8. [Italics my own]

681 The Silent University, <http://thesilentuniversity.org> [accessed 18 October 2017]

682 Colin, *ibid.*

683 Kosmaoglou, *ibid.*

684 *Ibid.*

while operating across a diverse set of models. A clear-cut distinction can be drawn using Fuller and Jonas’ triptych of alternative-oppositional, -additional, and -substitute but, further, between models that exist according to financial support and those that find other means to preclude monetary exchange, including time and labour exchange. Additionally, distinctions can be drawn across models that rely on their visibility in the domain of contemporary art to exist, and those that rely on the continued commitment of a small, specific group of users, students and communities.

In terms of evaluating how findings from these discussions map back on to my research aims, the nuance in distinguishing these organisations is key. The presentation of the above discussion works to the effect of compromising my initial hypothesis, that models held within the frame of contemporary art are prevented by such framing in their capacities to institute a changed landscape for arts education broadly. As evidenced by Open School East, School of the Damned and Art & Critique, their combined efforts, among other manifestations of alternative arts education, have significantly impacted the field. This further emphasises that the field of alternative arts education is one that has forged its own status as an embedded and sustained field.

This challenges my research questions and initial hypothesis insofar as the evolved field has worked successfully to gain visibility, support and validity in relation to its institutional counterparts. However, this does not make my research redundant, in that my efforts to outline a set of organisations outside of the immediate field of art’s Educational Turn in their combined capacity to propose a hybrid model of alternative arts education have been met. Insofar as finding an alternative mode of conceiving alternative arts education to those aligned to the field of the Educational Turn, the four organisations discussed begin to frame an address in organisational terms. The four dialogues with organisations outside the Turn each present an alternative *mode of conceiving alternative arts education* to those discussed above, which furthermore contributes a new set of organisational perspectives to the field. In reconciling the above discussions with the dialogues presented throughout this chapter, my objectives for this research are reconceptualised according to what they can practically offer.

What this means is that I understand that the four dialogues work to move the discussion outside the frame of contemporary art, to speculatively press towards the field’s capacity to function outside of art. This proposes that the field of alternative arts

education can be conceptualised and made manifest, thus take effect beyond recourse to discussion through the lens of artistic practice and art's institutions. The evaluations of this research need to reconceptualise their scope in order for the field to take effect in a wider context, one whose scope maybe beyond tertiary education, and impact on spaces and fields, for example, online, in other areas of arts, humanities and creative disciplines, and in other sectors. As such, cumulatively these seven conversations with organisational models work to reinforce the value in stepping outside of the domain of the Educational Turn since, by doing so, an additional set of organisational models are presented through my research as propositions back into the discourse of the Turn.

Conclusions

This final chapter evaluates and concludes the research. It is composed across three sections that address individually the evaluative components of the thesis. These are: the notion of (trans)formation whereby reflections are presented on the research journey, with a sub-section discussing the limitations and longevity of the research; propositions, which outline two speculative propositions that have emerged from the research dialogues discussed in the previous chapter; and contributions, which outline and draw together how the research makes contribution to the field of alternative arts education. This chapter is composed in such a way in order to reference the two-fold address of the research questions; to account for the transformation of the field, which in turn informs the reconceptualisation of the scope of the propositions of the thesis.

(Trans)formation

My research has drawn together scholarly artistic and non-artistic domains in order to address the following questions: what are the alternatives to models of the alternative art school having emerged through the Turn? Specifically, how might dialogic engagement with organisations outside of the Turn propose something other for the future of alternative arts education? The thesis has addressed these questions through surveying a lateral body of literature and contextual practice that attends to the ‘complex’ of the Educational Turn, derived from questions surrounding the ‘sentimentality’, ‘paradox’ and the aestheticisation of education and the academicisation of contemporary art. It has considered in detail the claim that the abundant model of ‘the alternative’ is in fact a diverse, nuanced field of plurality in relation to ‘the institution’ – as a symbolic demarcation of the traditional fee-bound art school whose conditions of academic and meritocratic attainment, hierarchy and contingency on mechanisms of standardisation, arguably renders these institutions as largely inaccessible, exclusive and slow to keep pace with the changing nature of contemporary art and requirements of its education.

The research works to conceptually step outside the domain of the Educational Turn, to examine a further set of alternative organisational models that are selected on their premising of their facilitation of knowledge, its production and mobility, as foundational principles of education and their omission from the literature on the Educational Turn. In so doing, the research is contextualised within a wider conceptual frame that considers the nature of ‘the institution’ as a form of ‘apparatus’⁶⁸⁵ that produces its subjects and the plurality of ‘the alternative’ as a set of effects of such apparatus. From this, the research proposes a dialogic approach to undertaking research, specifically through the practice of sustained conversation. It elicits the notion of hybridity in formation towards the realisation of a set of propositions forged through the four perspectives of the research dialogues.

The notion of ‘(trans)formation’ draws on the way in which my research has set out to critique the work of the Educational Turn and propose conceptual movement away from it, through the transformation of critique into a form of action. It considers how the act of stepping outside of the frame of the Turn, ‘in dialogue’ with four other

685 See Appendix 2

organisational models, might offer a means of conceiving alternative arts education in an altogether new and effective, hybrid and sustainable way. The research has worked to critique, in cases examined in this thesis, some inherent problems and alternative practices of the Educational Turn as a homogenised, instrumentalised set of alternative practices, on the basis that I argue contemporary art’s instrumentalising capacities render the now abundant model of the alternative *art school* bound by the domain of contemporary art. On one hand this means that ‘the alternative’ is at least conceptually homogenised, after Vidokle, as a model of artistic practice; and on the other hand, ‘the alternative’ becomes a self-serving mode of instituting in the context of art’s institutions, through the work of actors aligned to institutions co-opting such a form to elevate the political engagement and social relevancy of these institutions. ‘The alternative’ is found, through this research, to in fact encompass a plurality of modes of operating and organising. This plurality is defined in the research according to Fuller and Jonas’ triptych, ‘alternative-oppositional’, ‘alternative-additional’ and ‘alternative-substitute’, which are further compared against my own delineations of ‘the alternative’ found within the discourse on the Turn. These are: practices which emerge *internal* to the institution, those which are *aligned* to the institution, and those which are *distinct* from the institution (see figure 2), if such an institution can be defined as educational and where:

- 1 Access is conditional on tuition fees: engendering issues of elitism and accessibility and marks its inclusion into a market.
- 2 Access is conditional on degrees of academic attainment and evidence of appropriate work, engendering issues of meritocracy and accreditation which enforces and sustains an academic culture of intellectualism.
- 3 Status and hierarchy as often informed by historical precedence promotes a culture of tradition that continues the foundation of education and the formal principles of the university, school and pedagogy.
- 4 Symbolic and structural ideals of the institution(s) of education sanctioned by government, instituted through policy, and limited by complex bureaucratic measures, are at odds with its status as a human right and for public good.

It is argued that such a plurality to ‘the alternative’ is neutralised and instrumentalised by contemporary art’s framing of an Educational Turn *in art*. Through this I posit that the educational potential of these practices is encumbered by art’s own agenda,

conditioned by a circularity between its market and discourse. Therefore, the research has worked to propose movement away from this, which is noted through its inherent ‘sentimentality’ by Malik, as an ‘educational complex’ and ‘paradox’ by Lesage and Kenning, and from which I have drawn the notion of ‘knowledge mobility.’ In turn, this serves to reference how such sentimentality, complexity and flattened plurality is often veiled through the reconfiguration of and recourse to an ambivalent notion of knowledge politics or aesthetics outlined by Holert. Additionally, it is with reference to the dimensions of ‘the alternative’ outlined in part one of Chapter Three, and in figures 2 and 3, that I posit that my research has intended to arrive at a set of propositions that work towards Fuller and Jonas’ ‘alternative-substitute’ category.

By drawing from Bakhtin and Freire’s notion of ‘the dialogic’ as rationale to the act of stepping outside this domain, I have utilised the method of conversation as a mode of research practice, from the domain of artistic research. This has been to initiate a series of long-term, relational dialogues with other organisations, whose distance from the immediate frame of the Educational Turn, I consider and evidence to be critical and insightful, in terms of thinking how another mode of alternative arts education might be configured that can potentially work to surpass the instrumentalising tendencies of art. Taking a conceptual step outside the subject area of the research has meant that I had to first examine the types of practices that were omitted from the Turn’s discourse. These emerged, among a possibly infinite set, to be best represented by contemporary and experimental iterations of the timebank model, the co-working model, the foundation year model and artist-development model. Through initiating a series of conversations with organisers of these models based in the UK, my work presents a series of dialogues with each of these organisations as *propositional* modes of research. These dialogues figure independently as working conversations that together inform a speculative set of organisational principles.

Conclusively, I put these forward to reconfigure both back into the fold of the Educational Turn in order to propose a set of new speculations that offer the discourse something new by critical comparison, and outward to the burgeoning domain of alternative arts education. It is with these dialogues that I propose that other models operating outside contemporary art offer something dynamic, transformative and generative for the existing field of alternative arts education.

Limitations of the research

It is important to note that throughout the period of my PhD research (2013–2017), both ‘the alternative’ as a designation for a particular type of alternative art school that is bound to contemporary art, and the ambivalent domain of alternative arts education, emerging from the work of the Educational Turn, has transformed and evolved significantly. My hypothesis that the field of alternative arts education ‘after’ the Educational Turn is more or less rendered static and inward-facing on the basis of contemporary art’s capacity to instrumentalise education in a number of ways, is evident across my discussions in Chapter One, but is also met with some critical contestation as I come to evaluate the work. The research initially hypothesised that the Educational Turn – its naming, its formation around a set of critical concerns about arts education, its manifestation in artistic practice, alternative organisations, schools – could not claim a position ultimately in reforming arts education, owing to its implicit and explicit instrumentalisation of education. By this I mean its co-opting of forms and models of education that are ultimately presented within the remit of and as contemporary art.

This hypothesis has been explored through a lateral review of some of the key problematics and contextual practices, where my research has shown to be pertinent to an ‘afterward’ of the Educational Turn and has been examined further through the elicitation of a new notion of knowledge. This notion is observed across and between the collective work of the Educational Turn, and something which my research has formed a critique and vocabulary around and termed ‘knowledge mobility.’ This works propositionally to both critique the ‘double instrumentalisation’ of alternative education by contemporary art, and the issues surrounding the homogenisation/plurality of ‘the alternative’, as is addressed in part one of Chapter Three. Further, this critical vocabulary has helped to shape the decision to conduct the conversational research outside the immediate frame of the Turn. This decision is informed by the hypothesis that by choosing to remain conceptually within such a domain would limit the research in its scope and capacity to address what might be an alternative to the alternatives already produced from within the Turn. It has been through reconciling this act of stepping outside, the dialogic research and subsequent propositions with the problems initially observed, that my findings begin to take shape.

The initial findings are presented in the previous chapter through the four

dialogues with the Leeds Creative Timebank, the *IF* Project, THECUBE and Syllabus, which each inform the propositional aspect of the research. However, owing to the evolution of the field, it became apparent that these dialogues could benefit from further reflection, by way of comparison, to existing alternative art school models closely aligned to contemporary art more formally. As such, the four dialogues have been reconciled with a further three shorter conversations facilitated with the founders of Open School East, Art & Critique and School of the Damned. These are three key alternative art school models that I take to represent the wider domain of alternative arts education situated within the frame of contemporary art (having emerged according to the above demarcations: *aligned to*, *from within*, and *distinct from* 'the institution' respectively). In bringing my research back into dialogue with the foundational domain of the research, it has been my intention to conceptually test the propositions that have emerged through the dialogues with organisations outside of the Educational Turn. From this, I have observed two concluding reflections that critically mediate the efficacy of my hypothesis, and also present some form of resolve towards the address of my research questions, which furthermore contribute the propositions that will take the research beyond PhD. These reflections concern:

1 Time: my hypothesis is rendered relatively unstable, on the basis that the period of research cannot fully represent the progression of the field of alternative arts education, insofar as it has evolved significantly as my research has developed. As a researcher critiquing the conceptual 'afterward' of the Educational Turn and propositionally stepping outside it to find other modes of arts education, I could not account for the evolution of the field in its entirety that has in effect established itself as a substantial, interstitial domain between existing formal educational institutions, and the field of contemporary art. Examples of alternative art school models which have led the substantiation of this field are Open School East and School of the Damned; each has built on their initial temporary, synchronistic models to form a new semi-institutional space of alternative arts education.

2 New formations: while the above does not render my work obsolete, it has encouraged me to reflect on the decision to step outside the field. I understand that moving outside of the frame of contemporary art opens up a form of productive dialogue between contemporary art and other organisational forms whose structures offer new

ways of conceiving of alternative arts education, and whose organisational practices would otherwise not have been brought into dialogue with the Educational Turn. These models draw across a range of different contexts that I argue together propose something resolutely new for a possible future of alternative arts education. I have considered the ways in which this new speculative, hybrid model might manifest in practice. Loosely as a form of conflated alternative model it needs to be able to keep pace with economic, political, social and cultural changes both concurrent to the wider domain of art pedagogy, and the landscape of higher education.

