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BVAR, BCAR (Hons)
For the award of
Doctor of Philosophy
University of Southern Queensland
2015

Magnificent Monsters:
A *Place* for the Social Artist in Visual Art

Abstract

The thesis proposes that social artists (also known as participatory/live/socially engaged artists) are currently displaced, due to the use of everyday activities and objects to facilitate their artwork. As a result, social artworks have been traditionally unable to self-identify as art, and are often misread and misrepresented through a variety of other fields (such as theatre, politics, pedagogy) both historically and within current debates. Neither historical nor current theoretical discourses regarding social art position the artist as central within the limited discussion of social artwork. Instead the main theoretical focus, both currently and historically, is centred on the participation of the individual in a social experience, and the outcomes that are a result of that individual's participation. At present, the social artist is located in an ominous position due to social artworks being based on the misrepresentation and poor positioning of social art within various unrelated fields and debates.

The claim of this doctoral thesis is that social artists require their own ideological *place*, in which their work can be read within its own discipline (i.e. visual art), rather than being discussed through politics, etc. This argument will show that it is crucial for the continuing acknowledgement of social art practices to be read within their own *place*, in order to contextualise social artists and their practices within a visual art context and to distinguish them from politics itself. This thesis aims to reposition the social artist and create an *ideological place* for the artist to be regarded as vital in visual art. This will be done by creating a *strategic model* that is based on the intention of the social artist. This *strategic model* will be deployed in order to measure the value of the artist in both traditional object-based art and social art. The thesis will argue that the social artist is as valuable to the creation of social art as the traditional artist is to the creation of traditional/modern art objects for visual pleasure. Therefore social art deserves a place, to be acknowledged and understood within visual art practice and associated theory and criticism.

Certificate of Thesis

I certify that the ideas, interpretations and conclusions presented in this thesis are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not previously been submitted for any other award.

23/02/2015

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Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my primary supervisor Dr Kyle Jenkins and secondary supervisors Dr David Akenson and Dr Beata Batorowicz. My thanks go especially to Kyle, who has guided and supported me throughout this project, and has instilled in me a love for visual arts and has supported my research in social art.

I would like to thank the artists and the curator who were kindly interviewed for this project: Sal Randolph, Jon Rubin, Harrell Fletcher, Mary Jane Jacob, Liam Gillick, Lawrence Weiner and Lee Walton.

This project was undertaken with the support of an Australian postgraduate award for which I am extremely thankful. I would like to acknowledge Dr Guenter Plum for editing the thesis.

I wish to thank my friends and family for their support, patience and understanding throughout this project. I would especially like to thank my Grandmother for her continued presence, love and stability, and my wonderful brother Will, for being a constant motivating force. Thanks to my Mother Elizabeth Lawson-Zell, and Father John Lawson who have encouraged me to 'do what I love', and to Kyle Zevenbergen for his patience, kindness, understanding and support of my absence. Thanks to Katarina, Anthony and Alice Matuszczak for their understanding and unconditional friendship. Finally, thank you to Tarn McLean, whose presence continues to challenge and motivate.

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> Even when art is meant to have a participatory tone… it only makes sense because the person who invites the viewer to participate in the work is an artist.[1]

This doctoral thesis proposes to create an essential position or ideological *place*[2] (or context) for the social artist[3] in a visual art discourse (rather than through theatre, educational programs, community engagement or politics, etc.). Neither historical nor current theoretical discourses regarding social art position the artist as central within the discussion of social art.[4] As such, the role of the artist is not acknowledged as being valuable and thus a place for the artist in social art is not expanded upon in any great depth. Instead the main theoretical focus both currently and historically is centred on the *participation* of the individual, and the experiential[5] outcomes that are a result of an individual's participation in the social art project being undertaken. At present, the social artist is located in an ominous position due to the general disregard for the social artist found in the current literature in the field, and the dominance of collaboration and post-author arguments.[6] This is the result of the sole discussion of social artworks being based on the misrepresentation and poor positioning of social art within various unrelated, or at best tenuously linked fields and debates.[7] This thesis aims to reposition and redefine the current positioning of the social artist and create an *ideological place*[8] for the artist to be regarded vital in social art, by creating a *strategic model*[9] based on the intention of the social artist. It will be argued, that this intention is deployed in order to measure the value of the artist in both traditional object-based art and social art, arguing that the social artist is equally as valuable as the traditional artist, and thereby deserves a place, to be acknowledged in visual art, both historically and in contemporary discourse. The intentions of the social artist are crucial in identifying the value of the social artist, because it will be shown that without the artist's

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[1] D Grau, 'Another Quarrel' *The Age of Creation,* Lukas & Sternberg, Berlin, 2013, p.25

[2] The term *place* refers to an ideological context for the social artist to be acknowledged and valued in visual art.

[3] The social artist is an individual who engages in 'social art' (see definition in fn. 4).

[4] The term 'social art' has been coined by American artist Sal Randolph, referring to participatory art practices that are created by artists whose ideologies are located within visual art theory and history. The term was adopted for this thesis because it positions the activity of the artist (facilitating a participatory experience for an individual) within visual art ideologies, histories and debates. Social art is also known as participatory art, socially engaged art, social practice, new genre public art and live art. However, each of these terms involves different contexts in which they are located, understood and read as artworks.

[5] 'Experiential' refers to an experience that is had by an individual as a result of participating in a social artwork.

[6] There are a number of theoretical positions that question the role of the artist such as hermeneutics, intentionality and reception theory. I am aware of collaboration and post-author arguments but they will not be discussed in this thesis. Instead primarily it is the role and importance of the social artist that will be discussed.

[7] These misrepresentation fields include theatre, dance, education, politics, community projects, etc.

[8] An *ideological place* for the social artist in visual art is developed from the discussion of the social artist and the *ideological model* developed in Chapter 5.

[9] The strategic model is made up of five components (*artist's intent, design/plan, participation, documentation, secondary viewing*) that will be discussed at length in Chapter 5.

conceptual intentions (like any artwork) the work would not exist as a work of art or art experience.

In addition to establishing a place for the social artist, the thesis also provides an in-depth discussion of the practices of four eminent American social artists, including Jon Rubin, Sal Randolph, Harrell Fletcher and Lee Walton, in order to properly identify the artist's conceptual intentions. By using examples of these artists' works throughout the chapters, in addition to providing a detailed discussion of these artists in the fifth and final chapter, a methodological understanding of their work is formulated. While the introduction will discuss a broader range of artists that have been linked to social art practice, the focus on only four artists was decided upon in order to best articulate the argument for the creation of a place for social artists to be acknowledged as fundamental in visual art.

Artists working within social art (both historically and within a contemporary context) shift the position of the *viewer*,[10] from an observer of a traditional, or autonomous art object, into a *participant*[11] that is intrinsically engaged with the art activity. The current literature that surrounds social art briefly acknowledges the value of the social artist, but it does not expand upon the individual practice or position of the artists actively involved in the discipline. Instead of being positioned, acknowledged and understood within visual art ideologies, histories and debates, social art is often misrepresented by being located and recognised using the methodologies of other disciplines and contexts, such as community art, social work, politics, ethics, theatre and pedagogy.[12] This creates a slippage in the correct understanding of such works, but it also undermines the conceptual intentions of the artists involved in this evolving discourse.

The artist's conceptual intention forms the foundation for this research and has been discussed by various theorists in the field, yet not to the extent of this thesis. The artist's intention is especially important as the outcome of social art projects exists in the intention of the artist. 'Intention is [a] design or plan in the author's mind. Intention

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[10] The 'viewer' in this discussion refers to an individual who has a distanced experience of an artwork, in which the individual looks at but does not engage in a physical or relational experience with the work.

[11] A 'participant' refers to an individual who actively engages with the artwork by participating in a situation or structure that the artist has created for the participant's experience.

[12] These alternative disciplines and contexts are embedded within alternative terms for participatory practices such as the following: The term 'Socially Engaged Art' is used by the American critic Pablo Helguera with a focus on a pedagogical framework for the work and is widely used to refer to a group of social/political artists in the borough of Queens, New York. The term 'Social Practice' was invented by a group of West Coast Californian artists in the United States, who invite collaboration among individuals, and are often positioned in a community setting that involves social commentary. 'Littoral' and 'Community Art' are highly community orientated with a focus on creating a change in a specific neighbourhood. 'Live art' was developed in the UK (and adopted in Australia) and is often funded and made by people whose overall art practices are highly influenced by fields such as theatre and dance. 'Collaborative art' referred to by American critic Grant Kester focuses upon the relationship between artist and participant as collaboration. These genres have different names because they have been established in different environments and contexts, and incorporate different conceptual outcomes. Artists who are working within participation have come from different fields, which is why participatory practices have developed so many sub-genres under the umbrella of participatory art. Each of these sub-genres requires a separate context or place to be read within, as each of the sub-genres is located upon a different conceptual premise.

has obvious affinities for the author's attitude toward his work.'[13] Australian art critic Susan Best expands upon this, stating, 'without the anchorage point of the artist and his or her intentions, both expression and subjectivity are unfixed from their traditional locations.'[14] Belgian critic Thierry de Duve expresses a similar sentiment in saying 'we have learned that pictures [artworks] are intentional objects – in the sense that they are both the outcome and the bearer, the carrier, the medium of intentions on the part of their maker.'[15] What both theorists reiterate is the necessity of the artist being acknowledged in the critiquing of artwork, but also the fact that without the artist and their idea as the first germination of the conceptual intention, any artwork would cease to exist and in social art, there would be nothing to participate in.

The thesis examines events, writers, artists, critics and collectives that formed the basis for 'The Death of the Author' debate, from Modernism and in particular Post-Modernism where quotation, appropriation and collaboration were said to replace the artist as individual authority. French Dadaist Marcel Duchamp also determined the importance of intention, by acknowledging its role, stating that it has an 'extra, a curious intention.'[16] However, for Duchamp, the intention is apparently not of the artist's making. He goes on to state, 'that I am not responsible for, a ready-made intention.' By identifying the intention as belonging to another source, by being ready-made, Duchamp opens the ground for the sidelining of the artist that lead to the development of reception theory in visual art. However, this thesis will argue that identifying the intention with the artist's role is especially important in identifying the value of the social artist, particularly due to the non-physical nature of social art projects. The majority of theorists and related literature in the field has debated the experience of the participant in such projects instead of focusing on the role of the artist. In doing so they misplace or disregard a major component of this field of inquiry, because without the artist being considered within the debate, there cannot be a clear indication of a social artwork's conceptual intentions.

The term 'social art', rather than 'socially engaged art', 'participation', 'dialogic' or 'social practice', has been chosen for this thesis so that previous non-visual art related ideologies do not inform the debate. The use of a new term (i.e. social art) allows the current study to establish a new original perspective from which to consider the artist and to locate him or her in a key position within visual art, in particular, socially directed practice. The practices that are focussed upon in this thesis (especially in Chapter 5 *More Like Working with Gases than Solids: A Place for the Artist in Social Art*) discuss artists who have worked within a visual art field through object-based practices, prior to working within a social arts practice (as discussed through the practices of American artists Rubin, Randolph, Fletcher and Walton). Despite the artist's origin beginning in an object-based practice, their work is often misread as a variety of other activities, due to the artist's use of everyday objects, approaches and situations in order to create an accessible bridge to facilitate participation in the work.

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[13] W Wimsatt Jr and M Beardsley, 'Intentional Fallacy' *The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry*, University of Kentucky Press, Lexington, 1954, p.1

[14] S Best, 'Minimalism, subjectivity, and aesthetics: rethinking the anti-aesthetic tradition in late-modern art, *Journal of Visual Art Practice, Volume 5, Number 3,* 2006, p.141

[15] Thierry de Duve, 'Intentionality and art historical methodology: a case study', *Nonsite, Issue 6,* 2009, p.1

[16] M Duchamp, 'Regions which are not ruled by time and space…', *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp* M Sanouilet and E Peterson (ed) Da Capo Press, 1973, p. 127

Due to the prevalent misrepresentation of the social artist, this thesis recognises that the social artist requires an ideological place in visual art, in which to be acknowledged as a critical maker and facilitator of social artworks. The original model (discussed at length in Chapter 5) has been developed to identify the intention of the artist, comparing the role of the traditional object-based artist with the social artist. This is done by acknowledging and demonstrating that the social artist is as important in the facilitation of artworks as the traditional object-based artist is within their field, e.g. painting, sculpture, etc. To date this has not occurred, or where it has been raised, it has not been systematically pursued. As a result the artist in social art exists in a similar crisis to the traditional artist.

The crisis of the traditional artist is discussed by French critic Donatien Grau, who coined the term 'Magnificent Monsters', taken from Grau's essay 'Another Quarrel' 2013, where he outlines the end of art, proposing that art and the artist (in traditional object-based art) is currently in a crisis. Grau's dilemma is relative to the quandary of the artist in social art. Grau suggests 'a return to the object versus an emphasis on "practices"; [and] a particular meaning attached to craft verses industry… are signs of a failure to find a suitable position for these monsters our civilization has nurtured, these monsters we call artists.'[17] The notion of the 'monster as artist' is fitting due to the artist's continued existence, despite the 'crisis' and the 'end of art', and regardless of the nature of social art, not existing as a recognisable art object. Grau's failure to find a position for the artist is relevant in this discussion of the artist in social art, who is displaced for the following reasons: The majority of discussion surrounding the artist in social art positions the artist in a variety of fields that are located away from visual art such as theatre, social work, community art, pedagogy, etc. Social artists and art projects are therefore analysed and critiqued through a variety of artworks that are drawn from various other disciplines, due to the social artist's use of everyday activities in the facilitation of social experiences as art.

Grau formulates his position in relationship to artists in general being in a state of crisis due to the amount of graduating art school students each year. He suggests 'we do not know what to do with this many artists, whose number increases every day, all around the globe, and who constantly produce in the context of a mass market called the art world.'[18] Grau's argument illustrates a dire position for the artist, asking, 'how can the figure of the artist, as it has been constructed by history, philosophy, and literature, resist the violence of the present?'[19] Where Grau's argument is based upon the value of the artist within an economic, market industry system of creativity, this thesis solely discusses the social artist in a state of crisis in relation to the way in which theorists and historical debates have positioned social art within the visual arts in general. Theorists have placed social art on the periphery as a way of validating and giving alternative and often incorrect meaning to such arts practices. Even though this can open up debates involving the work, it still fails to acknowledge the role and value of the social artist in a visual art context, and as such, locates social art in an unrecognisable position theoretically.

In order to engage in a discussion of social art, important factors that influence social art and the positioning of the artist will be traced through recent art history. Such

[17] D Grau, 'Another Quarrel' *The Age of Creation,* Lukas & Sternberg, Berlin, 2013, p.28
[18] D Grau, 'Another Quarrel' *The Age of Creation,* Lukas & Sternberg, 2013, p.26
[19] ibid., p.25

developments include a shift from the 'artist made object' to the 'ready-made', to the use of the 'everyday activity'. A shift from static viewing/observation (which also can refer to keeping a physical distance/or not being able to touch the work as much as an ideological distance), to a participatory experience, through engaging in the activity or event (rather than maintaining a distance as a viewer), indicates a shift from the art object existing in an exhibition space to the object being positioned outside such traditional exhibition spaces. The social artist is a facilitator, enabling an 'everyday activity' to exist, as a social artwork is defined by the social artist's intention or conceptual design. These shifts demonstrate key issues in recent history that identify the relevance of a suitable place for the social artist to be constructed and discussed.

Historically there have been occasions where theorists and artists have attacked, questioned and shifted the understanding of authorship, creativity and genius within visual art. This is shown through French theorists/philosophers Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault, German theorist Walter Benjamin, French artist Marcel Duchamp, American Pop artist Andy Warhol (machine/factory), and the Appropriation movement of the 1980s, to name the most salient examples. Collectively these theorists, artists, critics and movements revolted against the author or artist as 'genius'[20] with the use of the ready-made, appropriation, etc. and instead looked at new ways of considering what is an art object and how can it be experienced in new ways.

Fig. 1

American critic Harold Rosenberg established a shift from the perception of an object to an encounter with an object in his essay 'American Action Painters' 1952; Rosenberg states that, 'the painter no longer approached his easel with an image in his mind; he went up to it with material in his hand to do something to that other piece of material in front of him. The image would be the result of this encounter.'[21] The artist here becomes a man of action, rather than a reaction or is reacting to an external stimulus. An example of this can be seen in the work of American Abstract Expressionist (who Rosenberg refers to as an action painter) Jackson Pollock's *Number 27* 1950 (Fig. 1) where the 'action' or splattering technique (an historical signature style of Pollock's) creates an 'automatic' construction through the element of chance, a characteristic inherent in Abstract Expressionist paintings from the late 1940s and 1950s. This work shows the beginning of the idea related to traditional art objects of being 'facilitated' rather than 'made' through the process of participation,

[20] The term genius involves originality, creativity, and the ability to think and work in areas not previously explored, thus giving the world something of value that would not otherwise exist.
[21] H Rosenberg, 'The American Action Painters', *The Tradition of the New,* Horizon Press, New York, 1959, p.25

meaning the artist's body being a participant in the activation and creation of the painting's surface.

French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre's essay *L'Existentialisme est un humanisme* 1946 (Eng. trans., 1948), like Rosenberg's statement, insists 'there is no reality except in action.'[22] This emphasis on action signals a shift from the static object to the staging of an action, or experience of the object in a 'situation'. Yet this action is not yet social collaboration where the artist is sidelined. Rosenberg positions the artwork in the context of the artist's conceptual intentions by stating 'a painting that is an act is inseparable from the biography of the artist. The painting itself is a 'moment' in the adulterated mixture of his life… the act of painting is of the same metaphysical substance as the artist's existence. The new painting has broken down every distinction between art and life.'[23] As stated below, this breakdown of the division of art and life is one aspect of social art, but it is not the artist's life that is engaged by theorists and critics, it is the life of society or culture. Rosenberg's discussion, on the contrary, indicates that the role of the artist is essential due to the artist being inherently attached to the work, which is vital as without the artist the work cannot exist. It will be argued of course, that while establishing a re-positioning of the social artist's role as a vital creator, and thus the research will allow for a more accurate and critical understanding of this field of art to occur, the artist's biography is not the issue.

Fig. 2

Drawing on the early experiments of Dada – for example, Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even (aka The Large Glass)* 1915-1923 (Fig. 2) where the 'extra curious intention' is coming from the accidental inclusion of cracks from the transportation of the work – the early 1950s American composer/artist John Cage, choreographer Merce Cunningham and artist Allan Kaprow experimented with a removal of the 'outcome' of the artist, by constructing the work using 'chance'. The 'chance operations' allowed the individuals to set up a situation in which various outcomes could occur through a propositional construct. This process operates in the same way as it does in social artwork, where the removal of the role of the artist occurs in the final outcome of the project where the viewer's participation[24] becomes the core artwork. Other factors governed by chance, participation, or the use of the ready-made, are also demonstrated historically by Duchamp; his shift from the 'artist made art object', to the 'ready-made', relates to social artists' use of everyday objects and

[22] J Sartre's essay *L'Existentialisme est un humanisme* (Paris, 1946; Eng. Trans, 1948) *The Grover Encyclopedia of American Art*, Oxford University Press, 2011, p.27

[23] H Rosenberg, 'The American Action Painters', *The Tradition of the New,* Horizon Press, New York, 1959, p.27

[24] The term participation refers to an individual engaging in an activity, rather than the genre 'participation' as discussed by UK critic Claire Bishop.

activities in the making of their work. For example, *In Advance of the Broken Arm* 1915 (Fig. 3) is a sculptural work consisting of a singular hanging snow shovel.

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Another of Duchamp's works and conceptual intentions was initiated through his work *Fountain* 1917 (Fig. 4) in which he placed a ready-made object in a gallery with a false signature on it. While Duchamp's use of the ready-made removes the artist's hand from the process, his inclusion of chance in *The Large Glass* 1915-1923, and also in his work *Three Standard Stoppages* 1913-1914 (Fig. 5), challenges intentionality. There is more to Duchamp's oeuvre than these attacks on the artist's role. In fact, Duchamp demonstrated a critique of the importance of the artist's central role in the creative undertaking, or creation of an artwork, through, paradoxically, the removal of the role of the artist as 'maker' to utilise the everyday in the conceptual intention of the work. However, where the intention may have been to remove the artist from the final outcome, that outcome is still governed by the artist, as they have formed the conceptual framework for the artwork to exist as a work of art. The artist does this by taking the everyday out of its context, relying on the artists intention to validate the reason the everyday thing or activity should be considered of value over and above its utilitarian purpose. Key writers such as UK critic Claire Bishop, American theorist Pablo Helguera and Korean/American critic Miwon Kwon represent various methods of positioning the artist in social art through a variety of alternative disciplines. As such, the role of the artist is not acknowledged as being valuable and thus a place for the artist in social art is not expanded upon in any great depth. Thus the *value* of the artist must be seen as paramount in social art projects. In stating that, Kwon does not develop her position to outline how the artist is regarded within such a practice. It is this positioning of the artist which is the central focus of the thesis.

The Paris-Dada season of 1921 produced work that again moved away from the use of a traditional art object, and instead incorporated the city's public in the construction of the work. One of the most significant works was an excursion to the church of Saint Julien le Pauvre, which drew more than 100 people despite the pouring rain. French Dadaist André Breton in his essay 'Artificial Hells, Inauguration of the "1921 Dada Season"' states that, 'by conjoining with gesture, Dada has left the realm of shadows to venture onto solid ground.'[25] This statement signifies transference from the work being positioned inside (a gallery space) to now being situated/positioned within an everyday activity (e.g. walking through a city and visiting a landmark).

[25] A Breton, *Artificial Hells, Inauguration of the "1921 Dada Season" (1921),* trans. Matthew S. Witkovsky in October, 105, Summer 2003, 139; C Bishop (ed.), *Participation*, MIT Press, 2011, p.16

The Dadaists, in addition to creating object-based works, also included participation in their work, through the creation of performances such as French Dada artist and poet Hugo Ball's *Karawane* 1916 (Fig. 6). In this work Ball recited a poem consisting of nonsensical words at the Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich, Switzerland. The work/poem represented the overarching theme of Dada, which was a critique of culture as a meaningless entity. UK critic Anna Dezeuze, in her book *'Do-it-yourself' Artwork: Participation from Fluxus to New Media* 2010, raises similar issues, explaining that the experiments of the early 20th century art movements of Dada, Futurism and Constructivism 'often sought to shock or disorient their spectators, through physical involvement and/or direct provocations.'[26]

Fig. 6

Dezeuze establishes a shift to include participation and a focus on the experience for the participant using everyday activities. These events establishing a transition from traditional object-based practices into a participatory practice, show the artist as a necessary facilitator of the work, thus revealing the artist's gradual emergence into the use of everyday activities to facilitate their work. The transition is established through a shift from the artist created object to the use of the ready-made, the removal of the artist's role as the creator of the object and the 'outcome' being a result of chance. It is important to establish these initial moves to show how artists located in a traditional object-based visual art context, progressed into using everyday activities. These activities became a bridge to facilitate participation, in which to explore their ideas and intentions that are directly positioned in a visual art context/ideology but within an alternative space away from the confines of the modern museum system and its clinical exhibition spaces.

German philosopher and cultural critic Walter Benjamin is in opposition to the idea of the artist as the creator of unique traditional art objects for the exhibition in the modernist sense, instead arguing for a shift from spectator or viewer of unique objects to collaborator. In his essay 'The Author as Producer' 1934 Benjamin discounts the role of the artist, arguing 'that when judging a work's politics, we should not look at the artist's declared sympathies, but at the position that the work occupies in the production relations of its time.'[27] Prominent UK based critic in social art Claire

[26] A Dezeuze, *The 'do – it – yourself' artwork*, Manchester University Press, 2010, p.4
[27] C Bishop, 'Viewers as Producers' *Participation, Documents of Contemporary Art*, Whitechapel

Bishop suggests that Benjamin's statement shows that the work of art should actively intervene, and provide a model for allowing viewers to be more involved in the process of production. Benjamin states that, 'this apparatus is better, the more consumers it is able to turn into producers – that is the more readers or spectators into collaborators.'[28] Benjamin's position focuses on the participant or collaborator rather than the singular producer of objects, due to their creation of the 'outcome' of the work rather than the specific outcome of the artist as author. The artist as individual is disregarded in this discussion, but is arguably essential in the construction of the framework for the viewer, or rather participant, allowing the work to exist as participatory due to the audience or participant undertaking an active role, participating in the work. As a result of this the artist is often overlooked, indicating that forming a new position for the social artist in his or her own place in which to be discussed and acknowledged in social art, is overdue.

In the late 1960s a shift in art occurred from traditional object-based artwork to Conceptualism, an amalgam of various tendencies taking myriad forms, such as performances, happenings and ephemera. From the mid-1960s through the mid-1970s Conceptual artists produced works and writings that completely rejected modern ideas of art such as a distanced reception of artwork by the viewer, and instead focused on the articulation of an artistic idea which 'is paramount and the material form is secondary, lightweight, ephemeral, cheap, unpretentious and/or "dematerialized"'.[29] In order to emphasise the idea, many Conceptual artists reduced the material presence of the work to an absolute minimum – a tendency that theoretically can be referred to as the 'dematerialisation' of art.

This idea was extensively discussed by American theorist Lucy R. Lippard in her seminal publication *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* which focused on the artists within the Conceptual Art field that were dealing with such issues. What this book and Conceptual Art represent is how 'concept art is not so much an art movement or vein as it is a position or worldview, a focus on activity.'[30]As such, the theoretical debates surrounding the dematerialisation of the art object in the late 1960s and 70s allowed for a reconsideration of what art could be, which was first investigated by Duchamp in the 1920s. What this meant for artists within social art, especially in a contemporary field, is that 'for many years people have been concerned with what goes on inside the frame. Maybe there's something going on outside the frame that could be considered an artistic idea',[31] and as such, social artists are working outside the frame, using everyday activities in the construction of their works just like Duchamp used everyday objects as a method of questioning 'what is art'.

This idea of dematerialisation through the design and activation of participation 'as artwork' involving the spectator, is established in the work of American artist Yoko Ono, who articulates this shift in her work *painting to hammer a nail* 1961 (Fig. 7), which invited visitors to contribute to the painting by hammering in a nail. Ono stated,

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Gallery and the MIT Press, 2006 p.11

[28] C Bishop, *ibid*, 2006 p.11

[29] Sol LeWitt, Escape Attempts, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1997,p.g.vii

[30] K Friedman, cited in *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1997, p. x

[31] R Barry, *ibid*, 1997, p. xii

‘I think painting can be instructionalized…The artist in this case will only give instructions or diagrams for painting – and the painting will be more or less a do – it – yourself kit according to the instructions.’[32] This point is reiterated by American critic Martha Buskirk, who declared ‘the physical object may remain mute in the absence of instructions about how it is meant to address its audience.’[33] Buskirk’s point establishes that the significance of the intention of the artist is retained, due to the inclusion of instructions that explain how the work is intended to address its audience; as ‘information presented at the right time and in the right place can potentially be very powerful. It can affect the general social fabric… The working premise is to think in terms of systems: the production of systems, the interference with and the exposure of existing systems… Systems can be physical, biological, or social.’[34]

Fig. 7

The artist as the instigator of instruction-based art can also be seen in the work of Brazilian artists Lygia Clark’s *Bicho* 1960 (Fig. 8) and Hélio Oiticica’s *P4 Parangolé, Cape 1* 1964 (Fig. 9), whose works expanded from painting to objects that can be interacted with by the viewer as participant. Buskirk’s statement is demonstrated in the work of these artists who have created instructions for their work to be activated, forming a frame of intention that allows the work to be participated in by any individual viewing the work. Even though the artist does not physically engage in the ‘making’ or formation of the work, their presence ‘as the maker’ is still vital to the project, because without the artist’s intention that forms the basis for the work’s existence, the project or activity is unable to exist as artwork.

Fig. 8

Fig. 9

Such an artistic discourse and working methodology has occurred through the various works of American’s Conceptual/Participatory artist Allan Kaprow’s *18 Happenings in 6 parts* 1969 (Fig. 10), Fluxus artist Alison Knowles’s *Make A Salad* 1962 (Fig. 11), kinetically oriented works such as by Philipino David Medalla’s *A Stitch in Time*

[32] Y Ono, *An introduction to the ‘do-it-yourself’ artwork*, Anna Dezeuze (ed), Manchester University Press, New York, 2010, p.1
[33] M Buskirk, *The Contingent Object of Contemporary Art*, 2003, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, p.16
[34] Jeanne Siegel, *An Interview with Hans Haacke*, Arts Magazine 45, no.7, May 1971, p. 21

1972 (Fig. 12), or the sculpture of Minimalists and Post-Minimalists artists such as Robert Morris' *bodyspace-motionthings* 1971 (Fig. 13). Each of these works represents the creation of a situation by the artist, in order to facilitate a framework for participation to occur. Even though each of these works would be read as an everyday activity, they are all a rigorous artistic practice, or that activity framed by the artist's instructions or other intentional rules for action.

Fig. 10

Fig. 11

Fig. 12

Fig. 13

UK critic Guy Brett, who has been writing about participatory art since the 1960s, reiterates the importance of the discussion and research surrounding participatory art, stating 'outside the writings of artists themselves, participation was barely recognised as a subject for discussion in art history or art criticism until recently.'[35] Brett proposes that due to the nature of some of the activities of artists at the time, it was impossible to apply traditional frameworks for artistic production and exhibition to the work. This is because 'there is a tendency to relate notions of participation back to the established categories or artistic expression, such as "theatre", or "sculpture", from which these radical artists had decisively broken away.'[36] As such, Brett believes that the social artist is in a crisis due to their work blurring the boundaries between art and life; through the work utilising everyday activities as a core material in their construction. As a result of this, it is essential that social artists and their collective artworks are acknowledged and understood through their own place within a visual art context.

French historian Frank Popper highlighted this in his essay titled 'Art Action and Participation' 1975; declaring 'the work of art has more or less disappeared by gradual stages. The artist has taken upon himself new functions, which are more like those of an intermediary than a creator, and has begun to enunciate open-ended environmental propositions and hypotheses. Finally the spectator has been impelled to intervene in

[35] G Brett, 'Three Pioneers', *An introduction to the 'do-it-yourself' artwork* Anna Dezeuze (ed.), Manchester University Press, New York, 2010, p.25
[36] i*bid.,* p.1

the aesthetic process in an unprecedented way.'[37] Popper's statement provides further evidence of the shifting nature of artists' practices to incorporate the spectator as a primary influence/material in participation, removing the emphasis from the artist's object to the situation as conceptual intention or instruction/rule/ frame etc.

The thesis will argue that the conceptual intention of the social artist is necessary, because the role of the artist in social art 'speaks to the integrity of the work of art based on the idea of authorship and the belief that the work of art is more than simply another commodity.'[38] The artist in this situation is still the primary facilitator or designer of the framework for participation, because, as Martha Buskirk suggests, 'when works of art are made using forms close to, or identical to the realm of everyday objects not defined as art, the designation of authorship may in fact be the only feature that distinguishes the work of art from any other object.'[39] What Buskirk raises here in passing is explored in depth by the thesis, particularly in the context of social art. In order to create a situation in which participants are able to engage comfortably in a project, the social artist uses 'approaches' (such as eating, conversing, etc.) in order to generate a familiar situation for the participant. Therefore, the uses of everyday approaches by social artists in their projects are 'less likely to be "works" than a fragmented array of social events, publications, workshops or performances.'[40] The social artist's use of regular everyday activities rather than the production of a traditional art object that is exhibited (and isolated) within a gallery or museum space, indicates that the social artist's intention for the work is critical, in establishing/defining/interpreting the work as a social art project situated in a visual arts discourse, because rather than the museum gallery space being the context for social artwork to be read in, the artist's ideology/methodology instead provides the context for the social artwork. The artist's practice is critical in the understanding of social artworks because they often rely on everyday activities and exchanges as a basis for the participation that is the outcome of the project. The everyday object/activity is used instead of a traditional artist's made object. It is therefore vital to create a context in visual art in which to read, acknowledge and discuss the social artist. Without the acknowledgement and positioning of social art within a suitable frame the work can be positioned away from the intentions of the artists involved. In this case the work is unable to be read correctly as alternative theories, e.g. theatre, politics, community engagement, etc. are used instead of visual arts to interpret the work.

Establishing the role of the artist as integral in social art requires a shift to occur within current debates. The reason for this is that the social artist could be considered to be situated in a state of crisis (as described by Grau), due to their misrepresentation in much of the literature in the field. For example, Jackson in her book *Social Works* 2011 identifies the multiple disciplines that social art projects are read within, stating 'to analyse social practice is inevitably to engage a range of artistic practices.'[41] However, Jackson does not expand to create a place in which to value the artist within her analysis. These contemporary theorists fail to find a suitable place for the artist in

[37] F Popper, *Art, Action and Participation*, London, Studio Vista, 1975, p.11
[38] M Buskirk, *The Contingent Object of Contemporary Art*, 2003, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, p.15
[39] *ibid.*
[40] C Bishop, *Artificial Hells, Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, Verso, London, New York, 2012 p.2
[41] S Jackson, *Social Works: Performing Art, Supporting Publics*, Routledge, New York, 2011, p.18

their discussion of the art projects, but instead write about these practices through various disciplines that the work appears to resemble.

Thompson demonstrates a similar disregard for the social artist and the context in which they are analysed, in his book *Living as Form*: *Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*, 2012. Thompson uses what he terms a 'cattle call' method to include a variety of projects that appear to be participatory art; however, this method disregards the integrity of the artist and their social art projects. 'As opposed to assuming there is an inherent difference between artist-initiated projects and non-artist-initiated projects, I have opted to simply include them all.'[42] By conflating artist-initiated and non-artist initiated-projects, Thompson disregards the role of the individual artist, by including a variety of projects that appear to be similar to social art projects, but are actually more aligned with community art. For example, Thompson includes Julian Assange's 'Wikileaks' as an art project, which is not intended to be read as art. In doing this Thompson dismisses the criticality and conceptual intentions of the artist.

In Pablo Helguera's book *Education for Socially Engaged Art* 2011, he offers a similar argument to Thompson in that he does not hold the artist in a position of authority in social art because 'the expertise of the artist lies… in being a *non-expert*, a provider of frameworks on which experiences can form and sometimes be directed and channelled to generate new insights around a particular issue.'[43] Even though, like Thompson and Jackson, Helguera discredits the artist as the creator of the work, he does refer briefly to the construction of a framework that is created by the artist's intention for the dissemination of the artwork. The current crisis in the positioning of the social artist has occurred due to the work of the previously discussed theorists such as Americans Shannon Jackson, Nato Thompson and Pablo Helguera, who have created contexts where the artists are located away from a visual art context and instead have been situated within theatre, performance, community art, social work and politics.

The expectations of the research (unlike current literature in the field) is to create a more accurate account of social art practices, in order for the works to be read in relation to the intentions of the artists involved. This approach is significant because it establishes a suitable place for the artist in visual art, a place that enables social art projects to be identified through the practices of the artist, and for the artist to be read in a position of authority in social art activities. The artist is essential because without the authorial role of the artist, projects may be unable to be identified as artworks insofar as they resemble everyday occurrences due to the everyday activities that the artists use to facilitate participation. If this occurs, social art could possibly cease to exist in an art context, and instead be read through various other disciplines and thus be misrepresented, misunderstood and abstracted in its meaning.

The establishment of an ideological place for the artist in visual art, through the model that is established in Chapter 5 *More Like working with Gases than Solids: A Place for the Artist in Social Art*, aims to foster the claim that the intentions of the artist as a core and critical constituent differentiates such art projects from everyday life. By

[42] N Thompson, *Living as Form*, co-published by Creative Time Books & MIT Press, 2012 p.27
[43] P Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art*, Jorge Pinto Books, New York, 2011, p.54

doing this a place can be established for the social artist to be acknowledged like any other artist making object-based work within visual arts.

A discussion utilising the intentional model in order to acknowledge and identify the intentions of the social artist as vital, in order to enable the artist's activity to exist as an artwork, must be had. British art historian Michael Baxandall expands on this position, stating 'intention is the forward-leaning look of things. It is not a reconstituted historical state of mind… but a relation between the object and its circumstances.'[44] Baxandall's argument refers to the reading or critiquing of an artwork, through the intention of the artist; on the other hand, to understand social art projects (and the use of the everyday) a framework is necessary in order to understand the artist's conceptual intentions, as this is what renders the project 'as art'.