On the basis of my dialogues, I anticipate that a hybrid formation might figure in a modular, networked form, whereby users of such a model might conceptually forge their own way through it by simultaneously contributing to its manifestation; for example, in its distribution. It would be free at the point of use, but users would make a commitment to its cause of providing a mutable educational model insofar as it would operate as simultaneously an organisation, site of expanded learning and collective resource, within which forms of exchange would be elicited around particular aspects between its users and organisers. It would draw across the type of time-based exchanges that the timebank has found; the notion of collective, community-driven co-working environments that are programmed, or organised around specific points of interest and specialisms as in the co-working spaces model. It would provide a compulsory foundation of contextual, theoretical 'study' that would be facilitated through existing institutional networks derived from the experimental foundation year model; it would provide mentoring and peer-led courses that would draw from such institutional networks, exemplified by the artist-development model.

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As a methodological approach, combining methods of critique, conversation and proposition, a dialogic rationale has permitted the development of its own working methods that are contingent to fields in which my subject is now situated. Through moving from and then between disciplines of art theory (as home ground to this research) and into artistic and communication research, and particularly given its framing within the Creative Exchange research programme, the work has had to be

conceptually and pragmatically dynamic, taking and recontextualising the Creative Exchange's methodology of knowledge exchange between academia and creative sector organisations as its point of departure. Placement within the context of the Creative Exchange has helped forge a set of values for the research which are primarily premised around practices of collaborative research. Having been supported by and collaborating with artistic and design researchers within the Creative Exchange hub, this research has developed in a transdisciplinary way that is founded on principles of transposition and communication. Comparatively, had the research been carried out in another environment, I could speculate that it might have relied solely on a theoretical foundation. The value in researching within this context then has been in the act of 'stepping out' and making real connections, through dialogue, that have founded and supported a combined scholarly and practical mode of critique and proposition. These 'real connections' through dialogue have developed and evolved over the period of my research which have ensured a commitment to the ethos of the research, trust between the practitioners with whom I have collaborated, and a genuine engagement with the work of the research.

By utilising conversation as its predominant research method, the research has been able to move between these disciplines and simultaneously attend to the subject's own evolution, albeit problematically as outlined above. It has drawn from Hannula's method and Blanchot's notion of 'infinite conversation' to provide the research with the dynamism of multiple voices, positions and contexts. The research has positioned this method within the frame of Bakhtin and Freire's 'dialogic'. This has been in order to theoretically fortify conversation's capacity to facilitate emergent, critical, situational knowledges that are concomitant to a contemporary understanding of Bakhtin's heteroglossia which ensures the research has evolved *with* the field.

However, conversation can be problematised in terms of its capacity to be able to provide an objective account. The decision to be *in conversation* with organisations, stems initially from the JOURNEY / SCHOOL project discussed in the Preface, and my understanding of it as an organic, situational and progressive mode of research. The designation of conversation over interview, for example, to this research felt first, and is evidently, an appropriate method insofar as my own position in the field, as a research practitioner whose intentions are to realise the work beyond the PhD in organisational form. By being in conversation with organisations, I have been able to move past the

divisions of 'researcher' and 'subject' towards forming lasting and insightful relationships (dialogues), that contribute a combined set of findings both back into discourse and out into the field of alternative arts education.

Approaching the end of my research this combined set of findings appeared to be somewhat archipelagic, insofar as how I would coherently consolidate them with the research questions. This is due to having to continuously re-evaluate the position and claims of the research as the field moved. As such, a decision was made to contextualise them in relation to a further set of alternative organisations whose proximity to contemporary art meant that I had already critically engaged with them, as presented in Chapter Two, with the co-founders of Open School East and founding member and current students of School of the Damned. A further correspondence with the founder of Art & Critique was initiated late in my research whose work also conceiving of an alternative to the model of the alternative art school resonates with my aims of this research. This decision to engage with a further set of organisations was made on the basis that my findings from Chapter Four needed to be further reconciled with the field I claim to critique – not least because of its evolution. It felt critically necessary to do so. The following sections frame my findings in detail according to their transformation and as a set of propositions to take beyond the PhD.

Propositions

'After the Educational Turn' has considered the conceptual and chronological afterward of art's turn to education, through manifest artistic practice which seeks to find in education an autonomous site for contemporary art, and which has also, through the (re) configuration of sites of contemporary art (practice, organisations, institutions), found a new space for educational forms to be expanded. I have argued that while this is on the whole a profoundly generative space, contemporary art, through its mechanisms of co-option, has instrumentalised the alternative educational form as the 'go-to' abundant model of the *art school*, insofar as education has become a mode, space and discourse of *art* and not *education*. This relatively self-serving and inward-facing paradigm, I argue, is preventative of any real or substantial educational reform at the level of the wider context of arts education in the UK. This hypothesis however proved to be troublesome as I came

to the end of my research, as the nature of the field of alternative arts education in the UK has moved substantially since I initiated the research. It has evolved as a relatively self-sustaining field that sits somewhere between my demarcation of ‘the alternative’ as distinct from ‘the institution’ and ‘the alternative’ as having emerged internally from ‘the institution.’

My research proposes a hybrid model of arts education that draws across aspects of the organisational models of the timebank, co-working space, foundation in the arts and humanities and artist-development model. This hybrid model contributes back into the field of alternative arts education, in the context of art’s Educational Turn, and offers something altogether distinct to those aligned to the domain of contemporary art. I argue for such an approach to alternative arts education, which might operate as a composition of aspects of the organisations discussed in Chapter Four; where new forms of coming together through and with education, begin to propose new ways to think educative and pedagogical communities in the arts broadly. The idea of conflating aspects of these models, in terms of both their symbolic (education in the arts for the greater public good) and structural elements (skill and knowledge exchange, hybrid working spaces, networks of mentors and institutions as resource, democratising pedagogical personnel), resonates with Gielen’s critique of the verticality (classic) and horizontality (contemporary) of arts institutions and their education ventures. Through reckoning the classic ‘verticalisation machines’,⁶⁸⁶ which are conditioned by ‘imaginary height [...] historical depth, [that create] a foundation to stand on’,⁶⁸⁷ with the notions of “[m]obilism, nomadism”, ‘travel’, ‘planetary drift’, ‘exodus’ [...] ‘connection’, ‘communication’, ‘distribution’, ‘redistribution’⁶⁸⁸ which together describe the ‘flat wet world’⁶⁸⁹ of the contemporary art world, Gielen finds a dilemma with this contemporary condition, which he describes as the ‘horizontality’ of ‘networked society’. For Gielen, these latter terms configure the contemporary ‘institution[’s] dissolve in a network structure’⁶⁹⁰ through which he critiques additionally the false imaginaries of horizontality which are implicated through its ‘mobility’ and ‘network’. However, he posits a solution to this via ‘reorganisation

686 Gielen, ‘Institutional Imagination Instituting Contemporary Art Minus the ‘Contemporary’’, p. 14.
687 Ibid.
688 Ibid., p. 20.
689 Ibid., p. 21.
690 Ibid.

in a hybrid way’,⁶⁹¹ which entails a way of instituting organisation that draws across previously distinct frames of disciplinarity and industry. For example, he claims that in the present, ‘doctors, economists, lawyers recognise the same problems as creative workers’⁶⁹² and as such, a key is to facilitate mutable institutional space that corresponds to the needs of each subject, through collective planning and organising.

In turn, this resonates with THECUBE’s idea of ‘big collaboration’, which is contextualised in Chapter Four as a model for large-scale collaboration across existing institutions. For Gielen, this is a radical turn insofar as creative workers are concerned because they are so often signalled as an exclusive creative class. However, he speculates that the dissolving of such clear-cut institutional boundaries, in terms of new organisational models, will offer one such solution to the symbolic and structural dilemma between classical institutional hierarchy and the networked, individual-focused horizontality of the art world. Noted in distinct ways by Holert, Rogoff, Phillips, Raunig and Vishmidt in their respective thinking, this type of organisational alternative must be able to respond to the urgent issues of the day. It must hold the capacity to keep pace with economic, political and social specificity, such as the prevailing knowledge economy, a culture of professionalism at the level of existing arts education institutions, and a culture of creative entrepreneurship framed through McRobbie’s creative dispositif.

Between Raunig and Vishmidt’s ideas of instituent and infrastructural practice, there exists a call to mobilise about, but nonetheless *with*, ‘the institution’ through its continued intervention. This call is one that focuses on and identifies the ‘material and symbolic’⁶⁹³ resources of the institution, conceptualised as infrastructure by Vishmidt, in order to ‘deploy [...] for the sake of furthering all sorts of projects rather than the loyal criticism attendant on “institutional critique” in its more canonised, and thus more habitual, forms.’⁶⁹⁴ If we can consider a relation between what Raunig and Vishmidt formulate as interventionist practice and ‘the alternative’ of alternative arts education, then considered pragmatically, Vishmidt’s elevation of the bind of material and symbolic resources of the institution through infrastructural critique could operate as a form

691 Taken from personal notes: Gielen, ‘Sustainability, Creativity in Repressive Liberal Times. Cultural Production in a Flat World’, *TRADERS Autumn School* lecture, LUCA School of Arts, KU Leuven, 10th–14th November 2015
692 Ibid.
693 Vishmidt, ‘Beneath the Atelier, the Desert: Critique Institutional and Infrastructural’, in *Marion von Osten Once We Were Artists*, p. 222.
694 Ibid.

of benchmark from which the degree and efficacy of ‘alternativeness’ can be gauged in this research. Where Raunig advocates fleeing from the institution, Vishmidt calls for permanent entry, by never leaving it but instead operating from the point of its infrastructure. This is defined in terms of the ‘formal’ and ‘material’⁶⁹⁵ conditions that encompass the art institution’s location in the ‘expanded field of structural violence’⁶⁹⁶ that its bodies of critique in (and outside of) artistic practice only attest, through the project of Institutional Critique as it is understood in relation to art’s institutions.

Raunig and Vishmidt’s thinking comes into dialogue with this research at the point where they do not wholly negate the institution, but actively seek to engage with it either through departure or inhabitation, recognising it as a necessary means of instituting alternatively. In the same way, my research claims not to negate existing institutions or existing alternative forms of arts education. Instead it proposes a form of hybrid framework aligned to one that Holert describes, via Vishmidt, as a form of modelling, which I align to the act of making propositions on the basis of findings from the dialogues with alternative organisations. I locate a limitation of my research at the point between Raunig’s instituent practice and Vishmidt’s infrastructural critique. The notion of thinking infrastructurally implies the inclusion of points of threshold where the in/out, inclusion/exclusion paradigms of arts education institutions are overridden by the assumption that there is always permanent inhabitation of a beyond space or, as Raunig puts it, ‘an absolute concept beyond the opposition of institution’, where the effects of institution (institutionalisation, structuralisation) are overruled.⁶⁹⁷

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In light of the above, the following propositions are outlined as means of carrying the research out into the field, by:

1 Conceptually considering each model (timebank, co-working, new foundation year and artist-development) as *modes of addressing* the crisis in arts education in the UK. Articulated first in conversation with Munday of the *IF* Project,

695 Ibid., p. 221.

696 Ibid.

697 Raunig, ‘Instituting and Distributing On the Relationship Between Politics and Police Following Rancière as a Development of the Problem of Distribution with Deleuze’, <http://eipcp.net/transversal/1007/raunig/en> [accessed 18 October 2017]

as a way of conceptualising what the *IF* Project does, the idea that ‘the alternative’ can be considered as modes of addressing a problem is on the surface a very clear way of describing what alternative arts education does; addressing the increasingly professionalised and marketised culture of education in the UK, through organising education in alternative ways. Through this articulation a valuable understanding developed of the components that make up ‘the alternative,’ and, in particular, thinking about what has changed for the collective status of the alternative through the course of this research.

Using *IF* as an example: as an alternative education model, it takes on (challenges), deals with (addresses through challenging) and speaks to (engages with higher education) the current education climate in the UK. However, it has only been able to do this within the status of ‘the alternative’. *IF* can only exist as an alternative, within a crisis of higher education. This acknowledgement is crucial because what is implied is a mode of temporality and limitation; in itself this is completely precarious because it can only exist providing it is in opposition to something else. However, in evaluative terms, while this temporality retains a form of limitation to ‘the alternative’ as a mode of address, I argue that recent progress made within the landscape of alternative arts education has significantly altered this predicament. Though *IF* has identified this to be a limitation, I argue that *IF* and projects like it have built a significant foundation of ‘the alternative’ by way of both discourse and in practice, which I think can exist despite potential reforms in higher education in the arts. The potential of educational reform in the UK has always been *IF*’s goal; that they actively inhabit such a space until there exists a fairer, democratic and ‘free at the point of use’ arts and humanities education for everyone.

It has been through initiating dialogue with the Leeds Creative Timebank, *IF*, THECUBE and Syllabus that I propose together they contribute significantly to the field of alternative arts education. They do so through their unique address and approaches to organising around knowledge, its exchange, mobility – education – whether explicitly, or on the basis of my observation as a researcher. They conceptually configure a unique space where ‘the alternative’ can exist in parallel to traditional institutions (of education), and not just as ‘sub’ or ‘novel’ organisations, but as new forms of institutions themselves. This is to say that they no longer conceivably need to exist in a space of precarious

opposition, but that is not to say without agonism. This can be understood in relation to what Raunig and Lütticken refer to as modes of instituent and para-institutional practice, and together as Vishmidt terms, practices of infrastructural critique.