American philosopher Garry Hagberg in his essay 'Artistic Intention and Mental Image' 1988 states that, 'in order for a work to exist, the artist must have *wanted* [emphasis in original] to paint, compose, or sculpt that particular work.'[45] A 'want' is a directive that indicates that the artist's intention is always present in the work, and thus identifies what generally appears to be an everyday activity as a social art project. This can be seen in the artwork by Taiwan/United States-based artist Lee Mingwei, who establishes the use of the everyday activity in his work *Sleeping Project* 2003 (Fig. 14), where a participant chosen in a lottery spends a night alone with the artist in the exhibition space, sleeping and chatting. Mingwei states that, 'the result is mental. Often there is no documentation. The artwork, for me, is the very individual experience of the people who participate, and every one of them is completely different. That experience is the premise of my work.'[46]

Fig. 14

The thesis has been divided into various chapters that will collectively debate the historical and contemporary positioning of the artist's role within social art. As such it is necessary to give an overview of each chapter and the fundamental issues that will be further engaged with throughout the thesis. Chapter 1 will review the critical literature in the field, examining key writers such as Claire Bishop, Pablo Helguera and Korean/American critic Miwon Kwon. These writers represent various methods

[44] M Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention, On the Historical Explanation of Pictures*, The Bath Press, Avon, 1985, p.41
[45] G Hagberg, 'Artistic Intention and Mental Image', *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol.22 No 3, Fall 1988, p.63
[46] L Mingwei, 'What We Made: Conversations on Art and Social Cooperation, Tom Finkelpearl (ed), Duke University Press, Durham and London 2013, p.304

of positioning the artist in social art through a variety of alternative disciplines. What this has caused is a fracture in the dissemination and understanding of the social artist's conceptual intentions for their respective artworks as a place for the artist in social art is not expanded upon in any great depth within current literature. For example, in Bishop's book *Artificial Hells* 2012, she briefly discusses the *value* of the artist, explaining that in participatory art, the notion of the collaborative artist is good and the singular artist is bad. However, even though Bishop states that this position 'needs to be taken to task', she does not provide an expanded commentary on the artist as being *valuable*. Helguera's book *Education for Socially Engaged Art* 2011 briefly discusses the authority of the artist, explaining that the artwork is positioned within the practice and concepts of the artist; however, like Bishop, Helguera does not expand upon his point. Kwon on the other hand, in her book *One Place After Another* 2004, argues that authorship lies in the artist's sanction of the work, because 'the intricate orchestration of literal and discursive sites that make up a nomadic narrative *requires* [emphasis in original] the artist as a narrator-protagonist.'[47] Thus the *value* of the artist must be seen as crucial in social art projects. In stating that, Kwon does not develop her position to outline how the artist is regarded within such a practice.

The review of literature in the field, both historically and within current debates, will enable the thesis to argue that the role of the artist is critical, in conceiving and critiquing social art projects to exist within a specific place in visual art. In establishing this point, the creation of a place for the artist, in which the artist can be read and acknowledged is essential in order to determine a place for the social artist in visual art. The literature review will identify the gap in the majority of writing in the field that does not create a suitable place critique or discussion of the artist in this area of art activity.

Chapter 2 *The Social Turn and the Artist* will provide an historical context in which to position the artist in social art, through understanding the changes in the role, value and authority of the artist, both practically and theoretically. The chapter will examine the changing role of the artist, and specifically the position and value of the artist in participatory practices from the 1920s to now, examining how the role of the artist changed from an individual maker of objects in a studio, to collaborator and finally to the artist as facilitator and authority of an activity participated in. A shift in the role of the artist will be discussed in relation to the individual practices of seminal American artists Allan Kaprow and Gordon Matta Clark, Brazilian artists Lygia Clark and Helio Oiticica, French theorist, writer and filmmaker Guy Debord and German Fluxus artist Joseph Beuys. Through the analysis of both individual artists practices as well as historical art groups including the Situationist International (France: 1950s-1960s), Neo-Concretism (Brazil: 1950s) and Collective Actions (Russia: 1975) which established the early facilitation of participatory artworks. The chapter aims to identify the differences between the various practices identified, and to formulate an historical frame for the identification of contemporary practices that are considered in later chapters.

Chapter 3 *An Ideology: Three Platforms for Social Art* deals with the 'context' of social art, creating a place for the artist through a discussion of four *platforms* that social artists primarily use to position their work. The four platforms are: The 'ideological' that deals with the theoretical and historical context of the exhibition

[47] M Kwon, *One Place After Another,* The MIT Press, 2002, p.51

space. This takes into consideration the ideologies that transfer automatically to the artwork, as a result of the work being placed within particular spaces, which influences the existence of an artwork. The 'institutional' discusses the structures and ideologies present in the museum and gallery space. The 'public space' incorporates the virtual space, festivals, conferences and social spaces that require the artist's intention in order for the work to be recognised as art. Finally, the 'artist-run initiative' is an exhibition space facilitated by artists to promote experimentation, and in some cases, also operates as a social art project. The four platforms were formulated for this discussion in order to assist in the establishment of a place for the artist, to acknowledge the artist as valuable. The platforms aim to demonstrate that the artist is essential to the positioning of social art projects, and as such is integral to acknowledging the artist's intentions. This chapter therefore argues that there is a place for the artist through the use of the platform, which will enable a valuing and positioning of social art to occur.

Chapter 4 *Four Common Approaches that Social Artists Use to Facilitate Participation in their Work* expands upon Chapter 3, discussing the social artist's use of everyday objects, activities and social structures, in order to create a bridge between conceptual intention and the approach that the artist uses as a vehicle to allow participation to occur. The four common approaches that are used by social artists, and are discussed in the chapter, are *economy*, *event*, *food* and *community*-based strategies. Artists use these everyday activities or structures to create an opening or bridge for the individual/participant to feel comfortable, and understand how they need to act in the social art project that the artist has created. The discussion will demonstrate that the artist is vital to the identification of the work through the implementation of a vehicle that acts as a framework, allowing the participant to engage in the activity as an artwork.

The various approaches occur when an artist shifts or alters an everyday activity through attaching an artistic intention to it, in order to facilitate their work. For example, making an object free, giving a gift, or creating an opportunity for an individual, are all approaches for the instigation of the artwork. This is discussed through the economy-based strategies of American artists Sal Randolph and Harrell Fletcher, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei and Taiwan born/US-based artist Lee Mingwei where they use an everyday system/economy, which is slightly altered in order to facilitate their work. The event as a strategy is discussed through artists, including British artist Antony Gormley, American artist Lee Walton and the series of projects called *Mobile Academy* 2005-Present by Berlin-based curator/ producer Hannah Huzig. These works alter the traditional 'event' structure in order to create a frame with which to provide an experience for the participant.

The Food strategy is an activity that uses the process of eating/dining as a method for discussion and debate. Thai/American artist Rirkrit Tiravanija, American artists Jon Rubin and Dawn Weleski's project *Conflict Kitchen* 2010-present, American collaborative *Fallen Fruit* and the Australian collaborative *Makeshift* all use *Food* as a vehicle for participants to understand and participate in the various social art projects these artists construct. Finally, a community-based strategy is used to facilitate projects such as shown in the works of Cuban artist Tania Bruguera, American collaborative *The Yes Men*, German collective *Park Fiction*, Austrian collaborative

WochenKlausur and Mexican artist Pedro Reyes, where the work is positioned within a community-based engagement and outcome.

The analysis of the strategies that social artists use to facilitate their work is important, because it will acknowledge that the social art project requires an everyday activity in order to create a bridge for participation. This is an important element of the planning process that the artist takes into account. However, displacement occurs in the understanding of such works because the artist's intention is often read through the disciplines that their works resemble. This chapter aims to explain why and how the artist uses everyday activities as a framework for the participant to engage with the work, and also establishes why such artists require an ideological place in order to be read as an authority in social art.

Chapter 5 *More like Working with Gases than Solids: A Place for the Artist in Social Art* will discuss the practices of current seminal artists in the field such as Americans Jon Rubin, Lee Walton, Sal Randolph and Harrell Fletcher. The title *More Like Working with Gases than Solids* is borrowed from an interview with Rubin, who discusses the nature of social art projects being more like working with gases than solids. This is a metaphor for the ephemeral nature of social projects, and as such it will be argued, they need to rely upon the artist's practice in order to be read and contextualised as artwork. This chapter aims to reposition Fletcher, Randolph, Walton and Rubin's social practices within visual art, so as to both acknowledge their fundamental involvement and for their work to continue to be understood correctly as visual art. This has been largely unsuccessful to date, due to the difficulty in identifying the work without acknowledgement of the artist's role, as the work can appear to be an everyday object or activity.

The thesis research will show that the role of the artist in social art, despite repeated misrepresentation, needs to be discussed through a theoretical frame or place in order to be identified as valuable in visual art. Without such a strategy the ephemeral practices of the various artists involved will slip into alternative misreading's as a result of the various artists not being acknowledged as vital makers and instigators of the artwork. Grau states in his essay 'Another Quarrel' that 'having noticed the forms of crisis, we are confronted with Hercules's choice: either decide to let things happen… or articulate a new solution, which would preserve a place [emphasis in original] for these magnificent monsters. And perhaps that is still worth a try.'[48] This statement by Grau has directed the original research of this thesis, as the aim of the thesis is to present the argument that a place for the artist in social art needs to be recognised, because the 'artist' is paramount within the conceptual intention, production and organisation of the work. Without the artist as initial instigator and tactician, there can be no participation or social engagement within an art context. The research will show that in social art the current discussion is too succinct, and therefore an additional argument will be developed in this thesis in order to enable a new reading and understanding of the social artistic practice; these will be debated within the chapters of the thesis.

The work for the PhD consists of half thesis and half studio research, both contributing equal parts. There are several research methodologies to be employed for the PhD, which are utilised as a strategy in order to research, disseminate and define the aims

[48] D Grau, 'Another Quarrel' *The Age of Creation,* Lukas &Sternberg, 2013, p.31

for the thesis. The research methods are qualitative; the strength of qualitative research includes 'both documentary evidence (where the researcher accesses the person who provided the evidence through secondary sources e.g. books, journals etc.) and investigational evidence (where the researcher talks with those who can provide information).'[49] As the project is underpinned by a critical relationship between theoretical and practice-led research, the following combination of research methods will be employed in the thesis and studio research: historical method, qualitative method (case study), and practice-led study. This combination of research methodologies has been chosen as it demonstrates a wide variety of techniques with which to gather information, ensuring that these research approaches avail themselves of primary and secondary sources. This combination of research methodologies is also particularly important because the project requires analysis of both historical and contemporary artists and events. Current original knowledge will be collated from qualitative research interviews and case studies with artists relevant to the study undertaken specifically for the research.

Historical sources are viewed as a method of positioning and gauging the value of the social practitioner historically, and as such historical research provides the critical contextual link between the past and the present.[50] A historical methodology assists in the examination of movements and events that have positioned social art practices from the 1950s through the analysis of art movements such as Happenings and Situationist International, and historical artists such as Lygia Clark, Helio Oiticica, Allan Kaprow, Joseph Beuys and Gordon Matta-Clark. The research enables collection, identification and correlation between the most pertinent historical references, through discussion of the work of art practitioners and art movements. This discussion will serve as a foundation for the recent history and positioning of the social artist, illustrates, documents and describes a focus on collaborative practices.

Case Study approaches place a 'focus on one or a few instances, phenomena, or units of analysis, but they are not restricted to one observation… [case study approaches] invest heavily in in-depth interviews or discourse analysis… producing a detailed historical account.' A case study methodology has been employed through the curation of one exhibition per month at an artist-run initiative called RAYGUN PROJECTS from June 2011 – present (over 40 exhibitions). This project has enabled a dialogue with contemporary social artists from various parts of the world such as Australia, the US, Denmark and France, who are key to the current research (for example, exhibitions by American social artists Lee Walton (2012), Sal Randolph (2014), Harrell Fletcher (2013) and Jon Rubin (2015) have occurred at RAYGUN). These exhibitions contribute to a key body of knowledge regarding social artwork in a regional context. Engaging in a dialogue with these artists facilitates an opportunity to analyse their working methods, to gain a further understanding of their individual art practices within an historical and contemporary context.

Empirical research has been used 'to observe phenomena in the social world so as to generate knowledge about these phenomena.'[51] This has included observations,

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[49] H Smith and R Dean, *Practice Led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts,* Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2009 p.4

[50] K Lundy, *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, SAGE Publications, 2008, p. 396

[51] L Given, *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, SAGE Publications, 2008, p.254

interviews, analysis of cultural and archival records, data management and analysis techniques (which includes data collection by means of surveys), conversation and cultural analyses. Social artworks/projects have been witnessed/viewed and museums and galleries examined that have curated seminal exhibitions in the field; these include:

Museum of Modern Art, New York. Exhibition by Lygia Clark *The Abandonment of Art* (1948-1988) 2014

Tate Modern's Performance Room, Exhibition by Harrell Fletcher *Where I'm Calling From* London, 2012

San Francisco Exploratorium, Exhibition by Harrell Fletcher *The Best Things in the Museum are Windows,* 2013

Art Gallery of New South Wales. Exhibition by Tino Segal *This is So Contemporary* 2014.

Researching these museums and galleries involved the viewing of relevant works and the examining of important artists' studio practices, which contributed to relevant knowledge of current social art.

The qualitative research also includes examination of seminal blogs and online publications such as 'eflux', 'Six Degrees' (New Museum Blog, New York) and 'Hyperallergic' (an art blog produced by 'going off script', New York). The blogs give relevant, current information about developments and occurrences in the art world that relate to participatory practices. This offers another avenue to understand an alternative voice that critiques social art practices that are being produced now. Seminal publications such as *Frieze*, a contemporary art and culture magazine, and the *Elephant Visual art and Culture Magazine* provide current information about artists in addition to documenting exhibitions and events that is crucial to the thesis. In 2012 research was undertaken through the attendance of the '18th Biennale of Sydney: All Our Relations' which included a symposium, artist talks and lectures, as well as the viewing of relevant Australian and international participatory artworks that are engaged in social art.

Qualitative research interviews have been conducted as a method of discussing and gaining pertinent information regarding the field of research as a 'conversational practice where knowledge is produced through the interaction between an interviewer and an interviewee or a group of interviewees. Unlike everyday conversations, the research interview is most often carried out to serve the researcher's…[area of inquiry] which are external to the conversation itself.'[52] This method creates critical support and original research for the thesis. Ethical clearance was given and interviews for the PhD were undertaken with American Conceptual artists Lawrence Weiner and Vito Acconci, UK conceptual artist Liam Gillick and American social artists Lee Walton, Jon Rubin, Harrell Fletcher, Sal Randolph, and American curator Mary Jane Jacob. Each of these individuals represents seminal intellectual property in the field, and the interviews thus serve as original research in the field of inquiry. Other, secondary,

[52] S. Brinkmann in L. M. Given, *The SAGE Encyclopaedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, SAGE Publications, 2008, p. 471

interviews featuring historical artists, such as Gordon Matta-Clark, Allan Kaprow, Joseph Beuys, Lygia Clark and Helio Oiticica will be accessed through publications, and used to position the argument, which values the social artist as an individual, as opposed to a collaborator. Collectively these interviews will be analysed for their contribution to the development of ideas and original research for the thesis, creating a clear model of the position of value of the social artist.

The practice-led research component of the PhD is an accumulation of research and knowledge through the construction of studio artwork. The studio research involved the organisation of participatory projects which complement and develop issues discussed in the thesis, regarding the position of the artist as crucial in social art. Practice-led research is used for this PhD because 'the particular form of knowledge that arises from our handling of materials and processes… [Out of creative practice can arise] a very specific sort of knowing, a knowing that arises through handling materials in practice [this praxical knowledge can induce] "a shift in thought".'[53] There are several seminal literary debates that demonstrate the importance of practice-led research in the accumulation of knowledge through the making and the facilitating of artwork and projects and the generating of original research. For example, Australian theorists Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt in *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* 2007 'draw on French philosopher Michel Foucault's essay "What is an Author" to explore how we might move away from art criticism to the notion of a critical discourse of practice led inquiry involves viewing the artist as a researcher.'[54] Gray and Malins in *Visualizing Research* 2004 further emphasise the importance of practice-led research, stating 'we learn through practice, through research, and through reflection on both. This active and reflective learning makes a dynamic relationship between practice and research. Practice raises questions that can be investigated through research, which in turn impacts on practice.'[55] Australian artist and art theorist Graeme Sullivan states that, 'visual research methods can be grounded within the practices of the studio and that these are robust enough to satisfy rigorous institutional benchmarks and demanding art world expectations.'[56]

Practice-led research is important to the overall study because it has allowed a direct experience through the facilitation of projects as a social artist. Direct experience (relating to an empirical methodology) within the role of the singular author, and the author as collaborator, is invaluable in forming relevant ideas relating to the research. A component of the practice-led research is the co-curation of an artist-run initiative called RAYGUN PROJECTS that is focussed upon expanded painting and social art practices and related activities. Several social artists have been curated at RAYGUN with each of these artists' projects establishing a framework in order to facilitate participation.

The practice-led research has incorporated several studio research projects through an exhibition titled *Without You There is No Me*, exhibited at the Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery and the University of Southern Queensland, as well as several other projects that have collectively engaged with the model that has been developed in this

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[53] H Smith and R Dean, *Practice Led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts,* Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2009 p.6

[54] B Barrett and E Bolt, *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, I.B.Tauris, London, 2007, p.135

[55] C Gray and J Malins, *Visualizing Research*, Ashgate, England, 2004, p. 1

[56] G Sullivan, 'Art Practice as Research', *Inquiry in Visual Art*, SAGE, LA, 2010 p.xxii

thesis. The studio-based work has been influential in the development of the research question and the approaches/models and platforms that have been discussed throughout the chapters. The work has also established an understanding of social art projects in order to create a basis for the discussion of social art's requirement of a place for the social artist in a visual art context.

The aim of the PhD research and the issues discussed and debated in the following chapters (and practice-led research) is to dispel the myth that the social artist's position is ominous within contemporary art, through the misrepresentation and positioning of such practices in alternative fields of inquiry. Instead this thesis proposes that the social artists, and their subsequent artistic intentions, are essential in forming a model, in order to identify the social artist's intention and in turn allowing the project to exist 'as artwork' within a visual art context. The social artist is, in accordance with its historical positioning, a maker (not too dissimilar to the way that painters paint, sculptors make objects and photographers produce photos) and therefore the artist's role as 'maker' or 'facilitator' is equal in both social art and traditional or modern art. The artist within this form of artistic practice is not so much a maker of objects, than an instigator of frameworks for participation to occur.

A place therefore needs to be created for these so-called 'magnificent monsters' to be positioned in a specific place, in order to identify their role of authority and value in visual art. This repositioning and rethinking of such artistic practices will allow social artists to be equal to, but not different from, any other artist who thinks about the world and what they wish to construct, express or conceptually and theoretically propose, through the methods or strategies he or she produces or activates within their work. The overall purpose of the thesis, and the gap in the research it aims to fill, is to establish a context for the social artist to be acknowledged and valued in a position of authority, and in doing so to find a suitable place for them in visual art, an issue that has not been previously investigated at length.

Chapter 1
Literature Review

The texts discussed in the literature review identify the gap in the field that this thesis seeks to fill. The literature addresses both the historical and theoretical debates that inform the field. It also analyses the seminal current texts that discuss the social artist through a variety of alternative fields such as theatre, politics, education and community art; however, the literature discussed does not sufficiently locate the social artist in visual art. Due to the experiential nature of social art, social artists often use everyday activities and materials to facilitate their work, which results in social artwork often being misread as an activity other than art. The texts discussed throughout the literature review create a basis to establish that it is therefore important to create a place for the social artist in visual art through identifying an ideological place in which the social artist is recognised as a visual artist. French philosopher Donatien Grau's essay 'Another Quarrel' in *The Age of Creation* 2013 is the key text in the field as it identifies the crisis of the artist due to politics, the art market/industry and the mythology of the artist. However despite Grau's proposed crisis, he eventually proposes that the nature and existence of the artist is in fact worth fighting for, this text provides the basis for the present discussion of the social artist within visual art. It is also worth noting that French Curator Nicolas Bourriaud's book *Relational Aesthetics* 2002 has been regarded as one of the seminal texts surrounding what he refers to as 'Relational Aesthetics'. However, although Bourriaud's text was integral to the reading of social art during the 1990s (when the text was first published in French), the text is primarily descriptive, and does not discuss the role of the artist in any great depth. This is the reason that although it is included in the literature review, it is not discussed in length throughout the thesis.

This review discusses both literature that is hostile to the place of the artist, e.g. German Fluxus artist Joseph Beuys who believes everyone is an artist, which essentially means no one is, or French Dadaist Marcel Duchamp who removed the artist's intention and replaced it with 'an extra, a curious intention that the artist is not responsible for.' Additional philosophical and theoretical perspectives, such as by French philosopher Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault as well as German philosopher Walter Benjamin, have been researched in regards to culture and appropriation practices. An example of this is American artist Sherrie Levine and her appropriation project *After Walker Evans* 1981 where she rephotographed Walker Evans photography from the exhibition catalogue 'First and Last'; the removal of the artist in the construction of the work allows for personal reinterpretation to occur within the artwork. This can be seen to parallel the current debates within social art where the artist's hand (conceptual intention) is almost disregarded (when acknowledged it is misrepresented through alternative fields of inquiry) in the understanding of social art.

Seminal research that has initially acknowledged the social artist as important, such as American curator and writer Alma Ruiz's catalogue essay for the exhibition *The Experimental Exercise of Freedom* 1999, outlines the changing role of the artist from a maker of objects to a facilitator of situations. However, Ruiz, like other contemporary writers and theorists who are sympathetic towards the social artists current misaligned artistic situation, does not expand upon this 'shift' in artistic practice and how social artists (who are making work that blurs the boundaries

between art and life through the use of everyday activities) require a pertinent place for their work to be acknowledged, understood and critiqued correctly within visual art.

Donatien Grau, 'Another Quarrel' *The Age of Creation,* Lukas & Sternberg, 2013, p.13

French critic Donatien Grau's essay provides the basis for the thesis, proposing (through a discussion of primarily object-based art) that art and the artist is in crisis. Grau establishes this through a discussion of three revolutions that he argues are the fundamental elements of today's art, but are simultaneously the source of its current crisis. Grau proposes that there are three revolutions in art, firstly, art as political or a democratic republic (in which only the best survive). This position exists in opposition to the traditional skill-based evaluation of art in which 'the most precise draftsman, the most exquisite painter, the strongest sculptor'[57] survived. 'Today's art may appear, from the outside, to be more open, and therefore more democratic: [as] anyone working in a medium can be an artist.'[58] However, Grau argues that the current seeming redefinition of art as a democratic form of production is extremely problematic; according to this position, anything can be art and anyone can be an artist. This position has resulted in the authority being handed over to the curator. Grau also identifies that there has been a democratic shift inside art itself that is contemporaneous with the moment when democracy has become the official political ideal of a world inspired by western culture.[59] Artists including German Fluxus artist Joseph Beuys (founding member of the German Green party), American Pop artist Andy Warhol (who constantly endorsed the Democrats in public elections) and Chinese contemporary artist Ai Weiwei (fighting against the Chinese Communist Party) have been important political figures. This example shows that the discussion of the artist has shifted from being acknowledged in a visual art context to being involved in, for example, politics, as shown by the artists named above.

Grau's second point relates to art as a market or industry, analysing how 'the "deal" has become a key component of artistic transmission.'[60] Grau argues that the implementation of the 'deal' is a recent change in which auctioneers and gallerists have become a critical part of the art system. Grau argues that art is democratic, and a market, and as a result interacts with popular culture today. Grau suggests that the artwork has 'evolved into an ever more fashion-inspired system. There are now seasons in art as well – each year inaugurates new trends, be it archaeology, anthropology, ruins, or storytelling.'[61] Grau's second point indicates the removal of a discussion of art activities from a visual arts context. The final revolution is the mythology of the artist; as Grau states that, 'we may think they are too many, that most of them are uninteresting or not challenging, but they are nonetheless seen as transcendent figures.'[62]

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[57] D Grau, 'Another Quarrel' *The Age of Creation,* Lukas & Sternberg, 2013, p.21
[58] *ibid.,*
[59] D Grau, 'Another Quarrel' *The Age of Creation,* Lukas & Sternberg, 2013, p.23
[60] D Grau citing Noah Horowitz, *Art of the Deal*, Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press, 2010
[61] D Grau, op.cit., p.24
[62] D Grau, op.cit., p.25

Grau proposes that this is because art deals with limits, and because the whole purpose is to exceed them in order to enlighten the world.[63] Grau continues suggesting that even when art is meant to have a participatory tone, as exemplified by Argentinian contemporary artist Rirkrit Tiravanija, 'it only makes sense because the person who invites the viewer to participate in the work is an artist. In that sense, what seems to challenge the active-passive dichotomy between the artist and viewer actually reinforces the idealized authority bestowed upon the act of art making, and in turn, the artist.'[64] This statement articulates the importance of the artist; however, Grau's initial argument places the artist in a position of crisis, rather than one of authority. Grau states that, 'these three revolutions are the fundament of today's art. They are also the sources of its current crisis. Indeed, each side of the creative paradigm seems to be threatened in some way.'[65] Grau's dilemma is relative to the quandary of the artist in social art, stating that, 'a return to the object versus an emphasis on "practices"; [and] a particular meaning attached to craft versus industry… are signs of a failure to find a suitable position for these monsters our civilization has nurtured, these monsters we call artists.'[66]

The notion of the 'monster as artist' is fitting due to the artist's continued existence, despite the 'crisis' and the 'end of art', as outlined by the three revolutions, and regardless of the nature of social art not existing as a recognisable art object, which does not enable the work to self-identify as art. Grau proposes that being a successful artist is socially more gratifying than being a successful lawyer. Grau states that, 'we do not know what to do with this many artists, whose number increases every day, all around the globe, and who constantly produce in the context of a mass market called the art world.'[67] Grau's argument illustrates a dire position for the artist, asking 'how can the figure of the artist, as it has been constructed by history, philosophy, and literature, resist the violence of the present?'[68] Grau therefore suggests the demise or failure of the artist, questioning how they are able to exist, or not exist in this crisis.

Grau again proposes that art has no future, stating 'as Klaus Biesenbach, chief curator at large of New York's Museum of Modern Art and the director of MoMA PS1, put it: "There is no such thing as contemporary art anymore. There are contemporary practices." In which case art loses its transcendent value and has the exact same relevance and content as fashion, pop music, or design. The concept of practice is the exact opposite of that of design.'[69] The text finishes proposing again that art is doomed but perhaps it is the end of the crisis and it may in fact be worth preserving the artist, through articulating a new solution that would preserve a place for the artist. Meaning that despite the artist's dire position due to external factors including art as a democratic republic, and art as a market or industry, Grau suggests that perhaps the artist is in fact valuable in society and a new formula needs to be developed in order to preserve the role of the artist. Grau reiterates this, stating, 'having noticed the forms of crises, we are confronted with Hercules's choice: either decide to let things happen, and allow the alliance between traditional skills and the market to triumph over the artistic paradigm that put the artist at its very centre, or articulate a new solution, which

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[63] D Grau, op.cit.,, p.25
[64] D Grau, 'Another Quarrel' *The Age of Creation,* Lukas & Sternberg, Berlin, 2013, p.25
[65] *ibid.*
[66] *ibid.,* p.28
[67] *ibid.,* p.26
[68] *ibid.*,p.25
[69] D Grau, 'Another Quarrel' *The Age of Creation,* Lukas & Sternberg, Berlin, 2013, p.27

would preserve a place for these magnificent monsters. And perhaps that is still worth a try.'[70]

Grau's text eventually suggests that the nature and existence of the artist is in fact worth fighting for, and this position is used to form the need to establish a place for the social artist in visual art. Where Grau proposes that the artist is in a state of crisis due to the politics of art and art as a market or industry, the thesis proposes that social art is in crisis due to the positioning of the work in the everyday, and by means of its discussion through politics, industry, theatre and other disciplines. This misrepresentation has led to the work being read through other disciplines, which has led to the work's absorption and discussion as an everyday activity. Grau's text therefore forms the basis for the necessity of establishing a place and value for the artist in visual art.

Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, Les Presses du reel, 2002

French critic and curator Nicolas Bourriaud's *Relational Aesthetics* 1999 is considered to have provided one of the first texts to contextualise participatory artworks in the 1990s. Bourriaud's text decodes relational artwork, forming a structure with which to read and understand the work. Bourriaud 'proposes that an overwhelming majority of critics and philosophers were reluctant to come to grips with contemporary practices. So these remain essentially unreadable, as their originality and their relevance cannot be perceived by analysing them on the basis of problems either solved or unresolved by previous generations'.[71] In forming a basis for an understanding of 'Relational Aesthetics' Bourriaud states that, 'lessening the figure of the author in favour of that of the artist-cum-operator may describe the "mutation" under way: Duchamp, Rauschenberg, Beuys and Warhol all constructed their work on a system of exchanges with social movements, unhinging the mental "ivory tower" myth allocated to the artist by the Romantic ideology.'[72] Bourriaud's text disfranchises the role of the artist by moving art from a work read through the practice of the artist to a work positioned in the social sphere that is located in the interaction between the artist and audience. Bourriaud states that, 'it is no longer possible to regard the contemporary work as a space to be walked through the "owner's tour" is akin to the collector's. It is henceforth presented as a period of time to be lived through, like an opening to unlimited discussion'.[73] Bourriaud's text discusses an aesthetic of inter-human relationships, and of encounter, proximity and of resisting social formatting. The aims of the essay are to discuss a formal arrangement that generates a relationship between people thereby lessoning the figure of the author to the 'artist-cum-operator'. Bourriaud therefore discusses the artist as a catalyst in what he describes as Relational Art, proposing that the art lies in the relationship between the participant and the work, rather than in the conception of the artist. Bourriaud's text therefore, while creating a reception or access point for museums to conceive relational art work in the 1990s does not play a seminal role in this thesis as it does not discuss the role of the artist in depth. The primary purpose of Bourriaud's discussion is in analysing a number of works that have a relational outcome, in order to contextualise them within a museum context. Bourriaud states 'how are we to understand the types of artistic behaviour shown in exhibitions

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[70] *ibid.*,, p.31
[71] N Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, Les Presses du reel, France, 2002, p.7
[72] *ibid.*,, p.93
[73] *ibid.*,p.15

held in the 1990s, and the lines of thinking behind them, if we do not start out from the same *situation* as the artist?'[74] This is the extent of Bourriaud's discussion of the artist, the text is therefore a discussion of how relational art fits within society and culture at the time it was written.

Toni Ross, 'Aesthetic autonomy and interdisciplinarity: a response to Nicolas Bourriaud's "Relational Aesthetics"', *Journal of Visual Arts Practice,* 5:3 (2006), p.167

Australian theorist Toni Ross's essay 'Aesthetic autonomy and interdisciplinarity: a response to Nicolas Bourriaud's "Relational Aesthetics"' 2006 opposes Bourriaud from the perspective that 'Relational Aesthetics' has been drawn from various points historically and thus is a theory of collaged and sampled ideas. Ross discusses specific points from 'Relational Aesthetics' including medium or disciplinary cross-overs and the nature of the participants, viewers and/or spectators that relational art brings to the work. Ross discusses American artist Mark Dion's archaeological dig projects of the late 1990s and draws out the distinctions between the social and disciplinary interaction that Bourriaud endorses, such as the 'co-existence' asserting an equivalent status between makers/artists and beholders/participants, and Bourriaud's status of equivalence of artistic activity and other disciplinary fields where Bourriaud states that there is no precedence of either producer and consumer.

Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, Verso, London, New York, 2012

UK critic Claire Bishop in *Artificial Hells*, like many writers and critics in the field, engages in a theorisation of what she terms 'participatory art', rather than referring to the artist or the technical components of the work. Bishop discusses 'Participatory Art' in relation to how it fits in, and is framed within the tradition of 'Marxist and post-Marxist writing on art as a de-alienating endeavour that should not be subject to the division of labour and professional specialisation.'[75] One of Bishop's central arguments in the book is that the 'development of social art should be positioned more accurately as a return to the social, as part of an ongoing history of attempts to rethink art collectively.'[76]

Bishop outlines the current position of participatory artwork, proposing that because it is not the direct result of a situation of political unrest (as discussed through historical examples), 'participatory art stands today without a relation to an existing political project (only to a loosely defined anti-capitalism) and presents itself as oppositional to visual arts by trying to side-step the question of visuality.'[77] Bishop continues, stating 'as a consequence, these artists have internalised a huge amount of pressure to bear the burden of devising new models of social and political organisation – a task that they are not always best equipped to undertake… we need to recognise art as a form of experimental activity overlapping with the world.'[78] Bishop's argument references the placement of participatory artworks and the ideas inherently attached to the work, depending upon where an artwork is positioned, and how that impacts upon the work's reading and existence. When a participatory art project

[74] *ibid.*,p.13
[75] C Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, Verso, London, 2012, p.3
[76] *ibid.,* p.3
[77] *ibid.,* p.284
[78] *ibid*., p.284

‘overlaps with the world’ the artwork is at risk of not being read as art, therefore a context or place in which to position and read the work is vital.

Bishop’s argument expands on the criteria with which to view the work, proposing that the tension ‘between equality and quality, participation and spectatorship – indicate that social and artistic judgements do not easily merge; indeed, they seem to demand different criteria.’[79] This thesis proposes that rather than a criterion, the presence of the artist is vital in acknowledging and understanding the conceptual intentions of such work. Without such acknowledgment the work can be misread and slippages can occur as a majority of social art is situated within social spaces and uses everyday activities in their construction.

Despite Bishop’s likening of participatory art to the outcome of various political systems, she references the role of the artist in stating that ‘at a certain point, art has to hand over to other institutions if social change is to be achieved. It is not enough to keep producing activist art.’[80] Bishop addresses the role of the artist in participatory work, stating that ‘the artist is conceived less as an individual producer of discrete objects than as a collaborator and producer of *situations* [emphasis in original]; the work of art as a finite, portable, commodifiable product is reconceived as an ongoing or long-term *project* [emphasis in original] with an unclear beginning and end; while the audience, previously conceived as a “viewer” or “beholder”, is now repositioned as a co-producer or *participant* [emphasis in original].’[81] Bishop establishes her points through two prevalent modes of participation: ‘Delegated’ performance, where everyday people are hired to perform on the artist’s behalf, and ‘pedagogic’ projects, in which art converges with the goals of education.

A delegated performance ‘is the hiring of non-professional performers or specialists in other fields to undertake the job of being present and performing at a particular time and at a particular place on behalf of the artist and following his/her instructions’.[82] Both of the modes of participation that Bishop proposes undervalue the role of the artist, focussing instead on the participant rather than the significant practice of the artist. Much of this work has not been addressed or analysed in depth by art historians or critics, and as a result Bishop forms a response to reactions from both the general public and the specialist art world or specialist art symposia. Bishop aims to address delegated performance as an artistic practice engaging with the ethics and aesthetics of labour. Bishop’s discussion of artistic interest in education traced a changing relationship between art and the academy. Bishop states that, ‘the current literature on art and pedagogy (of which Irit Rogoff’s contribution is frequently cited) tends not to deal with specific modes of this intersection and the differences between art and education as discourses.’[83] Bishop explores the disciplinary reorientation that where artists seemed to be ‘moving a “relational” practice (in which open-ended conviviality was sufficient evidence of social engagement) towards discursive situations with high-level intellectual content.’[84] Bishop explains that as an outsider she was often dissatisfied with the conceptual and visual rewards of these projects. Bishop states that, ‘when I found projects that I liked and respected, I had no idea how to

[79] C Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, Verso, London, 2012, p.275
[80] *ibid.*, p.283
[81] *ibid.*, p.2
[82] *ibid.*, p.219
[83] C Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, Verso, London, 2012, p.242
[84] *ibid.*, p.245

communicate them to others: their dominant goal seemed to be the production of a dynamic experience for participants, rather than the production of complex artistic forms.'[85] Bishop therefore focuses on the spectatorial implications of art becoming education.

Michael Foucault, '*What is an Author?'*, Harrison & Wood's *Art in theory* 1900-1990, Blackwell Publishing, 1993

French literary theorist Michel Foucault's essay *What is an Author?* 1969 describes how the author is traditionally regarded then indicates his position, proposing that 'the "truth" is quite the contrary: the author is not an indefinite source of significations which fill a work; the author does not precede the works, he is a certain functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short, by which one impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, and recomposition of fiction'[86]. Foucault proposes that the author does not precede the work, and suggests that the author does not exist as an infinite source of significations for the work. Foucault postulates that we represent the author as a 'genius',[87] when in fact we are inverting the author's role, and by doing this, we 'represent him as the opposite of his historically real function. (When a historically given function is represented in a figure that inverts it, one has an ideological production.)'[88]

Foucault establishes that since the eighteenth century the author has played the role of the regulator. He emphasises the point that it does not seem necessary that the role of the author remains constant in form but instead proposes a demise of the author, stating, 'I think that as our society changes, at the very moment when it is in the process of changing, the author function will disappear, and in such a manner that fiction and its polysemic texts will again function according to another mode, but still with a system of constraint – one which will no longer be the author, but which will have to be determined, or perhaps experienced.'[89] Foucault is therefore proposing that the authorial role will diminish and that the work will instead be perceived through experience.

Walter Benjamin, 'The Author as Producer', *Understanding Brecht,* Anna Bostock (trans), Verso, London, 1998 (First published 1966), p.85

German theorist Walter Benjamin discussed literary production relations arguing that the work must be inserted into the context of living social relations, and that 'social relations as we know, are determined by production relations. And when materialist criticism approached the work, it used to ask what was the position of the work *vis-à-vis* the social production relations of its time'[90] Benjamin states that, 'Instead of

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[85] *ibid.,* p.246
[86] Foucault, "What is an Author? In Textual Strategies, p.159 cited in Love and Death in Lawrence and Foucault, Barry Jeffrey Scherr, Peter Lang Publishing, New York, 2008, p.217
[87] By the term genius, Foucault refers to the author as the 'genial creator' of work in which he gives us 'with infinite wealth and generosity' an inexhaustible world of meanings.
[88] M Foucault 'What is An Author', Art In Theory 1900-1990, Harrison and Wood (ed) Blackwell Publishing, USA, p.927
[89] *ibid.*, p.982
[90] W Benjamin, 'The Author as Producer', *Understanding Brecht*, Anna Bostock (trans), Verso, London, 1998 (1966), p.87

asking: what is the position of a work *vis-à-vis* the production relations of its time, does it underwrite these relations, is it reactionary, or does it aspire to overthrow them, is it revolutionary?… [before I ask this] I should like to ask: what is its position *within* them? This question concerns the function of a work within the literary production relations of its time. In other words, it is directly concerned with literary *technique*.'[91] Benjamin's essay proposes that the author became producer when their activity shifted from being an independent creator reliant upon a conventional artistic technique to being the creator of a relational activity, in which the skills and technique of the author are transformed by the advanced technical context of the relation that an artwork has to product relations of the time. Benjamin therefore proposes that the author is not bound by a closed relationship with the technique or material, but instead that the author exists in relation to the product relations of the time, which enables their work to engage in 'social relations' and have a critical effect on capitalism, something autonomous art, that is, an art with a special 'aura', cannot.