2 Hybridity, both symbolically and structurally. This recognises that a changing and mutable political-economic and higher education landscape in the UK requires a changing and mutable set of alternative options for arts education, which are conceived of and actualised under the aegis that arts education in all its forms is for the greater public good. Where its placement within the field of contemporary art might attend conceptually to a similar ideal particularly in the way that it argues its autonomy, it remains to be bound to art's orbit of 'established organs of criticism, reception, funding, publicity, all the cultural vectors and financial mechanisms' as Vishmidt has claimed, are sustained by 'critical and market circuits'.⁶⁹⁸ Additionally, in the case of formal arts education, Malik asserts that 'art-making involves training and a discussion among peers who are selected for their appropriateness and ability to partake in it' but 'only certain artists will be recognised as being able to make a contribution to contemporary art'.⁶⁹⁹

Logically, it would figure that alternative means of configuring arts education away from such exclusivity is necessary. Structurally, this means that in order to be respondent to such a changing and mutable landscape, a new alternative organisational structure needs to be totally adaptable to such changes. This might mean taking from each of the organisations my work has been in dialogue with a structural component that when conceived together with components from the other organisations, proposes something that is more sustainable for a possible future of alternative arts education. One example here would be taking from the co-working model the idea of smart, mutable working environments, and putting it together with a newly conceived foundation year framework. This forms a free, mutable education environment for students and simultaneously a mode of training for early career academics, by drawing on the skills and knowledge of academics from across not only the field of the arts disciplines but also on their levels of experience.

698 Vishmidt, 'Introduction', in *Media Mutandis: a NODE.London Reader*, p. 3.

699 Malik, 'Educations Sentimental and Unsentimental: Repositioning the Politics of Art and Education', <http://www.bard.edu/ccs/redhook/educations-sentimental-and-unsentimental-repositioning-the-politics-of-art-and-education/> [accessed 18 October 2017] N.B. no page numbers

Another example would be the realisation of a type of modular infrastructure where aspects from each model are considered and offered as key components to an educational experience in the arts. As an illustration, from the timebanking model, take the exchange of skill, knowledge and time as a mode of reciprocal transaction; from co-working, the flexible and distributable spatial environments and collaborative ethos; from the artist-development programme, the notion of the network of practitioners and institutions as resource; and from the foundation year, the ethos of no cost and the fair recognition and distribution of labour between established academics and graduates as facilitators. This idea of hybridity is also conditional on its capacity to be distributable, where new models of co-production that can be shared across organisational networks could be elicited from each modular node. This also engenders issues concerning scale, where these models, in terms of permanence, would be subject to competing organisations. This is apparent in the work of the timebank, who draw from a national timebanking structure, whose details are mutable insofar as they are geographically based, corresponding to local needs. In a similar way, this is manifest in the co-working model, by which the concept of co-working is implemented in distinct ways, concerning their placement as either co-operative or independent organisations.

From each of these organisational components I would assert that a new, hybrid alternative arts education framework could be modelled, one that does not negate its existing institutional counterparts, but works in relation to them, despite them, as modes of infrastructural practice, after Vishmidt. The development of these propositions beyond the PhD might be to consider how these evaluations could manifest also at the point of the individual organisations. The dialogues with *IF*, *THECUBE* and *Syllabus* each considered how the application of thinking drawn from this research could work effectively, where, in the case of *IF*, the project takes on a new set of critical contexts framed by discourse in contemporary art. *IF* could feasibly begin to situate itself in relation to the work of Open School East, School of the Damned and *Syllabus*. Equally, *THECUBE* has taken on 'knowledge mobility' as its working hypothesis, which works to align its own thinking as an organisation with discourse in contemporary art.

Further, beyond the scope of applying the above propositional framework in practice, there are additional aspects of the work that can be developed. These are considering how the notions of institutional apparatus and friendship outlined in

appendices 2 and 3 can be aligned to develop friendship as an alternative to institutional apparatus. In this way, friendship becomes a mode of alternative organisation. Another way is considering how this thinking can be applied more broadly at different levels of arts education and in particular, how this could manifest in small-scale community formations, as is addressed through the work of the Leeds Creative Timebank and THECUBE. Each dialogue exchange through this research has informed my thinking to be taken beyond the PhD, and has contributed a mode of approaching alternative education in a way that is honourable and structurally new, through rethinking the role of exchange in education, the foundation year programme, working collaboratively, and through networked resource. It premises hybridity across these forms as a means of contributing to the field of alternative arts education, to which it intends to propose its realisation beyond the PhD, as the constitution of a new substitutive mode of conceiving alternative arts education beyond, but inclusive of, the remit of contemporary art.

Contributions

This research addresses its questions by founding and drawing together a matrix of critical and propositional, theoretical and practical lines of thinking that cross the disciplines of art history and theory, from visual culture, artistic and communication research and their combined, peripheral locations outside of academic domains. The research is situated contemporaneously but draws conceptually, theoretically and practically across structuralist and poststructuralist approaches to research and their intellectual application, brought together at first through the field of visual culture. Though devoid of a primary visual agenda, the work's proximity to critical artistic and aesthetic practice has informed the research's continued alignment to the expanded field of visual culture. As such, it draws from a range of reference points, following the work of key contemporary thinkers and practitioners who each contribute significant positions in this research towards framing the Educational Turn, and key philosophers and theorists from traditions ranging structuralism, to the fields of institutional critique, socially engaged art, the curatorial, artistic research and critical pedagogy as examples. As a form of dialogic exposition in its conception, the research design is constellated with some of the numerous contextual practices of the Educational Turn, and some of the

pressing cultural and political frames in the UK – with reference to the effects of the UK's political and economic conservatism on arts education, and struggles against which to carve out and maintain a socially and culturally coherent and accessible set of alternative sites. Taken together, this exposes a plurality of voices that forms a new perspective and contribution to the discourse on 'art as/and education', to borrow from the title of Els De Bruyn, Nico Dockx and Johan Pas' volume on the subject.

This research has taken on the responsibility of formulating and contributing an original methodological approach of critique, conversation and proposition, while navigating a subject that at times is complex, self-referential and has transformed throughout the period of research. The two-fold address of critique and proposition has been a difficult project to negotiate, but is founded in principle through its constellatory understanding of doing research and its dialogic world view; both *in theory* and *in practice*. This means that it draws across disciplinarily distinct discourse and in doing so constructs a new perspective and set of positions about a subject that has actually unravelled, concurrently, during the research process. At times the situated and live evolution of the field has proven complex and problematic for the research process; for example, in finding where to draw the line between research, its limitation and future incarnations. The nature of the subject has thus required my own critical inhabitation of it, not least because my work prior to this research, detailed in the Preface, was very much positioned within it. Stepping out as a practitioner and in as a researcher has meant that I have had to critically implicate my own experiences. As such, it felt appropriate to implicate other voices, to account for the subject's contemporaneity, and to reflexively account for my own motivations to produce a constellatory research project, together.

The clear gap in existing literature and practice led me to identify the timebank, foundation year, co-working and artist-development models as potential and unique modes of alternative arts education, to the commonplace model of the alternative *art school*. In order to examine the efficacy of these models, my attempts to address this gap are manifest through the development of long-term dialogic relationships and subsequently drawing together new voices from the outside of the Educational Turn. In testing the potential of these alternative models, I have drawn on the critical vocabulary of 'knowledge mobility', which is derived from critiquing existing discourse and practice from within the field of the Turn. 'Knowledge mobility' manifests as a critical

contribution that simultaneously functions as a critique and means of proposition.

Through eliciting a set of four dialogues with these alternative models, I have been able to examine the degree to which they can offer something other to the future of alternative arts education. The value of this approach for the field of alternative arts education lies in the act of drawing together thinking from each organisational model: alternative economic exchange (Timebank), recomposing the foundation year (*IF* Project), hybrid and smart spaces (THECUBE), and rethinking the role of arts organisations and educators (Syllabus). As such, the above propositions mark the work's capacity to develop beyond the PhD, and work to build on and evaluate current thinking in the field of alternative arts education.

The research locates its limitation in the burgeoning fields of infrastructural critique and artistic research in theoretical and institutional terms, and in practice, at the point where many of the projects, programmes and organisations discussed in this thesis move forward and evolve individually. Examples include Pioneer Works' Alternative Art School Fair showcase of alternative education; Open School East's move from London to Margate; Art & Critique's proposition for a co-operative art school infrastructure in London; Sam Thorne's contextual survey on self-organised art schools; and numerous volumes and academic colloquia committing time and space to this discussion. My work contributes to this body as one form of documenting the Educational Turn. As thinking moves forward and these practices evolve, my engagement with organisations outside of this domain contribute a set of new perspectives on how these phenomena can move forward with a focus on the long-term. Leeds Creative Timebank, *IF* Project, THECUBE and Syllabus have independently developed as organisations during the period of my research and I surmise that engagement with my research has brought to each of them a discursive and reflective perspective that frames what they do in educational terms, specifically in terms that frame what they do as modes of addressing the crisis in arts education in the UK. This research presents a range of other voices; my research practice has formulated together a number of new voices and concepts to the overarching discussion.

The research has taken on the responsibility of and commitment to opening an otherwise inward-facing discussion outwards, and to carry the urgencies of both the 'in' and 'out' towards one another to address the precarious landscape and future of alternative arts education.

Appendices

1 [ART&CRITIQUE], Art Skool Co-op (poster), October 2017



THANKS to School of the Damned for organising this event and bringing alternative art schools together!

FIRST 100% OFFICIAL UNOFFICIAL ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION OPEN-DAY

Organised by School of the Damned

Sunday, 1 October 2017, 1pm-6pm

Set Space, 76-89 Alscot Road, London SE1 3AW

What is Alternative Art Education?

[ART&CRITIQUE] <https://artandcritique.uk>

In the last ten years alternative art education has burgeoned into a full-blown movement, fuelled by economic crisis, austerity & the liberalisation of higher education. But what is alternative art education? Who is it for & what is it alternative to?

There are as many different formats and models of alternative art education as there are art schools, but in what ways is alternative art education expected to be different from traditional art education? Should alternative art schools try to emulate accredited MFAs or are they expected to radically re-imagine art education? What are the drawbacks of traditional art education and what practices are worth preserving? What alternative pedagogies and practices would play an important part in alternative art education? What are the learning outcomes of alternative art education, and how should these be evaluated? How should alternative art schools be organised, structured and funded? Should they be free, accessible and self-organised? How do alternative art schools get access to resources and what do they need to become sustainable? Do alternative art schools have social and political obligations? Are alternative art schools expected to resist and reform institutional models of education and pedagogy? Should alternative art schools challenge art institutions and the art market? Should alternative art schools participate in political struggles of resistance against war, social injustice and climate change? What are the objectives of alternative art education?

Together we will address some of these questions, exchange ideas and discuss the future of alternative art education in a participatory workshop. Come along and bring your own questions and ideas.

[ART&CRITIQUE] is a London-based alternative art education network dedicated to practice, research, education and critical engagement with art. We foster alternative models of art education in a series of free and open-access public events.

[ART&CRITIQUE] is independent, self-organised and self-funded. We employ collaborative, co-operative and collective pedagogy and organisation. Anyone can join by coming along to an event. If you have an idea for an event or collaboration get in touch.

[ART&CRITIQUE] emerged as a response to the financialisation of higher education, which exerts pressure on students and tutors alike. We resist the elimination of public education and the principle of commons-based education by responding to the growing need for a grass roots critical space to engage with art practice, research and pedagogy.

[ART&CRITIQUE] is founded on the conviction that learning is not limited to certain places and times but takes place in ongoing meaningful interactions. We are critical of the hierarchy in HE and the inequality between students and tutors. We believe that everyone has something to learn and everyone has something to teach. We are inspired by pedagogical philosophies and methods from a range of disciplines, from Plato to Ranciere, Paulo Freire to Roberto Freire, experimental art schools to Chinese martial arts, alternative art schools and activist organisations. We aim to kickstart a co-op to bring together all the independent organisations that offer alternative art education in the UK. We understand "art" as a broad field of social and creative activity and inquiry. We believe that art is politically explosive and it circulates in innumerable diverse forms. We realise that when we designate this activity as cultural, creative or artistic we appear to be delegating it to a harmless domain, separated from life and politics. Our aim is to dislodge these ideological separations and affirm the unity of life, knowledge, experience, politics and culture. We affirm the social role of art and the political responsibility of artists. We are critical of institutions that exhibit political art projects in exclusive contexts that divest them of social relevance. We believe in the urgent need for collective action in art and education.

2 Institutions, subjectification and subversion

The following text discusses some of the key theoretical positions that premise the use of ‘the alternative’ in this research. In the context of the Educational Turn, ‘the alternative’ is a critical construct that accounts for a wide set of artistic and political actions – based in organisational form – that come to work against or in relation to the apparatus of ‘the institution’. This text works to explore some of the thinking that has helped to shape my understanding of the distinctions between the constitution of both the institution and the alternative as theoretical and practical claims in relation to alternative arts education. The dialogues discussed in Chapter Four are premised on responding to this discussion.