Benjamin therefore proposes that 'this apparatus is better, the more consumers it is able to turn into producers – this is, the more readers or spectators into collaborators.'[92] Benjamin's ideas devalue the position of the individual artist in the creation of the artwork or object of aura, instead proposing that the premise of the work should be to make spectators into collaborators through social art experiences. In this case, the artist and their role as individual creators are secondary to what Benjamin places major importance on, which is the spectator becoming collaborator. However, what Benjamin fails to acknowledge is that without the artist and their conceptual intention creating the foundation from which a spectator can 'collaborate', there is no starting point for such an activity to take place.

Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author' *Participation,* (C. Bishop), The MIT Press, 2006, p.41

French theorist and philosopher Ronald Barthes' essay *From Work to Text* 1971 demonstrates that 'a work's meaning is not dependent on authorial intention but on the individual point of active reception.'[93] Barthes writing is engaged with works that 'emphasize the viewer's role in their completion.'[94] This point is reiterated through Barthes' discussion in his essay 'Death of the Author', stating that, 'a text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author [artist in the present context]. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination.'[95]

Barthes' argument that the future of literature is in the hands of the reader or the viewer/participant suggests that the experience is integral to the completion of the work. As such, it disregards the role of the author upon completion of the work by the reader, i.e. the participant in the present context. Barthes reiterates this, stating

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[91] *ibid.*
[92] *ibid.*,p.98
[93] C Bishop, *Participation*, *Documents of Contemporary Art*, The MIT Press, 2006, p.41
[94] ibid
[95] R Barthes, 'The Death of the Author' in *Participation, Documents of Contemporary Art*, C. Bishop (ed.), MIT Press, 2006, p.45

‘disconnection occurs, the voice loses its origin, the author enters into his own death, writing begins… narrative is never assumed by a person but by a mediator, shaman or relator whose “performance” – the mastery of the narrative code – may possibly be admired but never his ‘genius.’[96] Barthes proposes the author as mediator, rather than as ‘genius’ or originator of a text, and in so doing is disenfranchising the author, discussing them as a facilitator, rather than a creator of the actual work.

Rosalind Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture,* Viking Press, New York, 1977

American theorist Rosalind Krauss examines perception and experience in *Passages in Modern Sculpture* through a discussion of the artist’s practice. Krauss explores in particular American Post-Minimalist artist Robert Morris’s work ‘as a certain kind of cognate for this naked dependence of intention and meaning upon the body as it surfaces into the world in every external particular of its movements and gestures- of the self-understood, that is, only in experience.’[97] Krauss explores the outcome of experiential artwork, in that social artists facilitate a situation or experience without dictating an outcome, thereby leaving the work to be ‘understood’ or completed only through the act of experience. Krauss’s discussion of the engagement with the viewer and the art object reveals a relationship between the work and the participant. The physical relationship, engaging within the social, facilitates a connection between art, the world and the everyday, forming the basis for experiential or social forms of art.

Krauss expands this discussion and the shift from the gallery to the social, and the object to an experience by stating that, ‘the abstractness of Minimalism makes it less easy to recognize the human body in those works and therefore less easy to project ourselves into the space that sculpture with all of our settled prejudices left intact. Yet our bodies and our experience of our bodies continue to be the subject of this sculpture.’[98] Krauss outlines the relationship between the participant and the object in Minimalism specifically, but the ideas can also be transferred to be relevant in a discussion of the relationship between the participant and the artist.

Hal Foster ‘The Crux of Minimalism’, in *The Return of the Real*, October, The MIT Press, London, 1996, p.38

American writer and theorist Hal Foster discusses art, linking it with site or architecture through a discussion of Minimalism, stating that, ‘Minimalism sculpture no longer stands apart, on a pedestal or as pure art, but is repositioned among objects and is redefined in terms of place… he or she is prompted to explore the perceptual consequences of a particular intervention in a given site. This is the fundamental reorientation that minimalism inaugurates.’[99] Foster positions the viewer within a physical engagement with the work as well as referencing a transition between ways of viewing the artwork, and the viewer’s direct engagement with the site or architecture. As such, this requires each viewer to shift from his or her place of safety and exist wholly within the space to experience the work.[100] This shift from a passive

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[96] *ibid.,* p. 41
[97] R Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture,* the Viking Press, New York, 1977, p.267.
[98] R Krauss, *ibid* p.279.
[99] H Foster, ‘The Crux of Minimalism’ in *The Return of the Real,* The MIT Press, England, 1996, p.38.
[100] H Foster, *ibid*

to an active viewing of the work is the intention of the social artist in that they are creating a situation in which the participant experiences the work through their body, in particular, as social body. This is important because it is the basis of the exchange that the social artist creates within their artwork.

Joseph Beuys 'I am Searching for Field Character' in *Participation,* (C. Bishop), The MIT Press, 2006, p.125

American artist Joseph Beuys states in his essay *I am Searching for Field Character* that, Social Sculpture/Social Architecture 'will only reach fruition when every living person becomes a creator, a sculptor or architect of the social organism.'[101] Beuys' interchangeable use of 'social sculpture' and 'social architecture' shifts the role of the art object to the provocation of thoughts about what sculpture can be and how the concept of sculpting can be extended to the invisible materials used by everyone. Beuys' notion of 'social sculpture' and his statement that 'everyone is an artist' is part of the ambition to blur life and art that underpins Beuys' practice. With 'everyone' being 'an artist', Beuys paradoxically undermines the role of artist. If everyone is an artist, no one is! Beuys' essay intends to expand the limits of art, he calls for a reconsideration of what art is, levelling hierarchies between artist and viewer/participant through a redeployment of 'every man' as an artist or giving artistic licence to all, rather than to a particular kind of person.

Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another, Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, The MIT Press, 2002

American critic Miwon Kwon's book *One Place After Another* reassesses the traditional relationship between artwork and site, examining how specific sites have impacted upon the social art project and the artists involved. Kwon believes that, 'the site can now be as various as a billboard, an artistic genre, a disenfranchised community, an institutional framework, a magazine page, a social cause, or a political debate. It can be literal, like a street corner, or virtual, like a theoretical concept.'[102] This statement demonstrates Kwon's expansion of the site to become any kind of physical or theoretical space. This discussion shows Kwon's argument for an expansion to have occurred of the traditional art 'site' to include a variety of other sites, shifting the work from existing in a 'site' to existing in the practice of the artist.

Kwon provides a historical basis for her argument, focusing on the artist as 'site' in a discussion of what she terms 'new genre public art', referring to 'the nomadic movement of the artist-operating more like an itinerary than a map.'[103] This positions the artist's role and intention as crucial in social art. This is further expanded by Kwon in a discussion of the authority of the artist, stating that, 'with the evacuation of "artistic traces", the artists' *authorship* as producer of objects is reconfigured as his/her *authority to authorize* [emphasis in original] in the capacity of director or supervisor of (re)production.'[104] Kwon continues, reiterating the importance of the artist, stating that, 'the guarantee of authenticity is finally the artist's sanction, which may be articulated by his/her actual presence at the moment of production-installation or via

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[101] J Beuys *I am Searching for Field Character* in *Participation, Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art,* p.125
[102] M Kwon, *One Place After Another,* The MIT Press, Cambridge/London, 2002, p.3
[103] *ibid.*
[104] *ibid.*, p.42

a certificate of verification.'[105] Kwon's statement validates the valuable role and authority of the artist, creating an argument that discusses the authority of the artist through their presence in social art. Kwon expresses this, stating that, 'the presence of the artist has become an absolute prerequisite for the execution/presentation of site-orientated projects. It is now the *performative* [emphasis in original] aspect of an artist's characteristic mode of operation (even when working in collaboration) that is repeated and circulated as a new art commodity, with the artist him/herself functioning as the primary vehicle for its verification, repetition and circulation.'[106] This statement proposes that due to the everyday nature of the work, the artist has become a prerequisite for the verification and existence of social projects. Kwon argues that the nature of the site as a place to position artwork has expanded to include the practice of the artist, substantiating that the practice of the artist is integral to the positioning of the artwork, since without the artist's overall practice and methodology, the work would not exist as the artist creates a frame or structure for the work to enable participation. The thesis affirms this claim, but expands it to offer a complete frame for analysing the place of the artist in the process of creating and receiving social art practices.

P. Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art, a Materials and Techniques Handbook*, Jorge Pinto Books, New York, 2011

American critic Pablo Helguera's book *Education for Socially Engaged Art* 2011 proposes that his text be used as a materials and techniques handbook that creates an outline or description of what he terms 'Socially Engaged Art' (SEA). Helguera's aim is not to distinguish or create an overview of the artist's practices; he instead states that, 'this is about understanding and working with audience engagement and response for an artistic purpose.'[107] The text does not provide a theoretical discussion of social art, but instead is a discussion of the technical components that constitute it. The book instead provides an outline for how to use art in the social realm, by creating a curriculum for socially engaged art. Helguera argues that SEA draws from existing institutional structures that have gathered knowledge from a combination of disciplines such as pedagogy, theatre, ethnography, anthropology and communication. His primary focus is on pedagogy, using various educational models to demonstrate his points related to SEA. Helguera came to art and education simultaneously and believes that some of the greater challenges in creating socially engaged artworks can be successfully addressed by relying on the field of education.[108] The text makes connections drawn from knowledge in a variety of disciplines and creates a discussion and overview of the main characteristics of social art, including situations, conversations, performance, documentation as well as transpedagogy and deskilling.

Helguera argues that without an institutional structure, such as pedagogy, SEA is unable to be created in a challenging way; he demonstrates this, stating that, 'socially engaged art-making crosses overtly into other disciplines and tries to influence the public sphere in its language and processes, and it would be absurd to ignore the perfectly useful models that exist in those disciplines.'[109] Helguera proposes that due

[105] *ibid.*, p.42
[106] *ibid.*, p.47
[107] P Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art*, Jorge Pinto Press, New York , 2011, p.xvi
[108] *ibid.*, p.xi
[109] *ibid.*, p.xv

to the experiential nature of SEA, it must have a structure or methodology attached to it, to characterise the activity enabling it to exist as social art and that without such a structure it would be misread as an everyday activity.

Helguera makes valid comments about the role and presence of the artist, explaining in his definition of what an artist is that, 'the artist can act as a neutral entity, an invisible catalyst of experiences.'[110] Helguera contextualises the artist in a variety of ways, as outlined in his continued commentary on the role of the artist, stating that, 'when a professional artist or arts educator interacts or collaborates with community with little previous involvement with art, the community has an undeniable disadvantage in experience and knowledge, as long as the relationship unfolds primarily in the art terrain. In this case, the artist is a teacher, leader, artistic director, boss, instigator, and benefactor, and these roles must be assumed fully.'[111]

Helguera's text also comments on individual artists' activities, stating that, 'there are artists who try to be merely facilitators, to the point of denying that they are using any individual initiative at all. Claire Bishop characterises this as an attempt at the "elimination of authorship."'[112] Helguera's argument proposes that the artist cannot disappear altogether, despite the role of the artist being different in 'socially engaged art' than in other forms of art. Helguera states that, 'the objective is not to turn us [artists] into amateur ethnographers, sociologists, or educators but to understand the complexities of the fields that have come before us, learn some of their tools, and employ them in the fertile territory of art.'[113] This statement makes it clear that Helguera recognises that social art crosses over into a variety of other fields; however, it also shows that it is important to bring those practices back to an art context.

Helguera's argument does not elaborate on the position of the artist or the necessity of the artist in social art but argues that social art is often acknowledged to exist as an everyday activity rather than art. This research on the other hand argues that the role of the artist must be present in social art practices in order to facilitate participation, for without the artist the work ceases to exist. Helguera does not go into this, but states that, 'this book is about understanding and working with audience engagement and response for an artistic purpose.'[114]

Nato Thompson, *Living as Form*, Creative Time Publishing, MIT Press, USA, 2012

Living as Form: Social Art From 1991-2011 provides a general overview of projects that Thompson considers to be social art, despite whether or not they were designed to be seen or understood as art projects at all. By including a variety of activities and projects as art, Thompson disregards the role and value of the artist by combining non-artist-initiated projects with artist-initiated projects. Thompson confirms this, stating that, 'as opposed to assuming there is an inherent difference between artist-initiated

[110] P Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art*, Jorge Pinto Books, New York, 2011, p.53
[111] *ibid.*, p.53
[112] *ibid.*, p.53
[113] *ibid.*, p.xiv
[114] P Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art* Jorge Pinto Books, New York, 2011, p.xvi

projects and non-artist-initiated projects, I have opted to simply include them all.'[115] The method Thompson refers to as a 'cattle call' system emphasises a disinterest in the artist, due to Thompson's discussion of non-art projects in the same and artist-initiated projects with the same artistic integrity. Thompson compiles information for a comprehensive overview rather than a rigorous analysis of individual practices which better acknowledge and justify the conceptual intentions involved in each project, but also how they could possibly be understood collectively. Thompson's text is superficial in the sense that it only gives a brief overview of social art projects and the artists involved as he positions social art projects in a variety of other non-related disciplines. As a result, the artist is not acknowledged as the creator and facilitator of the work but rather as a bystander secondary to the actual events that have taken or are taking place. Thompson has therefore positioned the artist as a collaborator, rather than the fundamental facilitator of social art. Arguably, this position can be contested because without the artist the work is unable to exist. Thompson's cattle call approach will be challenged in the thesis, which instead creates a *place* for the social artist in visual art.

Shannon Jackson *Social Works*, Routledge, New York, 2011

American critic Shannon Jackson discusses social art through visual and performance studies as 'visual artists have begun to refuse the static object conventions of visual art, exploring the durational, embodied, social, and extended spatiality of theatrical forms.'[116] Jackson proposes that when creative disciplines (visual and performance) reject their own set of parameters/rules, they exist on the edge of other disciplines and that 'experimental art performances use visual, embodied, collective, durational, and spatial systems, but a critical sense of their innovation will differ depending upon what medium they understand themselves to be disrupting.'[117] Jackson establishes a basis for visual, performance and theatrical works that are responding to the boundaries of their own traditions, proposing that they enter into the traditions of other mediums. Jackson is aware that there are as 'many tensions as there are opportunities in imagining links between contemporary relational art [social] and the non-contemporary, some might say anachronistic, forms of theatrical art.'[118]

Jackson's book combines and discusses social art, performance theatre and institutional critique as one body of work seen through a single frame of acknowledgement and understanding. Jackson's argument proposes that each of these disciplines, when rejecting its traditional construct, makes reference to another discipline because all activities must fit into an ideology or discipline or the activity exists within everyday life.

Tom Finkelpearl *What We Made, Conversations on Art and Social Cooperation*, Duke University Press, 2013

American critic Tom Finkelpearl's text is intended to create a framework for understanding the emergence and acceptance of 'socially cooperative practices' in contemporary art. Through describing his use of the word 'cooperation' rather than

[115] N Thompson, *Living as Form*, co-published by Creative Time Books and MIT Press, 2012 p.27
[116] S Jackson *Social Works*, Routledge, New York/ London, 2011, p.2
[117] *ibid.*, p.2
[118] *ibid.*, p.2

‘collaboration’, Finkelpearl has established the term cooperation to identify a variety of degrees of participation that occur in a social art project, as opposed to a relationship of equality between artist and collaborator. Finkelpearl outlines the relationship between the artist and participant in regard to how much authorial intention each had in the work. Finkelpearl discusses the cooperation of the participants in artworks who he believes ought to be acknowledged in the making and discussion of participatory practices.

Finkelpearl states that, ‘for many of the projects discussed in this book, collaboration is simply too far-reaching a claim to make; not all of the participants are equally authors of these projects, especially in the initiation and conceptualization. *Cooperation*, on the other hand, simply implies that people have worked together on a project.’[119] Finkelpearl discusses the role of the artist, proposing that ‘the cooperative artist does not separate social insight from aesthetic vision. The aesthetic vision is in fact social. The artistic product is not secluded within the academy or the art world, or “set apart from common experience,” but rather is integrated into and in many cases actually consists of common experience – not “art as experience” but socially cooperative experience as art.’[120] Finkelpearl continues, stating that, ‘the split between the collective creation of the art and the viewing and experiencing public is present in a number of projects discussed in this book.’[121] Finkelpearl discusses the nature of the activity of the artist through a discussion of cooperation, rather than collaboration, creating a new context for the activity that occurs as a result of participatory art, in which the artist is raised from being a ‘collaborator’ to a co-operator, in which the participants are acknowledged, but are not the primary makers, instead working in cooperation with the artist.

Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 2004

American critic Grant Kester’s text outlines a shift from image or object-based work to what he defines as ‘dialogical’ (or participatory) art practices. In a discussion of this shift Kester explains that critics perceived social art practices in the same way they would traditional artworks, and criticising social artworks for not being visually engaging. Kester states that, ‘while the projects I am discussing here encourage their participants to question fixed identities, stereotypical images, and so on, they do so through a culminative process of exchange and dialogue rather than a single, instantaneous shock of insight precipitated by an image or object. These projects require a shift in our understanding of the work of art – a redefinition of aesthetic experience as durational rather than immediate.’[122] Kester continues, stating that it

[119] T Finkelpearl, *What We Made Conversations on Art and Social Cooperation*, Duke University Press, 2013, p.6
[120] *ibid.* p.361
[121] *ibid.*, p.5
[122] G Kester, *Conversation Pieces Community and Communication in Modern Art*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2004, p.12

both evaluates 'the status of communicability in modern and postmodern art and art theory'[123] and offers case studies of social art projects.

Kester believes that, 'from these two inquiries I develop a new aesthetic and theoretical paradigm of the work of art as a process – a locus of discursive exchange and negotiation.'[124] Kester develops his argument further, stating that, 'my goal here is to understand this work as a specific form of art practice with its own characteristics and effects, related to, but also different from, other forms of art and other forms of activism as well.'[125] Kester confirms his interest in projects that engage activism and states that his aim in the text is to treat communication as an aesthetic form. Kester's discussion focuses on exchange and dialogue rather than an art object, and therefore provides a key discussion in the field, but an alternative angle to that discussed in the thesis.

Grant Kester, *The One and the Many*, Duke University Press, Durham and London, 2011

Kester's *The One and The Many* proposes that collaborative practices blur the line between community activism and artistic production, positioned in such a way that participatory practices maintain a distance from the political and reinscribe the 'shock'. Kester focuses on 'site specific collaborative projects that unfold through extended interaction and shared labour'.[126] Kester does not discuss artists who maintain a traditional autonomous relationship but focuses instead on artists who work closely with communities, examining artists who work within the social system to institute change, and discussing works that are not strictly art, or politics, but exist somewhere in between.

Kester examines the singular role of the artist as 'the one' (or the primary creator), suggesting that 'the one' (or the artist) uses the surrounding world as a resource to be transformed and manipulated, asking if 'the many' are coerced into involvement or if it is a radical gesture by 'the many'. Kester identifies these questions as some of the most pressing political and ethical questions of today, which are central to the collaborative art projects he discusses. Kester focuses on social artworks that are inherently invested in social change occurring through three main points: The significance of autonomy, the material condition and effects of collaborative experience and regeneration.

The first deals with the significance of autonomy, the artist as autonomous, and the artwork as autonomous. Kester argues that when an artwork is interacted with, the construction of the work changes, and therefore the work cannot be autonomous, but is rather open to completion by the participant, or community. The second point deals with the specific material conditions and effects of collaborative experience; and the third deals with regeneration, exploring artworks that deal with modes of collaboration and participation in order to regenerate a community. These three points represent a disregard for the importance of the artist. Kester instead seeks a model for real social change, rather than art, which exists as a gesture to stimulate thinking about social

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[123] *ibid.*
[124] *ibid.*
[125] *ibid.* p.11
[126] G Kester, *The One and The Many*, Duke University Press, Durham, London, 2011 p.9

change. Kester discusses art's transformative role, discussing art that, for example, improves local conditions, and has the potential to transform and re-energise a community, this can be seen in the work of Danish collaborative group Superflex, Dutch artist Thomas Hirschhorn and Belgium artist Francis Alys. The practices Kester discuss 'seek to openly problematize the authorial status of the artist, and they often rely on more conciliatory (and less custodial) strategies and relationships.'[127] 'Kester valorises artworks that involve an immersion in local conditions, allowing artists to slowly develop solutions to very particular sociopolitical problems through a sustained dialogue with specific communities.'[128]

Magdalena Malm and Annika Wik (Eds.) 'Viewer as Museum' in *Imagining the Audience*, Riksutställningar/Swedish Exhibition Agence/Art and Theory, Sweden, 2012

Swedish theorists Magdalena Malm and Annika Wik discuss the role of the author and the interstices between contemporary art and performance. The text is a dialogue between the Swedish-born, London-based artist duo Lundahl & Seitl and Swedish curator Johan Pousette. Lundahl & Seitl describe their creation of 'performative pieces where the viewer is at the epicentre of the work… they describe how they focus on the immaterial and use the viewers' mind and perception to transport them to a parallel, virtual place.'[129] Lundahl and Seitl's description establishes the epicentre of their work. The essay 'Viewer as Museum' discusses the tedious placement of participatory practices within various other disciplines such as described in American critic Shannon Jackson's book *Social Works* 2011.

Lundahl & Seitl explain that a discussion of relating disciplines demonstrates the problematic positioning of social art as referencing other disciplines. 'The financing behind the production of art has often proven to be decisive in defining "what it is." We have shown *Symphony of a Missing Room* with financing from museums, or as a coproduction with a dance, theatre, or performance festival. We find ourselves in between these economies.'[130] Due to the social nature of their artwork Lundahl & Seitl find themselves in a space where their activity blurs the lines between art and life. When this occurs it is necessary for a system to be in place that acknowledges the work produced 'as art'. Due to social artists' desire to create an experience, as opposed to an art object, it becomes necessary to position the work correctly within the discipline within which it is to be understood so that no conceptual slippages take place.

Through their discussion of the understanding of their own artwork Lundahl & Seitl examine the role of the author, stating that, 'if one was to place our work in the context of a particular trend in contemporary art it is most relevant how the role of the artist has become more multifaceted and how the methods and constellations of collaborations have become increasingly cross-disciplinary.'[131] They continue, stating

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[127] G Kester, *The One and The Many*, Duke University Press, Durham, London, 2011 p.65
[128] E Heartney 'Can Art Change Lives' accessed July 23, 2013 http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/books/can-art-change-lives/
[129] M Malm and A Wik, *Imagining the Audience*, Riksutställningar/Swedish exhibition Agency, 2012, p.19
[130] Lundahl & Seitl, 'The Viewer as Medium' in *Imagining the Audience*, Riksutställningar/Swedish exhibition Agency, 2012, p.95
[131] *ibid.*

that, 'our work mirrors the new role of the artist as curator and the creation of artworks that find themselves on the border between a curatorial/institutional reinterpretation of an existing exhibition or work, and an autonomous artwork.'[132] Lundahl and Seitl explore the role of the artist in participatory work through a discussion of the positioning of social art in various disciplines; however, through the audience's involvement and perception, the role of the artist is validated as integral to the process of creating the work.

Lars Bang Larsen, 'Social Aesthetics' (1999) in *Participation*, Claire Bishop (ed.) MIT Press, 2006, p.172

Danish historian and art critic Lars Bang Larsen's 'Social Aesthetics' engages with social artwork in 'an attempt to present connections between today's participatory practices and historical precursors of the 1960s.'[133] '"Social Aesthetics' is an artistic attitude focussing on the world of acts.'[134] Larson states: 'it would be wrong to say that the opposite of Social Aesthetics is a painting or a sculpture, or any other traditional form of artistic expression. Social Aesthetics can't be observed alone and in this sense the term is double bound. It says that the social probably can't operate in a meaningful way without the aesthetics and vice versa, hence both the social and the sphere of art and aesthetics inform it.'[135] This point is important as Larson confirms that 'the social' as well as the 'art and aesthetics' realm are fundamental in order for social art to exist; by doing this he presents a historical context for the contemporary Scandinavian works he discusses.

Claire Bishop – 'Collaboration and its discontents', *Artforum*, February, 2006, p.178

Bishop's text briefly refers to models of collaboration in which an artist is judged by their working process. Bishop believes that, 'artists are increasingly judged by their working process—the degree to which they supply good or bad models of collaboration—and criticized for any hint of potential exploitation that fails to "fully" represent their subjects, as if such a thing were possible.'[136] Bishop's discussion outlines a tedious point in social art in relation to 'good' or 'bad' modes of collaboration, demonstrating only one model of representing the activity of the artist through a discussion of their system of making.

Bishop states, for example, that 'accusations of mastery and egocentrism are levelled at artists who work with participants to realize a project instead of allowing it to emerge through consensual collaboration.'[137] Bishop's discussion focuses primarily on the models of collaboration and the construction of social artwork. Her argument references a larger discussion, referring to the role of the collaborator in participatory

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[132] *ibid.*
[133] L Larsen, 'Social Aesthetics', *Participation, Documents of Contemporary Art* p.172
[134] *Ibid,* p.173
[135] *Ibid.*
[136] C Bishop 'Collaboration and its Discontents', Artforum, February, 2006, p.180
[137] C Bishop 'Collaboration and its Discontents', Artforum, February, 2006, p.180

art. Bishop, along with Tom Finkelpearl and Grant Kester, focuses upon collaboration rather than upon the artist and the practice of the artist.

Suzanne Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain, New Genre Public Art,* Bay Press, Seattle, Washington, 1995

American writer and theorist Suzanne Lacy's *Mapping the Terrain* aimed to develop a critical language that would identify and evaluate what she terms 'new genre public art'. Lacy designates 'the term "new genre" [that] has been used since the late sixties to describe art that departs from traditional boundaries of media. Not specifically painting, sculpture, or film, for example, new genre art might include combinations of different media. Installations, performances, conceptual art, and mixed-media art, for example, fall into the new genre category, a catchall term for experimentation in both form and content.'[138]

Lacy covers the following areas with the intention to create a language for new genre public art: social analysis and democratic processes, the responsibility of the artist, continuity, collaborative practice and the notions of public and private, engaging audiences, and new roles for artists, curators, critics and artists and collaborators, intentions, meanings and effects. Lacy believes this book attempts to throw a spotlight on the work of new genre public artists with the goal of developing a critical dialogue. 'The essays and the entries in the compendium provide a multivocal overview… the following related themes- of social analysis and artists' roles, responsibilities, and relationships with audiences… may contribute to a formal language for this type of public art.'[139]

Mapping the Terrain is a compilation of essays by writers working in the 1990s who have been asked to approach the work from a theoretical perspective, rather than creating a discussion based on artworks. Lacy means for the essays to explore and attempt to formulate the history, their individual experiences, and the potential futures of public art.

Jacques Ranciere. 'Problems and Transformations in Critical Art' in *Participation*, Claire Bishop (ed.), MIT Press, 2006, p.83

French critic Jacques Ranciere outlines the relationship or connection between art and the everyday, stating that, 'critical art must negotiate the tension that pushes art toward 'life', which conversely, separates aesthetic sensoriality from other forms of sensible experience.'[140] Ranciere goes on to discuss these ideas in *The Politics of Aesthetics*, revealing that 'the word aesthetics does not refer to a theory of sensibility, taste, and pleasure for art amateurs. It strictly refers to the specific mode of being of whatever falls within the domain of art.'[141]

Ranciere's definition of the term aesthetics, to be inclusive of whatever falls within the domain of art, is especially relevant for social art due to the tendency of social artists to use everyday activities to facilitate their work. These activities must therefore

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[138] S Lacy *Mapping the Terrain:New Genre Public Art*, Bay Press, Seattle, Washington, 1995, p.19
[139] *ibid.*p.31
[140] J Ranciere, 'Problems and Transformations in Critical Art' in *Participation, Documents of Contemporary Art*, MIT Press, 2006 p. 84
[141] J Ranciere, 'The Distribution of the Sensible' *The Politics of the Aesthetics* 2004 p.22

be read within a visual art context in order to be read as art. Art and life are just 'two distributions of the sensible' for Ranciere. Ranciere expands upon this idea, suggesting that by mixing the 'strangeness of the aesthetic experience with becoming-life of art and the becoming-art of ordinary life.'[142] This statement refers to the development of social art, and the engagement of everyday activities, in order to facilitate participation, but not in isolation from art, and it follows, not in isolation from the intentional frame of the artist.

Ranciere's position is discussed by UK critic Gail Day in *The Fear of Heteronomy*[143] by saying that 'the "autonomy of art" and the "premise of politics" are not in (simple) opposition; rather, it is their very conjuncture which grounds both the artistic autonomy and the project to change life. At the same time, this conjuncture also produces "two vanishing points": the danger of art's reduction to mere life and that of its reduction to mere art'.[144] Ranciere expands upon this, stating that, 'the aesthetic regime of the arts is the regime that strictly identifies art in the singular and frees it from any specific rule, from any hierarchy of the arts, subject matter, and genres. Yet it does so by destroying the mimetic barrier that distinguishes ways of doing and making affiliated with art from other ways of doing and making, a barrier that separated its rules from the order of social occupations.'[145] Ranciere's reference to these vanishing points relates a risk of art's collapse to exist as life. This relates to Grau's 'The Quarrel' 2013 and to the overall argument throughout the thesis that positions the artist as important in contextualising social-based artwork.

Ranciere outlines the connection experience brings, between art and everyday life, stating that, 'it simultaneously establishes the autonomy of art and the identity of its forms with the forms that life uses to shape itself.'[146] Ranciere strongly links everyday life with art by referencing forms within art as the same that life uses to shape it, in order to establish the distinction between everyday life and art as two 'distributions of the sensible'. Day solidifies this, quoting Ranciere: 'art is art to the extent that it is something else than art. It is always "aestheticized", meaning that it is always posed as a "form of life" 'emphasising the mutual permeability of art and life, he [Ranciere] sets out a social concept of the aesthetic.'[147] Ranciere's discussion of the 'social concept of the aesthetic', as outlined by Day, grounds this discussion, as it proposes, firstly, that the artist uses everyday materials in order to create a bridge for their work, and, secondly, suggests that the artist is key in enabling the project that exists so closely to everyday life to exist.

Charles Green, *The Third Hand: Collaboration in Art from Conceptualism to Postmodernism*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2001

Australian writer and artist Charles Green, in his book *The Third Hand*, discusses the process/activity of collaborations as altering the terms of artistic authorship. Green focuses on collaborative 'teams' such as Serbian/American Marina Abramovic and

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[142] J Ranciere 'Problems and Transformations in Critical Art' in *Participation, Documents of Contemporary Art* p.84
[143] G Day, *The Fear of Heteronomy,* , Third Text, 1475-5297, 23:4, 2009
[144] G Day, *The Fear of Heteronomy*, Third Text, 1475-5297, 23:4, 2009, p.3
[145] J Ranciere, *The Politics of Aesthetics* (2000) Bloomsbury, London, G Rockhill (translator and editor, 2004, p.18
[146] *ibid.*, p.23
[147] Day, *op cit.* p.3

Ulay, Russian/Americans Christo and Jeanne Claude, and English duo Gilbert and George, proposing the 'third hand' as an additional identity or a separate artistic practice that occurs through the act of collaboration.

Green states that, 'artistic collaboration is a special and obvious case of the manipulation of the figure of the artist, for at the very least collaboration involves a deliberately chosen alteration of artistic identity from individual to composite subjectivity. One expects new understandings of artistic authorship to appear in artistic collaborations, understandings that may or may not be consistent with the artists' solo productions before they take up collaborative projects.'[148] This statement indicates that Green has developed a system in which to discuss the artistic output of two individuals who collaborate. What Green describes as the 'third hand' is the creative outcome of the collaboration. Green is therefore giving solidity to the collaborative output and by this has established a system in which to perceive collaborative artwork, through an understanding of the work being the output of the artist's 'third hand'.

Alma Ruiz, 'Open Up: An Introduction', *The Experimental Exercise of Freedom*, 1999, p.20

The Experimental Exercise of Freedom is the catalogue linked to an exhibition of the same name that features Latin American artists of the Neo-Concrete movement Lygia Clark, Gego, Mathias Goeritz, Helio Oiticica, and Mira Schendel. The nature of these artists' practices outlines the changing role of the artist from a maker of objects to a facilitator of situations. This is extensively discussed by Ruiz who reiterated that, 'the artists in the exhibition assigned great importance to art as a living experience in which the artist, as Oiticica wrote "understands his/her position not any longer as a creator for contemplation, but as an instigator of creation," from this perspective the spectator was no longer considered to be a passive contemplator but an active participant in the production of meaning.'[149]

This confirms the shift in the artist's activity from the maker of objects to the creator of experiences, resulting in a transfer in the outcome of the project, from an art object to a participant's experience. Ruiz continues, stating that, 'artists for the most part, preferred actions that emphasized process while assigning little or no artistic value to the finished product.'[150] Ruiz outlines the role of the artist in these historical art practices as being process rather than outcome driven, discussing them as facilitators in the key objective of 'creating' experience through participation.

Ruiz discusses Clark's work, explaining that the works were '"vehicles for a bodily experience," intended to be handled, worn, felt, and played with by the viewer. In this way, the viewer becomes a participant in the work, and the experience of the viewer in turn becomes the outcome of the project. Linked with this development was Clark's initiation of group experiences involving friends and students... In these collective experiments, individuals were required to participate or leave, eliminating both the

[148] C Green, *The Third Hand*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 2001, p.x
[149] A Ruiz, 'Open Up: An Introduction', *The Experimental Exercise of Freedom*, 1999, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. p.20
[150] A Ruiz, *ibid.*, p.22

role of the spectator and that of the author of the work.'[151] By doing this Clark ensures that all people attending were participants.

Ruiz expands on the discussion of the relationship between the artist and participant in a discussion of Helio Oiticica's work *Eden* 1937-1980, in which 'he or she completes the journey from passive spectator to active participant, realizing that both Oiticica's and Clark's expectations that the spectator, more than the artist, lends meaning to the object.'[152] Ruiz's proposes that within such artworks the role of the artist shifts from being the creator of isolated artworks in the Modernist tradition and instead can be seen as investigators, entrepreneurs, educators and creators of new experimental conditions and experiences.

Claire Bishop 'And That is What Happened There: Six Participants of The Bijlmer Spinoza-Festival', *Thomas Hirschhorn, Establishing a Critical Corpus,* JRP Ringier, 2011, p.9

Bishop's essay explores Swiss contemporary artist Thomas Hirschhorn's project The Bijlmer Spinoza Festival 2009, a project that incorporated the community of Bijlmer, which is an estate in the south-east of Amsterdam. The community worked with Hirschhorn to build a structure and create a festival in honour of the Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza. Bishop writes about her decision to approach participants of the artworks, explaining that she was 'wanting a more nuanced sense of the dynamic between artist and participants, and for them to tell me things that I was unable to detect from attending the event.'[153] Bishop demonstrates through her inquiry that she believes a durational experience of the work is important due to the nature of the work as progression, with various activities being carried out at various times and in various places. As Bishop was unable to spend prolonged periods of time with the work, she asked the participants and viewers to describe/explain Hirschhorn's artwork and in particular about their relationship with the artist in order to critique the work.

In Bishop's interview with a participant of the project, Sammy Monsels (a community member who became one of the main on site coordinators of the project), explains that, 'they introduced Thomas as a very important artist, but that didn't make any impression on us in advance. The point is, he had the strength and the power to impress us. You could feel in his way of talking that he was deadly serious and could convince people of their talent and possibility to get something done.'[154] Sammy's statement demonstrates the importance of Hirschhorn in motivating the participants to be involved in the work through Hirschhorn's physical presence and vision for the project. This indicates that the social artist is essential in the development and establishment of their work, in both the planning, and in Hirschhorn's case, working with participants to create the work.

The focus of Hirschhorn's work is described by Bishop as being 'more akin to a machine, whose meaning lay in its continual production and collective presence, and only secondarily in the content of what was being produced.'[155] In referring to the

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[151] *ibid.*, p.26
[152] *ibid.*, p.28
[153] C Bishop 'And That is What Happened There', *Thomas Hirschhorn, Establishing a Critical Corpus*. JRP Ringier, 2011, p.9
[154] *ibid.*, p.14
[155] *ibid.*, p.11

content being produced, Bishop is referring to the structures that the community is creating, whereas the real 'content' or outcome of the work is in the participants' experiences. Hirschhorn's influence and presence in the production process is therefore very important to the outcome of the work; Monsels states, 'we found that he is one of us, who can also represent us on *any other level*. And that is the connection that a lot of people want.'[156]

Through a discussion with the participants of the project, Bishop's essay responds to a discussion of participants – who are often discussed as either 'exploited or empowered, credited or misrepresented by an artist's project – hapless victims of authentic collaborators.'[157] Bishop approached the text with the intention to add to the previous literature surrounding participatory art by approaching participatory projects through discussions with participants in order to analyse the work, rather than a discussion of the work from consideration of the artist's intention.

Umberto Eco, 'The Poetics of the Open Work', *Participation: Documents of Contemporary Art*, MIT Press, 2006, p. 20

Italian philosopher Umberto Eco is one of the pioneers of 'reader response theory.'[158] Eco explains his notion of the 'open work', stating that, 'the poetics of the "work in movement" (and partly that of the "open" work) sets in motion a new cycle of relations between the artist and his audience.'[159] Eco intends the work to be brought to conclusion by the performer or participant at the same time as they are experiencing it, stating 'in short, it installs a new relationship between the *contemplation* and the *utilization* of a work of art.'[160] Eco addresses an open-ended nature of modern music, art and literature, discussing a new mode of aesthetic reception (through the 'reader') and new forms of communication. Eco's writing shifts the role of the artist from the creator of the work to the facilitator of the work instead focussing on the 'reader'. With a focus on the act of reading in the interpretation of texts or the 'reader response theory,' Eco disenfranchises the artist, instead focussing on the 'reading' or participation as the outcome of the work. *The Poetics of the Open Work* therefore contributes to an understanding of participatory art due to the shift in the role of the author from 'maker' of traditional objects to the 'facilitator' of an experience. However, the thesis argues that without the 'text' the reader would have nothing to interpret.

Guy Debord, 'Towards a Situationist International', 1957, *Participation* (ed. Claire Bishop), MIT Press and Whitechapel Gallery, London, 2006, p.96

Debord's 'Towards a Situationist International' was a theory of constructed situations developed in response to the 'bind of capitalism'. Debord proposed to introduce

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[156] C Bishop 'And That is What Happened There', *Thomas Hirschhorn, Establishing a Critical Corpus. JRP Ringier, 2011, p.15*
[157] *ibid.*, p.7
[158] Reader response theory emphasises the role of the reader or the act of reading in the interpretation of texts.
[159] U Eco, 'The Poetics of the Open Work' 1962 in *Participation, Documents of Contemporary Art*, C. Bishop (ed.)MIT Press, 2006, p.39
[160] *ibid.*, p.39

everywhere 'a revolutionary alternative to the ruling culture,'[161] 'the most general aim must be to broaden the non-mediocre portion of life, to reduce its empty moments as much as possible "it is equally linked to the recognition of the fact that a battle over leisure is taking place before our eyes whose importance in the class struggle has not be sufficiently analysed"'.[162] Debord postulates that 'the ruling class is succeeding in making use of the leisure that the revolutionary proletariat extracted from it by developing a vast industrial sector of leisure that is an unrivaled instrument for destializing the proletariat through by-products of mystifying ideology and bourgeois tastes.'[163] In response to the bourgeois use of 'leisure' the Situationist International formulated rough maps by which individuals traced their way around the city, taking routes and accessing areas that were out of their everyday routine. These activities were called a 'Dérieve' or 'Drift' which is the practice of a 'passionate uprooting through the hurried change of environments, as well as a means of studying psychogeography and situationist psychology.' [164] This activity relates to the ideologies behind the activity referring to politics.

However, French theorist Jacques Ranciere in his article 'The Emancipated Spectator' 2009 suggests that Debord's reading of spectacle 'makes them [the participant] abandon the position of spectator: No longer seated in front of the spectacle, they are instead surrounded by the performance, dragged into the circle of the action, which gives them back their collective energy.'[165] This statement again shows Debord's underlying premise of the Situationist International as having political weight; this was the main premise of the Situationist International's activity related to the construction of situations, both through the dérives and in various other events; however, their entire program was ephemeral. Debord states that, 'in a classless society, it might be said, there will be no more painters, only situationists who, among other things, make paintings'. This comment refers to the class distinctions that were attached to the role of the artist and the overall notion of the bourgeoisie and 'leisure'. Debord formulated the Situationist International as a revolutionary alternative to the ruling class of the time.

Tom Marioni. *Beer, Art and Philosophy*, Crown Point Press, USA, 2003

American artist Tom Marioni's work is based within social interaction. His book *Beer, Art and Philosophy* 2003 is an autobiographical discussion of his work and ideas. Marioni's text describes his own art and practices, in a discussion of the ideologies of Picasso and Duchamp, while incorporating the social components in his discussion of why an activity is 'art'. Marioni substantiates an outline and connection between art and life, stating that, 'when the Janitor swept the floor, it was real life. When the dancer swept the floor, it was dance. When the actor swept the floor, it was theatre. And when I swept the floor, it was sculpture, a sculpture action. The same activity was different, depending on the intent of the person doing it.'[166] This statement shows Marioni's approach to art, through the engagement in everyday activities, conversation in his amalgamation of everyday life and art, proposing that art and everyday life can co-

[161] G Debord, 'Towards a Situationist International', 1957, in *Participation, Documents of Contemporary Art* (ed. Claire Bishop), MIT Press and Whitechapel Gallery, London, 2006 p.101
[162] *ibid.*p.97
[163] *ibid.* p.97
[164] *ibid.* p.98
[165] J. Ranciere, 'The Emancipated Spectator', *Artforum*, March 2007, p.279
[166] T Marioni, *Beer, Art and Philosophy,* Crown Point Press, USA, 2003, p.138

exist, and whereby the distinction can be made between them through intention. As shown in Marioni's example, intention, and the positioning of an activity within an artist's practice, enables the work to exist as art, within the artist's methodology.

This literature review has discussed texts that shaped the field historically, and addressed the limitations of the field through a discussion of the relevant debates surrounding social art today. The texts identify the gap in the field that this thesis addresses, that currently locates the social artist in a variety of other fields such as theatre, politics, community art and education, rather than creating a discussion that locates the social artist in a *place* within visual art. The texts discussed have therefore identified the importance of the research at hand, in identifying the need for a discussion relating to the role and discussion of the social artist in visual art.

Chapter 2
The Artist of the Social Turn: A History of Social Art Practices

> For (in every art) some purpose must be conceived; otherwise we could not ascribe the product to be art at all; it would be a mere product of chance.[167]

This chapter focuses on the historical position, role and activity of the artist, examining artwork and practices from the early to late 20th century as a foundation for contemporary social art practices.[168] The chapter will focus primarily on artists from the 1960s onwards who have been engaged with social artwork as a conceptual model to better express issues related to socio-political, cultural and artistic concerns. In stating this, however, particular key artists and art movements from the early 20th century will be discussed as they were the starting point and conceptual frame from which future advancement in the field took place. The chapter forms the basis for the thesis, arguing that the value of the social artist is measured through an *intentional model* that has been developed in this research in order to show that the social artist is as important as the traditional object-based artist.

This chapter creates a foundation for the overall discussion, by examining the artist through 20th century and more recent art history. The chapter provides the basis for the chapters following, in order to establish a suitable place for the social artist in visual art. The following historical discussion of artists validates a basis for the overall thesis, as it demonstrates how and why a shift from traditional object-based art to social art practices has taken place, due to specific individuals wishing to utilise non-traditional methods as a strategy in the production of their art.

Central to the discussion are key artists within the field: American Conceptual artists Yoko Ono and Adrian Piper, Brazilian Neo-Concrete artists Helio Oiticica and Lygia Clark, Philipino artist David Medalla, New York-based artist Marina Abramovic and the American group 'Anarchitecture', as well as works by German artist Joseph Beuys in 'Fluxus' in addition to the Russian Group 'Collective Actions'. This selection of artists and groups of artists are historically significant because their work constitutes some of the foundational practices that established the development of social art. Their various conceptual intentions make evident the diversity of approaches[169] or strategies, in addition to how artists have expanded from traditional practices in order to facilitate participatory practices that are more strategically connected to the ideas each artist was seeking to convey.

The artworks and practices discussed identify the role of the artist in recent history as a facilitator of an event or social activity, rather than the creator of a static object for another person, historically referred to as a viewer in traditional object-based practices. The practices of the artists discussed indicate the shift from a traditional

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[167] Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, 1790, Berlin, Trans. Hafner Press, New York, 1951, p.153

[168] I am aware that the continuance of art history itself is a contested or controversial topic, in particular the global context of contemporary art as discussed by J. Elkins in *Is Art History Global?* Taylor and Francis 2006.

[169] Approaches refer to the use of everyday activities in order to induce participation in the work. Various approaches are discussed in depth in Chapter 4.

object-based art activity to the expansion of the 'artwork' to include a physically and conceptually engaging experience for the participant. This transition alters the experience of the individual viewing the work, from a static or removed relationship with an art object to a participatory experience with a social art project. This discussion is significant because it establishes that the value of the artist in relation to a social artwork should be considered the same as that of any other artist who has been traditionally valued as the creator of an object. This chapter establishes the central aim of the PhD thesis, arguing that the artist has a fundamental role in social art and that, without the presence or conceptual frame of the artist, such work would not exist as visual art.

Traditional object-based artworks, on the other hand, are able to self-identify as art as they usually exist as objects that are located within a museum space, for example, and have no other use or function than an aesthetic one, or at most have a formal focus that contains another message such as a political statement. But it is the formal syntax and address to the eye of such objects that is most compelling. Romanian artist Constantin Brancusi's *Mademoiselle Pogany* 1912 (Fig. 15), for example, consists of a representational/abstract figure in bronze placed on a stone plinth. This work is representative of traditional modes of display for sculpture in visual art history.

Fig. 15

This chapter will establish the foundation for a place to acknowledge the artist as primary creator and facilitator of their work. Each of the artists mentioned above is key in revealing/addressing the key premise of the thesis, identifying that the artist's intention is key in creating a specific intentional model[170] that allows an everyday activity or object to be read and experienced as art. The intentional model is generated from the artist's intentions to create a framework of a set of rules or ideologies to facilitate participation. The social artist's intention enables the work to be participated in and this shows that the artist is important in order for participation to be facilitated, or so the thesis will establish.

The allocation of a place for the artist in social art is essential, because at present, the artist is in a 'state of crisis', as French theorist Donatien Grau argues in his essay 'Another Quarrel' 2013. Grau proposes that a displacement of the role of the artist has occurred within art. This dislocation of the social artist occurs as a result of the participant becoming the primary aspect in participation, removing the emphasis from the artist's hand (American critics Grant Kester and Tom Finkelpearl discuss this to

[170] This model is discussed at length in Chapter 5 *More Like Working with Gases than Solids: A Place for the Artist in Social Art*.

various degrees, which will be examined later). The social artist has subsequently been discussed in relation to a variety of disciplines that are unrelated to visual arts practice and as such are therefore displaced as a result of the misreading of their work.

The argument that is developed for the current thesis establishes that the social artist exists in a crisis parallels the argument put by Grau, who proposes that artists are in crisis due to market or industry-based politics in which only 'the best' survive. Grau's argument pursues an interest in the role and activity of the artist, questioning how they are able to exist, or not exist during this crisis. The treatment of the social artist reflects Grau's crisis due to the variety of disciplines in which the work is critiqued, rather than through debates associated with visual art, which would acknowledge the social artist. Grau's argument suggests that despite the current crisis of the artist, there is hope. Hope to establish a place for these artists that Grau refers to as 'monsters' due to their displacement in society. This thesis is in part a response to Grau's proposition, something he does not pursue in any length.

The thesis proposes that at present artists in social art are displaced, because they are not acknowledged to be in a position of authority, but are rather discussed through a variety of disciplines, activities and collectives to which the art projects appear to relate. As well as this, social-based artists also lose their position of authority through their work being aligned with the everyday, due to their utilisation of everyday objects and situations. The social artist's use of everyday activities with the engagement of numerous participants' results in a loss of authority of the artist, as the art project is unable to self-identify as art, and instead identifies as the activity that is used by the artist to facilitate participation.

The artists discussed primarily represent the artist as a 'facilitator' rather than 'art maker', which was initiated by French Dadaist Marcel Duchamp. Duchamp articulated through his work a departure from the artist as a maker of objects, to the artist as a creator of frameworks, in order to contextualise an object as art, through conceptual/ideological means. Duchamp achieved this by using 'ready-made' objects, for example, *Fountain* 1917 (Fig. 16) consisting of a store bought urinal which he signed with the pseudonym 'R. Mutt' and placed in a gallery.

Fig. 16

Fountain has become the primary historical example of the 'ready-made', which refers to the use of an everyday, manufactured object that was made initially for a purpose outside of art, to take the place of the traditional handmade artwork. *Fountain* demonstrates how Duchamp's 'ready-made' is able to exist as an artwork through his declaration of the object as art; because 'in the creative act, the artist goes from intention to realization… art may be bad, good, or indifferent, but, whatever adjective is used, we must call it art, and bad art is still art in the same way that a bad emotion

is still an emotion.'[171] Through this statement Duchamp is commenting on the artist's intention through their creation of the artwork.

Duchamp attacks artistic intention by not using his own name; he is not the author or 'creator god' as Barthes put it. Instead Duchamp displaces the artist as important in the process, stating that, 'the creative act is not performed by the artist alone; the spectator brings the work in contact with the external world by deciphering and interpreting its inner qualifications and thus adds his contribution to the creative act.'[172] However, in stating this Duchamp acknowledges that there are still two factors in the creation of art: 'the artist on the one hand, and on the other the spectator who later becomes the posterity.'[173] Duchamp recognises that there is a duality in the reading and experiencing of an artwork that contains both the artist's conceptual intentions and the viewer's participatory response creating an interpersonal experience of an artwork.

German theorist Boris Groys in an article titled 'Marcel Duchamp's Absolute Art' 2012 states that, 'when a culturally valorized object can be physically distinguished from ordinary everyday things, [by the artist's intention] there arises a temptation that is altogether understandable, from a psychological standpoint, to interpret this physical difference as the reason for the discrepancy in value between the "artistic object" and those everyday things.'[174] Duchamp's 'ready-mades' use an 'everyday thing' in the exhibition space which changes the role of the artist from being the creator of what appears to be the 'culturally valorised object' as explained by Groys, to the artist being the culturally valorised influence in the work. This idea is realised in Duchamp's *Fountain*, which exists as art due to the intention of the artist, despite Duchamp's use of a pseudonym and his emphasis on reception, even if this artist is no longer associated with the traditional romantic model of the 'creative genius'.

Duchamp was a member of a group of artists and poets referred to as 'Dada' who were not united by a common style, but by a rejection of convention relating to war, nationalism and the bourgeoisie. The key Dadaist included Duchamp, Hans Arp, Tristan Tzara, Andre Breton, Francis Picabia, Kurt Schwitters, Man Ray and Hugo Ball. The activities of the Dadaists included 'Visits', Dada Salons, Conferences, Commemorations, Operas, Plebiscites, Summonses, Accusation Orders, and Judgements.[175] All of these events sought to involve the Parisian public and established the Dada artists as facilitators of experiences, rather than as the makers of objects. *The Grande Saison Dada* was a body of work in the form of a series of manifestations made by the Dadaists in Paris from April to May 1921. One of the most prominent works was *An Excursion to the Church of Saint Julien le Pauvre* (1921) (Fig. 17, 18), which drew more than 100 people despite the pouring rain. One month later Dada artists and writers organised a mock trial of the French anarchist/author turned nationalist Maurice Barres, entitled *Trial and sentencing of M. Maurice Barrés, by DADA* 1921 in which members of the public were invited to sit on the jury.

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[171] M Duchamp, 'The Creative Act', *Marcel Duchamp*, R Lebel (ed.), Paragraphic Books, New York 1959, p.77
[172] *ibid.*
[173] *ibid.*
[174] B Groys, 'Marcel Duchamp's Absolute Art', Mousse Magazine, Issue 36, December 2012, http://moussemagazine.it/articolo.mm?id=914 accessed June 6, 2014, p.1
[175] C Bishop, *Artificial Hells,* Verso, 2012, p.66

Fig. 17

Fig. 18

These events demonstrate the facilitation of events by artists, initiating an experience for the public, shifting their position from distant observer to participant. This establishes a progression from art existing as a static object to art existing as an experience, as a result of artists using everyday activities and situations as a vehicle to create participatory artworks. André Breton states in his essay 'Artificial Hells, Inauguration of the "1921 Dada Season" 1921', that 'by conjoining with gesture, Dada has left the realm of shadows to venture onto solid ground.'[176] This statement demonstrates an expansion from what Breton terms 'gesture' or an object that was created by an artist, to a work existing in everyday life. This shift reiterates the importance of the intention of the artist in contextualising art projects that use everyday activities as a bridge for participation. UK critic Claire Bishop supports this, describing Dada works as 'collaborative (yet highly authored) experiences.'[177] Bishop's statement recognises that the intention of the artist creates a framework that facilitates the artwork, and creates a basis for participation to occur.

Bishop suggests that German theorist Walter Benjamin creates a model for artwork to be participated in. This model is significant because it addresses the relationship between the participant and the project in social art. Bishop states, 'Benjamin maintained that the work of art should actively intervene and provide a model for allowing viewers to be more involved in the process of production.'[178] Benjamin directly states that, 'this apparatus is better, the more consumers it is able to turn into producers – this is, the more readers or spectators into collaborators.'[179] Benjamin's position focuses on the 'collaborator' (or participant); however, the artist maintains their role as crucial through their construction of a framework, in order for the work to be participated in. The artist may no longer make objects to be viewed and consumed by another individual, but collaboration of the inclusion of the audience in participation requires the conceptual frame created by the artist.

Conceptualists and performance artists also started to react against the notion of the artist as singular genius. This model of artistic identity is most closely associated with 'Action Painting' in North America (also referred to as 'Abstract Expressionism' and the 'New York School') and, to a lesser degree, 'Tachism' in Europe. In this model of artistic identity the artist is celebrated as an individual creator of works, rather than

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[176] A Breton, 'Artificial Hells, Inauguration of the "1921 Dada Season"' (1921), trans. Matthew S. Witkovsky in October, 105, Summer 2003, 139; *Participation*, C Bishop (ed.), MIT Press, 2011, p.16
[177] C Bishop, 'Viewers as Producers' *Participation, Documents of Contemporary Art*, Whitechapel Gallery and the MIT Press, 2006, p.10
[178] *ibid.*, p.11
[179] W Benjamin, 'The Author as Producer', *Benjamin, Selected Writings,* Vol.2, part 2, 1931-1934, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003, p.777

being disregarded in social art through a reading of the work through various other disciplines. German Philosopher Immanuel Kant discussed the notion of 'Genius' in his 'Critique of Judgement' 1790.[180] Kant proposes that 'genius' is the ability to independently arrive at, and understand ideologies and concepts that are original, thus demonstrating the paramount role and value of the artist in initiating an artwork. The 'genius', Kant asserts, 'gives the rule to art', thus creating a model of originality for others to pursue. The thesis, whilst defending the place of the artist, does not follow this romantic notion of the artist as originator, but it does maintain a need for considering the vital place of the artist as provider of the frame for participation.

American critic Harold Rosenberg, more closely aligned with a Kantian account of genius, nevertheless established a shift from the viewing of an object to an encounter with an object in his famous essay 'American Action Painters' 1952. Rosenberg states that, 'the painter no longer approached his easel with an image in his mind; he went up to it with material in his hand to do something to that other piece of material in front of him. The image would be the result of this encounter.'[181] Rosenberg emphasises the process via the act, as a part of the outcome, by indicating a shift to the experience of the very 'act' of painting and an engagement with the painting as an index of the process of creation, rather than the artist simply creating a painting to be looked at. Further, the Action Painting of the late 1940s focussed on the 'action' of splattering/dripping of the paint, removing the focus from the artist as author to the artist as facilitator. This is done through the element of 'chance' which comes into the creation of the work, because even though the artist chooses the colour and roughly positions where it will go on the canvas, through bodily action the paint attaches itself on the canvas through a system of participatory action between the artist and the field of action. In this method of painting the artist is a facilitator rather than a specific maker of the artwork. This is demonstrated in the work of American artist Jackson Pollock *One: Number 31* 1950 (Fig. 19) where his splattering/drip technique, created by dropping paint, creates an 'automatic' construction and an element of chance in the assembly of the paintings.

Fig. 19

Fig. 20

Chance is also used as a strategy in the work of American artist Morris Louis *Alpha-Pi* 1960 (Fig. 20). Through the automatic process of pouring the paint to create the abstract composition, Louis removed the specific planned outcome, leaving room for a variety of outcomes to occur organically. This example demonstrates the artist's expansion from the traditional 'technique'-based painting to a painting based upon a set of instructions implemented by the artist. It is then the artist's directions that are indicative of the work's outcome.

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[180] Kant I, *Critique of Judgement*, 1790, Berlin, Trans. Hafner Press, New York, 1951

[181] H Rosenberg, 'The American Action Painters', Art in Theory, 1900-1990, ed. Harrison, Wood, Blackwell Publishing, 1992, p.581

American critic Grant Kester further elaborates on this view by stating 'one of the primary trajectories of modernist art involves the gradual erosion of the authoring conscious via techniques such as automatic drawing, frottage, montage, the splatter and dripping of paint and so on.'[182] The author's role is eroded because as mentioned above, the specific outcome or result of the painting has changed from the deliberate application of paint with a brush to, for example, the splattering of paint using a stick. The use of authoring via techniques such as those outlined by Kester, again indicates a shift in the artist as a creator of composed images to the artist as the facilitator of an experience that is the outcome of the work. This shift relates to the role of the social artist as the facilitator of an intentional framework or structure that creates a situation in which the participant can have an experience understood as an art experience. This experience is art because it is located within an artist's ideology and practice. The artist's intention creates a structure for the experience and the work to exist as art.

French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre's essay 'L'Existentialisme est un humanisme' (Paris, 1946; Eng. Trans. 1948) supports the positioning of the artist as the instigator of a framework or intention that produces an experience stating, 'there is no reality except in action.'[183] (This was discussed above with regard to Existentialism, relating to what Sartre refers to as 'existence before essence'[184], which means the blueprint or purpose pre-exists the actual outcome, or object.) This statement, like Rosenberg's premise, establishes a shift from the static object to an action, or experience. Rosenberg positions the artwork in the context of the artist, stating that, 'a painting that is an act is inseparable from the biography of the artist. The painting itself is a "moment" in the adulterated mixture of his life – whether "moment" means the actual minutes taken up with spotting the canvas or the entire duration of a lucid drama conducted in sign language.'[185] This is shown in American artist Mark Rothko's *No 61 (Rust and Blue)* 1953 (Fig.21) where his fields of colour are best read within an understanding of the artist's intention/overall practice. These works express basic human emotions and comments on the human condition. Rosenberg demonstrates that the practice and 'biography' of the artist contextualises all of the art that the artist has made. However, Rosenberg is not entirely correct as it is not the biography of the artist, but their conceptual intention that enables the artist (and in this thesis the social artist) to create a frame for participation. The role/intention of the artist is therefore essential in contextualising the work as art, because as Rosenberg asserts, the artist and the artist's life are inherently located in the artwork. For the thesis, what is located in the artwork or social experience as art is the artist's conceptual intention or frame.

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[182] G Kester, *The One and the Many*, Duke University Press, 2011, p.3

[183] J Sartre's essay *L'Existentialisme est un humanisme* (Paris, 1946; Eng. trans., 1948 in The Grover Encyclopedia of American Art, Oxford University Press, 2011, p.27

[184] 'Existence precedes essence' refers to Sartre's emphasis on ontology and away from the bias of epistemology that emerged in scholasticism and early modern philosophy. The human being (artist) acts and these acts lead to the identity of the actor/artist. Heidegger (who influenced Sartre) says we are 'thrown' into the world, thus there is no essence prior to that existential fact. Value and identity are not essences given prior to existence, but rather are acquired through action and freedom. This links to abstract expressionism/action painting.

[185] Harold Rosenberg, 'The American Action Painters', in Art in Theory, 1900-1990, ed. Harrison, Wood, Blackwell Publishing, 1992, p.582

Fig. 21

The artist's intention governing the existence and creation of an artwork is also evident in the work of early 1950s American composer, music theorist and artist John Cage, American choreographer Merce Cunningham and American artist Allan Kaprow. This group of artists experimented with an intentional framework that allowed the outcome of the artwork to be governed by chance, something we normally associate with the absence of the artist. The 'chance operations' were set up as situations in which various outcomes could occur, and this process shows the use of the artist's intention, where the outcome of the work is governed by a set of rules, or a framework that has been established by the artist in order to facilitate an outcome. This is shown in Kaprow's *Fluids* 1961 (Fig. 22) in which Kaprow initiated a system where the work is constructed by having people assist in building a structure from bricks of ice; however, the outcome of the work is melted away, existing only in the experience of the individuals and the artist's intent that occurred through the process of making.

Fig. 22

A framework for an artwork to exist and be read in the everyday is seen in the work of 'The Situationist International' 1957 which consisted of French novelist Michèle Bernstein, French Marxist theorist, film maker, artist and writer Guy Debord and Danish artist Asger Jorn. This collective was consisted of a group of socialists, artists and political theorists, who operated in Paris in the late 1950s. Debord states in his essay 'Toward a Situationist International' 1957 that 'our central purpose is the construction of situations, that is, the concrete construction of temporary settings of life and their transformation into a higher, passionate nature.'[186] This statement indicates the importance of the artist in establishing an outline for the work/situation to exist within. Debord outlines the premise of the work of the 'Situationist

[186] G Debord, 'Towards a Situationist International', 1957 in *Participation*, C Bishop(ed.), MIT Press, p.96

International', which facilitates constructed situations, or participatory events and alternative experiences and behaviour, to break the bind of capitalism.[187] In a desire to activate the city, the 'Situationist Internationals' created events, which they termed a *'dérive'* (or drift), as one of the principal concepts deployed. Debord states 'the *dérive,* is the practice of a passionate uprooting through the hurried change of environments, as well as a means of studying psychogeography and situationist psychology.'[188] The *dérives* were facilitated by a very loose map (Fig. 23 & Fig. 24), that had multiple arrows pointing in various directions, taking the participants on an alternative route through Paris, accessing spaces and engaging in experiences that they may not have had otherwise.

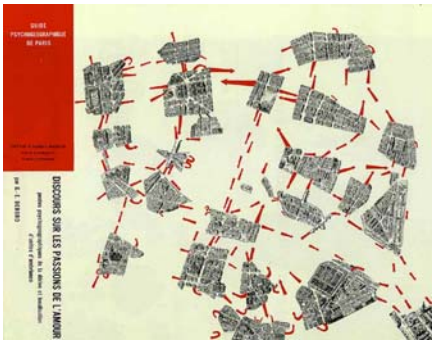

Fig. 23

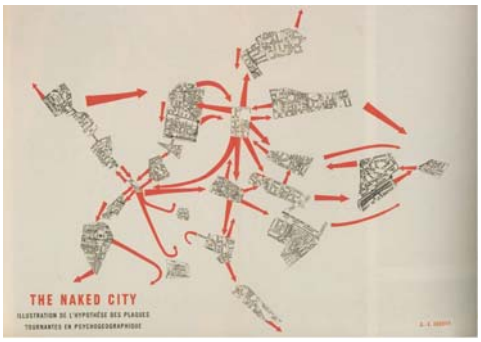

Fig. 24

Debord explains the premise of the work, stating that, 'everything leads to the belief that the main insight of our research lies in the hypothesis of constructions of situations.' [189] Debord outlines the political and ethical role of the artist in the 'Situationist International', stating that, 'we must develop an intervention directed by the complicated factors of two great components in perpetual interaction: The material setting of life and the behaviours that it incites and that overturn it.'[190] Debord here indicates the artist's use of everyday life in order to create a vehicle for participation. Debord continues, stating that, 'it is not a question of knowing whether this interests you, but rather of whether you yourself could become interesting under new conditions of cultural creation.'[191]

The development of an ideological place for the artist, as the creator of an experience, relates to American critic Michael Fried's discussion determining the basis for an 'art experience'. Fried describes 'an object *in a situation* – one that, virtually by definition, *includes the beholder…* works of art must somehow *confront* the beholder – they must, one might almost say, be placed not just in his space but in his *way.*'[192] While it is clear that Fried is arguing for a shift occurring at this time from the author/artist to the 'beholder' who is included in the 'situation', this is not the end of the artist and the role they play. The role in the creation of what Fried called 'the situation' between the object and the 'beholder', in his essay 'Art and Objecthood' (1967), indicates the

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[187] *ibid.,* p.96
[188] G Debord, 'Towards a Situationist International', (1957) *Participation*, C Bishop(ed.), MIT Press, 2006, p.96
[189] *ibid.,* p.98
[190] G Debord, 'Towards a Situationist International', 1957 *Participation*, Bishop(ed.), MIT Press, 2006, p.96
[191] *ibid.*
[192] M Fried, 'Art and Objecthood'(1967) *Postmodern Animal,* S Baker (ed.) Reaktion Books, London, 2000, p.53

development of the artist as the creator of an experience for the participant, rather than the producer of an object. The artist as monad or individual creator of isolated objects for a distanced viewer has largely passed, but the role of the artist remains.

Allan Kaprow's 'Happenings' also show, like the 'Situationist International', the artist as a facilitator of an event, creating a framework for a participant to engage in the artwork. The shift that participatory artwork facilitates, from the viewer to participant, is demonstrated in Kaprow's constructed situations, for example *Yard* 1961 (Fig. 25 & Fig. 26) is an environment created using a mass of car tyres in a courtyard outside a gallery space. The tyres (and in particular the artist's idea) force the viewer/participant to climb over them in order to enter the space. It is through this forced physical intervention that a repurposing of the space is created.

Fig. 25

Fig. 26

Fig. 27

By participating in Kaprow's framework, the participant is activating the work rather than experiencing a static, distant or separate object. The inclusion of the audience as participants is also evident in *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* 1959 (Fig. 27) that consisted of a series of experiences facilitated by Kaprow through instructions and objects. These happenings were presented to small, intimate gatherings of people in lofts, classrooms, gymnasiums and galleries.[193] Invitations to the exhibition informed participants that they would become a part of the Happenings, and simultaneously experience them. When people arrived at the exhibition space they were given programs telling them how to behave, when to take their seats, and how and when to move between the three rooms. By telling the audience what to do, they become participants rather than members of an audience. In this way, Kaprow's work turns the audience into participants.

Kaprow explains the role of the artist and participant in his 'Notes on the Elimination of an Audience' 1966, stating that, 'I think that it is a mark of mutual respect that all persons involved in a Happening be willing and committed participants who have a clear idea of what they are to do. This is simply accomplished by writing out the scenario or score for all participants and discussing it thoroughly with them beforehand.'[194] Kaprow's statement demonstrates the artist's control over the process, even if this 'artist' is in fact several artists.

[193] A Kaprow 'Notes on the Elimination of the Audience', *Participation* MIT Press, 2006 p.103
[194] *ibid.*

Kaprow's intention, that led him to create a structure for the work, establishes that the conceptual frame initiated by the artist must be determined before engagement with the work is possible. Bishop positions the happenings in the everyday, stating that, 'Kaprow sought from the happenings a heightened experience of the everyday, in which viewers were formally fused with the space-time of the performance and thereby lost their identity as "audience"'.[195] Bishop's statement shows that by using an everyday approach, Kaprow facilitated a framework for the audience to become participants.

American artist Yoko Ono's work *Painting to Hammer a Nail* 1961 (Fig. 28) also creates a framework for participation. Ono invites the viewer to contribute to the painting by hammering in a nail. Ono stated in 1965 that, 'I think painting can be instructionalized … The artist in this case will only give instructions or diagrams for painting – and the painting will be more or less a do – it – yourself kit according to the instructions.'[196] Ono establishes in the work how the artist is paramount in imbuing their conceptual intention through the creation of a framework or set of instructions to facilitate an experience. This point is also discussed by American critic Martha Buskirk, who states, 'the physical object may remain mute in the absence of instructions about how it is meant to address its audience. Herein lies yet another paradox: on the one hand, the category of authorship for contemporary art is one that allows for processes based on administration and delegation of making, the artist's ongoing presence and decision-making have become more important for contingent works where the physical boundaries of the piece have to be reconceived each time it is exhibited.'[197] Buskirk's statement again establishes that the intention of the artist is crucial to the activation of the work.

Fig. 28

Buskirk suggests that the artist's ongoing presence and decision-making have become more important for what she describes as 'contingent works', which are dependent upon the instructions or intentions of the artist in order to operate as art. This point relates to the central argument that establishes the basis for the creation of an intentional model signals that the value of the social artist is equal to the value of the traditional object-based artist in the creation and existence of an artwork. The authentication of the social artist as key then determines that the social artist requires an ideological place in which to be identified in visual art.

[195] C Bishop, *Participation*, MIT Press, 2006, p. 102
[196] Y Ono, 'An introduction' *The 'do-it-yourself' artwork*, A Dezeuze (ed), Manchester University Press, New York, 2010, p.1
[197] M Buskirk, *The Contingent Object of Contemporary Art*, 2003, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, p.16

Brazilian artists Lygia Clark and Helio Oiticica also show the vital role of the artist through their work and involvement in the 'Neo-Concretism' group, which was developed in Brazil in 1959. Brazilian artist and curator Figueiredo in his essay titled 'The World is the Museum: Appropriation and Transformation in the work of Helio Oiticica' states, 'The Neo-Concrete movement which represented a break with the principles of Concrete art, opened the way for other phenomenological topics and introduced spectator participation to the work of art and the idea of art *versus* life.'[198] Both Clark's and Oiticica's art practices demonstrate a shift in the role of the artist from the maker of an art object by enabling the artwork to exist through the use of everyday activities and objects as a vehicle to create the work. This relates to Buskirk's discussion of the work being dependent upon the artist, again indicating that the artist acts as the facilitator of an experience and thus is central in that experience for the participant.

Both Clark and Oiticica were initially painters who expanded their practices to include physical space, and then finally participatory artworks. This can be seen through traditional paintings on canvas, e.g. Clark's *Planos Em Superficie Modulada Serie B no.7* 1958 (Fig. 29) and Oiticica's *Metaesquema No. 348* 1958 (Fig. 30) to the expansion of painting into an architectonic space such as Oiticica's *Grand Nucleus 1960-1966* (Fig. 31) and Clark's exhibition installation in 1965 (Fig. 32) at Signals Gallery, London. This shift shows that artist's need to create a connection to the artist's concept as was typically the case with modernist art. In particular, Clark's sculptural works installed at Signals Gallery were created to be physically handled by the visitor who could manipulate the objects into various sculptural outcomes, thus creating a participatory experience for the visitor.

Fig. 29

Fig. 30

[198] L Figueiredo, 'The World is the Museum: Appropriation and Transformation in the work of Helio Oiticica', *Helio Oiticica:The Body of Color*, ICAA Publications, 2007, p.120

Fig. 31

Fig. 32

This shift in the visitors' experience from a traditional exhibition space containing a static art-object, to one that invites embodied experience of situations is exemplified in the writing of Puerto Rican-born curator Mari Carmen Ramirez who explains, 'by activating the relationship between the subject and the work in *real* time, the Neo-Concretes opened up the work to multiple readings based on the participant's immediate experience of the piece.'[199]

This is shown above in Clark's installation works that enable an experience for the participant to occur because for Clark 'the object … has lost significance, and if I still use it, it is so that it becomes a mediator for participation.'[200] This statement suggests Clark's role as an artist changing from a maker of objects to a facilitator of experiences. Works such as *Bicho* 1960-1963 (Fig. 33) show the artist's expansion into participatory work, where what appears to be a traditional art object is intended to be handled, and reconfigured into different physical existences through visitor participation. Thus the work instead of being static is transitional in time and place.

Fig. 33

Fig. 34

Clark's sculptures such as *Caminhando (Walking)* 1963 (Fig. 34) expanded again to become instructional work, in which the participant undertakes an activity according to Clark's instructions. Clark's work also included objects that were to be worn, or events to be undertaken by a group of people. This is shown in *The I and the You: Clothing-Body-Clothing Series* 1967 (Fig. 35) in which Clark has developed clothing that facilitates an experience for the individual who wears the works. Brazilian critic and curator Suely Rolnik discusses the work, stating that 'the object completely loses its visibility and comes to "dress" the body and integrate itself into it… it becomes impossible for the spectators to orient themselves from an image of either the object or their own body… [the] attention [is] moved entirely away from the object to

[199] M Carmen Ramirez, 'The Embodiment of Color – From the Inside Out', *Helio Oiticica: The Body of Color*, ICAA Publications, 2007, p.44

[200] L Clark and H Oiticica, 'Letters 1968-69', *Participation*, *Documents of Contemporary Art,* C Bishop (ed.), published by Whitechapel Gallery and the MIT Press, 2006, p.110

concentrate on the vibrating body of its wearer.'[201] Rolnik's statement shows the artist as a creator and facilitator of a framework for an object to be used and participated in, through the set of instructions that are created for the work to be completed by the artist. These instructions indicate the value of the role of the artist in social art in order to establish a basis for the existence of the work to be acknowledged and understood through the theoretical debate.

Fig. 35

Fig. 36

Clark reiterates the importance of the artist's intention in the work, speaking about her later participatory work such as *Structuring of the Self: Relational Objects* 1976 (Fig. 36) in which she creates situations for participants to engage in an experience. She claims that it is '"the relation in itself" that makes it alive and important… I hope someone will come along and give meaning to the formulation. And the more diverse the lived experiences are, the *more open is the proposition* [emphasis in original] and it is therefore more important. In fact, I think that now I am proposing the same type of issue that before was still achieved via the object: the empty-full, the form and its own space.'[202] Clark emphasises the importance of the creation of a frame as a central and integral conceptual material, which is to facilitate a bridge for the work to be used by the participant, allowing it to exist as participatory.