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It is useful to return again to Ivan Illich as part of his deschooling theory, which is outlined in ‘Problematising the Educational Turn and its paradoxes’ in Chapter One. Illich notes a spectrum of institutions to illustrate the distinctions between different types of institutions in society that are commonly considered to be under the same aegis, those that require and elicit generally an unwitting faith and trust by and from its subjects. Returning to the explanation of ‘deschooling’, this is described by Illich as a process in which society literally unlearns itself, in which it is dismantled and disconnected from the institutional apparatus that sanction and control it; and in which a transfer of responsibility is made between self and institution. Deschooling then is the act of inhabiting new approaches to formalising ‘incidental or informal education’.⁷⁰⁰ This has been useful towards articulating what might categorically constitute the institutions from which the types of alternative examined in this research emerge.

Although Illich was writing in a significantly different timeframe to that of this research, it is striking to observe the similarities between a post-war, post-‘68 America and a post-2008 UK; Illich’s use of education as a lens through which to both critique and propose (de)schooling society maps on to the discourse of the Educational Turn, particularly insofar as it references to the Bologna Declaration, and the gradual professionalisation and marketisation of higher education in the arts. As alternative

700 Illich, ‘Why We Must Disestablish School’, in *Deschooling Society*, p. 22.

education in the frame of this research is generally understood to be in a state of crises – the global economic crisis, UK’s political crisis, educational crisis, to name a few – equally the object of my research is conditional and symptomatic of a wider set of issues that my work does not focus on but acknowledges as this crisis-state. These issues are revealed through understanding the wider educational contexts in the UK in parallel to the Educational Turn in art. As Geoffrey Crossick points out, when discussing the instrumentalisation of ‘creativity’ by the New Labour government in the late 1990s and early 2000s, in the context of the implementation of mechanisms such as knowledge transfer and knowledge exchange in higher education institutions:

[w]e might imagine that New Labour found in ‘creativity’ something inclusive, open and democratic [...] Arts education, research and dissemination are insistently lauded for their ability to produce that rarely defined phenomenon called ‘creativity’. It is an emphasis that unfortunately marginalises the more fundamental ways in which cultural and artistic experience is important; fostering individuals, families and communities that are reflexive, thoughtful, aware of diversity and complexity, conscious of themselves and of others, including others who are very different in place or time.⁷⁰¹

If an emphasis on ‘creativity’ works to marginalise the ‘fundamental’ impacts of cultural and creative practices and the potential of arts education, through its institutions and actors, by essentially commodifying it, particularly with additional reference to McRobbie’s idea of the ‘creativity dispositif’, then we can begin to understand a systemic logic behind the drive to create new modes of arts (creative) education against this wider context.

McRobbie refers to some of these same conditions as Crossick, also in parallel to Vishmidt’s notion of the infrastructural distinction between ‘diagnosis’ and ‘modelling’, as being informed and held in a vortex by the ‘creativity dispositif’⁷⁰² as an instrumentalising continuum. It is useful to hold onto McRobbie’s idea: what she describes by the creativity dispositif is essentially a reworked form of governmentality, the same forces that govern Illich’s schooled society that tend to ‘organise production’ over ‘facilitating activity’.⁷⁰³ For McRobbie, the creative dispositif is a ‘self-monitoring,

701 Geoffrey Crossick, ‘Knowledge Transfer Without Widgets: The Challenge of the Creative Economy’, Lecture to the Royal Society of Arts, 31st May 2006, p.1.

702 Angela McRobbie, ‘Unpacking the Politics of Creative Labour’, in *Be Creative Making a Living in the New Culture Industries*, p. 38.

703 Illich, ‘Institutional Spectrum’, p. 53.

self-regulating mechanism⁷⁰⁴ that emerges when creativity is taken on by ‘the institution’. Thus instrumentalised, it is reified and sentimentalised and becomes a form of institutional apparatus that is stripped of what Crossick calls ‘the more fundamental ways in which cultural and artistic experience is important’. This self-monitoring and regulating mechanism develops to the end of disassociating the State’s responsibility over institutions from the individual subject; to one that manages instead of facilitates. In this sense, creativity is no longer about the creative practice and culture from which it is born, but a ‘site for implementing job creation and, more significantly, labour reform; it is a matter of managing [/organising] a key sector of the [...] population by turning culture into an instrument of both competition and labour discipline.’⁷⁰⁵

What is useful in McRobbie and Crossick is how creativity as a form of institutional apparatus is explained as being deployed by ‘the institution’ (of government) in a similar way to how ‘the institution’ of contemporary art has come to deploy ‘the alternative’. Malik’s same sentimentality of expanded forms of art learning, which manifest in alternative forms of arts education, is echoed by McRobbie as the ‘romance’⁷⁰⁶ of a particular way of working – as a creative entrepreneur in the creative industries as part of the creative economy. For McRobbie, such a romanticisation can be traced to New Labour’s valorisation of the UK’s creative economy; in parallel to then prime minister Tony Blair’s emphatic adage, ‘education, education, education’⁷⁰⁷ in his 1997 education manifesto speech, and the general project to widen access to higher education under his leadership. For McRobbie, New Labour’s investment in these two sectors was driven under the aegis of ‘growth, which hinged around the themes of social inclusion, job creation and prosperity’,⁷⁰⁸ and also coincided with the imposing collective celebrity of the Young British Artists. It was during this time that such a conception of creativity worked to produce what McRobbie terms ‘the artist as human capital’.⁷⁰⁹ This goes some way to inform an understanding of what is at stake when ‘the institutions’ (government, education, art) come to take on the forms by which artists exercise their autonomy from such institutions. By framing Illich’s conception of an institutional spectrum, whereby

704 McRobbie, *ibid.*

705 *Ibid.*

706 *Ibid.*

707 Education, Education, Education, https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&v=kz2ENxjJxFw [accessed 18 October 2017]

708 McRobbie, *ibid.*

709 *Ibid.*, p. 62.

‘manipulative’ and ‘convivial’ institutions are at odds with one another, in relation to the political and economic circumstances that form the type of dispositif McRobbie refers to under New Labour, we can observe a link between the artistic motivation to realise ‘the alternative’ and the tendency to co-opt this on the part of the ‘manipulative institution’ of contemporary art. Further, and in addition to the paradigm of creativity, it is useful to acknowledge the changing state of higher education in the UK during the same period, up until the present.

Citing organisational theorist Henry Chesbrough on ‘Open Innovation’, business executive Richard Lambert claimed in his 2003 report on business-university collaboration that universities needed to take on a central role in initiating relationships with the industry and business sectors in order to secure their status as spaces of innovation, openness and experimentation.⁷¹⁰ In an attempt to break from the often perceived ‘closed-door’ guise of research and university education, universities in the UK under the New Labour government began to play a broader role nationally and internationally, by externalising their activities, their research, faculty and dispersal and connectedness of the student body. This process of externalisation was in part conducted via collaborative mechanisms such as knowledge transfer partnerships and knowledge exchange hubs, to elicit new forms of working relationships between higher education and the professional channels they feed. The ‘Lambert Review of Business-University Collaboration’ outlines the incentives for both business and universities of doing so: businesses wanted to expand and disseminate their own work, research and development, moving away from closed, inter-technology transfer. A consequence of this can be illustrated by the ubiquity of the ‘tech city’ model in urban centres and is locally manifest in the types of co-living and workspaces Pattison has critiqued through his work. Universities wanted to enter into the global market of higher education, represented by phenomena such as league tables and governed by, for example, the Bologna Process. These processes, pre-2008, reveal the potential of the higher education system as a substantial marketplace for the UK, particularly as tuition fees were incrementally rising and contingent to a robust creative economy that was evolving simultaneously.

Within this context, Crossick and McRobbie’s thinking problematising ‘creativity’s’ use in cultural and education policy during this time, is useful towards

710 Henry Chesbrough in Richard Lambert, ‘Introduction’, *Lambert Review of Business-University Collaboration*, (London: Crown copyright, 2003), p.11.

understanding the wider frame surrounding and informing my research. When notions of creativity are utilised in the context of the higher education market and the economy a skewed and marginal version emerges of what they attempt to describe and, not least, a version that prevents of any social change or transformation beyond that of accruing economic and cultural capital for the UK. When creativity and knowledge are commodified and distributed via institutional bartering devices such as knowledge exchange, they become products and the institutions from which they emerge become trading posts.

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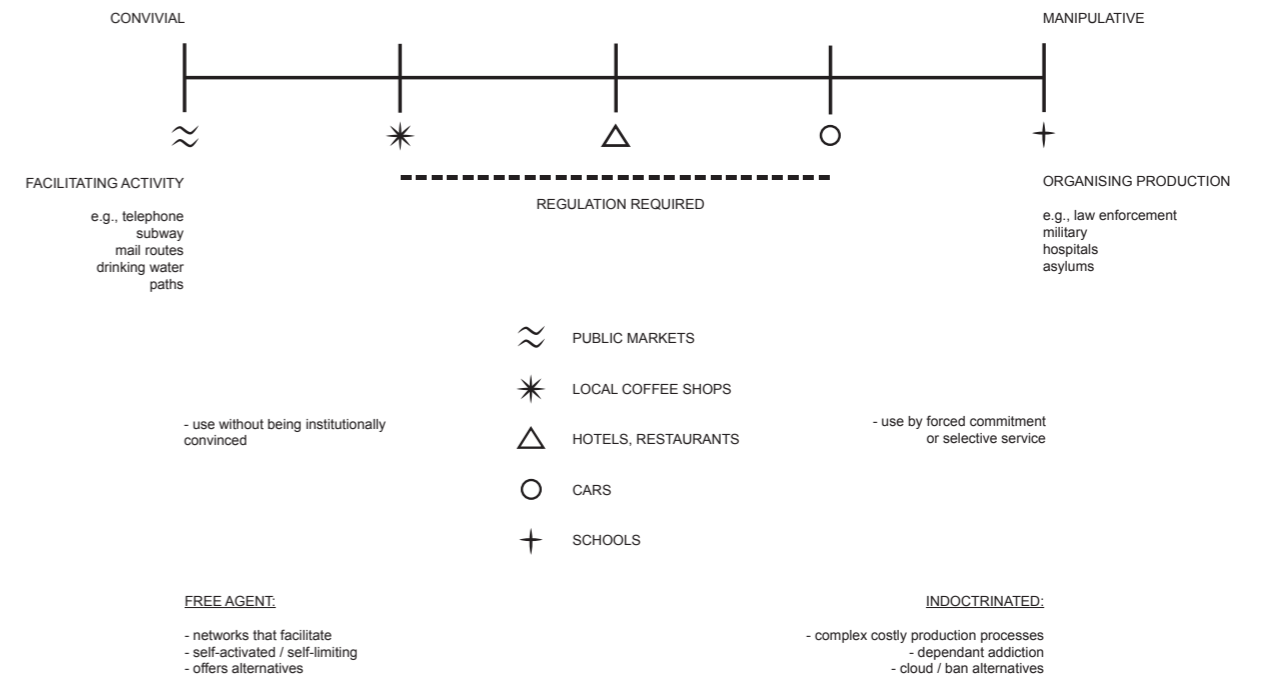


Figure 10, Susannah Haslam, *Ivan Illich's Institutional Spectrum* (diagram), 2017

Illich's institutional spectrum (see figure 10) holds striking resemblance to the types of discussions parallel to the Educational Turn that work to critique and distinguish the role of institutions both in terms of education and of art. Namely, these discussions focus on the fortified and heavy-handed institutions of education that are being marketised and in effect becoming increasingly exclusive, with increasing degrees of sway and control over society. In the art world, as is noted by Malik and Bourriaud, 'art school has a discreet but decisive influence on the art scene it feeds'.⁷¹¹ In the 1970s, Illich speculated that the future of institutions would depend on a holistic outlook, where institutions would 'support a life of action'⁷¹² for their subjects, as opposed to a life focused on the development of 'ideologies and technologies'.⁷¹³ This reflects thinking discussed by political theorist Hannah Arendt discussed in the 1950s as the 'vita activa',⁷¹⁴ active life, whereby categories or 'conditions'⁷¹⁵ of labour, work and action are drawn as the three main conduits of life for humanity. I find Arendt's distinctions significant in understanding what Illich means by institutions that support a life of action.