Oiticica's work underwent similar changes to Clark's, including the implementation of structures to create participation, during the shift in both artists' practices. This shift was documented through the personal correspondence to each other in letters that underpinned many of the ideologies of 'Neo-Concretism'. Their ideologies were similar as they were both engaged in producing a body of works that reflected their ideas pertaining to authorship and participation.

Oiticica, like Clark, expanded from painting to objects that constructed an environment for the viewer. In a letter to Clark, Oiticica stated that, '"relation in itself"… [is] dynamic, by the incorporation of all the lived experiences of precariousness, by the non-formulated; and sometimes what appears to be participation is a mere detail of it, because the artist cannot in fact measure this participation, since each person experiences it differently.'[203] Oiticica constructed

[201] S Rolnik, 'Moulding a Contemporary Soul: The Empty-Full of Lygia Clark', *The Experimental Exercise of Freedom*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, 1999, p.82
[202] L Clark and H Oiticica, 'Letters 1968-69', *Participation*, *Documents of Contemporary Art,* C Bishop(ed.), Whitechapel Gallery and the MIT Press, 2006, p.114
[203] L Clark and H Oiticica, 'Letters 1968-69', *Participation*, *Documents of Contemporary Art,* C Bishop(ed.), Whitechapel Gallery and the MIT Press, 2006, p.111

participatory objects, which he called *Parangolés* that were activated when worn and danced in by the participant, e.g. *Nildo of Mangueira with Parangolé P15 Cape 11* 1967 (Fig. 37), *P07 Parangolé Cape 04 'Clark'* 1964-65 (Fig. 38) and *Hélio Oiticica with P4 Parangolé, Cape 1* 1964 (Fig. 39). Oiticica created the *Parangolés* to induce contribution by the audience by wearing the clothing, thus the materiality of the *Parangolés* is the framework that allowed participation. The film *HO* 1979 by Ivan Cardoso documents Oiticica's *Parangolés* when they were activated by a participant.

Fig. 37

Fig. 38

Fig. 39

The use of the everyday object to facilitate participation was also demonstrated in the work of American Post-Minimalist artist Robert Morris, which is shown in his work *bodyspace-motionthings* 1971 (Fig. 40). Morris installed a series of plywood structures in a gallery space and invited participants to engage with them in their own personal way. The structures included a large cylinder that one could roll inside of; a giant plywood seesaw on which two people could balance; a giant ball that could be pushed around; and numerous areas and walls that could be climbed.

Fig. 40

Fig. 41

Fig. 42

Morris's intention for the work included the work being used by the participant. This work could be seen as an influence for Austrian contemporary artist Erwin Wurm's *One Minute Sculptures* 1997-present (Fig. 41 & Fig. 42) where the works are created on the spot by gallery participants, using whatever objects that have been placed in the gallery by the artist, e.g. pens, chairs, bottles, cardboard boxes, etc., then photographed for documentation. It is through the process of personal activation of the various objects by the participant that Wurm's conceptual intention is developed, actualising the concept.

This again, like the work of Clark and Oiticica, shows the artist as a facilitator through activating everyday objects in order to facilitate participation. Filipino artist David Medalla also uses everyday activities to facilitate his work, e.g. *A Stitch in Time* 1972

(Fig. 43). In this artwork an everyday activity existed as art through a length of cloth and different coloured spools of cotton that were supplied by the artist for invited people to stitch whatever they wish into the cloth. Each stitch becomes both a further creation of the composition of the work, but also a marker of time (as documentation), of when participation occurred.

Fig. 43

The use of the everyday object/activity was expanded to include a restaurant in the work of American collaborative 'Anarchitecture', which was founded in the autumn of 1971 by American artist Gordon Matta-Clark, American choreographer/dancer Caroline Goodden and three other members of the loose collective of New York downtown artists.[204] The artists together facilitated an art project/restaurant named *Food* 1971 (Fig. 44 & Fig. 45). It was the first restaurant in the then-emerging lower Manhattan neighbourhood of SoHo, New York and *Food* was developed in equal parts as a participatory art project and a functioning restaurant. The restaurant existed as art because it was framed by the conceptual intention of artists, where patrons of the restaurant were invited to stand and speak publicly about a topic of their choice instead of paying for their meal.

Fig. 44

Fig. 45

Spanish art historian Gloria Moure in her essay 'Short Term Eternity' 2006 discusses *Food*, stating that, 'the restaurant functioned as a cooperative with the participation of artists, poets, musicians, filmmakers, photographers, dancers, sculptors and painters; and every day (guest chef day) an artist was invited to design and cook a menu. During the two years that it was open, it was a place to meet, discuss and debate.'[205] This project establishes that the intention of the artist is essential in order to render an

[204] B Jenkins, *Gordon Matta Clark Works and Collected Writings*, Gloria Moure, Ediciones Poligrafa, 2006, p.36

[205] G Moure 'Short Term Eternity', *Gordon Matta Clark 'Works and Collected Writings'*, Pub. 2006, Ediciones Poligrafa p.12

everyday activity, namely eating, and the running of a restaurant into an artwork. Because, without the artist's (or collective of artists') frame, there is an actual restaurant and the act of eating. Matta-Clark 'redefined landscape as an interactive idea in which the social, historical, ideological and natural cohabit together, a landscape in which the artist is included as an essential ingredient.'[206] Moure's analysis is highlighted through such activities, and in the context of this thesis increased emphasis on the engagement with the audience in such projects reveals the role, value and authority of the artist.

Like the project *Food*, the practice of German Fluxus artist Joseph Beuys merged art with life in a symbiotic relationship. The last 20 years of Beuys' life were devoted to both art and activism, working towards socio-economic reform where Beuys established 'Social Sculpture' with the goal to make every person a contributor, or maker of what he termed 'social organism'. Through Social Sculpture, Beuys indicates that society as a whole is to be regarded as one great work of art where the concept of sculpting can be extended to include invisible materials used by everyone.[207] Beuys believed that any individual 'is free in his thinking, and here is the point of origin of sculpture. For me the formation of the thought is already sculpture. The thought is sculpture.'[208] Beuys expands on this idea in his essay 'I am Searching for Field Character' 1973, stating that, 'the most modern art discipline – Social Sculpture/Social Architecture – will only reach fruition when every living person becomes a creator, a sculptor, or architect of the social organism. Only then would the insistence on participation of the action art of Fluxus and Happenings be fulfilled.'[209]

Beuys' artistic intention is inherently attached to his works regardless of his wish for art and life to be combined, and his works continue to be positioned within a visual art field as he is recognised as an artist producing situations called art. As such, Beuys referred to his performances as 'actions' in the hope to remove the distance between art and life. However, the ideologies, layers of meaning and symbols attached to these 'actions', locate the performances as artworks produced – or at least conceptualised – by an artist, due to Beuys' positioning of the works in an art context and due to his overall ideology as artist.

Beuys' mention of Fluxus, meaning 'to flow,' was originally conceived by American writer, performance artist and composer George Maciunas. The Fluxus art movement of the mid 20th century included artists such as Americans George Brecht, Yoko Ono and Dick Higgins, among others. American art critic Michael Corris stated that, 'the manifesto of 1963 exhorted the artist to 'purge the world of bourgeois sickness, "intellectual", professional and commercialized culture … dead art, imitation, artificial art, abstract art, illusionistic art … promote a revolutionary flood and tide in art, promote living art, anti-art, … non art reality to be grasped by all peoples, not only

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[206] *ibid.*, p.10

[207] J Beuys, as quoted by Carin Kuoni, ed., *Energy Plan for the Western Man: Joseph Beuys in America* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1990), 19. http://www.walkerart.org/archive/F/A44369B1F42E32026178.htm, accessed Aug 7, 2014

[208] J Beuys, 'Statement on "Man" by Joseph Beuys: an interview', W Sharp (ed.), 1969; quoted in 'Energy Plan for the Western man – Joseph Beuys in America', and compiled by Carin Kuoni, Four Walls Eight Windows, New York, 1993, p. 90

[209] J Beuys, 'I am Searching for Field Character', *Participation,* C Bishop(ed.), MIT Press, 2006, p.125

critics, dilettantes and professionals.'[210] Corris continues, stating that 'the *Fluxmanifesto on Fluxamusement* used innovative typography and ready-made printed images to communicate the concept of the self-sufficiency of the audience, an art where anything can substitute for an art work and anyone can produce it.'[211] 'The Fluxus agenda was to collapse boundaries between the art object and the framing device that marks it as such.'[212] Fluxus, like Beuys' notion of Social Sculpture collapsing the space between art and life, is again impossible because the intention of the artist will always remain with the work, regardless of its materiality and/or use of alternative materials and situations, because the concept and the outcome can never be separated.

Fig. 46

Fig. 47

Fig. 48

The artist's intention can be identified in Beuys's work *7000 Oaks* 1987 (Fig. 46, Fig. 47 & Fig. 48) for Documenta 7 in Kassel, Germany. The work consisted of 7000 oak trees and 7000 Columrar basalt stone columns that are roughly 4 feet high which were installed with the trees. Beuys had the stones in Kassel (Germany) heaped on the lawn in front of the 'Fredericianum', which is Documenta's principal exhibition building; the pile decreased as more trees were planted. German critic Norbert Scholz states that, 'planting in public spaces in the inner city was carried out on the basis of site proposals submitted by residents, neighborhood councils, schools, kindergartens, local associations, and others. The result offered significant opportunities for "occupying and utilizing 'public' open space socially."'[213] Despite the work's existence and facilitation through everyday objects that are positioned in the everyday realm, the intention attached to the work contextualises it as activities undertaken in the name of art. Beuys' work demonstrates the artist as the facilitator of an activity that provides a framework for participation to occur. Engagement with this project occurred through the open invitation to submit requests for the work to be positioned in a public space. The work's placement in a public space, and the inclusion of public input, is explained by UK-based critic David Thistlewood, who outlines Beuys' interest in merging art and life in 'Joseph Beuys "Open Work": its Resistance to Holistic Critiques' 1995, also argues that Beuys was 'fascinated with processes of flux, temporary solidification

[210] M Corris, Grove Art Online, 2009, Oxford University Press http://www.moma.org/collection/theme.php?theme_id=10457, accessed June 9, 2014
[211] *ibid.*
[212] A Parmer, 'Alison Knowles', *Art in America Reviews,* New York, 2011, http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/reviews/alison-knowles, accessed 6/11/2014
[213] L Cooke (http://www.diaart.org/sites/page/51/1295 accessed January 25, 2014) referencing Norbert Scholz, "Joseph Beuys-7000 Oaks in Kassel," Anthos (Switzerland), no. 3 (1986), 34

and re-liquefaction- whether as evident in material properties (for example in his celebrated use of fat as a sculptural medium), or in the creative 'happening', considered as the momentary arresting of forms or actions for special and particularly energised attention.'[214]

German critic Jan Verwoert also discusses Beuys' interest in the merging between art and life, and in doing so questions Beuys' role of authority by addressing Beuys' idea of authorship where 'on the one hand he incessantly attacked traditional notions of the authority of the work, the artist, and the art professor, with his radical, liberating, and humorous opening up of the concept of art with regard to what a work, an artist, or a teacher could still be and do beyond the functions established by tradition, office, and title. On the other hand, however, it seems that in the presentation of his own interpretative discourse, Beuys regularly fell back on the very tradition of staging artistic authority with which he was trying to break.'[215] Verwoert's point, while not pursued at length, nevertheless is sympathetic to the main objective of this thesis research, that even though theorists (and in Verwoert's analysis of Beuys) may wish to position social-based projects within an art/life debate by having them understood as something other than art, all this work is still predicated on the first manifestation of the activity. That manifestation (or initial seed as conceptual frame) is the artist's intention and thus social art must be acknowledged, positioned and debated from a visual art starting point or context. The artist is central to that context.

Fig. 49

Fig. 50

The 'Collective Actions Group' was a five person collective, working in Moscow from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s. The group, like Beuys, demonstrates the artist's intention. In the work *Appearances*, *Moscow, 13 March* 1976 (Fig. 49 & Fig. 50), the artwork was an experience involving participants who were invited by telephone to take a train to a site outside Moscow. When the individuals reached the location they would walk from the station to a remote field where, as UK-based critic Claire Bishop explains:

> upon arriving in a remote field at Izmaylovskoe, the group was asked to wait and watch for something to appear in the distance. Eventually, a couple of the organizers became visible on the horizon, in what [central theorist of Collective Actions Group Andrey] Monastyrsky refers to as the "zone of indistinguishability": the

[214] D Thistlewood, 'Joseph Beuys 'Open Work': Its Resistance to Holistic Critiques', *Joseph Beuys, Diverging Critiques*, Liverpool University Press, 1995, p.1

[215] J Verwoert, 'The Boss: On the Unresolved Question of Authority in Joseph Beuys' oeuvre and Public Image' *e-Flux, Journal 1, 12/2008,* http://www.e-flux.com/journal/the-boss-on-the-unresolved-question-of-authority-in-joseph-beuys'-oeuvre-and-public-image/, accessed Nov 6, 2014

> moment when one can tell that something is happening but the figures are too far away for one to clarify who they are and what exactly is taking place. The figures approached the group and gave them certification of having attended the event (CAG refers to this as "factography"). Monastyrsky later explained that what had happened in the field was not that they (the organizers) had appeared for the participants, but rather, that the participants had appeared *for them*.[216]

Despite Monastyrsky's comment that focuses on the participant, this work demonstrates an intentional model that the artists have created in order to facilitate an experience for the individual. 'Collective Actions' intended the work to occur through the experience of the participants; however, the framework that is established by the artist is shown by Bishop that, 'when participants' engagement finally occurred, it was never in the place where they expected it.'[217] Bishop's statement reiterates the role of the artist as the fundamental facilitator of the event through their intention as the framework from which all activity is derived. Although the artist's focus is on the participant, the work would not exist without the artist.

Serbian-born, New York-based performance and conceptual artist Marina Abramovic uses her body to facilitate participation as the artwork. This is established in her work *Rhythm 0* 1974 (Fig. 51), which was both an endurance piece and a participatory artwork, making her body both an object and a subject of an artistic action. Abramovic provided a framework for *Rhythm 0*, allowing her to be manipulated by the public in any way they chose, using a range of objects laid on a table including grooming tools, food, flowers, feathers and weapons, etc. Even though it is the participants who control the outcome of the work, because they choose how they engage with the artist through the objects provided, the artist is still the catalyst for such participation to occur. The existence of the work is based on the intention and the physical presence of the artist, because without the artist the work is unable to exist.

Fig. 51

American Conceptual artist and philosopher Adrian Piper displays a similar strategy to Abramovic in her artwork *Funk Lessons* 1983 (Fig. 52). In this work Piper creates a framework in order to use and teach dance, as a physical language that could be

[216] C Bishop, 'Zones of Indistinguishability: Collective Actions Group and Participatory Art', *e-flux journal* #29, November 2011, http://www.e-flux.com/journal/zones-of-indistinguishability-collective-actions-group-and-participatory-art/ accessed November 5, 2014
[217] *ibid.*

engaged in and used by everyone. At the time, Funk music was primarily associated with 'black' culture, as opposed to 'white' culture, in which the roles of social dance were entirely different.

Fig. 52

Piper stated in her essay 'Notes on Funk' 1985 that her aim was to enable people to 'get down and party, together.'[218] American critic Lauren O'Neill-Butler explained the project in the Artforum video archive, stating that Piper 'used them to address xenophobia, an issue increasingly central to her art. Under the guise of a "get down and party *together*" affair, she began to teach white, primarily art-world audiences about the histories of African-American funk and soul music. Yet the lessons also underscore that "at least some perceived racial distinctions are learned, and learnable, behavior," as [American] critic Holland Cotter notes.'[219]

The framework that Piper creates for the work enables participation to occur and the experience of the participant to complete the work by activating the idea or conceptual intention. Teaching it to a typically white higher socio-economic demographic displays Pipers role as a facilitator. Piper validates this 'In Notes on Funk' 1985, where she writes that *Funk Lessons* offered a path to 'self-transcendence and creative expression within a highly structured and controlled cultural idiom, in a way that attempt[s] to overcome cultural and racial barriers'.[220] Piper's intention for the work allows this everyday activity to exist as an artwork; however, this framework (as artistic concept) must be attached to the activity before any participation is possible.

While his theory of aesthetics is out of favour with many theorists of culture today, Immanuel Kant in fact establishes this premise in his 'Critique of Judgement' 1790, stating, 'for (in every art) some purpose must be conceived; otherwise we could not ascribe the product to be art at all; it would be a mere product of chance.'[221] This point re-establishes Kant's other point, distinguishing the artist as key, and relates to Piper's shift of the everyday object into an artwork. Both Piper and Kant's examples suggest that the artist's intention is vital, and their intention (as conceptual involvement) facilitates a framework for the work to exist 'as art'.

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[218] A Piper, 'Notes on Funk', *Participation*, MIT Press, 2006, p.130
[219] L O'Neill-Butler, 'Cram Sessions', *Artforum Film Archive*, published online 28/1/2010, http://artforum.com/film/archive=201001, accessed June 9, 2014
[220] A Piper, in 'Notes on Funk', 'Cram Sessions', L O'Neill-Butler (ed)Artforum Film Archive, published online 28/1/2010, http://artforum.com/film/archive=201001, accessed June 9, 2014
[221] I Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, 1790, Berlin, Trans. Hafner Press, New York, 1951, p.153

American historian Frank Popper highlighted the role of the artist as the creator of frameworks in his essay 'Art Action and Participation' 1975 where 'the work of art has more or less disappeared by gradual stages. The artist has taken upon himself new functions, which are more like those of an intermediary than a creator, and has begun to enunciate open-ended environmental propositions and hypotheses. Finally, the spectator has been impelled to intervene in the aesthetic process in an unprecedented way.'[222] Popper believed that the spectator became a primary influence in participation in the 1960s, removing the emphasis from the artist to the actual outcome of the experience for the participant. It is important to note that people do not participate in artworks in order to dispense with the artist. They participate in an artwork because it is of interest to them, and the artist has created a situation that induces participation. Thus the artist operates as a facilitator, as argued throughout the thesis, which proposes that the framework that the artist constructs for the work is vital to facilitate participation. American critic Martha Buskirk makes a related point, stating,

> the readymade in particular and recontextualization more generally are possible because of the play on long-held assumptions about artistic authorship. There is even a body of law, known generally as moral rights, that speaks to the integrity of the work of art based on the idea of authorship and the belief that the work of art is more than simply another commodity. However, when works of art are made using forms close to or identical with the realm of objects not defined as art, the designation of authorship may in fact be the only feature that distinguishes the work of art from any other object.[223]

Buskirk's statement provides the basis for the importance of creating a place for the artist. In her reference to the difficulty in distinguishing art objects among objects not defined as art, Buskirk articulates that the role of the artist is essential in contextualising the everyday object or activity 'as art'. The premise of this thesis is to create a place in which the artist can be discussed and acknowledged as critical in their role as facilitator. This chapter *The Artist of the Social Turn: A History of Social Art Practices* has established a historical positioning of the role of the social artist, which is important in order to establish a basis for a discussion on contemporary practitioners and theorists who are engaged in the field of social art that will be addressed in later chapters.

The position of the social artist in crisis, as briefly outlined in Grau's essay 'Another Quarrel', exists in parallel to the argument being developed in this PhD research in regards to social art practices, in which the artist does not have a place in which they can be positioned and acknowledged in a position of authority. This has not occurred because social artists generally do not create traditional art objects, but instead use everyday objects and activities from a variety of other disciplines as strategies for the creation of their work. When the works are critiqued, this is often done according to the discipline, which the borrowed objects or activities appear to reference.

American critic Shannon Jackson emphasises this, stating that social art practices 'use visual, embodied, collective, durational, and spatial systems, but a critical sense of their innovation will differ depending upon what medium they understand themselves

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[222] F Popper, *Art, Action and Participation*, London, Studio Vista, 1975, p.11
[223] M Buskirk, *The Contingent Object of Contemporary Art*, 2003, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, p.15

to be disrupting.'[224] This establishes that artists working in social art are not analysed and critiqued according to the intention of the artist as they should be, but instead according to what they usually appear to reference. It is not so much that these references are not present, but rather that they are not the 'glue' that holds the action or event together as art. This is the role of the artist as individual, or as collective.

Seminal critics within the field, such as American critics Grant Kester, Nato Thompson, Tom Finkelpearl and Claire Bishop, have developed a variety of means with which they critique social artwork according to frameworks that they have drawn from a variety of other disciplines such as theatre, literature, politics, performance, etc. However, what these theorists have consistently done is creating a limited position for social artists in visual art and in doing this social artists have been misrepresented and positioned through an inaccurate analysis. Where they have raised the issue of the artist's role, position, or value in providing an intentional frame, they have not pursued this at length.

By simply discussing historical artists and practices it is revealed how social art is shaped by two key developments: the artist as facilitator rather than as studio artist, and the audience as participant rather than as viewer. In addition to these key arguments one only has to view and discuss the work of historical artists such as Allan Kaprow, Yoko Ono, Lygia Clark, Helio Oiticica, Robert Morris, Adrian Piper and Joseph Beuys to see that even though social art may utilise experimental and experiential materials, activities and situations for the realisation of the work, the artist's role as a facilitator in forming the conceptual intention of the work is always present for participation to occur.

This chapter has established the historical basis for a discussion of the first social artists who expanded their practices from traditional object-based ones to those situated within social art incorporating participation. What this demonstrates is that historically there has been a transition since the mid-1960s, with artists rethinking what art is and what art represents as a conceptual and expressive vehicle for the dissemination of thought and the facilitation of experiences. As such, the historical artists discussed in this chapter suggest that the social artist deserves an ideological place to be acknowledged in visual art, because that is the position from which such work comes. The development of such a place will allow social artists to be acknowledged in a position of authority, and as a key facilitator of artwork. Strategies deployed in order to create a place for the artist are expanded upon in the chapters that follow.

[224] S Jackson *Social Works*, Routledge, New York, 2011, p.2

Chapter 3
An Ideology: Three Platforms for Social Art

Chapter 3 *An Ideology: Three Platforms for Social Art* will discuss social art projects through the use of three strategic *platforms*: institutional, public and artist-run. These three platforms have been chosen as they collectively represent the most prevalent platforms in which social art projects are positioned, thereby assisting in the recognition of social art as a visual art form. It will be shown that these three platforms build a context, or a basis for social art to be understood, which in turn impacts the reading of social artwork. The discussion of the most used platforms that social art projects are located in assists in the recognition of such work, thereby establishing a place for the social artist in visual art. The term *platform* is used because it refers to a variety of spaces that are utilised by social artists in their works, including social, virtual, ideological, public and artist-run spaces, rather than the term 'site' which refers to only physical spaces such as a museum space. The term place is a position argued throughout the thesis in response to French philosopher Donatien Grau's essay 'Another Quarrel' 2013, which establishes the hope that these 'magnificent monsters' (artists) could find a place in order to be acknowledged and valued within social art and a wider visual art field.

A discussion of the platform is therefore essential, as the artist's intention includes the location or platform that they choose to situate the work in. The intention of the artist is fundamental as social art projects utilise everyday objects and activities, and when these projects are placed away from a traditional art platform, e.g. a gallery or museum, they require the artist's conceptual intention in order for the work to be read as art. For example, this can be seen in American artist Josh Greene's work *Sophie Calle's Bed* 1999 (Fig. 53), in which Greene asked Calle to borrow her bed in order to assist in his recovery from a break-up. The project took place between the two artists' apartments and the elongated presence of Calle's bed in Greene's apartment. A discussion of the platform is important because it contributes to the formulation of a place for the artist, and thus develops the basis for the artist to be acknowledged as valuable and crucial in visual art.

Fig. 53

What the thesis has been referring to as a 'crisis' is due to the general disregard for the social artist found in the current literature in the field, and the dominance of collaboration and post-author arguments.[225] The social artist is currently critiqued

[225] There are a number of theoretical positions that question the role of the artist, such as hermeneutics, intentionality, reception theory and context theory. I am aware of collaboration and post-author arguments but they will not be discussed in this thesis. Instead the role and importance of the social artist will be primarily discussed.

through a variety of disciplines such as politics, theatre and object-based practices as discussed in previous chapters. This chapter, through the use of the platform, will confirm that social artists are fundamental and indispensable in regards to social art, much like an artist who makes traditional object-based works is important because without the artist there is no foundation or blueprint for the work. Even artists such as French sculptor Auguste Rodin, despite American art critic and theorist Rosalind Krauss's insistence to the contrary, provide an original model or blueprint for the potentially endless number of bronze copies.

This chapter examines how social artworks relate to the platform in which they are positioned, identifying the essential role that the artist plays in contextualising the artworks. The project's artistic positioning facilitates a reading of social artwork, which is crucial, because the placement of social art away from a traditional art context requires the work be read and understood through the intention of the artist,[226] in order for participation to occur. For example, Spanish artist Santiago Sierra paid homeless people to engage in his project *Person Saying a Phrase* 2002 (Fig. 54). This activity requires the intention of the artist to be understood in order for the project to be read as an artwork due to its positioning on the streets. It is the intention of the artist that is crucial, even more so than the object or the participant, as the framework for the artwork embodies the artist's ideas, creating a context for the project.

Fig. 54

In this chapter the platform is broken up into three 'ideological' bases that independently deal with the theoretical and historical context of the exhibition space. The 'institutional' platform discusses the structures and ideologies that are present in the museum and gallery space, such as a physically and ideologically distanced viewing of an artwork. The 'public space' incorporates the virtual space, festivals/conferences and social spaces that require the artist's intention in order for the work to be recognised as art. For example, American artists Harrell Fletcher and Miranda July's project *Learning to Love you More* 2002-2009 (Fig. 55) used the virtual space. The project was a series of everyday activities or instructions that anyone was welcome to undertake, and then was invited to post the documentation of their project on a website[227] that was dedicated to the artwork.

[226] This means that without the artist's idea/facilitation of the work, the project would not exist.
[227] Learning to Love You More website, accessed 12/11/2014
http://www.learningtoloveyoumore.com/index.php

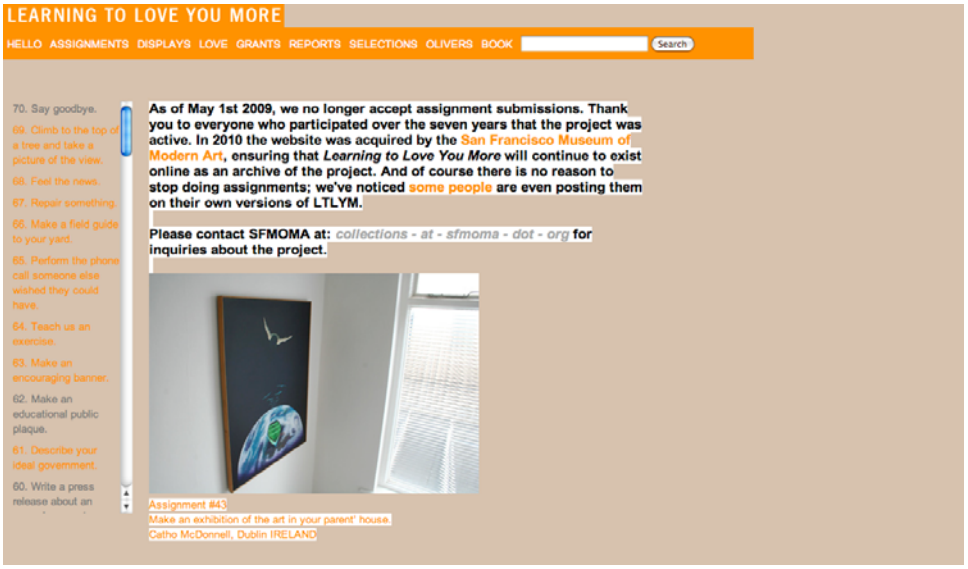

Fig. 55

The use of instructions shows the necessity of the artist's intention in order for these everyday activities and the location of the project to be identified as art. Finally, the 'artist-run' platform has an alternative system and promotes experimentation and expansion of institutional spaces, and in some cases also operates as a social art project, which in itself is directed by artists. For example, RAYGUN PROJECTS is an 'artist-run space' that allows the artists who are invited to exhibit at RAYGUN the opportunity to experiment and create whatever project they wish to undertake for their exhibition, away from the confines of a commercial gallery system. American artists Mark Dion, J. Morgan Puett and Grey Rabbit Puett also undertake a similar strategy in their project *Mildred's Lane* 1998-ongoing (Fig. 56) in which artists are invited to carry out art projects away from a traditional exhibition system, in this case in the original farmhouse.

Fig. 56

The ideological basis (which is the overall basis for the three platforms) is established in visual art history and theory, with a focus on the developments that impact upon the reading of the work, and are linked to art projects that are positioned in a platform. A discussion exploring the 'ideological' basis includes a history of the shifts that have occurred in the relationship between the artist and platform since the 1960s. Such a discussion is important because physical spaces carry an inherent ideology that has been formed by the discourses, debates, and history of the platform.

The ideology of spaces impacts upon the perception of a work of social art, because it influences the social artist's choice of platform for their work. For example, British-German artist Tino Segal's *Kiss* 2010 (Fig. 57) consists of two individuals kissing, undergoing certain movements and positions in accordance with Segal's instructions and intentions. The ideology connected to the location of the work at the Guggenheim Museum in New York inherently attaches this performance to those that have occurred previously in the same space, thus locating the work as art. This contextualisation may not have taken place if the activity had occurred in a public space because of context, history and an implied understanding that are all factors in how various spaces and activities are understood. While context theory, such as that of American Philosopher George Dickie, would suppose that context alone can account for the art status, major museums do not let mechanics or cabinetmakers create works or art experiences for their museum. They invite artists.

Fig. 57

This is not to say that the space of exhibition or performance is not important. French Philosopher Michel Foucault proposes that spaces have ideas and uses attached to them that impact on how an individual experiences the space. Foucault investigates the changing nature of space in his essay *Of Other Spaces* 1967,[228] as spaces and places are situated in a changing time and context, impacted upon by technological developments and shifts that have occurred. Foucault's argument articulates how spaces have developed an ideology that impacts upon how that space is experienced by an individual. He considers the history of spaces, and how they have changed since the mediaeval period under the influence of technology.

Technology has led to the evolution of platforms within a contemporary context, as well as to an exploration of how these spaces are constructed to fit within the ideology of society. For example, historically villages were designed with the town square, the church and the common in the centre as a method of impacting upon and shaping that society. Foucault explores this idea through 'traditional spaces' that have been constructed by society in order to fulfil a purpose, for example, gardens and cemeteries, museums and libraries. These spaces have a set of beliefs and implied uses attached to them and are important; as Foucault argues, we do not live in a void, but instead inhabit spaces that have been constructed for a specific use, which in turn impacts upon how an individual experiences space in general and that space in particular.

[228] M Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces' (1967) cited in *Politics-Poetics documenta x – the book*, Cantz Publishing, Germany, 1997, p.262

This relates to the placement of social art projects because, in accordance with Foucault's proposal, the ideas or beliefs that are already attached to spaces impact on how the artwork is read and understood. Foucault proposes that we live in a set of relations, meaning people, objects and places do not exist in isolation, but in relation to each other, and thus the relations that occur within a space define the place, or platform for engaging. This was most prevalent in the prominence of Installation Art in the 1970s, where the space and the artwork that inhabits it become synthesised as one total object or *Gesamtkunstwerk*. The artwork was designed to transform the perception of a space, allowing the viewer to enter the work as they enter the exhibition space, e.g. in the work of American Installation artist James Turrell's *Akhob* 2013 (Fig. 58). In this immersive installation, Turrell creates a situation in which the individual is unsure of their surroundings, and is therefore experiencing the work by physically engaging in the design of the space by the artist. Foucault's idea shows that the interaction that occurs in a space is governed by the ideas and events that have occurred previously because 'it is necessary to notice that the space which today appears to form the horizon of our concerns, our theory, our systems, is not an innovation; space itself has a history of western experience and it is not possible to disregard the fatal intersection of time and space.'[229]

Fig. 58

Foucault's discussion focussed upon the ideologies of space and this relates to the platforms that social art is positioned in. Foucault's argument proposes that public spaces and ideologies have developed as a result of the developments of society. This in turn impacts upon the social artist's positioning of their projects in a variety of platforms, as they are constructed from everyday objects and activities referring to Foucault's interrelation between time and space, and the impact that everyday activities and histories has on an individual's experience. Social art projects are therefore impacted upon by the artist's choice of platform, which has its own set of rules and ideas in a way analogous to that outlined by Foucault. For example, the traditional museum space has facilitated a removed or distanced perception of an artwork, due to the space creating limitations when viewing artworks. In addition, the white walls and the focussed lighting showcase the object, drawing attention to its exclusivity. The art object positioned in the museum space is presented at a distance from the everyday object of social life. German philosopher and cultural critic Walter Benjamin coined the term 'aura' to refer to such isolated or distanced works of the modern museum.

UK-based political theorist Andrew Robinson discusses Benjamin's aura, stating that, 'historically, works of art had an "aura" – an appearance of magical or supernatural force arising from their uniqueness… The aura includes a sensory experience of

[229] M Foucault, *ibid.*, 1997, p.262

distance between the reader and the work of art.'[230] This has been perpetuated through the Louvre (Paris), for example, in the display of Italian Renaissance painter Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* 1503 (Fig. 59). The work is not only displayed singularly on a gallery wall but is isolated from the actual physical space through a fence, as well as an anti-bomb structure that encloses the work to create even further distance from the viewer. Here the work takes on an 'aura' of cultural significance as it is placed away and protected from the world inside its transparent casing. This is discussed at length in Australian critic and theorist Robert Hughes's television documentary *The Mona Lisa Curse* 2008 where he states that, 'the Mona Lisa has been transformed from artwork into celebrity icon'.[231]

Fig. 59

American critic Tom Finkelpearl reiterates Benjamin's point about distance through a discussion of American philosopher John Dewey, where he states that, 'for Dewey, the troubling discontinuity of high art and life is reflected in narrow definitions of art and its isolation in museums: "Objects that were in the past valid and significant because of their place in the life of a community now function in isolation from the conditions of their origin. By the fact they are also set apart from common experience, and serve as insignia of taste and certificates of special culture."'[232] Dewey's comment demonstrates the dislocation of art when it enters the museum space due to the rules and structures inherent in that space. The social artist takes these rules, structures and ideologies connected to the museum space into account, when they are positioning their artwork in a traditional museum platform; the social artist considers how the work will be read and experienced, as the location and the history of the space, along with the place of the artist, governs the participatory experience.

The late modernist period saw a shift from the traditional isolation of works, for example, the extension of art into installation (1960s-1970s) moved art away from an art object that is traditionally read from a distance, and instead turned exhibition spaces into environments in which the viewer has a physically engaging experience with the work. Artists started working in this way in order to shift the viewer's experience from a physically removed viewing of an art object to an embodied experience of an artwork in an environment. This can be seen in American Post-Minimalist Robert Morris's *Untitled* 1969 (Fig. 60) in which large felt forms expanded from the wall and into the same space as the viewer. This work shows the expansion of a work from a wall or a plinth into the same physical environment of the viewer. Brazilian artist Ernesto

[230] A Robinson, 'Walter Benjamin: Art, Aura and Authenticity', *Ceasefire Magazine*, June 14. 2013, accessed June 13, 2014.
[231] R Hughes, *Mona Lisa Curse*, Oxford Film & Television, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JANhr4n4bac, 0:24sec, date accessed 11/11/2014, 2008
[232] T Finkelpearl, *What We Made*, 2013, Duke University Press, Durham, London, p.345

Neto's work *Gloeiobabel Nudeliome Landmoonaia* 2000 (Fig. 61) allowed participants to physically enter into an environment created by the artist which therefore engages the participant in an embodied experience through direct contact with the physical structure of the work.

Fig. 60

Fig. 61

American critic Grant Kester in his book *Conversation Pieces* 2004 comments on arts expansion from the gallery space into the public space, stating that artists during the 1960s and 70s 'began to question the gallery itself as an appropriate site for their work… the museum, with its fusty, art historical associations, appeared ill equipped to provide a proper context for works that explored popular culture or quotidian experience.'[233] American performance artist Andrea Fraser also explores the move from the gallery into alternative spaces of artistic activity. In a discussion of French Conceptual artist Daniel Buren's work *in Situ* 1970 (Fig. 62 & Fig. 63), Fraser states that many works 'bridged interior and exterior, artistic and non-artistic sites, revealing how the perception of the same material, the same sign, can change radically depending on where it is viewed.'[234]

Fig. 62

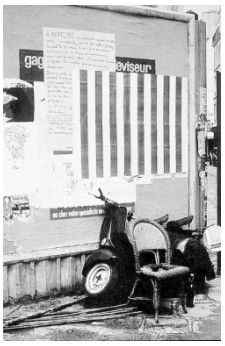

Fig. 63

Fraser points out that the reading of an artwork can be altered depending upon the platform that the work is read within; this is due to the ideologies and structures present in a particular space. Buren comes to much the same conclusion when he states, 'it is by working for a given exhibition site that the work in situ – and it alone – opens up the field for a possible transformation of the very place itself.'[235] Buren emphasises the possibility of the public space as a platform for social art projects where they can reactivate various societies' understandings or expectations of the

[233] G Kester, 'A Critical Framework for Dialogical Practice' in *Conversation Pieces*, University of California Press, 2004, p.124
[234] A Fraser, *From The Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique* MIT Press, ed. Alberro, and Stimson 2005, p.413
[235]D Buren, accessed May 2, 2012, http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/education/school-educator-programs/teacher-resources/arts-curriculum-online?view=item&catid=721&id=38

spaces they inhabit daily, which are transformed through such artistic invention and participation.