For Arendt, '[m]en are conditioned beings because everything they come into contact with turns immediately into a condition of their existence'⁷¹⁶ and such existence consists of things produced by humans, as is the nature of work. Work, for Arendt, is the remit within which the permanence of an otherwise terminable mortal life is enacted, that is, the apparatus that extends humanity's presence in the world; it produces the human artefact, which is 'unnatural'⁷¹⁷ and 'artificial'⁷¹⁸ and with which the physical, natural world is filled. These unnatural and artificial artefacts are what I interpret as constituting the overburdened institutions of Illich's schooled society; they fill the world, divisible as institutions, recomposing the world through infrastructures of 'false public utilities'.⁷¹⁹ For Arendt work is presented impartially, and this relation is an interpretation of how unavoidable or, rather, necessary the institutions of existence, or conditions of human life as in Arendt, are. What is most useful in this distinction is in Arendt's discussion of human action as both commonality

711 Bourriaud, 'Revisiting the Educational Turn', p. 184.

712 Illich, 'Institutional Spectrum', p. 53.

713 Ibid., pp. 52–3.

714 Hannah Arendt, 'The Human Condition', in *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 7.

715 Ibid.

716 Ibid., p. 9.

717 Ibid.

718 Ibid.

719 Illich, p. 57.

and condition of plurality and distinction; '[a]ction [...] corresponds to the human condition of plurality, to the fact that men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the world.'⁷²⁰ This being, in action, together between men in Arendt, is the 'condition [...] of all political life'.⁷²¹ If all life is political, by nature of this thinking of action, i.e., its constituting being in the world, then after Arendt, plurality is the condition of human action⁷²² insofar that it is an inherent condition of existing in a world that is composed of difference. In Illich, institutions are forms of apparatus that attempt to condition human life into thinking that it requires it; for Arendt, they are objects of work, of permanence. Institutions condition not only through their perceived necessity for Illich, but also via their tendency to homogenise this type of plurality that action permits in Arendt. Illich's proposition is that institutions support a life of action, rather than a life of perpetuated ideology and technology. In Arendt this would come under the aegis of the classical, 'vita contemplative',⁷²³ the life contemplative, which she holds in relation to the life active. Illich proposes a life of plurality: 'choosing a life of action over a life of consumption [...] will enable us to be spontaneous, independent, yet related to each other.'⁷²⁴

To illustrate this, Illich discusses two institutional extremes, which are 'radically opposed'⁷²⁵ in the ways in which they facilitate the signification of Arendt's distinction between labour, work and action. These are: 'convivial'⁷²⁶ and 'manipulative institution[s]'.⁷²⁷ The latter encompasses Illich's understanding of traditional and formal education institutions, and the former 'convivial'; I argue this to be the categorical distinction of practices of expanded art-learning emerging under the aegis of art's Educational Turn, at least at a surface level. For Illich, convivial institutions are precarious and are exemplified to the left-hand side extreme of the institutional spectrum in figure 10. These are accounted for by their 'spontaneous use'⁷²⁸ in that they do not function through being sold, and yet function as required in society. Examples of convivial institutions drawn together by Illich, are '[t]elephone link-ups, subway lines, mail routes, public markets and

720 Arendt, p. 7.

721 Ibid.

722 Ibid., p. 8.

723 Ibid., p. 14.

724 Illich, p. 52.

725 Ibid., p. 53.

726 Ibid.

727 Ibid.

728 Ibid., p. 54.

exchanges [...] [s]ewage systems, drinking water, parks and side walks'.⁷²⁹ These are all services that, at least on a foundational and functional level, facilitate use by 'free-agents',⁷³⁰ who are neither obliged nor prevented, in the most part, from their use. It can be said that most of the alternative education models within the Turn correspond to Illich's delineation of 'convivial' organisations, insofar as they are mostly free, and users of them are not obliged or prevented, yet they are deemed necessary, insofar as they respond to a prevailing crisis in education. 'Convivial' institutions are regulated, where those of the Turn are not unless aligned to existing institutions, and there exists some limitation to their use. This is true for those institutions that entail an application process and where certain commitments are required to participate, but generally, the user is free to use or not use them.

In the context of my research, returning to Malik, practices of the Educational Turn tend, in the most part, to at least present as organisations that permit their free-ish use as educational resources, even if they are underwritten or supported by so-called 'manipulative institutions'. Manipulative institutions are 'the dominant type'⁷³¹ that characterised the 1970s for Illich and, I maintain, resemble many traditional arts education institutions today, not least their non-art focused counterparts. Illich's argument in many cases is quite extreme, but holds significant resemblance to the issues at stake as part of the crisis of education in UK and in Europe; in 'the institution's' capacity to co-opt and instrumentalise 'the alternative', and in their capacity to demands fees in exchange for education. In return a student receives a journey through which their productivity is organised according to institutional regulations and requirements. 'Manipulative' institutions are exemplified on the right-hand side of the spectrum in figure 10. For Illich in the seventies, 'the most influential modern institutions crowd up at the right of the spectrum'.⁷³² He lists 'law enforcement, modern warfare [...] the military [...] jails, [...] mental hospitals, nursing homes, orphan asylums'⁷³³ inhabiting this side of the spectrum. These are expensive to produce and maintain and are 'highly complex',⁷³⁴ Illich states that most of the cost and elaboration goes into 'convincing consumers that they cannot live without [...] the institution'.⁷³⁵ In turn, this yields a type of reliance on the manipulative institution, which also bears the mark of the human condition

729 Ibid., pp. 54–5.
 730 Ibid., p. 55.
 731 Ibid., p. 52.
 732 Ibid., p. 53.
 733 Ibid., p. 54.
 734 Ibid., p. 55.
 735 Ibid.

of work, which itself works to maintain and crystallise these institutions. On the convivial side of Illich's spectrum, free-agents are free to use such institutions; on the manipulative side, users are manipulated and unwillingly consume and participate,⁷³⁶ through forms of 'advertising, aggression, indoctrination, imprisonment'.⁷³⁷ For Illich this more or less always results in a psychological or 'social addiction',⁷³⁸ whereby 'treatment'⁷³⁹ under the guise of prolonged consumption (product, service) is administered via the manipulative institution. Across Illich's spectrum we can observe a range of middle-ground institutions exemplified through the public market, local coffee shop, hotel and restaurant chains, cars and schools.

Illich's deschooling is an effective theoretical analysis of the impacts on society of institutional apparatus, utilising the lens of education as a means to reveal its cogency and relationality to everyday life. Illich presents numerous definitions of alternatives and hypothesises, with great resonance to the present crisis in education, about a potential alternative future for education; imploring the reader to think in future terms towards 'the creation of a new style of educational relationship between man and his environment'.⁷⁴⁰ His work suggests however that a problem with offering numerous alternatives is that, in effect, a saturated climate of alternatives only maintains a circular producer-consumer process, and that '[d]issent veils the contradictions inherent in the very idea of school'⁷⁴¹ in the first place. This saturated climate is present now through the form of Illich's 'dissent'.

What is useful here is that Illich's speculation is to a degree revealed through what I initially described as the abundant model of the alternative art school, which emerged through the process of 'double instrumentalisation'. In light of this, the important question to ask is how to configure forms of dissent (as forms of action) that prevent their seemingly unavoidable subsumption and instrumentalisation by the same institutions to which they oppose, rather than how to avoid the circumstances that make deschooling a necessity from Illich via fulfilling Arendt's call to an active life. Drawing back to the discussion in Chapter One, it is important to note that this tension is not omitted from the literature on the Educational Turn. However, what is underdeveloped is perhaps a pragmatic outline of how to act in dissent within such an already saturated field. Shaping the discussion on

736 Ibid.
 737 Ibid.
 738 Ibid.
 739 Ibid.
 740 Ibid., p. 72.
 741 Ibid., p. 67.

horizontality and horizontalism, Mouffe, Gielen and Isabell Lorey each present variations of institutional dissent. What has emerged through their combined thinking in relation to this research is a theoretical appraisal of what could be; acting from within; acting between institution and state; and acting through dissolving hierarchy. We can also observe this in Vishmidt's infrastructural critique. This can be identified in institutional projects and departments ranging from Department 21 at the RCA in London and Sandberg Instituut at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam, to projects and organisations ranging School of the Damned and Art & Critique in London, to Ögüt's nomadic Silent University and Dockray's Public School.

Through engaging with a set of organisations within and outside the Turn, in conjunction with reviewing its literature, dissent is revealed to be implicit across and between the scale of 'the alternative' outlined in 'The (many) alternatives' section in part one of Chapter Three and in figures 2 and 3. Illich was correct insofar as 'dissent' acts as a veil, about and beneath which not much is really changed. Each of the organisations my work has engaged in dialogue with – the timebank, co-working space, experimental foundation year and artist-development programme – were born from a type of dissent that compelled each one to conceive of an alternative reality. I believe each has taken the organisational steps that could conceivably be attributed towards change at the level of alternative arts education. It is useful to then consider to what degree the notion of dissent and its combined acts are indeed a resolutely indelible mark on and of neoliberal society composed entirely of 'institutions', thus a form of self-serving apparatus that in fact perpetuates rather than disrupts it.

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I now consider in some detail what is meant by apparatus, particularly in relation to 'the institution'. This serves to magnify these terms in relation to the above discussion in Illich and Arendt and towards revealing the wider theoretical frame of my research. In Giorgio Agamben's treatment of the apparatus, he first discusses Foucault's notion of the 'dispositif',⁷⁴² which is explained by Foucault in 'Confession of the Flesh' in 'Power/Knowledge' as 'a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms [etc]'⁷⁴³ and as the 'system of relations that

742 Dispositif and apparatus are used interchangeably in the first few sentences of this section.
743 Foucault, 'The Confession of the Flesh', in *Power/Knowledge*, p. 194.

can be established between these elements'.⁷⁴⁴ For Foucault, this system of relations is a formation 'which has as its major function at a given historical moment that of responding to an *urgent need*'.⁷⁴⁵ This means that the apparatus is predominately functional, insofar as it is respondent and conceptually shape-shifts according to the specificity of an urgent need. Such mutability, insofar as function and need are concerned, implies that the apparatus is continuously suspended between a 'play of power' and 'coordinates of knowledge'.⁷⁴⁶ Agamben, in his genealogy on the apparatus after Foucault, introduces the way in which the apparatus is also a process of subjectification: it produces its subjects, on the basis that it is a form of governance that is devoid of a 'foundation of being'⁷⁴⁷ and exists distinct from living beings.

For my research, Agamben's notion that subjectification emerges through the apparatus is useful in terms of understanding why it is important to step outside the domain of contemporary art in order to speculate on what might become a new set of reference points for the domain of alternative arts education. Agamben's thinking underlines how we can attribute contemporary art's instrumentalising tendencies to the power play of 'the institution', or what is described by Foucault and Agamben through the apparatus. The apparatus, with its mutable, strategic function, is the spectre of 'the institution' in its persistence and in its capacity to produce its subjects. If we can consider 'the alternative', in the context of this research as one such example born from this process of subjectification, then we can observe the paradox and the inherent impossibility of the Educational Turn working toward social change or transformation at both the level of art's autonomy and insofar as the project of alternative arts education. Malik's 'sentimentality' and Lesage and Kenning's 'paradox' then are illuminated in Agamben's treatment of the apparatus. Further and to clarify, I draw on an additional example from Agamben: through employing an illustration of the mobile phone, he draws on the infallibility of the capacity of the apparatus to govern, via technology. Agamben says, '[h]e who lets himself be captured by the "cellular telephone" apparatus [...] cannot acquire a new subjectivity, but only a number, through which he can, eventually, be

744 Ibid.

745 Ibid. [Italics in original]

746 Ibid.

747 Giorgio Agamben, 'What Is an Apparatus?' in *WHAT IS AN APPARATUS and Other Essays* (California: California University Press, 2009), p. 11.

controlled.⁷⁴⁸ In the context of my argument, I would translate this as: the alternative apparatus of arts education cannot acquire the status of new subjectivity that would mean a truly alternative model of arts education. Instead, a form of language, as artistic-political form, is produced which can only ever manifest as a ‘strategic objective’ of ‘the institution’ and instrumentality of contemporary art. Thus, alternativeness (in the context of the Educational Turn) is implicitly negated through its position in relation to contemporary art. For Agamben, after Foucault, the apparatus, is this ‘heterogeneous set’⁷⁴⁹ that encompasses ‘virtually anything, linguistic, nonlinguistic [...] discourses, institutions, buildings, laws, police measure, philosophical propositions’,⁷⁵⁰ it is the between-ness of these elements, or their relationality, which produces more apparatuses, in other words, ‘the alternative’. Foucault designates this between-ness as a ‘system of relations’ or the ‘nature of connections’⁷⁵¹ and Agamben calls this relationality a ‘network established between these elements.’⁷⁵²

Agamben’s reading of Foucault’s *dispositif* permits us to think more specifically about the effects of Foucault’s project of governmentality. This presents direct resemblance to Illich’s motivations to think that a project of deschooling towards, what is in Arendt, the active life, is viable. It permits us to think more specifically about how Illich’s framing of dissent is a paradox, for it can only work to ‘veil the contradictions inherent in the very idea of school’⁷⁵³ as its own apparatus. Agamben explains that in French, the three meanings of the *dispositif* emerge predominately around 1. decision-making, 2. arrangement-making and 3. instruction-making.⁷⁵⁴ I am drawn to the idea that this schema presents a set of conditions for institution-making, particularly in the context of Illich’s spectrum that designates the opposing function of ‘the institution’ from ‘facilitating activity’ to ‘organising production’. These descriptions of the *dispositif* can be attributed to both sides of the spectrum. Further, Agamben’s project contextualising the apparatus traces a link to thinking that makes a distinction ultimately between being and governance. This can be located in Arendt’s thinking about work, where work represents and carries through and with it an instantiation of permanence about existence,

748 Ibid., p. 21.

749 Ibid., p. 2.

750 Ibid., p. 3.

751 Foucault, p. 194.

752 Agamben, *ibid.*

753 Illich, ‘Irrational Consistencies’, p. 67.

754 Ibid., p. 7.

that otherwise is lacking in our humanities’ own mortality, and where labour is the perpetuation of the species (nature of being). Agamben’s pursuit of the genealogy of the apparatus arrives at a juncture that separates and articulates being and action, from the institution and care⁷⁵⁵ of the created world.⁷⁵⁶

This makes the distinction between living beings and apparatus, between which ‘the subject’ emerges and the production of the subject between living beings and the apparatus implicates the subject’s own capture by the apparatus, or its conditioning: ‘an apparatus [is] literally anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviours, opinions, or discourses of living beings’.⁷⁵⁷ Returning to the context of my research with Agamben’s explication in mind, it is useful to consider how his reading correlates to the effects of a wider condition that has elicited the Educational Turn – on one hand, presented by Illich as schooled society, and on another, by Malik’s critique of sentimental education. I argue that the process of ‘double instrumentalisation’ has taken place due to the Educational Turn’s capture by the contemporary art world, which figures as one of many apparatuses that directly impact the way in which the Turn is limited in its effecting any significant transformation at the level of arts education proper.

It has been through drawing together a conceptual framework, first marked by the notion of ‘knowledge mobility’, as simultaneously the urgency within the given historical context (alternative arts education in the UK between 2006 and 2016), as a mode of addressing the contradictions of the Educational Turn and the function of a set of relations specific to the paradigm of the Educational Turn (the incentive to act in the world, made manifest in this research through the designation and model of ‘the alternative’ as a perceived mode of address). Knowledge mobility is, therefore, a form of critiquing this particular function of the apparatus of contemporary art, as manifest in the Educational Turn.

755 The notion of care is important here, particularly as Foucault discusses one perspective of care (in relation to the care of oneself) as ‘an attitude towards the self, others and the world’, i.e., he posits care as a position conditional on a process of relationality, not dissimilar to the nature of apparatus in the world. Foucault, ‘6 January 1982 First hour’, in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: lectures at the College de France 1981–1982* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 10.

756 Agamben, *ibid.*

757 Ibid., p. 14.

Further, it is useful to consider the above discussion as a point of departure. In so doing, I examine the plurality, or at least slipperiness of ‘the institution’ through Jacques Derrida’s notion of the ‘double gesture’ of the institution, and by drawing from Grant Kester’s notion of ‘tactical inversions’⁷⁵⁸ as methods that are concomitant to collaborative art practice and contemporary art’s tendencies of organising and collectivity. I use the three distinctions⁷⁵⁹ outlined in the ‘knowledge mobility’ section in part one of Chapter Three as a means of considering the application of the new notion knowledge in a way that builds on the tactics employed as form in the Educational Turn and in a way that aims to move outside of the Educational Turn.

Jacques Derrida’s ‘double gesture’⁷⁶⁰ is defined as the act of situating the ‘unsituatable’⁷⁶¹ within as well as outside of the university. With reference to the third distinction of knowledge outlined as ‘an epistemological and institutional understanding’ and defined through discussions of ‘artistic’ knowledge, in the context of artistic research, we may understand the act of exposing practice to research and vice versa as practices that are institutionally unsituatable. In Derrida, the unsituatable is that which emerges from ‘preparing oneself [...] to transform the modes of writing, approaches to pedagogy, the procedures of academic exchange, the relation to languages, to other disciplines, to the institution in general, to its inside and its outside.’⁷⁶² I interpret this akin to Schwab’s expositionality on the basis that a form of risk-taking is implicit to the act of situating the self and work or programme on one hand, and on the other, the instance of acting indeterminately. For Derrida, acting indeterminately towards an unknown, is a condition of this double gesture, whereby the above-mentioned transformation of writing, language and so on into other domains is the act of a commitment to ‘going as far as possible, theoretically and practically’⁷⁶³ without a tangible schema towards a given destination. This is distinct from that which is conventionally required to be made evident through the work (practice/research) in programmes of practice-led or -based research in art

758 Kester, ‘Autonomy, Antagonism, and the Aesthetic’, in *The One and the Many* (London: Duke University Press, 2011), p. 54.

759 1. A structural and methodological understanding of knowledge. 2. A conceptual understanding. 3. An epistemological and institutional understanding.

760 Jacques Derrida, ‘The Principle of Reason: The University in the Eyes of its Pupils’, *Diacritics*, vol. 13, no. 3 (Autumn 1983), p. 17.

761 Ibid.

762 Ibid.

763 Ibid.

or design, when examined according to scientific epistemological models of research assessment.

The point of this discussion is to highlight a number of significant ways of approaching this problem of ‘the institution’ of education (knowledge) both systematically and conceptually in terms of Derrida and Schwab’s thinking. This idea of responsibility or commitment to the unknown, from within the site of the university, is something that is reiterated and made manifest through Rogoff’s unbound knowledge, that is, a programme of thinking without knowable destination. Further, the proximity of Derrida’s unsituatable acts of double gesture is strikingly close to current conversation about the constitution of knowledge in relation to both the university and its alternative manifestations. This is something that we contemporaneously encounter in both the example of formal tertiary arts education institutions and in the alternative manifestations of arts education through the Turn. The intention of Derrida’s double gesture appears to resonate with the premise of the exposition insofar as it actively seeks to transform or disrupt convention and rigidity covertly, through subversive inhabitation, or through a form of subversive action that simultaneously jumps through institutional hoops while shaping what Stefano Harney describes as, the ‘undercommons’⁷⁶⁴ of the university.

In the context of the double gesture, Harney’s undercommons can be interpreted to be what Derrida calls ‘the abyss beneath the university’.⁷⁶⁵ For Harney, this is the site within which the ‘subversive intellectual’⁷⁶⁶ performs the work of the university, thus produces the university, separate to the ‘polite company [of] rational men’⁷⁶⁷ upstairs. This physical, gendered distinction is Derrida’s double gesture in practice, in effect, and it requires the literal double gesture of the subject to inhabit the university in order to be held up by it. For Harney, this taking or stealing⁷⁶⁸ from the university is the only way to exist with it in the present conditions of university education. This thinking is further explored in Derrida’s ‘Sendoffs’ text. Thinking under the aegis of ‘destination,’ or long-term, Derrida formulates his advocacy of taking risks, as a subversive intellectual, through the example of the Collège International de Philosophie. In his outline of the

764 Stefano Harney, ‘The University and the Undercommons’, in *The Undercommons* (Wivenhoe: Minor Compositions, 2013), pp. 25–43.

765 Derrida, ‘The Principle of Reason’, *ibid.*

766 Harney, p. 26.

767 *Ibid.*

768 *Ibid.*

Collège, Derrida made a point of insisting that its first four years would be coordinated ‘without ever being constrained by some general and authoritarian planning’,⁷⁶⁹ meaning that it would operate indeterminately, towards some form of unknowable destination.⁷⁷⁰ Its ‘forms of interrogation’⁷⁷¹ via a series of disciplinary intersections⁷⁷²

assign to the Collège its greatest and most permanent opening, which it must never suture with the assurance of a body of knowledge, a doctrine or a dogma. [...] it is necessary to inscribe it in the very charter of the institution, as a sort of founding contract.⁷⁷³

The very idea of sendoff in the sense of indeterminate destination⁷⁷⁴ on the part of the Collège’s programme, Derrida continues is where his double gesture plays out. The sendoff, as anti-plan or programme, can be understood to be the permit to take from the institution what the subject requires; in his words, to ‘act as if such a community were possible [...] as if [...] still not legitimated pathbreakings could have been the object of a consensus’.⁷⁷⁵ Taking this as both the granting of permission to inhabit the university subversively, and as the initial formula for Derrida’s charter for the Collège, we can observe the proximity of this to Schwab, with the risk and indeterminate nature of the exposition. By operating at intersections, the Collège cannot account for the ambivalence and indeterminacy of as-yet-to-be-known knowledge. Something of Derrida’s double gesture is enacted by the exposition, where one strives to formulate new ground within the framework of ‘the institution’, which is exactly what the Collège does.

769 Derrida, ‘Sendoffs’, in *Eyes of the University Right to Philosophy 2* (California: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 219.

770 Ibid., p. 220.

771 Ibid., p. 219.

772 Ibid.

773 Ibid.

774 Ibid., p. 220.

775 Ibid., p. 224.

3 Friendship and exposition

The following text presents how through my research I have come to expand thinking around ‘the institution’ and ‘the alternative’ in relation to the notion of ‘friendship in action’, outlined by Condorelli as a mode of working and towards the expansion of discourse on friendship. I take this notion to be helpful towards understanding the formulation of both communities of practice and supplementing discourse, which is broadly what my research aims to do. In terms of how this thinking addresses my research questions, I take ‘friendship in action’ as the conceptual manifestation of acting alternatively towards transformation in arts education. Condorelli’s friendship theoretically correlates with Agamben’s theorisation of the apparatus as a heterogeneous set. Where the apparatus is contingent to institutional power, friendship is instead contingent on the idea that the same conception of a heterogeneous set is formed through practices of support, and engagement with things, ideas, people that when conceived of together, offer something greater than they would alone. Plainly, the apparatus is the resultant formation of power play, and friendship is a model of support.

By drawing on this distinction, I present a collaborative project I was involved in during the early stages of my research, that interrogated and explored the capacities of language as a means of realising Condorelli’s ‘friendship in action’. As a precursor to my subsequent conversations with organisations outside the fold of the Educational Turn, this project provided the explorative space to work through some the issues pertaining to ‘the institution’ that my work contends with. Further, it is hoped that by presenting this notion of friendship as an act of expositiveness, ‘exposing practice to research’, the dialogues presented in Chapter Four are read as such acts, in that, they not only function as means of addressing my research questions, but also constitute a type of approach that aims to practice *in friendship*, as an exposition in itself. It is intended that my evaluations towards speculative alternative forms of arts education go some way to presenting both friendship and expositiveness as conceptual components of their realisation.

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Knowledge [nol-ij]

Progressive Synonyms

Singularity

1. **Past.** Singular subjectivity.
2. **Present. Verb.** Fusion (processual).
3. **Future.** Non-hierarchical composite spaces or ecologies without substrates, layers (eg. of the digital and physical).
4. **Noun.** Conditional.

Specificity

1. **Noun.** Subject or object identified as being separate (ie. *"it is not that."*).
2. **Noun.** Locatedness, positionality, situatedness.
3. **Adj.** Environmental (eg. the comparative value of a free newspaper prior to 8am and after 11pm).
4. **Adj.** Materiality or embodied-ness.
5. **Verb.** Immanence.

Subjectivity

1. **Noun.** That which exists on the basis of the self, otherness or distinctness (as singular or collective) (eg. perspective).
2. **Noun.** Perspective, position, angle.
3. **Verb.** Affect (process).
4. **Noun.** Affect (consequence).

Agency

1. **Noun.** Affective or embodied critical position.
2. **Noun.** Potential or capacity for action and or velocity.
3. **Noun.** Motivation.

Will (to think, do)

1. **Verb.** Motivation to pursue (eg. experience motivating a will *to know*) (see **Agency**).
2. **Adj.** Exhilaration.

Object

1. **Noun.** Already external in relation to the subject (see **Subjectivity**).
2. **Verb.** Being detached.
3. **Verb.** To demarcate.
4. **Verb.** Becoming external.
5. **Noun. Verb. Adj.** Complexity (processes of identification as autonomous).

THESAURUS and Preface (2014) is a collaborative artwork that critiques the rhetorical language of 'knowledge', 'exchange' and 'collaboration' as the terms are attributed to arts education in often complex ways that are deemed to work against what they actually embody in the context of research. The artwork was produced as a way to explore the potential of unhinging these terminologies from their binding to 'the institution' of academia in order to experiment with meaning and application and to produce new subjectivities. Its inclusion in this research is intended to frame how language is subsequently used and understood – as indeterminate but also contingent to contexts with 'strategic objectives', as with the previous discussion on the nature of the apparatus. It provides a context for how I have approached conversation and dialogue as research tools, in conversation with the Leeds Creative Timebank, *IF* Project, THECUBE and Syllabus programme.