Argentinean historian/critic Inés Katzenstein in her essay *Reality Rush: Shifts of Form* 1965-1968 believes that, 'Buren undertook a questioning of painting that led him successively to distil the basic elements of the medium, to move the artwork from the museum to the street, and to initiate a critical theory of the interrelation of artwork and museum.'[236] This reference shows that the ideology inherently attached to the museum also impacts upon the reading of an artwork, hence Buren's shift away from the museum space.

The importance of the space in which a work is positioned can also be seen in the work of American Minimalist Donald Judd's *15 Untitled works in Concrete* 1980-1984 (Fig. 64), where Judd positioned the series of works outside in an open environment so that 'everything connects – indoors and outdoors…concrete, blocks and barrel shapes, transparency and closure, light and shade, nature and built spaces.'[237] This allowed the audience to experience the work in relation to the outside space. The viewer's own physicality forms an embodied experience of the artwork, rather than a traditional viewing involving an object or image, isolated in a museum space and viewed at a distance, e.g. American Abstract Expressionist Franz Kline's paintings installed at the *Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), LA* 2013 (Fig. 65). Here the work is fenced off from the gallery space, establishing that the museum brings a set of preconceived ideologies that facilitates a particular experience of the work, traditionally exhibited and isolated away from the visitor.

Fig. 64

Fig. 65

This idea of the art object exhibited and isolated away from the visitor became the conceptual frame in which a number of artists from the late 1960s to the mid-1970s became interested. This initiated performance-based artworks that bridged the gap between artist and object to artist and viewer reception. These works were generally positioned in the museum space, and instead of being based on the existence of an object, they were based on the performance or action of the artist themselves 'as the object', e.g. American artist Chris Burden *Shoot* 1971 (Fig. 66), in which he was shot in the arm by an assistant while standing inside a gallery.

[236] I Katzenstein, 'Reality Rush: Shifts of Form 1965-1968', in Beyond Geometry, Experiments in Form, 1940-70sThe MIT Press, Cambridge, 2004 p.190
[237] M Stockebrand, *The Making of Two Works: Donald Judd's Installations at the Chinati Foundation*, Chinati Newsletter Vol. 4, 2004, pg.60

Fig. 66

Performance art entering the museum altered the experience and ideology that the museum produced, shifting it from a space containing isolated objects and the static viewing of those art objects, to the encounter of a physical, experiential performance. Performance art forced a shift in the thinking and approach to art, and therefore redefined the relationship between viewer and artwork.

Fig. 67

This new approach to exhibition space and the experience of that space is demonstrated in German installation artist Rebecca Horn's *Finger Gloves* 1972 (Fig. 67) which used wearable gloves that alter the artist's relationship to her surroundings, as well as changing the physicality and motor skills of her body. The creation of devices that function as an extension of her body enabled Horn to touch the whole room, so that, for example, distant objects came within her reach. Horn uses technical functionality to stage her works within a particular space, expanding the exhibition space from that of a building to a stage of interpersonal relations through the activity undertaken. Italian critic and curator Angela Vettese in her forward to *Rebecca Horn: Fata Morgana* 2010 suggests that Horn's works, 'represent the relationship with ourselves and the world around us, they also reflect most of all the relationships dearest to us: that between two people. That often treacherous and illusory – and yet indispensible – dimension, that complete expression of the body and of imprisonment, as well as of freedom. That ultimate expression of the heightened sensory state.'[238] Vettese's description of Horn's conceptual interests signifies a shift in the relationship that occurs in the museum or institution, from a static relationship with an object to an interpersonal relation that occurs between the visitor and the performance artist at that moment in time.

It is from the 1960s/70s that museums were forced by historical and theoretical pressures building at the end of Modernism to alter the rules of audience/viewer engagement in the exhibition space, in order for an experiential or inter-relational

[238] A Vettese, Forward, *Rebecca Horn: Fata Morgana*, Published by Charta/Moontower Foundation, 2010 p.1

experience to occur, and to be experienced as intended by the artist. For example, American Conceptual artist Yoko Ono's *Voice Piece for Soprano- Scream 1. Against the wind 2. Against the wall 3. Against the sky* 1961 (Fig. 68) at the Museum of Modern Art in New York invited participants to scream into a microphone that echoed through all of the gallery spaces of the museum. Ono created a connection between the space her work occupied and the remaining gallery through audience participation, making the specific location of the object but one part of the situation or experience.

Fig. 68

Yugoslavian/American Conceptual artist Marina Abramovic's work *Rhythm 0* 1974 (Fig. 69) tested the limits of the relationship between performer and audience, by inviting participants to engage directly with the artist in order to construct the artwork. Seventy-two objects (e.g. a rose, a feather, honey, a whip, olive oil, scissors, a scalpel, a gun and a single bullet, etc.) were placed on a table and allowed to be used by each audience member in any way that they chose, on the artist's body. These works demonstrate how the viewer's position in the receivership and activation of artwork had undertaken a shift from disembodied viewer of distant objects and images to becoming an active participant in the construction of the work.

Fig. 69

The developments of participatory works demonstrate the beginning of a change in the use of the platform by both artists and audiences. This gradual progression to include the audience as participant illustrates a change in the use of the museum space, from exhibiting a static object to creating an environment and ultimately to housing participatory projects. Artworks like those discussed above rely on the museum context, but this is not always the case. When an artwork exists away from a traditional museum space, and instead is located in a social space, for example, it rejects the traditional ideologies attached to the exhibition space, because the artist has found it necessary to remove the work from that space, in order to clearly articulate their ideas without the ideological baggage of the museum intruding. By locating the artwork in a social space the artist is looking to establish a relationship between the artwork and the viewer. An example of this use of social space is American artist Lee Walton's series of *Momentary Performances* 2009/2010 (Fig. 70) in which Walton sets up specific instructions for an everyday occurrence to take place in another context in order to complete his art project. Walton's location of this *Momentary Performance*

away from the museum space, instead locating the work in a public space, allows the social occurrence to fluidly exist between everyday life and art, thus removing the distance between the visitor and artwork. The text instructions indicate the artist's intention, revealing that the action is in fact art because the work relates to Walton's overall ideology and artistic practice, thereby contextualising the text/work within all of Walton's previous works.

Fig. 70

The rules or structures attached to various spaces or platforms result in the development of an 'ideology' that impacts upon the actions of the individual who participates in the artwork. For example, in a museum space objects are not usually touched, in a shop setting, or commercial setting, however, objects may be picked up and examined. Public outside spaces such as the street, park, library, etc. have another system that sometimes allows open access to facilities and equipment by the public. American critic Miwon Kwon takes a similar position in *One Place After Another* 2002, stating that, 'emerging out of the lessons of minimalism, site-specific art was initially based in a phenomenological or experiential understanding of the site, defined primarily as an agglomeration of the actual physical attributes contributing to a particular location (the size, scale, texture, and dimension of walls, ceilings, rooms; existing lighting conditions, topographical features, traffic patterns, seasonal characteristics of climate, etc.), with architecture serving as a foil for the art work in many instances.'[239] For example, American artist Susan Lacy's work *The Roof is on Fire* 1993-1994 (Fig. 71, Fig. 72 & Fig. 73) facilitates a series of discussions between teenagers on a rooftop of a car park/parking lot. The neutral space allowed for issues such as violence, sex, gender, language and race to be discussed freely amongst the participants.

Fig. 71

Fig. 72

[239] M Kwon, *One Place After Another,* The MIT Press, 2002, p.3

Fig. 73

The role of the artist is essential in utilising and adapting the ideologies and structures attached to both exhibition spaces, and perhaps more importantly, to what Kwon terms 'non-art' contexts. The social artist, upon deciding where the work is to be positioned, responds to the ideologies and structures that are present in that space, while simultaneously rejecting traditional ideologies if the work is positioned away from the museum space. This occurs through the artist's intention for the work, which is even more crucial to social art projects that are not literally housed within the museum space. This is because the activity outside needs a link to the artist, in order to be determined as a work of art, as opposed to a more traditional aesthetic object such as a sculpture or painting. Another example of this is American artist Fritz Haeg's project *Edible Estates* 2005-present (Fig. 74) in which a series of front lawns in Kansas, US, were offered to Haeg to be replaced with edible landscapes. The front lawn, especially in the US, is directly related to a sense of pride an individual has for their property. Haeg engages with this system and shifts these traditional ideologies to become a productive space where vegetables can be grown and then distributed in the neighbourhood. Again, knowledge of Haeg's intention is required to perceive this work as an art project.

Fig. 74

This is evident in American artist Jon Rubin's *Billboard* 2010-present (Fig. 75 & Fig. 76). This work is an example of how an art project also exists as an everyday structure that is transferred into an artwork through the artist's intention. Rubin identifies the importance of the link to the artist through a discussion of his Billboard project, which consists of an old billboard with various messages placed upon it. Rubin explains, 'I curate it, people create text for it. It's in the middle of the city, Pittsburgh and it has no signage on it. There's no website, there's no way of telling what this thing is. If people google billboard, Pittsburgh and the address my website for the project might come up, the billboard might come up. [However] there wasn't the internet when I was first starting, but nowadays there is a capacity to create a secondary archive that

people can easily find about your work that gives people the depth of the larger art intention of your project. That was always a tough thing in the early pre internet days, you either had to spell it out, or have a publication there, it was difficult, and you didn't want to get in the way of the work by saying, "hey! That is an artwork, check it out".'[240] Rubin here establishes the importance of identifying the artist's intention for an artwork, and the use of the internet in identifying works positioned in a public space, showing that when a work is located outside, it does not have an ideological structure that is attached to the works as those located in a museum space.

Fig. 75

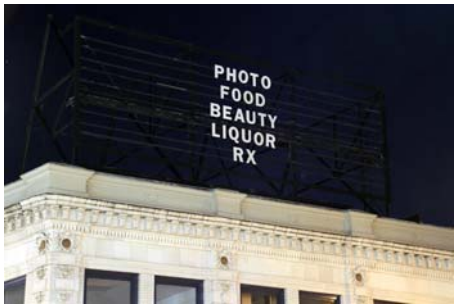

Fig. 76

The existence of social artwork or any artwork therefore begins with the intention of the artist (this is expanded upon in Chapter 5 in the discussion of a 'model' used to identify the value of traditional and social artists). The artist then facilitates the positioning and materialisation of the work, enabling it to be participated in, and finally the outcome of the work occurs through the experience of the work by the participant. The positioning of the work therefore always occurs in a platform, as it adapts the ideologies inherent in the spaces for the work's existence. The positioning of any work of art therefore innately relates to the history of the placement of artwork in that particular location. An example of this alteration of the traditional placement of artwork is Mark Dion's *Project for the Royal Home of the Retirees* 1993 (Fig. 77), in which Dion worked from a lithograph of the museum before its refurbishment, engaging with the war veterans who disliked the curator of the museum. In collaboration with the veterans they decided which of their personal items would enter the museum's collection after they had died. Dion fabricated two of the original cabinets that were filled with the images that were identified in the lithograph. He then filled the other with mementoes belonging to the veterans, specifically those objects that would not make it into the collection upon their deaths.

[240] J Rubin, Interview, Appendix, p.

Fig. 77

Swiss contemporary artist Thomas Hirschhorn like Dion rejects the traditional placement of artwork inside museum spaces by building structures outdoors, and engaging local community members in the making/construction of this work. Hirschhorn's work *Bataille Monument* 2002 (Fig. 78) was a temporary pavilion that housed a range of community activities for the city of Kassel, Germany, for Documenta 11. The artwork became an exhibition space, a theatre, a food kiosk, it had free internet access as well as children's facilities as a way 'to provoke encounters, to create an event… it is a question of sharing this, affirming it, defending it, and giving it form… from my understanding of art and my belief that art can transform.'[241]

Fig. 78

Fig. 79

By facilitating projects in the general community Hirschhorn articulates his disinterest in the ideologies attached to the museum space as a site for transformation. UK-based critic Pablo Lafuente wrote an article for *Frieze* magazine entitled 'Thomas Hirschhorn' in which he explains that when Hirschhorn works 'off-site', or away from the museum space, 'he chooses locations that are far removed, geographically and culturally, from the usual circles of art production and consumption. Pieces such as *Skulptur Sortier Station* 2001 (Fig. 79), at the Stalingrad metro station in Paris, and *the Deleuze-Monument* 1999, in the suburbs of Avignon, are, from the outset, confronted with a social reality that doesn't fully recognize them'[242] as art.

[241] T Hirschhorn, *Thomas Hirschhorn's Gramsci monument in NYC*, accessed 11/11/2014, http://au.phaidon.com/agenda/art/articles/2013/may/07/thomas-hirschhorns-gramsci-monument-in-nyc/, Phaidon website, 2013

[242] P Lafuente, 'Thomas Hirschhorn', Frieze Magazine, Issue 90, April 2005, accessed August 29, 2014 http://www.frieze.com/issue/review/thomas_hirschhorn/

Hirschhorn carefully positions his work away from a traditional art context in order for the work to exist within a set of relations that are located within everyday life, creating a tension between these two different social and cultural circles – that of the everyday and that of museum practices. Hirschhorn's work reveals that the intention of the artist is critical in choosing the platform where the work is to be situated, in order for the work to be participated in as a work of art, rather than as an action or activity that is indistinguishable from life itself. The aftermath of the project arrives at the museum or in art magazines and other art world sites of reception, but only once it has passed through the conceptual filter of the artist's intention.

To completely unpack and develop the strategy of the platforms used by social artists, each platform will be outlined through the use of examples of artworks as a way to theoretically and visually explain the core concepts involved. The first platform to be discussed is the 'institutional space', which includes museum and gallery ideologies that have been formed during the traditional role of the institutional housing of precious art objects. The ideology attached to the traditional museum space involves the conventional relationship between an art object and viewer, which impact upon the placement and reading of social artworks when they are included in the museum exhibition schedule.

Museums have often invited participatory artists to create a project in the education wing of the museum, as the projects line up more easily with this structure rather than in the main exhibition spaces due to the everyday nature of social art. American critic Tom Finkelpearl in his book *What We Made, Conversations on Art and Social Cooperation* 2013 states that, 'although participatory art practices were beginning to gain some traction in the art world in the 1990s, it was still unusual for museums to undertake such projects, and when they did it was often at the invitation of the director of education, not the curator. For example, American Feminist/Performance/Conceptual artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles says she felt it was extraordinary to be working in the main gallery instead of the education wing for her project (*Unburning Freedom Hall*) at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles in 1997.'[243] Finkelpearl's statement reiterates the institutional tendency to maintain the traditional distanced relationship between artwork and viewer. When the work became participatory, the institutions' reaction was to put the work in an alternative space away from the museum's exhibition spaces. However, the move to the main exhibition spaces of the museum requires that an entry point is established in order for participation to occur in such work.

Despite social artists often choosing to position their works away from the traditional museum spaces due to the ideologies that are attached to the museum as discussed, social artists, like any other artists, are invited by museums to exhibit in museum spaces, and therefore they alter the traditional ideologies that are ingrained in the space. Due to the preconceived ideologies that are inherent to the museum space, social artwork has approached its positioning in the museum in a variety of ways. When a social art project is placed in a museum setting, specific processes occur to verify that the project is in fact an artwork, and is intended to be participatory, that is, participated in *as* an artwork. In order to establish that the work is participatory in a museum space there is often signage, or a museum guide leading the participant

[243] T Finkelpearl, *What We Made, Conversations on Art and Social Cooperation*, Duke University Press, 2013, p.90

through the work. The use of everyday objects and activities in participatory artwork demonstrates the importance of a framework that is facilitated by the artist's intention. Akin to an architect's design, which is a blueprint for constructing a house, the artist has an intention for the work, which forms an experiential framework for participation to occur.

This specific introduction to the project is necessary because the museum/gallery space has a traditional ideology that has been ingrained in the exhibition space as a result of the work that has been primarily shown in the space, e.g. Lee Walton's *Go Ask Marsha* 2010 (Fig. 80) at the Weatherspoon Art Museum, North Carolina, is a work on paper with instructions for participants to 'Go ask Masha' who is a museum guard for instructions about how to engage with the work, thus the instructions as to how to participate in the artwork are central to the work occurring.

Fig. 80

Fig. 81

New York-based artist Lee Mingwei used the museum to create a set of rules that the participants were asked to follow for his work *The Moving Garden* 2009 (Fig. 81). Visitors were invited to collect a fresh flower as they left the museum, upon the condition that the individual took a different route to their next destination, and gave the flower to someone who they felt would benefit from the unexpected act of generosity. Mingwei's project creates a new framework for exchange, which is possible through positioning the work in a museum. Mingwei states, 'I did not choose to document what happened once the flowers left the museum. As in life, we rarely learn how far our kindnesses (or unkindness's) extend.'[244] In Mingwei's artwork the museum space is a structure that is used to present, facilitate and contextualise the activity as an artwork through the creation of an alternative economy in which the participant was asked to undertake an act of kindness (as activity) upon leaving the museum.

Galleries generally either exist as commercial or as not-for-profit exhibition spaces. Despite the often ephemeral or experiential nature of social art, some social artists are represented by commercial galleries, due to the fact that they have developed and demonstrated a sophisticated and professional art practice. For example, Tino Sehgal is represented by Marian Goodman Gallery (New York), American artist Harrell

[244] L Mingwei, Artist Interview about 'The Moving Garden' at Lyon Biennial, 2009, accessed June 25, 2014 http://www.leemingwei.com/projects.php#

Fletcher by Jack Hanley Gallery (San Francisco), and American/Thai artist Rirkrit Tiravanija by Gavin Brown's Enterprise (New York). The fact that commercial galleries represent these artists identifies and acknowledges that the artist is important in the conceptual framing of social art because it exists as a gesture just like traditional-based artwork.

American artist Tom Marioni in his book *Beer, Art and Philosophy* 2003 comments in regards to the intention of the individual undertaking an action. Marioni defines that action, explaining that, 'when the janitor swept the floor, it was real life. When the dancer swept the floor, it was dance. When the actor swept the floor, it was theatre. And when I swept the floor, it was sculpture, a sculpture action. The same activity was different, depending on the intent of the person doing it.'[245] Marioni highlights the point that the artist's intention is essential in order for an activity to exist as art, especially due to the close relationship social art projects share with everyday activities. Marioni's statement also shows that the context or space in which the work is activated plays an important role in the acknowledgment of social art. For example, the work when it is an action that takes place in a museum is more likely to be read as art, than if the action took place in a public setting.

The positioning of social work in the museum space is one of the factors that contextualises the activity as art which can be seen in several examples of contemporary social art projects. Sehgal's works *This Progress* 2010 (Fig. 82, Fig. 83) and *This is So Contemporary* 2014 (Fig. 84) are positioned in the traditional museum and gallery environment. The two works rely purely on the process of the conversational and choreographic allocation of roles that in turn rely exclusively on bodily movement and social interaction. This occurs through a rigorous process of training people who are not specifically actors to facilitate the work. These people in turn facilitate an experience for the participants present in the space when the activities are taking place.

American artist Sal Randolph, who participated in one of Sehgal's works, described the specific training that she was required to undergo, which had to be memorised in order to be taught. The activity is passed on through memory only, it is not written down, but only taught to the necessary people/actors. This is part of the intention for the work, established by the artist, that enables the work to function as participatory. Therefore, in conjunction with the other factors, such as the location of the experience, Sehgal's instructions indicate that the artist is key in designing the work, in order for it to exist in a specific way. The framework for participation therefore occurs in the teaching of the work to the performers and in the exchange between the performers and the participants.

[245] T Marioni, *Beer, Art and Philosophy,* Crown Point Press, USA, 2003, p.138

Fig. 82

Fig. 83

The specific structure that is created in order to facilitate the work shows that the work can exist in a museum space, but must exist in accordance with the intentions of the artist. For example, *This Progress* 2010 (Fig. 82 & Fig. 83) at the Guggenheim involved groups and individuals who were guided around the spiral architecture of the Guggenheim, passed from performer to performer. The process was initialised when a child approached gallery visitors and asked them 'what is progress?'; the conversation continued on the topic of progress and was sustained by a young adult and so on, until the visitor was having a conversation with an elderly performer. This project was created through a series of interpersonal exchanges; the actors were carefully chosen and had specific roles identified by the artist in order to carry out the artist's intention for the interaction with the participant or museum visitor. While the location of the museum signifies an art experience due to the ideology informing our reading of such spaces, the process exists as art, to a great extent, because it is positioned and defined by the intention of the artist, through the instructions that delineate the work.

Fig. 84

In *This is so Contemporary* 2014 (Fig. 84) at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, actors were chosen by Sehgal to stand as uniformed guards outside the gallery. The actors burst into song, serenading various members of the public who were entering the museum singing 'This is so contemporary, this is so contemporary'. The instruction given by the artist enabled the participants, who were the people entering the museum, to have an alternative experience than the preconceived everyday action of entering a public museum. The role of the artist in this work is that of an instigator through instruction; the conceptual intention of the instruction enabled the actors to undertake their role as guards/performers, who then created an altered experience for the participant. It is this experience which, although not directly involving the artist, is manufactured through the artist's conceptual intention.

American artists Harrell Fletcher and Job Rubin's work *Wallet Pictures* 1998 (Fig. 85, 86, 87) also uses the museum as a platform that contextualises an everyday image or activity as art. Fletcher and Rubin set up a photo booth outside the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, asking people who were entering the gallery to share their wallet photo, and allow it to become part of an exhibition. These personal photographs were re-photographed, blown up and transformed into valuable objects by framing and hanging them in the museum, transferring their meaning from the private to the public and the conceptual. This project demonstrates that the museum as a platform contextualises images to be artworks because as soon as a work is hung in an institutionalised art space, a value is attached to the work. The project also identifies the role of the artist as an authority, showing that Fletcher and Rubin's intention for the work was primary in enabling and facilitating the process. The artists' intention also contextualised the personal pictures as a part of an artwork, which were framed and placed on the gallery wall. Through this process the artist becomes the authority, enabling the personal photographs to be transformed into an artwork and placed within an alternative context.

Fig. 85

Fig. 86

Fig. 87

Fletcher demonstrates a different kind of intention for the project *The Sound We Make Together* 2010 (Fig. 88) at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), Melbourne. Fletcher chose local community groups in Melbourne that contributed to the exhibition such as Arts Projects Australia, Crooked Rib Art, Footscray Community Centre, Grainger Museum and Hell Gallery. Participants from these groups were invited to select works for the exhibition from the NGV Collection, which were then displayed as part of Fletcher's exhibition. Essentially the exhibition is curated by the community where 'the series of presentations and the resulting exhibition has opened up the professional world of curating to diverse community groups across Melbourne, inviting an alternative approach to exhibition making. It challenges assumptions concerning the traditional role of the artist, the curator and the art museum by facilitating a democratic involvement in the various aspects of exhibition production.'[246]

[246] G Vaughan, *Harrell Fletcher: The Sound we Make Together, National Gallery of Victoria,* 2010, p.2

Fig. 88

National Gallery of Victoria director Gerard Vaughan supports the role and position of the artist in social art by identifying that the artist's intention created an opportunity for an alternative system of curating to come into play within the gallery. Even though the curator is replaced by the community collective, the artist is still present. This activity would not have been possible without Fletcher's intention for the work in creating a structure that allows for the process of participation. In fact, Fletcher states in an interview undertaken in relation to his exhibition 'Michael Pleming' that no matter how hard he tries, his presence as artist is still important in contextualising an activity as art.[247] This structure changes for various projects that Fletcher has created, whether it is a direct relation between himself and the participant or when boundaries are crossed between the art world and non-art world. For Fletcher the blueprint of his work is situated within setting up engaging experiences for himself and the various individuals involved in the projects because he 'creates a structure that allows interaction [participation].'[248] Danish artist Olafur Eliasson's *The Cubic Structural Evolution Project* 2004 (Fig. 89) also shows the positioning of an everyday activity inside a museum structure in order to facilitate an overall communal outcome. In this work Eliasson created a platform that allowed gallery visitors to assist in the building of a physical structure from Lego blocks. Each gallery visitor had the potential of becoming a participant in the work through the deconstruction and reconstruction of the Lego blocks in creating personalised building.

Fig. 89

Marina Abramovic[249] in her performance *The Artist is Present* 2010 (Fig. 90, Fig. 91) at the Museum of Modern Art created a framework for participation to occur through

[247] H Fletcher, paraphrased from an interview with RAYGUN PROJECTS, 2013, Appendix p.234
[248] *ibid.*
[249] Abramovic has expanded her performance practice to include interpersonal exchanges/ participation. An example of this is the durational work at the Serpentine Gallery in London 2015 titled *512 hours* in which Abramovic was in the space for 512 hours, in direct relation to the visitors

an exchange between artist and participant. Abramovic sat at a table in the atrium of the museum for six days per week for the three-month duration of the exhibition and members of the audience were invited to join her, sitting opposite Abramovic, making eye contact. It was through the physical connection of being situated together in the same location as well as the eye contact that Abramovic referred to this engagement as an 'energy dialogue' with the audience. This work gives an example of the difficult nature of social art, as Abramovic considers herself to be a performance artist, and therefore *The Artist is Present* could also be seen as a durational artwork. However, the role of the participant is seminal in the work, and is important in much of Abramovic's recent work. The work and Abramovic's practice is therefore located in a visual art context through a reading/contextualisation of the work within performance art. This classification that Abramovic has maintained, again demonstrates the lack of position of social artwork in visual art. The role and importance of the artist within this social artwork is evident, through the physical presence of the artist, which initiates an experience for the participant between themselves and herself on a personal level, both existing as an important element of the artwork.

Fig. 90

Fig. 91

The artworks discussed above have shown how social artwork can exist in the museum space, which enables social art projects to be easily identifiable due to various paraphernalia such as the catalogue, white walls, wall didactics and so forth that are present in the space, telling the visitor that what they see is an artwork. Even though these elements or didactics assist in the identification of these participatory artworks, it is still the conceptual intention of the artist that is paramount in facilitating participation and therefore completing the work. The museum is the constant, but the social experiences delivering the conceptual intentions of the artist are the variable. The artist can work within the museum or outside it, which goes to show that the museum is not essential to the designation of the experience as an experience of art, but the artist is.

When a social art project is positioned away from an art context (museum/gallery space) the artist has to label the work as art in order for it to be acknowledged. The use of the museum platform allows people to enter the museum knowing (as they have come with expectations) that they are about to have an art experience that allows them to consider other traditional or non-traditional/participatory projects that they could have identified or experienced previously in such a space.

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of the gallery.

The second platform, 'public,' is divided into three parts: the *virtual*, *conferences/festival* and *social spaces.* These three elements of the 'public' platform are discussed individually to assist with the discussion. An artist's use of the 'public' platform indicates that they choose to remove themselves and their work from the ideologies inherent to the museum space. The social art project's removal from the museum also removes their contextual positioning due to the use of everyday activities as a vehicle to create their work (in order to initiate participation). In such circumstances social art projects, appearing to be an everyday activity, are at risk of being disenfranchised rather than being acknowledged as art because they are blurring the line between an activity 'as art' and 'as life'.

Artists utilise virtual spaces in order to engage participants across a wide geographic location, both nationally and internationally. A virtual space could be defined as a website, a project undertaken via email or social media, or a project streamed live, which results in the project having a virtual platform. The 'performance room' of the Tate Modern, London, invited Harrell Fletcher to undertake a project that would be streamed live online. To facilitate this project, *Where I'm Calling From* 2012 (Fig. 92), Fletcher invited a busker he met in London, named Bill Jackson, to play guitar and sing at the Tate Modern, which was then streamed live on the internet on Thursday 28th of June, 2012. In this project Fletcher designed a work that is both performative and social at the same time because the footage of the performance is available for constant viewing. Even though the video/stream originates from a museum, the work exists on a virtual platform accessible anywhere in the world, with no geographical dislocation, because everyone has the opportunity of viewing and having an experience at the same time.

Fig. 92

Fig. 93

The virtual space has also been utilised at the artist-run initiative RAYGUN PROJECTS located in Toowoomba, Australia. This has enabled artists to engage directly with an audience through Skype and Facebook. A virtual platform allowed audiences in Australia to converse with American artist Lee Walton at his exhibition opening. Walton spoke with audiences about his work *Experiential Declarations* 2012 (Fig. 93). The presence of the artist and the conversation with him was important in order to assist audiences to read the projects that were a collection of everyday activities that were proposed by people to be read as art and contextualised by the overall practice of the artist. Harrell Fletcher's exhibition *Michael Pleming* 2013 (Fig. 94) and Danish artist Honey Biba-Beckerlee's exhibition *Diplotopia* 2012 (Fig. 95) also engaged in a similar process at RAYGUN, using a live virtual (via Skype) discussion, enabling participation with the audience in real time that were geographically located on opposite sides of the globe. Throughout all these projects at RAYGUN, the dialogue with the artist is often important, due to the highly conceptual nature of social art, and by using social networking strategies, the virtual becomes an

element of the public space platform, allowing the audience to become a participant through the sharing of knowledge in real time.

Fig. 94

Fig. 95

Festivals and conferences on social art create a platform that is usually governed by an overarching topic or theme. Festivals are often attached to symposiums or conferences that involve key speakers relating to a specific topic, such as the relationship between life and art, etc. The topics create a platform in themselves that impact upon the works positioned in the conference and the overall discussion of the conference/symposium, allowing the project to connect itself to the overarching theme of the festival. The work is therefore contextualised by the artist's practices, in order to exist as art; the work is also contextualised through its inclusion in the festival.

The 'Festival of Live Art' (Australians call participatory art 'live' art) 2014 occurred in various venues throughout Melbourne, Australia. The festival included 17 days of performances, experiences and happenings, from intimate one-on-one projects to spectacles, for example, Australian Triage Live Art Collective's work *Strange Passions* 2014 (Fig. 96) coupled two strangers with masks to discuss 'what they want' and their secret passions. The festival created numerous participatory experiences for visitors, but all of the artworks existed under the overarching theme of the *festival* and therefore created an overall conceptual basis for the works to be read within. Australian artist Nicola Gunn's *Live Art Escort Service* 2014 (Fig. 97) featured a personal tour and a description or question answering service for people attending the festival who knew very little about 'live art'. This project, while being based in the larger context of the festival, also demonstrates the conceptual intention of the artist where the work is made possible through a set of rules implemented by the artist (as an experiential framework) that created a situation in which the participant could have an experience that is the work.

Fig. 96

Fig. 97

'Open Engagement' is a three-day international social art festival in New York that explores various forms of traditional and non-traditional (specifically social) art. The conference attached to the festival focuses on the theme of life/work and 'examines how economic and social conditions connect to life values and philosophies and situate the everyday in relation to larger political and social issues including labor, economics,

food production, ways of being, and education.'[250] The themes of the conference and festival contribute to the platform that is created for the artworks that are included in the program. For example, organisations and people that have been included in the programming are New York-based organisation 'Flux Factory'; 'The Laundromat Project' (which takes art, artists and arts programming into laundromats); and the collective 'Fieldtrip' (which offers eclectic neighbourhood activities such as bowling). The artworks attached to the conference were in direct relation to the discussion incurred at the conference and therefore the conference as a whole created a platform for the work. The 'Festival of Live Art', the 'Proximity Festival' and 'Open Engagement' each form a slightly different platform in which social art projects are able to exist in social spaces. Regardless of this, overall they provide a necessary context for social art to be acknowledged as art, through the platform created by each festival/conference.

The virtual and the festival/conference are a part of a public setting, because they have ideologies and structures inherent to them that are linked to the everyday and thus the intention of the artist is especially important when work is placed in such a setting. Australian artist Jason Sweeny's work *Stereo Public* 2012 (Fig. 98) is an iPhone application that engages the public space. Sweeney asks participants to navigate their city for quiet spaces and once found, to then take an audio recording and visual snapshots of these spaces, which are accompanied by an original musical composition by Sweeny. The located quiet space is then added to the map on the app, as either just a space or a space with a musical composition and other app users are then able to locate these spaces and/or find new spaces for themselves. *Stereo Public* uses the app as a framework to create participation; however, without the artist designing the app/structure of the work, this project is unable to self-identify as art.

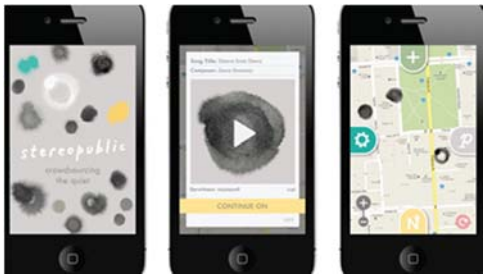

Fig. 98

American historian and curator Miwon Kwon suggests that the artist positions their work outside in order to engage with people in a more meaningful way. Kwon suggests a public space does not have an institutional or ideological system in place, which enables the participant to engage in the work more freely. Kwon explains, 'if the critique of the cultural confinement of art (and artists) via its institutions was once the "great issue," a dominant drive of site-oriented practices today is the pursuit of a more intense engagement with the outside world and everyday life; a critique of culture that is inclusive of non-art spaces, non-art institutions, and non-art issues (blurring the division between art and non-art, in fact).'[251] Kwon proposes that an engagement with various sites and contexts, which she refers to as 'non-art' spaces, institutions and

[250] J Delos Reyes, 'life/work' accessed, June 15, 2014, http://openengagement.info/home/
[251] M Kwon, *One Place After Another,* The MIT Press, 2002, p.24

issues, allows for greater engagement between the artist and audience to occur in the work.

Fig. 99

Thomas Hirschhorn also demonstrates an engagement with the public in non-art spaces by creating Festivals, based on the ideas of philosophers. Hirschhorn employs leading members of the community to undertake leading positions in the formulation of the event. *Gramsci Monument* 2013 (Fig. 99) located in Forest Houses in the Bronx, a suburb of New York, is a temporary 'monument' to the Italian political theorist and Marxist Antonio Gramsci. Residents of Forest Houses built an outdoor pavilion exhibition space, library, theatre and bar, all from materials such as packing tape and low grade plywood that Hirschhorn believes 'do not intimidate' the visitor. The choice of materials and the positioning of the work in a public platform, as well as inviting community members to assist with the building and running of the physical structure, creates a symbiotic relationship between Hirschhorn (the designer of the framework), the community and finally the artwork that facilitates participation.

The previous projects demonstrate that artworks positioned in a public setting require a knowledge of the role and intention of the artist, in order to establish an understanding of social artwork in the context of visual art. The intention of the artist is even more important within a public platform in order for the work to be understood and participated in. The prominent and integral role of the artist, especially when the work is positioned in a public platform, shows the necessity to establish a suitable place for the artist, in order for them to be acknowledged as artists. The outcome of the work may well include an experience, but participation would not be possible without the intention of the artist creating an experiential framework for this to occur in.

The final platform is the artist-run initiative which is traditionally a gallery/project space created by an artist or artists, and therefore does not involve the ideological constraints that are present in commercial gallery spaces. Artist-run spaces are primarily experimental in nature and thus are utilised extensively by artists who are engaged with social art projects, because unlike a commercial gallery, artist-run spaces are not concerned with commodity or sales. There are various artist-run initiatives that have become an important platform for participatory artwork. For example, in Australia 'RAYGUN PROJECTS' (Toowoomba), 'CLUBS', 'Punctum' and 'WestSpace' (Melbourne) and 'ALASKA' (Sydney) all have either included at particular times or continue to exhibit, foster and support national and international artists who are engaged in participatory art practices. Internationally 'NLH Space' (Copenhagen) and 'The Sundown Salon' and 'Machine Project' (Los Angeles) have

also focused (as galleries) on exhibiting and supporting such practices. The 'Sundown Salon' (Fig. 100), directed by Fritz Haeg and run out of his home, facilitates happenings, pageantry, performances, artwork and events. 'Machine Project' (Fig. 101), directed by Mark Allen, is a storefront space that holds up to 60 people and whose structure could be seen as a platform for social art as it invites artists (and various other people) to create projects.

Fig. 100

Fig. 101

RAYGUN PROJECTS develops 'on' and 'off site' participatory events that invite both artists and various people to engage with them. This is demonstrated through invited artist American Sal Randolph's project *Library of Art: Expanding Universe: RAYGUN Edition* 2014 (Fig. 102), which is an exhibition that coexisted in both RAYGUN and ALASKA exhibition spaces. A collaborative project entitled *SHARING LOVING GIVING* 2014 (Fig. 103) was facilitated through an exchange between RAYGUN PROJECTS and NLH Space in Copenhagen, Denmark, which was a coexisting participatory project where the directors/artists of both spaces handed out shirts that were handprinted with the slogan SHARING LOVING GIVING when any participant drank a beer with the directors, either in RAYGUN or NLH Space.

Fig. 102

Fig. 103

Harrell Fletcher and Jon Rubin also opened an artist-run gallery 'Gallery HERE' in the United States. Fletcher states that, 'we had decided not just to do some projects in the neighborhood, but to start a gallery. The gallery became a structure. Then, we needed to figure out what the content was going to be. So, we decided that it would be situations, people and environments within that neighborhood. We decided on a five-block radius around the gallery, [and] everything had to come from there.[252] The artists used the artist-run gallery as a platform to enable participation to occur, similar to RAYGUN. In such gallery spaces the physical space is less about presenting objects

[252] H Fletcher, Interview with Allan McCollum, accessed April 4, 2013 http://allanmccollum.net/allanmcnyc/harrellfletcher/mccollum_interview.html

on a wall or floor, as an installation, and more about the space becoming a location for facilitation.