THESAURUS and Preface was conceived of between performance maker and researcher Tess Denman Cleaver and I as part of a residency in the co-working space at FACT, during the exhibition 'Time & Motion: Redefining Working Life'. It emerged at an early stage of my research, when I was contending with the idea that alternative forms of arts education were ultimately at odds with both the domain of contemporary art and the institutions that they intended to critique. From this thinking, I became concerned with the nature of the rhetorical language surrounding 'knowledge' and 'exchange' and 'collaboration', terms which felt subsumed by 'the institution' and which needed unhinging from it. From the outset, we wanted to conceive of a resource for our own research that was mutable and flexible enough for it to be utilised, expanded, reformed and revised. After the residency, the work evolved through its presentation and discussion in a number of external scenarios. These were, its presentation at the 'Critical Practices and Experimentation' symposium at the University of Copenhagen as part of the Culture@Work European programme that examined the ways in which critical cultural practice is put to work across artistic and academic fora. Situating the work into the context of the academic institution, particularly as a site it intended to critique, in principle meant that we had to revise and rethink the types of language that we were critiquing and proposing. This was challenging as it required us to distinguish its function of critique from its function of instruction. It also encouraged us to identify the work as a form of methodological position that could inform collaborative practice. The

Figure 11, Susannah Haslam and Tess Denman-Cleaver, *THESAURUS & Preface* (extract from artwork), 2014

work became both an instructional and expressive text, and we began to consider ways to open the text up, namely by including other voices and positions, towards the idea of an unfolding, layered and hybrid instruction/expression. We were also invited by the discursive platform PRESS ROOM⁷⁷⁶ to contribute THESAURUS to their session as part of artists Maurice Carlin and Jen Wu's Temporary Custodians Of ...⁷⁷⁷ project and Helen Kaplinsky and Kelly Loughlin's Kitchen Table Discussions during 2014's Liverpool Biennial. THESAURUS and Preface was presented to a group around the kitchen table, discussed, critiqued and edited.

While our work together on THESAURUS formally came to an end in 2015, in the context of my research I consider the project as a form of working methodology for dialogue, conversation and co-writing – as methods I have drawn on across my research. It is something that I have evolved independently in the form of the ongoing project 'Towards an Ethics of Intimacy',⁷⁷⁸ which has utilised the work significantly in its enquiry into the nature of intimacy, friendship and proximity in the context of co-writing as an intertextual practice online. On reflection, the process of developing THESAURUS and Preface significantly informed my decisions to work in and with conversation, towards producing conceptual dialogues and, in three cases, co-written texts that together informs my research practice, as is discussed in part two of Chapter Three and Chapter Four. While each of these methods, in research terms, account for significantly different approaches to doing research, particularly given their distinct manifestations across different disciplines, they each build on aspects of my work under the aegis of JOURNEY / SCHOOL, which is important as a means of bringing the practical work of that project into this research.

Additionally, the methods of conversation, dialogue and co-writing correlate with what Kristeva terms as the production of a linguistic network. That is, my research practice combined utilises the conversational approach both structurally and as a form

776 PRESS ROOM is a touring discursive platform initiated by artists Maurice Carlin, Pippa Koszerek and Jade Montserrat that stages the processing of information through appropriating the structural frame of the press room as information point and locus of dissemination, <http://www.mauricecarlin.com/press-room> [accessed 18 October 2017]

777 Temporary Custodians Of ..., <http://www.constantmeeting.co.uk/temporary-custodians-of> [accessed 18 October 2017]

778 Towards an Ethics of Intimacy is a project I have developed from THESAURUS and Preface. It is an online and offline work that addresses the complexity of intimacy, proximity and friendship through co-authorship online. It uses online, open productivity platforms as sites of practice, as method and as spaces of experimentation and spans poetic form, critical commentary and real-time screen-recording.

of communicative practice to develop a set of dialogues, three of which have included co-written texts. Thinking THESAURUS as the formation of a methodological position, permitted Denman-Cleaver and I to develop a form of inclusive language, and a lens for articulating the propositional element of my own research. It permitted us to open up and access the otherwise tightly bound and exclusive terminology that laid claim on the work we had not yet undertaken. THESAURUS serves this research as a process and mode of experimentation for making propositions.

As part of this process and by inhabiting this mode of experimentation with language, I found resonance with Condorelli's work, whose thinking on and in friendship came to frame both the approach to working that Denman-Cleaver and I were taking on and, in another way, a more conceptual rendition of some of my thinking about alternative organisational structures for arts education, or alternative sites of knowledge production. It became clear that Condorelli's framing of friendship as a form of methodology for her own artistic work could help us locate our own evolving practices as researchers. Through the notion of 'support', Condorelli discusses this 'friendship in action',⁷⁷⁹ where it is understood it as condition of *doing* work. She refers to Arendt and writer Mary McCarthy's own framing of their intellectual and manifest friendship as a process of 'befriending issues'⁷⁸⁰ and, in Arendt's own words, the constitution of a 'thinking business'.⁷⁸¹ As a context for Condorelli's thinking, it is important to note that existing philosophical discourse on friendship is inherently exclusive. It excludes those conventionally marginalised from society, in light of which, Condorelli's attempt at supplementing the discourse through notions of support and friendship in action, is a way of writing into the discourse the presence of those excluded. She further articulates that 'the most interesting models of friendship'⁷⁸² are found among those who are excluded from it. Considering the role of THESAURUS in relation to this, what emerged was that through unhinging otherwise bound language, we were also able to write into it our own positions of research.

During the time that Denman-Cleaver and I were working together on THESAURUS, Condorelli presented new work at the Chisenhale Gallery as part of the

779 Condorelli, 'The Company We Keep, part one', in *The Company She Keeps*, p. 34.

780 Ibid., p. 35.

781 Ibid.

782 Ibid., p. 36.

programme, 'How to Work Together', alongside Studio Voltaire and The Showroom. As the premise of this work, Condorelli posits friendship as a condition of working practice, of support both in physical and conceptual forms. Condorelli's rendition of friendship here drew across these two frames, a pragmatic and structural one, which locate or make proximate the relationalities of working practice,⁷⁸³ and another conceptual one, tending to problematise this exclusionary philosophical treatment of friendship, through the act of opening it up. Condorelli's description of the practice of working together with others, as thinking on and in friendship, became a means by which I could also locate ideas pertaining to the production of the alternative form of arts education. Through Condorelli's rendition of friendship, critiquing artistic, organisational and educative practice after the Educational Turn towards proposing other and alternative forms of arts education in the context of my research, became about framing different accounts of new and non-institutional forms of coming together, working together, producing knowledge together. Thinking in this way about friendship as an absolute condition of practicing in the present brought a degree of focus to my own work, which then permitted me to step outside the domain of the Educational Turn as a research practitioner and transformed the research work from critique to proposition. The act of stepping outside of the research's home ground both symbolically and practically meant that I needed to take on a new set of languages, akin to the process of conceiving of THESAURUS, which would together contribute a constellatory, intertextual research form.

Drawing on the THESAURUS project as a means of illustration, I now discuss the acts of friendship and co-writing as interrelated practices that worked in part to foreground my research practice and decision to co-write aspects of these dialogues with my collaborators. The following text draws on the THESAURUS project as an analogy for what it means to co-write together as a designation of friendship. Pragmatically, THESAURUS and each of the dialogic texts produced with Munday, Camargo and Fritz and Pettitt and Juul Petersen were co-written using Google Docs. As such, Google Docs is considered as a site of friendship, conversation and co-writing in the following reflections.

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783 Céline Condorelli at Chisenhale, 2 May – 22 June 2014 (London: Chisenhale Gallery, 2014)

A desk, meeting room, email window, café, and Google Docs window each draw on the communicative and collaborative faculties of sense, responsibility and commitment, by nature of making present and interrelating positions between interlocutors. As sites of production, they question the self's sense of responsibility and commitment in relation to other subjects, places and selves. Online productivity platforms reframe the same questioning of notions of proximity, intimacy and working relationships, through their redefinition of spaces of work and thus by nature of the agency of the self in work, they redefine the self in terms of agency. Ideas of proximity, intimacy and co-authorship become unbound from location and time in the context of online co-writing, in a way that formulates a new space of working that is not conditioned by set times or locations, or through relying on now outdated dissemination systems of, for example, the postal service; before then, the colporteur on horseback. In this way, the processes of production and distribution are both speeded up and slowed down, and, it is useful to recall the idea of slowing down in relation to contemporary art's tendency towards exhibiting care through self-organising, hosting, curating, as is discussed in Chapter Two as modes of survivalism in the context of the contemporary art world. As a notion that is commensurate with friendship, the idea of care in Foucault, is one of support that encompasses 'an attitude towards the self, others, and the world',⁷⁸⁴ when he speaks of what it is to know yourself. Foucault talks about care for the self being a foundational imperative above and before knowing the self,⁷⁸⁵ where caring is a way of disclosing a problem in the world, out of the curiosity it inspires. This can manifest as concern about what exists and what might come to exist,⁷⁸⁶ through its mediation of the unknown. I am interested in the relation between Foucault's statement that care is the designation of actions,⁷⁸⁷ those that implicate the self's sense and practice of responsibility in the world, and Condorelli's idea that friendship is placed in actions that emerge from and 'create forms of solidarity'⁷⁸⁸ which 'put one's own practice in a constant relation to acting in public in the world at large.'⁷⁸⁹ Further, these actions for Foucault, are the means by which one makes a stake in the world, where

784 Foucault, '6th January 1982: first hour', in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France* (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2005), p. 10.

785 Ibid., p. 12.

786 Foucault, 'The Masked Philosopher', in *Ethics Subjectivity and Truth: The Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984* (New York: The New Press, 1994), p. 325.

787 Ibid., '6th January 1982: first hour', p.11.

788 Condorelli, 'Notes on friendship' in *The Company She Keeps*, p. 8.

789 Ibid.

*'one changes, purifies, transforms, and transfigures oneself.'*⁷⁹⁰ For Condorelli, these actions are primarily based in the process of making things public. This juncture between resolutely inward looking, or looking 'away [but] from the outside'⁷⁹¹ in Foucault, versus Condorelli's practicing in public and so with others, before the self, is a useful framework for my research in two ways. The first in the sense that it offers a way of thinking through how and to what end forms of organising for the purpose of education can come into being; for who, about what, and who with. The second, more conceptually, as a way of questioning how formations of care and friendship are organised spatially; what is produced between nodes of this friendship, is this the site of production, the intertext of care and friendship?

Returning to Google Docs, the idea of the intimate in work, or space of intimacy, becomes a space ethically unstable; where one is usually able to understand working proximities and intimacy in quite clear terms through social cues and institutional norms in physical proximity and according to the regulations and protocols of being at a desk, in a cafe, online these perspectives become skewed because we generally confront others through a mediated lens. For example, the institutional frame of Google, the sometimes-awkward relay of thinking processes made visible through the blinking maker on the page. The page, as a window, becomes transformed, it becomes a space of disembodied co-productivity, something that can be likened to writer Marina Warner's analogy of the arabesque, where the countervailing energy between the flow and the container of the line (text) are at once freed from and framed⁷⁹² by the writer's toolbar, the online desktop. Warner speaks of Alois Riegl's interpretation of the 'endless correspondence'⁷⁹³ of the arabesque, which speaks of an infinity that limits its own extension, which is mirrored by the page's own limitation and simultaneous infinity loop, where the chaos⁷⁹⁴ of alternation between words and ideas play out entropically. In response to Warner's thinking, it is useful to consider her analogy of the arabesque in relation to co-writing as a form of linguistic (re)structure that is found in Blanchot's notion of 'subordinated alternation'.⁷⁹⁵ I am interested to draw this parallel as I think it goes some way towards interpreting the

790 Foucault, *ibid.*

791 Foucault, p. 10.

792 Marina Warner, 'Arabesque', Visual Cultures Lecture Series, Royal College of Art, 8 March 2016

793 *Ibid.*

794 *Ibid.*

795 Blanchot, 'Interruption As on A Riemann surface', p. 75.

forms of relationship found through the practice of co-writing that also bear resemblance to Condorelli's framing of friendship as a condition of work. Further, more generally, one which is constituted through mobility between relations and references of work. In Condorelli, friendship is the instantiation of a way of working with others, 'connecting things, establishing relationships'⁷⁹⁶ as in the practice of 'making things public',⁷⁹⁷ friendship becomes both a means and space of production.⁷⁹⁸ I understand the site of Google Docs to be an extended site of friendship in this same way; moreover, as a form of condition and treatment for putting things in relation to one another, which I interpret as the means by which the organisations I have been in dialogue with converse with one another, under the aegis of my research.

Further, and building on this, I am interested in exploring how online collaborative writing might actually come to reveal a new understanding of intimacy and proximity – as conditions of coming together around a collective urgency, as is conceptually described through Condorelli's work, and in my own, as the objective of practicing education alternatively – particularly repositioning the combined ideas of friendship from Condorelli and care of the self in Foucault. The space of intimacy within online productivity platforms becomes a space ethically unstable because the conditions of sense and responsibility take on new forms, which are hidden and based on a version of trust different from the implied trusts that we experience face-to-face. In a way, a disembodied handshake: I am compelled to trust you. For Condorelli, the idea of contracting friendship is incongruous, in the sense that it operates 'in excess of any such rigid forms of agreement'⁷⁹⁹ and particularly in the context of historical discourse on friendship, which designates friendship as the 'exercise of freedom'.⁸⁰⁰ As philosopher Johan Frederik Hartle points out, this comes at a cost to those excluded from such a discourse, where women and slaves were traditionally not part of such a constitution of friends.⁸⁰¹

The idea of the disembodied handshake as something which marks the tropes of commitment and responsibility over work, or the thing co-produced is discussed in practical terms in relation to self-organising; as a condition of work, working in

796 Condorelli, 'Notes on friendship', p. 7.

797 *Ibid.*

798 *Ibid.*

799 *Ibid.*, 'Too Close to See', p. 13.