Australian artists and writers Brad Buckley and John Conomos suggest an overlap between the artist-run initiative and the curator in their essay 'The Artist-Run Initiative: An Agent that Blurs the Studio, Laboratory and Exhibition Space, creating a site for Inventiveness' 2013. Buckley and Conomos expand upon the role of the artist, stating that, 'ARIs have been spaces of innovation because they have always critiqued the way museums have suggested that the curator, not the artist, has turned art into art.'[253] This statement establishes that the artist is essential in facilitating their work, rather than the curator, 'turning the art into art', and thus the intention of the artist always creates a basis for the work to be engaged in, and facilitated by the participant.

The platforms discussed in this chapter were chosen to demonstrate a strategic acknowledgment of the key role of the artist in social art. The three platforms demonstrate how and why the artist is fundamental to the existence of various artworks within that platform. This is due to the fact that theoretical and historical context and positioning of the work within either an inside space (gallery/museum as traditional space) or the public space (non-traditional) are still dependent upon the inherent concepts of the artist, regardless of where the artists chooses to place their work. Whether through an institutional positioning of social art in museum or gallery spaces or through the 'Public Space' incorporating virtual space, art festivals/conference or artist-run initiatives, ideologically all these spaces are still dependent upon the artist's conceptual intention in establishing an understanding and context for any project to be acknowledged *as art*.

These four platforms each has a different set of rules and ideologies that impact upon the way that the social art project exists in a particular platform. The rules and ideologies that are inherent to a particular space impact upon the fundamental role of each artist who has chosen to position their work in that specific platform. For example, a project that exists in a social space is unlikely to be read as an artwork unless the work can be understood through the artist's intention, unlike the same work positioned in a museum where an implied meaning is attached to the work based on its position within such a cultural place. The research and discussion surrounding each platform places an increased importance on identification of the artist's role as essential in enabling the existence of social art projects because without this, slippage can occur between an everyday activity 'as artwork' and an everyday activity 'as life'.

This chapter has established the ideological basis for the platform and examined how the artist has positioned their work within it as an authority and critical maker within the field of visual art. This has established that the artist in social art is integral to the work, because without their conceptual ideologies designing, framing and instigating the work, it would not have existed *as art* to be acknowledged, taught, seen or participated in. As discussed above in this chapter, social art once sat positioned away from a visual art exhibition space, in an isolated educational space, on the periphery of the museum. However, social art can, and should, be viewed as a visual art practice, despite the fact the social art is based on the experience of the participant. This alternative structure for an artwork does not make it any less or more important than

[253] *ibid.*

any other art form. The aim of the research is not to create a hierarchal ranking system of creativity but to demonstrate the importance of establishing a suitable place for the social artist in which they can be acknowledged as key within a visual art context, just as an artist who paints or sculpts is acknowledged through their work ‘as an artist’.

Chapter 4
Four Common Approaches that Social Artists Use to Facilitate Participation in their Work

This chapter will discuss four specific *approaches*[254] (*economic, event, food and community*) that social artists use in order to enable participation in their work; these are not the only approaches, but the most prevalent in this field. This chapter will develop and demonstrate the primary approaches that social artists utilise in creating a conceptual place for social art within visual art. The discussion of contemporary social art projects will contribute vital evidence to revealing why a place for the social artist within the visual arts is necessary. Without the repositioning and reconsideration of the debates social artists will continue to be misplaced within misguided understandings.

The first approach to be discussed in the chapter is economic. The social artist uses the economy-based approach by altering an everyday exchange or interaction in order to facilitate their work. For example, creating an opportunity for an individual, making an object free, or giving a gift are three 'economic' approaches that are used to facilitate a social art project. The second approach to be discussed is the event. The event as an approach to social art, like the economic one, is an everyday structure, occurring away from the museum space, that people are familiar with, such as a party, lecture or performance. The third approach utilised is food. Food is used to facilitate a social artwork, often because it is an activity that everyone is familiar with. Food is often used as a material/strategy because it can be easily shared, and like economy, creates the framework for a social exchange to occur through communal participation. The fourth approach is a community-based approach, which refers to working with community groups or with specific groups of people.

In the introduction to the book *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life* 1993, which is a selection of American Conceptual artist Allan Kaprow's writings, the editor, American critic Jeff Kelley, quotes Kaprow, stating that, 'the models for the experimental arts of this generation have been less the preceding arts than modern society itself, particularly how we communicate, what happens to us in the process, and how this may connect us with natural processes beyond society.'[255] This statement suggests that rather than using traditional materials, artists have turned to using society itself, which indicates that everyday activities and processes are used in order to enable an experience to occur in such a system of making work. The reason for the utilisation of everyday activities is because there has been a shift in how we communicate due to technology, advertising, etc. and so artists are using alternative methods of interaction as the medium for the formation of their respective works.

Kelley addresses Kaprow's use of everyday approaches to facilitate his work:

> Kaprow identifies five models of communication, rooted in "everyday life, and non art professions, and nature," that may

[254] An approach is a method or system that is used to facilitate social art, which is often a common social activity that is adapted slightly by the artist as a vehicle for participation.
[255] J Kelley quoting Allan Kaprow, in *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life/Allan Kaprow – Expanded Edition*, ed. J Kelley, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California, 2003, p. xv

> function as alternative ways of conceiving the creative enterprise. These are situations, operations, structures, feedback, and learning – or commonplace environments and occurrences, how things work and what they do, systems and cycles of nature and human affairs, artworks or situations that recirculate (with the possibility of change and interaction), and processes like philosophical inquiry, sensitivity training, and educational demonstration. Although Kaprow located these models in the works of other artists, it is clear that as a cluster they constitute his own measure of experience.[256]

The everyday approaches artists use as a material in the construction of their work are discussed in this chapter, which argues that these approaches are undertaken in order to create a familiar system or social structure to make participants feel at ease. 'Kaprow sees language as a means to understand the barriers of mind that segregate aesthetic from everyday experience – not for the sake of philosophy, or for the life of the mind alone, but to facilitate meaningful action in life.'[257] Kaprow's focus on language to understand the barriers of mind indicates the importance of an understanding of the social artist's intention, in order for an understanding and acknowledgement of the work to occur. It is therefore important to create a discussion of the most prevalent approaches used in social art, to show how and why social artists construct their work in a particular way.

A discussion of these everyday approaches (economic, event, food and community) are important in order to identify that social art projects are identified as artworks, and are thereby separated from everyday life. This chapter will discuss how particular social artists employ everyday approaches to frame the conceptual intentions of their work. In doing this, the social artist's intention is identified as fundamental in visual art, which has not been given extensive consideration in the literature to date. The issue of the artist's role, where it is discussed, is done so only cursorily. This discussion forms a key contribution to the field through the current research, as it creates a new way to understand, as well as reposition the social artist in visual art.

It is important to recognise that the artist's intention is imperative in order to identify, value and read social artwork, and in turn social artists, as social artwork can be viewed as an everyday activity causing a slippage to occur in the understanding of the subsequent artwork. Social artists often use everyday activities and situations as a way to facilitate their work because they often consist of activities that have a pre-existing interpersonal element.[258] For example, Mexican artist Dora García's work *The Romeo's* 2008 (Fig. 104) employed young men to establish seemingly spontaneous conversation with visitors to the Frieze art fair in London, changing the viewer's habitual experiences of city life by engaging in a pre-existing interpersonal system of exchange/conversation.

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[256] *ibid.*, p. xvi
[257] *ibid.*, p. xxv
[258] This has nothing to do with historical pressures and theoretical assaults on creativity and authorship and singular works.

Fig. 104

By focusing on the artist's intentions it allows social artworks to be read as 'artwork' rather than as an everyday activity. This has occurred repeatedly where the work is positioned and/or incorrectly understood through theorists' discussions which locate social artwork within a 'community', 'political', 'collaborative', 'pedagogic' or 'theatrical' context, which has been the common system of understanding this practice. The chapter will discuss and define the most common approaches used to create social artwork, in order to formulate a strategy to view social art practices that otherwise may be misunderstood. This chapter develops the foundation that contributes to the discussion in Chapter 5 *More Like Working with Gases than Solids: A Place for the Social Artist in Visual Art*, which establishes a model to view, consider and discuss social art within a visual art context.

The artist's utilisation of the approaches discussed in this chapter engages pre-existing social codes/structures or an existing 'use' system that is attached to everyday activities; these assist the participant in understanding how to engage in a social artwork as they are familiar with the activity. The first approach to be discussed is economic. The social artist uses the economy-based approach by altering an everyday exchange or interaction, in order to facilitate their work. For example, creating an opportunity for an individual, making an object free, or giving a gift are three 'economic' approaches that are used to facilitate an art project. American/Cuban artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres's *Untitled (Monuments)* 1989 (Fig. 105 & Fig. 106) invites the audience to take one of the stacked posters, suggesting that the artwork is completed by the viewers' physical interaction with, and consumption of, the work as they transfer the work from the gallery pile out into the outside world and then finally to a personalised location (home). The reason that economy-based approaches are used in social art is that trade and exchange as an interaction creates an experience for a participant.

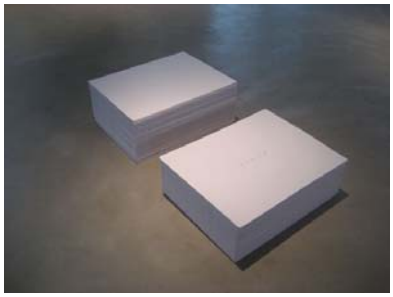

Fig. 105

Fig. 106

The second approach to be discussed is the event. The event as an approach (like the economic approach) to social art is an everyday structure (occurring away from the

museum space) that people are familiar with, such as a party, lecture or performance. The event allows people to engage in the familiar activity of going to a designated space for a specific purpose, e.g. a social event. This structure is altered by the social artist to facilitate an experience, which becomes the outcome of the artwork. For example, American artist Fritz Haeg opened his home for a series of artist-initiated events known as the *Sundown Salon* 2001-2006 (Fig. 107, Fig. 108). This project altered traditional 'entertaining' in the home through the participatory nature of the project and the activity/discussions generated from the event, which was situated within an artist's intention 'as artwork'. This approach, however, is the most problematic as the artist's intention is difficult to identify, and in some cases a misunderstanding of the intention of the project can occur. In such circumstances what appears to be people eating, drinking, socialising and partying, is actually an artist, using social activities as a material in their artwork. This problem establishes the importance of the current research in identifying and examining common approaches used to create social art projects, in order to create a basis for these projects to be more easily understood within a visual art context.

Fig. 107

Fig. 108

The third approach utilised is food. Food is used to facilitate work, often because it is an activity that everyone is familiar with. Food is often used as a material/strategy because it can be easily shared, and like economy, creates the framework for a social exchange to occur through communal participation. This is shown in American artist Lee Walton's project *Life/Theatre Hot Dogs* 2014 (Fig. 109, Fig. 110). Hot dogs were cooked on-site and given to the public at designated periods of time. Through text descriptions that were stamped on the hot dog wrappers, the public became aware of the life/theatre performances occurring around them. In this artwork food becomes a premise and vehicle for the dissemination of the concepts the artists are dealing with in the project.

Fig. 109

Fig. 110

The last approach to be discussed is a community-based approach. The community-based approach refers to working with community groups or with specific groups of people. This occurs through the referencing of issues that affect a specific community of people. For example, Spanish architect Santiago Cirugeda's *Recetas Urbanas (urban prescriptions)/Puzzle House* 1996-2004 (Fig. 111, Fig. 112). The project consisted of Cirugeda supplying the community with materials that could be used to erect a dwelling based on either a personal or communal need. The work dealt with

constrictive issues of city planning and construction laws to develop impermanent structures to house the homeless and socio-economic communities. By developing a system of communal land use, the project challenged highly regulated and bureaucratised public ownership because the moveable structures were able to be transported quickly, placed upon empty lots in and around the city of Seville, Spain. The practice of creating a solution through the empowerment of a community's activity, Cirugeda believes, means that each citizen plays 'an important role in the development and construction of the environment.'[259]

Fig. 111

Fig. 112

The four approaches introduced for discussion in this chapter have a conceptual relationship, as each creates a participatory exchange within the creation of the artwork. Using such approaches allows social artists to embed the conceptual intentions of their work within a familiar system, allowing a symbiotic relationship to occur between the concepts of the artist and the experience of the participant. This is partly because participants/viewers are in an environment that is not alien to them, and thus they are not uncomfortable or unsure as to how to act. American artist and critic Pablo Helguera discusses the artist's use of everyday approaches, stating that, 'understanding the social processes we are engaging in doesn't oblige us to operate in any particular capacity; it only makes us more aware of the context and thus allows us to better influence and orchestrate desired outcomes.'[260] Helguera's comment suggests that social artists indeed utilise pre-existing structures and approaches in order to create the desired outcome, or conceptual intention of the work.

Historically an analysis of the approaches that social artists use has not been discussed at any length; it is important and necessary to do so because without a discussion of the role of the artist, the actual intention of the work can be lost or misunderstood. This discussion identifies how the social artist uses various approaches, and as a result reveals and establishes a place that needs to be created in visual art in order for the social artist's intention to be identified and regarded as paramount in the field. The crisis of the artist in social art has been discussed in previous chapters through the writings of French critic Donatien Grau, who established that social art's use of everyday objects and activities results in the artist being displaced. This displacement occurs because the social artist is often interpreted through the disciplines that their work resembles, e.g. theatre, dance, performance, community work, etc., and as such,

[259] S Cirugeda, *Casa Rompecabezas*, LIVING AS FORM: Socially Engaged Art From 1991-2011, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2012, pg. 130
[260] P Helguera, Education for Socially Engaged Art, Jorge Pinto Press, New York, 2011, p.xv

they are not acknowledged as being crucial for the production of the artwork. This is reiterated in the writing of American critic Shannon Jackson, *Social Works* 2011, which proposes that artworks located in other disciplines adopt the frameworks or ideologies that are attached to those disciplines. Identification and a discussion of the social artist using everyday approaches is important, as social art projects positioned in the everyday can be overlooked, ignored or coupled with projects that are not intended to be art.

American curator Nato Thompson in his book *Living as Form* 2012 combines social art projects with non-art projects that appear to be 'similar' in his survey of the field. For example, not-for-profit organisation WikiLeaks founded by Australian computer hacker Julian Assange did not formulate WikiLeaks as an art project, but Thompson has included it nevertheless. Thompson includes a variety of disciplines, suggesting that where these 'projects' do belong is difficult to communicate, as 'these participatory projects are far removed from what one might call the traditional studio arts-such as sculpture, film, painting, and video – what field they *do* [emphasis in original] belong to is hard to articulate. Though defined by an active engagement with groups of people in the world, their intentions and disciplines remain elusive'.[261] This position is incorrect because although social art projects may appear to be similar to the activities of other not-for-profit organisations and social/community organisations, they are different, because social art projects are made by an artist, with artistic intentions. It is therefore necessary to read social art projects in a specific place, within a visual art context. Against Thompson's claim, this thesis argues that social art is an art movement that needs to be located in visual art, because it is intentionally made by an artist.

This chapter will discuss each of the four approaches separately through reference to key artists, artwork and current literature in the field as a way of articulating why the artist is essential within this field of artistic discourse. The first approach, economy, is traditionally understood as a system of trade and exchange that is based on money. In this thesis economy is being addressed as a form of trade and exchange adapted by the artist in order to facilitate an experience. American critic Ted Purves, author of *What we want is free: generosity and exchange in recent art* 2005, states that, 'rather than illustrating ideas of gifts and charities, these [social] works actually intended to embody them, to locate the "work" of the artwork into a literal transfer of goods and services from the artist to the audience.'[262] For example, Pierre Bal-Blancs's work *Working Contract* 1992 (Fig. 113) involves employing a scantily dressed male wearing headphones to dance for at least 5 minutes a day on the light bulb studded podium for the duration of the exhibition.

[261] N Thompson, Living as Form, Creative Time Books, The MIT Press, New York, 2012, p.18
[262] T Purves, *'What we want is free: generosity and exchange in recent art*, State University of New York Press, 2005, p.x

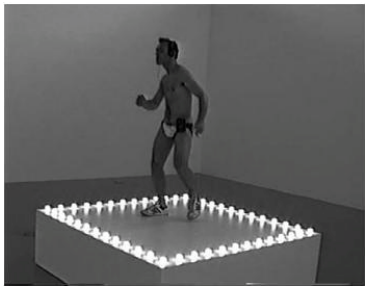

Fig. 113

Through the transfer of goods, the artist in social art alters a pre-existing social or exchange structure from being economically-based to being experientially and conceptually focused activities. In order to identify this alteration it is necessary to understand the intention of the artist in social art. This is displayed in American artist Sal Randolph's *Money Actions* 2005-ongoing (Fig. 114) where she alters the social dimension of money (by making it free) to create a participatory activity. Randolph acts outside of the rules of a monetary exchange system; instead the activity of giving away money in the streets, stores and galleries becomes the art activity. Randolph believes 'money is caged in rules, simply acting outside these rules opens up new ranges of social action and interaction… For me the artwork happens inside the other person as they experience the situation-as they think about, give away or spend the money.'[263]

Randolph reveals that through the use of an economic approach, and by altering the rules generally attached to money, it is able to exist in an (artist's) altered system. Identifying the artist's strategic intentions is, as Randolph states, the experience of the participant, which is her primary interest. Randolph's role as the artist is crucial in facilitating this experience through the conceptual intention of the work. It is this conceptual intention that shifts the work away from being an everyday situation in a public setting and instead exposes it as an artwork.

Fig. 114

Fig. 115

A series of projects called *Mobile academy* 2005-2012 (Fig. 115) by Berlin-based curator/producer Hannah Huzig also uses an altered economy through an exchange of knowledge in the creation of an artwork. In one of the projects, *Blackmarket for Useful Knowledge and Non Knowledge* 2005 (Fig. 116, Fig. 117), narrative formats of knowledge are transferred. This occurs through a process, exhibited in different formats, involving between 12 and 100 tables where experts from a wide variety of fields pass on their knowledge to various participants in a 30 minute one-on-one

[263] S Randolph, 'Money Actions and Free Money', accessed June 14, 2014, www.salrandolph.com

session. Australian art critic Ingrid Scheffer, in her essay *The Whispered Story of Knowledge* 2006, states that, 'this may be part of the appeal for the public – where else would they have the chance to spend half an hour in conversation with a future researcher, an entomologist, an aviation engineer, a film director, or a violin-maker, for example?'[264] The participant is instead able to engage in a system in which an artist has organised for experts from a variety of fields to be able to share their knowledge. Participants are able to book several half-hour conversations, and anyone who does not want to book an expert of their own can listen to the dialogues that interest them through headsets that enable access to the conversations from a distance.

Fig. 116

Fig. 117

Blackmarket shifts an economic exchange, creating a situation in which participants are able to learn about a variety of fields, engaging in a 'knowledge is power' ideology. The artist has made this available through an altered education transferral, shifting from the well-known traditional system that requires a financial exchange in order to gain knowledge either through a university degree or school tutoring, to the use of an 'artist altered' economy, as a strategy to produce an environment, as a situation for participants to engage in a process of knowledge transferral.

Both Randolph's and Huzig's projects reveal how an economy approach can create alternative processes of participation. The economy is being approached in this way by social artists because the idea of trade and exchange is an interaction that creates an experience for the participant. It is the actual experience of the participation that is the outcome of the work, which is aligned with the conceptual intentions of the artist.

The next specific approach discussed is an event, which is defined as a planned public or social occasion such as a lecture, rally, party, meeting, etc. For example, English artist Jeremy Deller's work *Battle of Orgreave* 2001 (Fig. 118) in which Deller facilitates a historical re-enactment of a mine worker union strike by researching the original event in depth in order for the re-enactment to be filmed. Another example of an event-based work is American Paul Chan's project *Waiting for Godot in New Orleans* 2007 (Fig. 119) in which Chan staged the theatre performance *Waiting for Godot* in response to the asymmetry he found between New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, and the solemn scenery of the iconic screen play. The event creates a framework that is familiar, and that people know how to operate or act within, because such events are usually positioned within a social environment, such as a theatre, hall or any manner of public or private spaces, generally occurring away from the museum or gallery framework.

[264] I Scheffer, The Whispered Story of knowledge, accessed June 26, 2014 http://www.mobileacademyberlin.com/englisch/2005/goethe.html

Fig. 118

Fig. 119

Toronto-based arts and research group Mammalian Diving Reflex create social interactions/events between people in public spaces, facilitated by a series of *Haircuts by Children* 2006 (Fig. 120) where the general public were invited to receive a free haircut by a child. 'The event' strategy is also shown in the work of Swedish artist Elin Wikström's project *What Would Happen if Everybody did this?* 1993 (Fig. 121). Wikström moved a bed into a grocery store and lay silently every day during the store's opening hours for the three-week duration of a group exhibition in Malmö, Sweden.

Fig. 120

Fig. 121

English artist Anthony Gormley's *One and Other* 2009 (Fig. 122) and American artist Lee Walton's *Wappening #4* 2010 both have utilised such an approach, implementing a conceptual intention into the event that facilitates an artwork. Gormley's *One and Other* 2009 was a durational event that operated around a public plinth located in Trafalgar Square, London, which is filled with military and valedictory historical statues. Gormley created a durational event using the plinth to hold people, as opposed to a historical statue that symbolises or celebrates a moment in history for that culture. Gormley uses the plinth not as a plateau for holding a static object (e.g. English sculptor William Behnes's *The statue of Henry Havelock, Trafalgar Square* 1861 (Fig. 123), representing a traditional socio-cultural figure placed on a plinth to highlight the notion of importance) but rather inverts its use so that it is now a stage to engage multiple people, who are working within the same ideological goals. Gormley invited members of the public to participate voluntarily for one hour intervals to use the plinth however they wished. For 100 consecutive days, 24 hours per day, 2400 participants were involved in transferring the plinth from being a space for a singular use into a location for collective and communal experience that created the artwork.

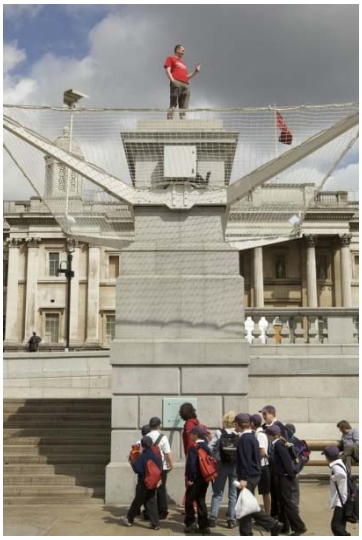

Fig. 122

Fig. 123

Gormley states that, 'this elevation of everyday life to the position formerly occupied by monumental art allows us to reflect on the diversity, vulnerability and particularity of the individual in contemporary society. It's about people coming together to do something extraordinary and unpredictable.'[265] While the public's use of the plinth is 'unpredictable', the intentional frame provided by Gormley is essential to the permitting of that freedom to act, to create a public event. Gormley's work uses the event as an approach in order to facilitate his work. It is important to gain a conceptual understanding of the artist's intention in order to understand the conceptual premise of the work. Understanding the intention of the artist is also vital in order to allow the participants to conceive the conceptual basis of the work and to participate in it. The event approach allows the artist to utilise a preconceived ideology of the space or environment that the work is situated in, along with the ideological position of the artist to authorise the event, as part of the social structure that is inherent to the event.

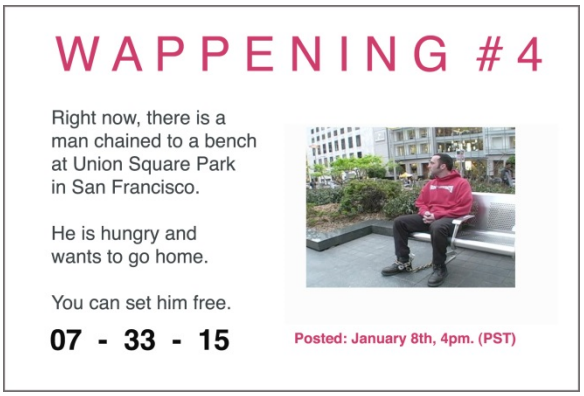

Fig. 124

Lee Walton, like Gormley, uses an event approach in *Wappening #4, February 8, at 4pm* 2010 (Fig. 124). Walton altered the traditional event as a gathering of people in a specific location to one person existing in a specific location. The project consisted of Walton posting a picture of a man on his website home page who was locked to a public park bench in San Francisco. Walton challenged the public to work together, to

[265] A Gormley, *One and Other, Fourth Plinth Commission, Trafalgar Square*, London, 2009, accessed on June 25, 2014, http://www.antonygormley.com/show/item-view/id/2277

contact the one woman who knew the code for the lock; she was wearing a red scarf sitting in a café in Williamsburg, a suburb of New York, for the duration of the event. Over the course of a few hours word spread and through a collective effort the man was freed. By engaging in the process of freeing the man, Walton both altered the traditional event, in order to allow multiple people to participate in the process. Through participation the public engaged in, and completed the work.

Walton's project altered the traditional idea of an event by using the internet as a basis to invite individuals to engage in the work and thereby *become* participants. The event approach represents social artists' alteration of familiar everyday activities in order to facilitate participation. By imbuing the event with the artist's intention a structure is created for a participant to experience the work. Walton alters the traditional 'event' by using a virtual platform to announce the project; and Gormley enables a progressive event through which a variety of people participate in the completion of the work.

The third approach the social artist uses is food. Like the economic and event approaches, the activities surrounding food (eating, growing food) have a direct relationship to daily life as it is an activity every human understands. American artists Jon Rubin and Dawn Weleski run *The Conflict Kitchen* 2010-current (Fig. 125, Fig. 126), using a food outlet as an approach in order to create a social project. The Conflict Kitchen is an eatery in Pittsburgh that will only serve food from the countries that the United States is in conflict with, to date North Korea, Cuba, Iran and Venezuela. Food, and the way it is being consumed, is therefore used as a means to converse about political, social and cultural issues related to the experience and/or knowledge of that place. The restaurant changes its shop front, menu and food packaging every few months according to current geopolitical events. Interviews with people from the nations in conflict with the US range in subject matter from cultural to political and all these elements become the material for dissemination within the work.

Fig. 125

Fig. 126

Interviews are undertaken in order to establish alternative perceptions of the countries currently in conflict with the US, and are printed on the food packaging as a method of disseminating this information. What this creates is a multileveled understanding of what is really occurring and about challenging preconceptions of these events. *The Conflict Kitchen* uses food and an altered structure of an eatery to engage the general public in discussions about countries, cultures and people that they may know little about outside a media portrayal of such events, creating social awareness and an experience 'as the artwork'. In this project the artwork is both the activation of people coming together through interaction but also about public awareness through the activation of information that may have been unavailable or unnoticed previously.

Fig. 127

Thai/American artist Rirkrit Tiravanija's *Untitled, (Free)* 1992 (Fig. 127) at 303 Gallery, New York, like the *Conflict Kitchen*, shows an altered approach to the use of food as a strategy for participation. Tiravanija's project created an alternative context in which to experience 'food' in a gallery by rearranging the use of spaces inside a gallery. Tiravanija moved the office of Gallery 303 out into the main exhibition space, indicating that the curators were to work in the public space, and then set up a rudimentary kitchen and eating area in the office/storage area, with free meals offered daily. By doing this Tiravanija uses food as an approach with which to create an altered experience of both the exhibition space and the preconceived notion of what an artwork is. American art critic Joshua Decter described Tiravanija's work as follows: 'by staging quotidian social processes – cooking, eating, and cleaning up – within the gallery space, he exchanged a post-commodity ethos of generosity and humility for the normative small entrepreneurial codes of a community gallery, which acknowledges that such activities, occurring within the frame, are codified as an expanded art condition.'[266] Decter proposes that Tiravanija's project exists within an expanded art condition because food is located within an art context, through Tiravanija's intention. Decter continues by saying that the work is 'testimony to the gallery as a platform for cultural production – but also to its enduring limits as a frame.'[267] The frames Decter discusses are provided by the artist's intention, an intention that authorises the consumption of food as art.

The gallery as a frame was discussed in Chapter 3 *An Ideology: Three Platforms for Social Art* through the artwork of American Conceptual artist Tom Marioni in regards to how the intention of the activity defines the existence of that activity as an art experience. For example, if a janitor sweeps the gallery it is life, if a dancer sweeps the gallery it is dance, and if the artist sweeps the gallery it is art. The positioning of an object or activity in a gallery space alone is not sufficient for it to be art, as it needs the intellectual property and conceptual intention of the individual, in this case the artist, to provide the frame for the activity.

American artists David Burns, Matias Viegener and Austin Young, also known as the collaborative 'Fallen Fruit', also use food, specifically fruit, as a strategy to work with

[266] J Decter, Review, Artforum, May 2011, p.283
[267] J Decter, Review, Artforum, May 2011, p.283

individuals and communities to establish an experience or exchange, thereby facilitating the artwork. The collaborative project, beginning in 2004, created public projects and site-specific collaborations by mapping fruit trees that were growing on, or leaning over onto public property. The project involved and encouraged the local community to become familiar with the names of trees, and to take and share the fruit that the trees produced. By planting fruit trees in communal areas, and mapping where pre-existing fruit trees can be accessed by the public, 'Fallen Fruit' provided a free exchange, by altering a system in which fruit trees are generally grown for an individual's private use but in this project become communal gain.

Another project by 'Fallen Fruit' that also incorporated an economic approach is the project *Del Aire Public Fruit Park* 2012 (Fig. 128) which was a public art commission to create a fruit park with the community in a neighbourhood in Hawthorn, California. 'Fallen Fruit' worked with local residents to plant a centrally located park with 36 fruit trees. In addition to this, 48 trees were adopted by residents throughout the neighbourhood, adding to the project. By creating an orchard in a public space 'Fallen Fruit' created a system in which locals established knowledge of seasonal fruit trees, and worked together to share the crop of the trees. By implementing a commercial resource, 'Fallen Fruit' used a 'food' approach to facilitate participation, and a communal connectedness by local residents in establishing a socio-beneficial activity 'as resource'.

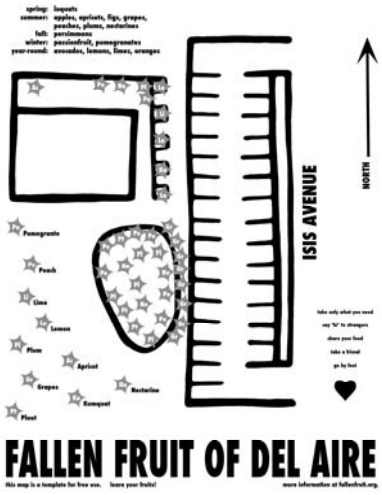

Fig. 128

Fig. 129

Fruit Tree Adoptions (2007-current) (Fig. 129) again uses fruit trees as a means to create a social exchange in which 'Fallen Fruit' distributes free bare-root fruit trees, in a variety of urban settings. The recipient of the tree signs formal adoption papers promising to care for the tree, and 'Fallen Fruit' asks that the trees be planted on the periphery of their property – which contributes to an open social exchange whereby people can pick the fruit from the overhanging limbs. The project creates an ongoing system of exchange, through which community members are participating in the project by caring for the trees. The project simultaneously establishes a structure for communal use, by asking that the trees be planted on the periphery of the property, allowing for any other local resident to benefit from the tree.

Fig. 130

Food as an approach to social art is also explored by Australian collaborative 'Makeshift', consisting of two artists, Tessa Zettel and Karl Khoe. Their work *Making Time* 2010-current (Fig. 130) was initially devised in 2010 at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, and has been remade by Tessa Zettel for the 'ANTI festival' 2012, Kuopio, Finland, and for Performance Space, Sydney, in 2013. *Making Time* is an open kitchen facilitated by the artist, where participants are invited to bring fruit that they have grown or found and share strategies for the preservation of food through informal workshops on pickling, bottling, and making jam using a variety of locally grown and seasonal food. Through the various projects/events occurring, the artist has created a situation wherein the participants together engage in an informal dialogue while pickling, and sharing pickling techniques. The artist also intends the process to be meditative and self-reflective, in addition to recovering old preservation practices 'through modes of community, initiation and social learning.'[268]

Australian researcher Abby Mellick Lopes writes about the act of working collectively, stating that, 'It was incredibly exhausting but it made me realise the value of… making something together. It brings a new dimension to friendship when you give time, work together, exchange knowledge and share the results.'[269] Mellick Lopes comments on the result of working collectively, the outcome of the artist's intention for the work, which has been developed through a continual practice of creating a structure or intention for people to gather together to share recipes and engage in preservation practices. Despite the ethical value of the experience, this activity, without the intentional frame, is just a social exchange.

The projects discussed by Tiravanija, 'Conflict Kitchen', 'Fallen Fruit' and 'Makeshift', each exemplify situations in which food has been used by the artist as an approach, to engage participants to have an experience by attaching their own intention to the food related activity. What such projects do is house the conceptual intention of the dialogue, and through the process and time of undertaking the activity, participants are able to have a symbiotic experience, and this experience is the artwork. As such it is difficult to identify such activities 'as art' because the actual materiality of the project could be the planting of a tree, the pickling of fruit or any object that has resulted from the participation. However, the object is not arbitrary because even

[268] A Mellick Lopes, 2013 'Seeing Thinks in/as time', accessed October 13, 2014, http://making-time.net/?p=411
[269] *ibid.*

though it appears to be something positioned within the everyday, through the artist's conceptual framing of the project, the activity and resulting discussions become the artwork.

The fourth approach discussed is community-based activities that like economic, event and food are used as an approach (or bridge) for participation to occur. Community is defined as a group of people living in the same place or having a similar characteristic in common and often use specific structures and activities in order to come together and engage in activities as a group. Social artists have adapted these community systems in order to create approaches in their work as pre-existing[270] community groups and actions create a basis for a model that can be adapted by artists as an approach or opportunity for an experience to occur. Rather than create a community through the artist's intentionality, a pre-existing community is engaged.

The works of Cuban artist Tania Bruguera, American collaborative project 'The Yes Men' (consisting of artists Steve Lambert and Andy Bichlbaum), German collective 'Park Fiction', Austrian collaborative 'WochenKlausur' and Mexican artist Pedro Reyes have each altered a community approach, using schools, newspapers and local parks as the environment/location to situate and create a participatory experience from an existing community. American critic Pablo Helguera expands upon the use of a community approach, stating that, 'socially engaged art can't be produced inside a knowledge vacuum. Artists who wish to work with communities, for whatever reason, can greatly benefit from the knowledge accumulated by various disciplines –such as sociology, education, linguistics, and ethnography – to make informed decisions about how to engage and construct meaningful exchanges and experiences.'[271] These other disciplines, it must be stressed, are deployed in the service of art, they are not to be confused with the structure of the discipline itself. This is a common misunderstanding found in the literature surrounding social art.

The artists utilise a community approach by drawing from a variety of other disciplines to gain further knowledge of inter-relational activities, by altering these activities in order to create meaningful experiences for participants. An artist drawing upon these various other activities is one of the reasons that social art is often read within a variety of unrelated disciplines. The artist does not become a sociologist, educator or ethnographer by drawing ideologies from these disciplines, but instead simply adapts these approaches in order to create a slightly altered structure or framework to facilitate an artwork that is representative of their conceptual intentions.

[270] 'pre-existing' refers to community groups that have occurred independently from their involvement in a social art project.
[271] P Helguera, Education for Socially Engaged Art, Jorge Pinto Press, 2011, p.xv

Fig. 131

Tania Bruguera's *Cátedra Arte de Conducta (Behaviour Art School)* 2002-2009 (Fig. 131) is an adaptation of a school system reconfigured as both an institutional critique and a public gathering. Bruguera borrows from education formats and explores the relationship between the performing arts, politics and their implementation in society. The project operated as an open access school, with members coming from various fields including architecture, theatre, writing, engineering, set design, music, cinema, sociology, visual arts and history, to teach these various disciplines free of charge. However, rather than working as an educator, Bruguera has adopted this model in order to create her social art project, which occurred as a result of responding to a lack of civic discussion centres and art spaces in current Cuban society.

Bruguera believes the works are 'actions aimed to transform some spaces in society through art, transcending symbolic representation or metaphor and meeting with their activity some deficits in reality, in life through *Arte Útil* (Useful Art), are prioritized.'[272] This statement confirms that social artists altering a familiar model is effective in order to create a vehicle for participants to engage in a project, as well as contributing to a social function. The school model in this case is important as it creates an open access point for the participants because individuals are already familiar with the relational construct presented in a school situation. Bruguera has altered the traditional school by implementing the specific curriculum outlined above (architecture, theatre, writing, visual arts, etc.) and through the use of a pre-existing model, she identifies why it is important for social artists to be discussed in a place within a visual arts discourse. Without artistic intention such a project solely becomes a community education program.

'Yes Men', like Bruguera, have altered a pre-existing community structure with their conceptual intention in order to create a social artwork in their project *New York Times Special Edition* 2008 (Fig. 132). The project involved the creation of a replica of the *New York Times* newspaper that involved 30 writers, 50 advisors and around 1000 volunteer distributors. On November 12, 2008 over 80,000 copies of a Special Edition of the *New York Times* were distributed free in several cities around the United States. The paper was distributed one week after the election of Barack Obama, where much of the United States population was still in a state of excitement regarding the future of the nation. The paper included 14 pages of 'best case scenario' news set nine months

[272] T Bruguera, Statement, accessed June 28, 2014, http://www.taniabruguera.com/cms/492-0-Ctedra+Arte+de+Conducta+Behavior+Art+School.htm

in the future, with the headline 'Iraq War Ends', describing the world as it could be eight months into the future.