800 Johan Frederik Hartle, *ibid.*

801 *Ibid.*, p. 14.

friendship designates a type of permission that is self-authorising. Can we then consider Condorelli's friendship as a means of democratising and opening up the conditions and relations of work? As part of the Antiuniversity festival in 2016, the workshop 'Opportunity Makers, Opportunity Takers' took on friendship as a model of self-organising education and learning in the expanded field of art. In this context, friendship assumed a position that generates this type of permission. Among cultural practitioners who are working to institute alternative spaces of education, there is a burgeoning discourse in and around friendship as a mode of addressing notions of care, support, hospitality and their combined manifestation in self-organising.

Equally, the idea of sense is important in co-writing; co-authorship requires a harmony, which is inclusive of dissent or difference in opinion, i.e., one which is dialogic in principle and action. This harmony forms an exclusive, shared and intimate space. A space of support that is intimate through this new trust and proximity in work. This idea of support is a sense and can be sensed, it is marked by Blanchot's interrupted conversation and the alternation of speech acts. In Condorelli's work on friendship, she discusses it in relation to working practices and their structures, both conceptually and manifestly for work but also in terms of political and social action. In conversation with sociologist Avery F. Gordon, with whom Condorelli's work on friendship is formed, we can observe in the first instance Condorelli's tendency to issue thinking about the wider philosophical discourse on friendship, in which those excluded from it – women and slaves⁸⁰² – were/are continuously positioned on a threshold. Similarly, a thread of the Opportunity Makers workshop focused on questioning the ways in which self-organised practices are often inaugurated and led by females and yet their institutional counterparts are headed by males. As such, Condorelli attempts through her writing on friendship to simulate a space for a new inclusive discourse on friendship.

We can think of support and intimacy as ethical positions and conditions of co-authorship, of artistic research through the exposition, of artistic work through the network, of artistic practice through slowness – a slowness not in time but in focus. If Google Docs, as is illustrated in the THESAURUS project, is a space of intimate proximity, is a support, an avenue, a virtual studio, office, desk, knee, a space of production and a means of communication, essentially we are able to observe this new sense of intimacy on

802 Ibid., 'The Company We Keep part one', p. 35.

an un-geographical but proximate scale between the local and the psychic. Such intimacy marks out and exposes the gradual emergence of a hybrid, operative territory. Composed as such across an ambivalent private self, extremely public self and digital, coded, physical versions of self. An exploration of this territory as a channel of communication, a shared space of productivity and a space of communion prompts us to question an ethics of co-authorship or co-writing. It begins to skew traditions of thinking behind the conventions of work, productivity, togetherness, participations, relations, relationships and notions of the embodied and disembodied self and other selves so chaotically post-rationalised today. Some questions I am asking in the context of my research practice are: how is mutuality implicit to this co-authorship? How does this act of co-authorship mutate and bend the integrity of authors, subjects, and correspondents? Can intimacy or proximity validate knowledge? What knowledge? How can this movement and mobility on the page be understood in relation to static truths, or blurred, hybrid forms? What is proximate and void?

Condorelli speaks of friendship as a condition of work. As something that exceeds a reliance upon the presumed embodied and physically proximate relationship for support, or proximity to the subject or subjects of a relationship, or as something that transcends the physically proximate to the psychic and cognitive. This assumes a new version of locality. This friendship engenders another local. Condorelli's idea of friendship is something that surpasses the capacity of the singular entity; it is entirely constituted by that which is in dialogue with it, which is how I view the potential capacities of alternative arts education in terms of their collective efforts and effects to instantiate a type of arts education that is hybrid and mutable. This friendship is like a dance and perhaps it is easier to use dance as a metaphor here, after Warner's arabesque. This hint towards disembodied intimacy, as a criterion of practice, or of work more broadly, valorises the concept of a working relationship as a form of exposition that activates simultaneously the self and other selves – or friends, those that ultimately form the present self in its entirety. Such a formation of friends – including the self – surpasses the physical-embodied and lays about a proximity, one that carries between its points – in action – this intimacy of which I speak. Equally, Agamben asks 'what is friendship other than a proximity that resists both representation and conceptualisation?'⁸⁰³ Representation, to continue with

803 Agamben, 'The Friend', in *WHAT IS AN APPARATUS and Other Essays*, p. 31.

the analogy of the dance, on the dancefloor being the named, fast-dancing, photographed friend and conceptualisation as a projection of the essence of this friend. Agamben's question follows his analysis of a painting by Giovanni Serodine, of Peter and Paul on the road to their martyrdom.⁸⁰⁴ He describes the two subjects fixedly looking at one another, but in such close proximity that Agamben notes 'there is no way that they can see one another'.⁸⁰⁵ While a somewhat oblique reference, this image is important because it presents the opposite formation of how co-writers, friends, online co-produce. This sense of proximity is skewed to a visually bereft field, where visuality is focused purely on the intertext of dialogue, of writing, of the frame that such is bound by, rather than this physical presence of the co-writer. Instead of being so physically proximate that one cannot see the other, online, one is proximate not to the other, but to writing, that perhaps the work or intertext is the representation and conceptualisation of the other. Because such a proximity is the space of collision, communion, of being-with between the intimate self and other selves, I wonder how might this formation of friendship, this relationship, become conceptualised or be represented through structural or organisational form? Particularly when enacted, or in fact actualised in co-writing after conversation. Perhaps this co-authorship is exactly a representation. Through this act of co-authorship, the exposé of the self and other selves undergoes a political treatment; where we come to question an ethics of intimacy.

Co-writing illustrates this intimacy in a new time-space. It presents live and real-time, the sense and sensation of writing together, of being productive together, of correspondence, of participation. It presents this beguiling intimacy of cognitive work in a way that exposes its error, sensations, failings and movement. Production, when in concert with another – in writing, in dancing, in dialogue – is premised by a form of subconscious commitment. These things are always already part of relational frameworks of production; i.e., used in contexts that replicate otherwise time-consuming, productivity systems, or baton passing. They are acts and events. 'Co-' as a prefix signifies a joining or a joint, mutuality, common. Co-authorship through co-writing remains to be with before self.

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804 Ibid., p. 30.

805 Ibid.

Returning to the THESAURUS project, to conclude, it is useful to consider Schwab's notion of exposition in relation to Condorelli's friendship and in particular the ways in which co-writing is framed above. In the edited seminar transcript 'Imagined Meetings', Schwab describes the epistemological instability inherent to contemporary practices of artistic research by detailing what constitutes the idea of exposing practice to research, in the first instance – that which encompasses and presents 'a multiplicity of local knowledges and local practices which we cannot compare against a given framework.'⁸⁰⁶ In a situation where the determination of practice or research is not (yet) constituted, the understanding, coherence or placement of both the subject and object of work inhabits a space of instability. By this what is meant is that the perceived lack of disciplinary grounding, or reference points often engender the work as objectively indetermined. However, Schwab continues by intimating the necessity of continued engagement and negotiation through encountering such indetermination. When the exposition of a thing lacks a concrete epistemic reference base, one is still able to engage and negotiate on the basis that the work presents a transformative experience; one which activates the receptor, its environment, and places the entire experience into a new perspective or context. Schwab points out that while this instability is synonymous with potentiality or possibility, it too bestows 'a consequence, a locality of almost autonomous status'⁸⁰⁷ where both self-determination and indetermination⁸⁰⁸ are interdependent agencies that transcend the necessity of convention to be placed or applied within an already existing framework. Self-determination for Schwab is the capacity of the work to be able to essentially place and present itself, and indetermination is the capacity of the work to be able to be anything.⁸⁰⁹ Furthermore this rejects the tradition of the omnipotent epistemic reference point and with that, any criteria for inclusion or exclusion.⁸¹⁰

When we encounter a plurality of knowledges – as with expositiveness and in conversation – its means of production, its locations and digressions, particularly across the subject/object paradigm, local knowledges, traditions and systems, we need to avoid the types of homogenising devices that conventional knowledge locations – apparatus – implement. Those which have provoked, in the first instance, the thinking around

806 Schwab, 'Imagined Meetings', in *Why Would I Lie?*, p. 10.

807 Ibid.

808 Ibid.

809 Ibid.

810 Ibid.

expositionality and, for example, practices of ‘the alternative’ as means of exit from the perhaps overbearing and stringent norms of ‘the institution’. This homogenising expels the potentiality, possibility and indetermination that research, work and practices inherent to artistic forms of research constitute. At present, it too has evoked an overhaul and reconsideration among agents of artistic practice and research into challenging not only the effects of such homogenisation, but also the organisational, behavioural and spiritual fabric of the institution. Returning to Gielen’s ‘flat, wet [contemporary art] world’,⁸¹¹ such homogeneity and flatness can be attributed, in part, to the networked apparatus formulation in Agamben. On the surface it offers up the promise of more information, more communication, more flexibility, more mobility, more knowledge(s), and yet its glory is no sooner acknowledged than it turns very quickly to mediocrity.⁸¹² Gielen’s flat, wet worlds of “‘creativity’ [...] ‘innovation’ [and] flexibility”⁸¹³ resonate with many critical discussions around the instrumentalisation of knowledge, creativity and education, that discourse on the Educational Turn has alluded to, through its shaping of a culture of knowledge politics, described by Holert and Rogoff. It refers to the types of measurements and mechanisms that are shrouded by the promise of enlightenment, of humanism, philosophy and progressiveness and yet, in practice, corrupt, reduce, reproduce and standardise the concepts of knowledge, creativity and education to the point that its language has become so complex and removed from what it aims to define and encompass. This language pervades ruthlessly through the apparatus of the institution and becomes a complex network itself; a network that is described using a heavy-handed rhetoric that ceases in any way to honour or celebrate the thing which it supposedly produces and, in effect, reduces.

This language appears on the surface to be void of criticality, or potentiality, possibility and of the ruminating indetermination that fuels the two perspectives of the exposition and alternative practice. This language has become incarcerated by itself and by the institutional and organisational discourses that accelerate and legitimate it and as such have produced a seemingly impenetrable vernacular in which to access and apply. I would be interested to explore further whether there is a way in which to think and inhabit

811 Gielen, ‘Institutional Imagination’, in *Institutional Attitudes Instituting Art in a Flat World*, p. 21.

812 Ibid., p. 2.

813 Ibid., p. 20.

this language of knowledge, creativity and education, in a way that derives criticality or at least allows for it. Additionally, in a way that can attempt to retrieve or reclaim the language and territory of knowledge, creativity and education from its institutional and rhetorical grips. A question is, how might we move beyond these limitations through the realisation of a more durable alternative educational form, based *in friendship*?

Schwab suggests that the exposition affords the individual (both producer and receptor) space for critical transformation, in and by ‘situations that change what we think, what we know, and who we are in those situations.’⁸¹⁴ Similarly, Hebert and Karlsen, in their thinking around progressing the project of self-organisation, allude to the necessary flexibility in approach to a subject, as being one of self- and collective transformation. As a political treatment, the spaces within which this type of project can operate are limited, unstable and not always ethically sound; therefore the need to continuously produce and appraise the project and the spaces it inhabits is necessary. This produce/appraise paradigm is seen ‘as a radical process that continuously challenges the fixed relationships our society is built upon – between the self, the individual and the institution’.⁸¹⁵

814 Schwab, ‘Imagined Meetings’, p. 10.

815 Hebert referring to ‘There is No Alternative’, in *Self-Organised*, p.16.

4 Open School East and School of the Damned founders' questions

1. What was your motivation in setting up Open School East?
2. In what ways do you think Open School East has met with its original aims? Or if not, please explain why not.
3. In your opinion how has the Educational Turn in art had an impact on Open School East? Or how do you think Open School East contributes to an Educational Turn?
4. In my research I discuss the instrumental capacities of the Educational Turn as being something preventative of change in the context of (alternative) arts education. How has it been important for Open School East to be aligned to the art world, creative industries, or education institutions?
5. What, if anything, has changed between the period in which you set up Open School East and the present context?
6. As a co-founder of an alternative form of arts education, what were/are your organisational strategies?
7. In what ways might there be limitations to reproducing institutional formats and models?
8. What are the immediate steps moving forward for Open School East, for example, in the next year?
9. What are the longer-term ambitions for Open School East, for example, in the next five years?

5 School of the Damned students' questions

1. What was your motivation in being involved in School of the Damned?
2. In what ways do you think School of the Damned has met with its original aims? Or if not, please explain why not.
3. In your opinion how has the Educational Turn in art had an impact on School of the Damned? Or how do you think School of the Damned contributes to an Educational Turn?
4. In my research I discuss the instrumental capacities of the Educational Turn as being something preventative of change in the context of (alternative) arts education. How has it been important for School of the Damned to be aligned to the art world, creative industries, or education institutions?
5. What, if anything, has changed between the period in which School of the Damned was set up and the present context?
6. As a co-organiser (in the sense that each cohort is responsible for the organisation of each year) of an alternative form of arts education, what were/are your organisational strategies?
7. In what ways might there be limitations to reproducing institutional formats and models?
8. What are your ambitions for School of the Damned in the longer-term?

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