Fig. 132

The use of the tangible newspaper, in this project, allowed people to be transported to a parallel world, giving weight to the hopes and dreams of the wider demographic at the time. American artist Steve Lambert, one of the 'Yes Men', states that, 'the goal of the organizers was not to have anyone feel tricked or the butt of a joke, but to be welcomed in to an inside joke that could be shared with friends… It was a utopian vision written in a familiar language.'[273] Lambert believed that the use of the newspaper as a way of directly communicating with a wider community established a bridge between art and life, allowing an entryway to experience the project. The community participated by reading the paper; the paper's own website was also visited by over 300,000 people in the first two days. This project is a key example of how artists take a pre-existing structure that is commonly used by the community, and through the process of alteration inject the conceptual intention of the artist into the pages of the paper, thereby creating a bridge for participation.

Fig. 133

Two other projects that utilised a community approach are *Park Fiction* 1994-current (Fig. 133) and the *Right to the City Network Hamburg* 1994 by German artist Christoph Schäfer and the local residents of St. Pauli (a neighbourhood of Hamburg), Germany. The project was a form of protest and resistance towards developers, when they attempted to acquire the last remaining piece of land in the area that was used by the public. Instead of protesting, the residents began picnicking, and used the parks for festivals, exhibitions, talks and activities. The community built a mobile planning centre that was a container housing a telephone hotline, questionnaires, maps and an instant camera. The centre enabled community members to document the activities

[273] S Lambert, 'About the Project' *New York Times Special Edition,* http://visitsteve.com/made/the-ny-times-special-edition/, accessed 29 June, 2014

that took place at the park and the container. In addition, documentation of the events was also shown at other art events including *Documenta 11* 2002 in Kassel, Germany.

This project initiates a fine line between art and life, asking the question of what the role of the artist is, and where the intention of the artist lies within such an activity/event. If the project had not been initiated by an artist, and then subsequently taken to *Documenta 11*, would it appear to be an artwork? Could anyone from the general public, someone not designated or identified as an artist, indeed an artist with a lengthy C.V., have initiated such a project at *Documenta*? This demonstrates that the overall artist's practice is fundamental in order to contextualise an activity as art.

This project shows that artistic intention is essential in order for such a project to exist and be viewed and understood 'as art', within a visual art context; without such a positioning this project would only be viewed as a community activity. This establishes why it is crucial to create an ideological place for the intention and acknowledgement of the social artist within visual arts, a place that was often taken for granted with the creation of modernist formal objects and images. Within this context projects such as Christoph Schäfer's, which are imbedded within the community, are not viewed solely as community-based activities. Instead they should be acknowledged as an artwork, created by an artist, and are therefore debated and investigated through the field of visual art.

The group 'WochenKlausur' (1993-current), consisting of six Austrian artists, Katharina Lenz, Pascale Jeannée, Susanna Niedermayr, Stefania Pitscheider, Erich Steurer and Wolfgang Zinggl, like 'Park Fiction', create events that are based on community structures. The group adapts pre-existing community structures by developing small but important improvements to social and political shortcomings. For example, *A cinema for Immigrants* 2006 (Fig. 134) involved a monthly screening of films for immigrants in Limerick, Ireland. Each month immigrants from a different country would choose a film to be shown at a local community centre, as independent cinemas in the area had closed previously, unable to compete with mainstream film companies.

Fig. 134

The project involved WochenKlausur contacting film distributors, production companies, festivals and directors from around the world, negotiating to screen the often prize winning films, free of charge, in addition to providing free transport to and from the event from the three refugee centres situated in the city of Limerick. The project creates an event for immigrants to socialise and educate each other through film, but also creates deeper links with the community through the simple activity of leaving the refugee centres and inhabiting a community space. By creating an

interventionist strategy, WochenKlausur adapts pre-existing structures such as a cinema, stating that, 'proceeding even further and invariably translating these proposals into action, artistic creativity is no longer seen as formal but as an intervention into society.'[274]

Another example of a social-based activity is WochenKlausur's project *Furnishing Social Institutions* 2005 (Fig. 135, 136, 137) which was developed in a three-week residency at the Smart Museum and University of Chicago. The artwork consisted of a system of exchanges between large cultural institutions such as museums, galleries and theatres that throw out large stage sets that they are unable to store. WochenKlausur approached nine cultural institutions in Chicago to supply materials they no longer needed (such as stage sets, discarded wood materials, etc.). These were then converted by students at The University of Chicago art department, The Illinois Institute of Technology and the Harrington College of Design into furniture and usable objects required at social institutions.

Fig. 135

Fig. 136

Fig. 137

By using a community approach, WochenKlausur established relationships between nine large cultural institutions and design schools, in order to assist other institutions creating a system of trade and exchange. This activity, without the conceptual intention of the artist inherent in the design of the exchange, would only exist as community work, rather than as an art project. A specific example of the project is a request for garden furniture by *Deborah's Place* 2005 (Fig. 135, Fig. 136, Fig. 137), a homeless shelter for women, for which two outdoor tables and chairs using recycled cable drums were designed and built. This project again identifies the importance of the artist's conceptual intention as this could have been viewed as a community or charity event rather than being read as an artwork.

WochenKlausur finally turned the project into a not-for-profit organisation named 'Material Exchange' 2005. The organisation is made up of employees from the museum and all of the cultural and social institutions involved in the Chicago area. WochenKlausur themselves initiated the shift from the project existing as an 'art project' to existing as a 'not-for-profit' project in order to allow it to have long-term community benefit. The role and intention of the artist is therefore crucial in order to identify when projects exist as art, and when they are transformed into something else, e.g. in this case a community project.

Mexican artist Pedro Reyes's project *Palas por Pistolas* (Fig. 138, Fig. 139) 2008 also skirts a fine line between community work and the use of a community approach as artistic strategy. This project, like WochenKlausur's project, shows how the role of the artist is fundamental to understanding and positioning social art within a visual art

[274] WochenKlausur, 'artist statement' http://www.wochenklausur.at/projekte/menu_en.htm, accessed June 29, 2014

context. This occurs due to the close links the various projects have between art and life, utilising everyday activities and approaches. In *Palas por Pistolas*, Reyes collected 1527 voluntarily donated guns in exchange for coupons for discounted appliances and electronics from the community of Caliacán, a city in Western Mexico that is known for drug trafficking and a high rate of death by gunfire. The weapons were then steamrolled, melted down and recast into 1527 shovels. The shovels were then distributed to a number of public schools and art institutions, where they were used to plant 1527 trees. The project demonstrates a community approach and community involvement as a bridge for participants to engage in the social art project, which directly correlates to benefitting a community through the regeneration of urban environments. Reyes has also established a transfer from metal constituting an agent of death to its facilitation as an agent of life through it aiding the planting of trees.

Fig. 138

Fig. 139

Belgian contemporary artist Francis Alys *When Faith Moves Mountains* 2002 (Fig. 140, Fig. 141) brings people together to create a collective experience through an activity, in this case the moving of a sand dune by a few inches in Lima, Peru. In this project 500 volunteers standing at the base of a 1,600 foot sand dune for the next several hours in a straight line shifted the dune shovel load by shovel load. The work is not about the physical activity of moving sand using a shovel but is instead a metaphor for establishing that people can collectively achieve anything, in this case moving a mountain. For Alys the work activates a consciousness in the individual, creating deeper connections with both the geographical location they are positioned in and the other people that inhabit that place as well. Through the very act of each individual participating, isolation becomes community activation because the actual artwork is 'about doing something with other people.'[275]

Fig. 140

Fig. 141

[275] F Alys, *When Faith Moves Mountains*, LIVING AS FORM: Socially Engaged Art From 1991-2011, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2012, pg. 105

This chapter has discussed the necessity for an overall positioning and ideological place for the social artist to be established in visual art, in order for their work to be viewed and understood as art rather than be mistaken as a community-based activity. The chapter has identified four prevalent approaches that social artists use in order to facilitate art projects: economic, food, event and community approaches have been identified in order to assist in an understanding and discussion of the ways in which social artists facilitate their work. They do this by using a variety of structures 'as a strategy for making artwork' inherent in everyday activities. Whether the approach was economic, event, food or community-based, each approach identifies a variety of ways that artists utilise as a vehicle to create and facilitate a social art project. Through the act of personal and community participation, the framework or system established by the artist is a central component of this form of artistic practice. The establishment and recognition of this is essential if artists and their social art projects are to be acknowledged and understood correctly within visual art as the relevant field of inquiry, rather than locating the art experience in another discipline, regardless of the fact that such disciplines are drawn on.

This chapter, *Four common approaches that social artists use to facilitate their work*, directly relates to the central discussion of the current thesis. This involves the formative discussion proposing that the role of the social artist is essential to the instigation of social art, identifying that without the artist's intention, social art may be misread and misrepresented as everyday life itself. This is in opposition to the prevailing theoretical discussion of the artist in social art, where they have been displaced in the current literature in the field. This is a result of the various artists' practices being read through disciplines that their work resembles or draws upon, such as politics, theatre, performance or community work. The systematic approaches used, economy, event, food, community, have been particularly important to pinpoint and position, as they are some of the most prevalent utilised in social art internationally.

This chapter reiterates that the social artist must be acknowledged, and given a place in visual art in order for such social artistic practices and projects to be regarded and identified 'as art'. Without such an acknowledgement and strategic positioning, as discussed in this chapter, the artwork that is produced is situated within the confines of everyday and community-based environments. Social artists 'expand models of art, advance ways of being an artist, and involve new publics in their efforts,'[276] and so the activities that these artist use that blur 'life' and 'art' need to be viewed, acknowledged and debated through the artists' concepts as a way of defining such projects as art projects.

[276] A Pasternak, *Forward*, LIVING AS FORM: Socially Engaged Art From 1991-2011, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2012, pg. 8

Chapter 5
More Like Working with Gases than Solids: A Place for the Artist in Social Art

This final chapter of the thesis will discuss and establish an ideological place for the social artist within visual art. The establishment of such a place is necessary for this form of artwork because unlike modernist object-based art activities, where objects are created, presented and understood 'as art', e.g. painting, sculpture, etc., social artwork can be transient and ambiguous, due to the everyday approaches that are utilised to facilitate the work, e.g. community activities, food, events, etc. Positioning social art within the context of visual art removes the risk of the work being misunderstood through a community/political approach that encompasses alternative ideologies, which up to this point has occurred within historical and contemporary literature. The title of this chapter, *More like Working with Gases than Solids*, reflects the fact that social art projects are ephemeral, hence the metaphor of gas, an object that is difficult to identify within an uncontrolled environment.

This chapter will establish that traditional, object-based art practices and social art practices can both be read within the same intentional model, through the following five discourses. The first component is the *artist's intent*; the second is the *making/facilitating* process; the third discusses the object-based outcome or *participation* (which is not always known by the artist when the work is participatory); the fourth deals with the *documentation* (or trace object[277]); and the fifth and final component addresses what UK-based theorist Claire Bishop refers to as the *secondary viewing*, or the *viewing of the documentation*, by a secondary individual who has not participated in the work. *Secondary viewing* is a term coined by Bishop who refers to the viewing of the documentation of a project (or artwork) in order to perceive the work, rather than perceiving the work through participating in it. This process is vital in order to understand social art projects, due to the nature of the works being ephemeral, as opposed to an object-based work that is still able to be physically seen, engaged with and experienced consistently as 'the original artefact'.

Using such a model will allow for an accurate definition of the intention of the artist in social art projects to prevail, rather than the definition that is usually recognised in the literature that currently surrounds social art, predominantly locating the social artist/project inaccurately. Such methods of recognising objects 'as art', or ways of defining them, are already pre-existing within the historical and contemporary visual art field; however, artwork does not materialise in the same way within social art. The argument established in this chapter indicates that the role of the artist is as important in social art practices as it is in traditional art practices, and thus needs to be recognised as such for the work to be acknowledged and debated correctly.

This discussion is important, as social art projects cannot visually represent themselves, due to their utilisation of everyday processes/activities and placement within everyday environments and spaces, including the fact that many are ephemeral processes. This is related to the title of this chapter, *More like Working with Gases than Solids*, which is borrowed from an interview with American artist Jon Rubin, who discusses the nature of social art projects as opposed to traditional object-based

[277] The trace object refers to a physical object that was facilitated and is a part of the participatory experience.

art making. This title is used as a strategic reference because, like Rubin's analogy, social art projects are ephemeral, hence the metaphor of gas, as transient, constantly shifting and almost unnoticeable away from a controlled space, such as a laboratory.

Due to the momentary nature of social artwork, it is necessary to perceive such projects through the model that has been proposed for this chapter, entitled the intentional model, as it allows for such ephemeral projects and artworks to be more clearly acknowledged and understood 'as art'. The intentional model discusses social art projects in relationship to the five components outlined above, allowing for such projects to be understood and acknowledged through the conceptual intention of the artist, which is the same model of understanding used for any visual artwork. This chapter will use the intentional model as a frame to extensively discuss particular social artists' practices that are key in the field, to confirm that it is imperative to create a place for the artist in social art. The importance of creating a place facilitates an acknowledgement of the social artist within this form of art activity, which has not been extensively pursued previously within both 20th and 21st century theoretical debates.

Currently social art is read through a variety of other unrelated fields such as 'community', 'collaborative', 'political' or 'theatrical' contexts, which have all been discussed in previous chapters. This chapter will argue that social art is no different, in one significant respect, to any other medium (traditional) art forms within Modernism or contemporary art, in that it needs to be read through the overall practice and methodology of the artist's conceptual frame, rather than alternative fields of inquiry. In addition to this, social art must be positioned in a visual art context, due to the misrepresentation of social art projects and their discussion through other fields as discussed above.

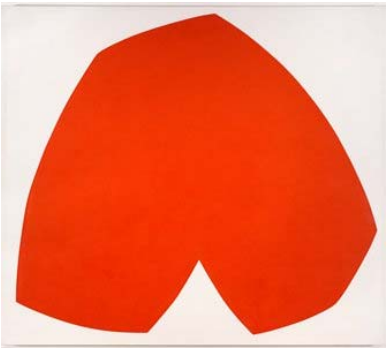

Fig. 142

Currently that analysis of social art projects occurs through these alternative disciplines; this form of understanding of social art could be likened to analysing one of American colour field painter Ellsworth Kelly's works *Red White* 1962 (Fig. 142) through theatre or a political ideology, which would not be a realistic strategy of inquiry. However, traditional-based practices have an advantage; using the Kelly example, an inaccurate reading would not occur because the painting is easily identified as a formal/late modern art object, and therefore is positioned and read through that context. For social art conjecture and confusion occurs, because the work is ephemeral and placed within alternative environments of display, where the conceptual intentions of the artwork are abstracted because of its blurred positioning, away from either a formal art exhibition context and/or materiality.

This chapter will discuss at length how social art projects use a model to define their work as a way of presenting the artist's conceptual intention with exceptional clarity. In the same way that a painter is the creator of a painting, a social artist creates an experience for an individual, and it is that experience that encompasses the conceptual intention of the artist, and the subsequent social artworks. Therefore, both types of artist (traditional and social) should be treated with the same regard and value, as opposed to the widespread discussion of the social artist as collaborator, rather than as a primary facilitator or maker of the work. This displacement of the social artist has led to the current distortion of the artist in social art, as discussed in the previous chapters, through both the inception and consideration of the work visually and theoretically.

This distortion or slippage of understanding has occurred due to the social artist being discussed through a variety of other contexts, including anthropology, sociology, politics, theatre, performance, etc. by American theorists and critics such as Pablo Helguera, Claire Bishop and Shannon Jackson, who are considered important within the participatory field. It is not that such disciplines are unrelated; it is more the case that the links to other disciplines have been overemphasised, along with the focus on collaboration rather than the artist's intentional frame. The current positioning of the artist in social art therefore requires redeploying, to instead be regarded through a place for the artist that provides an ideological understanding of the artwork. This will be established in an analysis of the following practices discussed through the intentional model in which to identify and acknowledge the artist as a vital maker and instigator of social artwork. The model developed will be used in this chapter to discuss the four leading artists in the field, whose works have been discussed throughout the thesis in order to create an overview of their practices, artists who are located within a visual art context rather than, for example, anthropology. This means the model will be discussed primarily through American artists, whose practices come from a visual arts position, as opposed to Australian artists who primarily engage in 'live' art predominantly drawn from the UK. The majority of Australian practices are ideologically developed from a theatre-based context, referring to the texts and ideologies inherent to the field of theatre, rather than visual art.

The artists whose practice will be discussed at length are Americans Jon Rubin, Lee Walton, Sal Randolph and Harrell Fletcher, as each of these artist's practices are critical and informed by visual art ideologies/theories in the field. Their work is the best representation of social art practices, because they intend their work to be read through their overall artistic practice, and therefore within a visual art context.

Fletcher, for example, makes a point about the positioning of his work in a visual art context, stating that, 'since art audiences have built in understandings of how art is supposed to work for them, they need to refigure their expectations in regards to my work. For instance it is important to understand that I'm not thinking about traditional commercial applications in regard to my work, and instead am valuing participation, education, appreciation of the everyday, etc.'[278] Further to this, Fletcher in an interview for this research answered 'yes' when asked if he believed that historical rules and methodologies need to be taken into account when he was making work. Fletcher's statements position him in the role of 'the author of the work', rather than 'the participant as author' as discussed by French critic Roland Barthes in his essay 'Death

[278] H Fletcher, Appendix C, p.2

of the Author' 1967[279]. Barthes argues that 'a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination'[280], proposing that the 'writing' and 'creator' (reader) are unrelated, and that the work comes to life upon its reading, rather than through its writing.

Projects created by Rubin, Walton, Randolph and Fletcher will be analysed through the intentional model devised in this research, in order to examine the conceptual goals of each social artist within a visual art context. The original discussion in this chapter and in the research for this thesis, establishes a basis for understanding and positioning the social artist. This positioning is a place in which the social artist is redefined as a valuable facilitator within visual art.

As discussed in the introduction of the thesis, the prior position of the social artist is one where he has been disenfranchised, through the discussion of the artist as a collaborator, with no value as author. This is discussed in debates surrounding postmodern appropriation and citation, lack of originality and collaboration, and these debates have formed the precursors to contemporary assumptions that the artist has little or no value in the field. The German theorist Walter Benjamin is in agreement with this position, arguing for a shift from spectator to collaborator in his essay 'The Author as Producer' 1934, which discounted the role of the artist. Benjamin's discussion has expanded from the relationship formed between the artwork and politics as shown by the early European Modernist art movement Dada, e.g. in German artist Hannah Höch's *Cut with the Dada Kitchen Knife through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch in Germany* 1919 (Fig. 143). The collective practices of Dada used art as a vehicle to be anti-war, to question political affinities and challenge bourgeois ideals of the time; according to Benjamin, 'when judging a work's politics, we should not look at the artist's declared sympathies, but at the position that the work occupies in the production relations of its time.'[281]

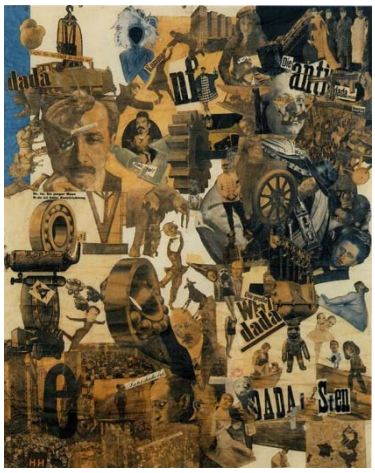

Fig. 143

Claire Bishop suggests that Benjamin's statement shows that the work of art should actively intervene, and provide a model for allowing viewers to be more involved in the process of production: 'this apparatus is better, the more consumers it is able to

[279] This was written primarily in relation to literature but has been applied to an art context
[280] R Barthes, 'The Death of the Author' *Image Music Text* Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1978
[281] Walter Benjamin, 'Author as Producer' 1934, cited by C Bishop, 'Viewers as Producers' in *Participation, Documents of Contemporary Art*, Whitechapel gallery and the MIT Press, 2006 p.11

turn into producers – this is, the more readers or spectators into collaborators.'[282] Benjamin's position focuses on the participant or collaborator, due to their creation of the 'outcome' of the work. The artist is disregarded in Benjamin's discussion, but is, in this research, redeployed as seminal in the construction of the framework, allowing the work to exist as participatory.

The original contribution of the research is to create a new place for the social artist in visual art. This is done through the use of the intentional model that will redefine how and why social art is different from the everyday activities that it resembles. While some theorists and writers have mentioned the importance of the artist as discussed in the introduction, including Claire Bishop, Miwon Kwon and Pablo Helguera, there is no sustained and developed discussion of this issue currently in the field of visual art. This discussion draws on French critic Donatien Grau's essay 'Another Quarrel' 2013 whose position suggests the demise or failure of the object-based artist, due to three revolutions in art: one, art has become a political or democratic republic in which only the best survive (due to the evaluation of art being skill-based); two, art is now a market, and industry, more than it has ever been; and three, the mythology of the artist. Grau proposes that being a successful artist is socially more gratifying than being a successful lawyer 'because art deals with limits, and because its whole purpose is to exceed them in order to enlighten the world.'[283] However, Grau goes on to discuss the crisis, stating that, 'we do not know what to do with this many artists, whose number increases every day, all around the globe, and who constantly produce in the context of a mass market called the art world.'[284]

Grau's argument illustrates a dire position for the artist, asking 'how can the figure of the artist, as it has been constructed by history, philosophy, and literature, resist the violence of the present?'[285] Grau's argument suggests the demise or failure of the artist, questioning how they are able to exist, or not exist in this crisis. Grau articulates his dilemma, which is relative to the predicament of the artist in social art, stating that, 'a return to the object versus an emphasis on "practices"; [and] a particular meaning attached to craft verses industry [suggests that]… both sides are signs of a failure to find a suitable position for these monsters our civilization has nurtured, these monsters we call artists.'[286] The notion of the monster as artist is fitting in this context due to the artist's continued existence, despite Grau's theory of 'crisis'. The result of Grau's position is that social art projects are burdened by the lack of instant recognition of what is being viewed or experienced, e.g. an actual artwork, but rather what they intrinsically resemble, which appears to be an everyday activity. One of the consequences of this confusion is that recognition of the artist's role is usually lacking in such a climate because of the visual nature (or lack of visuality) of the work.

Many social artists have expanded from traditional mediums within the visual arts, such as painting, photography, objects or film, and instead have chosen to use 'participation' or 'an experience' as a material in the creation of their work. For example, Fletcher describes his shift from traditional art practices to a social art practice, stating that in graduate school, he had 'this frustration with what I was

[282] C Bishop, 'Viewers as Producers' in *Participation, Documents of Contemporary Art*, Whitechapel gallery and the MIT Press, 2006 p.11
[283] D Grau, 'Another Quarrel' *The Age of Creation,* Lukas &Sternberg, Berlin, 2013, p.25
[284] *ibid.*, p.26
[285] *ibid.*, p.25
[286] *ibid.*, p.28

starting to learn about the art world, and feeling like it was too exclusive and too commercial; and so then at that point I started to really explore these ideas [participation] in a bigger kind of way…[I have] now continued on from there but [with] pretty similar basic ideas that were going on at that time, that I've just played out and added too since then. Back then it [participation] was focussed very specifically around the neighbourhood in Oakland, but now it is wherever I'm doing work.'[287]

Fig. 144

Fletcher undertook a series of social art projects with Jon Rubin at an artist-run gallery that they co-directed called 'Gallery Here' 1993-1995 (Fig. 144); the gallery was focused on projects situated around the neighbourhood in which it was located. The previously demonstrated expansion of Fletcher's practice from traditional materials shows that his social art projects have been created in relation to a visual art context. As Fletcher's thought and making process is intrinsically located in visual art due to his training, interest and history being located in that context, he has simply expanded from an object-based practice to engage in a participatory practice, much like painters expanded their practices in the 1970s and onwards from the canvas support to architectonic wall paintings, to open up points of departure as a method of synthesising site and conceptual intention, e.g. British-American painter Sarah Morris's *Installation View (paintings on canvas), Los Angeles* 2005 (Fig. 145) & *Chimera (Origami)* 2009 (Fig. 146). In Fletchers case, and like social artists in general, the expansion has been from the physical (as object) to the ephemeral (as participatory experience). For example, Fletcher's project *If I Wasn't Me I Would be You* 2003 is a video compiled of individual's stories about how they received a scar. This project is different from an object-based work as the outcome of the project is the result of individuals' contributions.

Fig. 145

Fig. 146

Fig. 147

[287] H Fletcher, Interview with RAYGUN, 2014, Appendix B p.184

Sal Randolph's work reveals a shift from a focus on an object to the experience of an individual or the object's reception. In her work *free words* 2001-2005 (Fig. 147) 3000 copies of a book were produced and distributed, by being placed on the shelves of bookstores and libraries, creating an art situation within a public and commercial space; when the book was found, it belonged to the individual who found it. Randolph describes the shift, from object to subject, asking herself, 'how does a work of art reach someone? What makes them decide to take it in? And how does it come alive (or not) inside them?'[288] This change occurred in Randolph's practice after she watched viewers look at her paintings for just a few minutes, while they took her up to a year to make. This momentary viewing of the work by the public resulted in Randolph deciding that she needed her work to be more 'involved' with the viewer, to go beyond the few moments of 'polite' looking.

Randolph states, 'that moment of looking just wasn't enough for me. I began a series of experiments trying to prolong the encounter of the viewer and the work (what I might now think of as their participation in the work).'[289] Her explanation shows the expansion of traditional practices to evolve into social art projects that are based on an experience, rather than a short viewing, which in turn creates a more accurate conceptual currency within such projects. Even though Randolph's work has shifted into a social art paradigm, it is still situated within an established visual art field of inquiry because the work has been created with the intention that it will be an artwork. As such, the work needs to continue to be read in a visual arts structure for it to be accurately acknowledged and understood. What this creates is an artwork that is predicated on the act of experience (as artwork), rather than through the object (as artwork). This transition shown in the work of Fletcher and Randolph directly relates to Rubin's statement that social art is 'more like working with gases than solids' because of its ephemerality. As such, the artwork becomes situated and dependent upon the act of experience underpinned by concepts, rather than viewing something that is physically situated within an exhibition space.

Fletcher believes that through the artists creating a work that is about proposition, it allows the participant to reconsider the way that they think about the work. Fletcher believes that, 'since art audiences have built in understandings of how art is supposed to work for them, they need to refigure their expectations in regards to my work. For instance, it is important to understand that I'm not thinking about traditional commercial applications in regard to my work, and instead, am valuing participation, education, appreciation of the everyday, etc.'[290] Fletcher establishes that his work requires a specific place or ideology in which to be acknowledged and read as social art, i.e. within a wider visual art context. This can be established due to Fletcher's reappraisal of the terms in which art is usually viewed and therefore an ideological model in which to view such work is central.

Lee Walton also delineates the placement of his 'experiential' work within the everyday, stating that, 'I am celebrating the idiosyncratic beauty of our daily actions. Culturally, we must constantly pay tribute and find poetry in the everyday and unspectacular aspects of our lives. Ultimately, I believe that these everyday moments

[288] S Randolph, 2014, Appendix B. 184
[289] *ibid.*
[290] H Fletcher, Appendix D, 2014, p.182

are the common bonds that unite us, both locally and globally.'[291] Walton uses an everyday approach as well as framing the everyday experience through his conceptual intentions, by establishing a place in which to recognise social art practices as visual art. By doing this, the work is allowed to resist being viewed within alternative theories that create a slippage of understanding to occur in the subsequent artwork. Such slippages are the risk that social art practices incur regularly, as they resemble everyday activities. However, the use of everyday activities is necessary for social artists to best portray the conceptual intentions expressed through the structures designed for participation in the project.

Rubin also outlines his intention and the reason he works in social art, revealing that his work focuses on an inter-relational exchange rather than an object. Rubin states that, 'in the end, I'm still driven by true stories, whether it be the story of an individual, group, or institution, [that is] constructed and broadcast.'[292] For Rubin 'artists are like sociologists, especially when we're in a group of peers, there is nothing better than taking a trip with colleagues and sharing the strangeness of the ordinary world… I think it's vital that all work and dialogue rub directly against the real in some way.'[293] Rubin's choice of position for his practice allows the work to use the everyday (like Walton) as a material. For example, *The Time and the Temperature* 2012 (Fig. 148) consists of an everyday custom-made sign, similar to ones seen outside businesses, churches or schools in the US. Rubin's sign, however, tells the current time and temperature in Tehran, a place that was at the time in the news on a daily basis. Rubin's project provided a moment in time when the distance between the US and Iran was momentarily collapsed. Throughout the run of the project there were open public forums with cultural, religious, academic and political leaders discussing some of the complicated issues at stake regarding US and Iranian relations. Rubin demonstrates this use of everyday materiality that occurs in social art, stating that, 'artists are engaging in public situations in really idiosyncratic, non-national and open ended ways.'[294] Although Rubin states that 'artists are like sociologists', it is important to remember, as the thesis has argued, that his practice is not sociology as such, because the work was intended to exist as social art, and exists within his overall artistic practice.

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[291] L Walton, F'Book, in Net Works: Case studies in web art and design Xtine Burrough, 2011 p.135

[292] J Rubin, 'More like working with gases than solids: A conversation with Jon Rubin', James Voorhies, *the New Administration of a Fine Arts Education by Bureau for Open Culture,* published by the Bureau of Open Culture, 2011, p.58, http://issuu.com/bureauforopenculture/docs/fae-catalog-issuu, accessed July 13, 2014

[293] J Rubin, 'A Golf Lesson with Jon Rubin', p.3 (interview with Joseph del Pesco', *Dots and Quotes No.1*, A collective Foundation POD Press Publication, 2006.

[294] J Rubin, 'More like working with gases than solids: A conversation with Jon Rubin', James Voorhies, *the New Administration of a Fine Arts Education by Bureau for Open Culture,* published by Bureau of Open Culture, 2011, p.45

Fig. 148

Fig. 149

Although the social artist, as argued above, has shifted away from a traditional art context and expanded into a social art practice, their works are still often misrepresented. This occurs as the role of the artist is not discussed or identified, because they do not yet have an ideological place of their own in order to be discussed within that context. The intentional model is therefore required in order to make evident the activity and role of the artist, in both traditional and social art practices. For example, in American abstract painter Mark Rothko's *Black on Maroon* 1958 (Fig. 149) the five components of the model that allow the audience to see the painting as an artwork can be identified easily. The first component, the artist's intent, is obvious: Rothko has created a large painting on canvas, encompassing elements such as vibration through the brush strokes employed, as well as the sense of physicality through the size of the canvas used. The second component is the design, making of facilitation of the viewing or participation process; the painting has been installed on a wall so that the spectator can stand in front of the painting and gaze at it. The third component, the participatory phase or the outcome, is the experience that the viewer has when standing in front of the painting. Traditionally this is an aesthetic experience rather than a social one. The fourth component is the documentation or 'trace object' of the work, which exists as a photographic plate in a book or image on the internet. The documentation is representational of the painting as it aims to present a similar experience as standing in front of the painting. The fifth component is the viewing of the work by what Bishop refers to as a secondary viewer, that is, someone who is experiencing the work through its documentation only, as opposed to being able to be present in front of the painting; again, the documentation is only a representation of the painting, and it is not able to convey the experience of being in the same space as the artwork.

The same intentional model can be used to analyse a social artwork such as Fletcher's *Blot Out The Sun* 2002 (Fig. 150). In this work the first component of the model, the artist's intent, can be identified in an interview with Fletcher in which he spoke about the project. Fletcher explains that Jay, the owner of a 'garage' in the US, 'thought that his garage was the center of the universe because there was so much activity and unusual characters coming through all the time. He said that someone should make a movie about what went on there and project it on the wall of the building next door (which we eventually did). When I went to go talk to him about actually doing it Jay told me that he thought the movie would be like James Joyce's Ulysses.'[295] In the

[295] H Fletcher, 'Blot out the Sun', 2002, accessed 14 July 2014, http://www.harrellfletcher.com/2006/index3b.html

artist's discussion with Jay, the garage owner, Fletcher establishes the intention of the project in response to Jay's requests.

Fig. 150

The second component of the model is the design making or facilitating of the project. Fletcher developed *Blot out the Sun* into a film that featured people who pulled into 'Jays Garage' (a local service station) and who were invited to participate in the project. Fletcher's facilitation of the project occurred in the parameters that he created in order for the work to take place. In order to create the third component of the model, which is the *participatory* phase or the outcome, Fletcher highlighted excerpts from Irish writer James Joyce's *Ulysses* 1922, which he invited visitors to the garage to read while being filmed in order to create the film. The fourth phase, which is the *documentary* or '*trace object*' component, occurs in the completed film that has been created as a result of individuals participating in the project. The 'documentation' of the project was then projected on the wall opposite the garage, for members of the community to see. The film was then shown as part of the Olympia Film Festival, the PDX Film Festival, the Aurora Picture Show and the 2004 Whitney Biennial. This relates to the fifth and final component of the model which is the secondary viewing. This occurs when people view the film without participating in the process of contributing to the work. Their experience is therefore removed since they only view the documentation of the work.

Fletcher's work *Blot out the Sun* confirms that the role and process of the artist in social art is as involved and valid as the role of the artist in traditional object-based art practices. Social projects should therefore, like traditional object-based practices, authenticate the intention of the artist, allowing an individual artwork to be contextualised within all of the artist's activities, projects, writings, conversations, lectures, etc. Collating and placing all the artist's projects and activities together allows for a more succinct understanding of the artist's evolving methodology, and as such enables social-based art projects to be acknowledged and positioned within a visual art context.

The following examples of social artworks, projects by Fletcher, Walton, Randolph and Rubin, will be discussed as they are essential in identifying the five components of the intentional model in greater depth. The first component of the intentional model, the artist's intention, can be identified in Walton's work *Objects From Places We've Never Been to Before* 2014 (Fig. 151) facilitated by RAYGUN Projects, Toowoomba, Australia. This work reveals Walton's role as facilitator, as central in the project, as he gives the various participants instructions with which to carry out the work. Walton

does this through creating a video in which he introduces himself and explains the project. In the video Walton invites a group of participants to each nominate a site/place/destination (e.g. park, shop, etc.) that they would visit. They were then asked to send RAYGUN (the gallery) a statement describing where they would go, and when. Walton then asked each participant to find, during their visit, an object from this site to bring it to the gallery for the opening of the exhibition for display.

Fig. 151

Walton postulated that the object was indicative of the experience that the participant had. The object was placed on a shelf next to the participant's written intention, previously sent to the gallery, for display. By sending a video that described the work, Walton allowed the participants to engage with him directly, as well as personally through a virtual medium; this created a personal connection to participants in Australia, while Walton was located in the US. Walton's choice to engage directly with those individuals involved, through a video that explained the project, is indicative of the importance of the role of the artist in such social art projects because they act as the frame and mediator of the participation that will occur in the project.

Jon Rubin's project *Oxford Circle* 2013 articulates the first component of the intentional model, the artist's intent, which again identifies the role of the social artist in the artwork. The second component deals with the making/facilitating of the artwork, how the idea will materialise. In a traditional artwork this occurs in the object/artefact; however, in social art it is the instructions or intentional frame that governs the participatory experience. Rubin discussed his conceptual frame in relationship to American Conceptual artist Allan Kaprow, stating that, 'what was powerful about Kaprow's ideas… is that anything you see in the world and any way you move in the world can be your practice. That is why you try to build a sort of aesthetic scaffold around what you're doing, as opposed to a singular ethical criterion for all of your work.'[296]

[296] J Rubin, 'More like working with gases than solids: A conversation with Jon Rubin', James Voorhies, *the New Administration of a Fine Arts Education by Bureau for Open Culture,* published by Bureau of Open Culture, 2011, p.51

In Rubin's project *Oxford Circle* (Fig. 152) he articulates a frame, or scaffold, by setting up the premise for the project to occur through multiple advertising spaces in the Oxford Circle underground or 'tube', in London. Rubin designed posters that held an image of a man who appeared to be waiting for a train (Fig. 153). Rubin states that, 'the photo will be stark and beautiful, the man's face filled with gravitas. No one else will be in the photo but the man.'[297] The man in the image, wearing the same clothes as he was photographed in, was physically at the same station waiting for a train during rush hour each weekday for the duration of the images' display. As people arrive at the platform they saw the photos of the man in the ad spaces; some then recognised him waiting on the platform (Fig. 154). As passengers boarded the train the man was left standing on the platform alone, replicating the image in the station.

Fig. 152

Fig. 153

Fig. 154

By implementing the posters in the underground, Rubin was setting up a conceptual frame with which to enable a duality of receivership for the viewer, that of seeing and receiving of the project by the participants, through their acknowledgement of the man from the posters. The man waiting at the station wrote in a notebook, recording things that he heard people on the platform say, that were directed at him. This writing was presented on the project blog which outlined the conceptual frame or plan for the project, indicating that the man standing on the platform was there for a greater purpose than just the activity of catching a train and this was supported by the documentary evidence that accompanied the project.

Randolph's work *Bureau of Unknown Destinations* 2012 (Fig. 155, Fig. 156, Fig. 157), like the example of Rubin's artwork, also shows how the design of the participatory process is vital for the work to be completed. The artwork was facilitated

[297] J Rubin 'about' *Oxford Circle blog*, http://oxfordcircle.tumblr.com/about, accessed July 9, 2014

by Randolph giving away over 100 free round trip tickets for train adventures, which 'began with the tearing open of a sealed envelope, revealing the mystery of where the traveller would find themselves by noon.'[298] Randolph relies on a simple 'set of rules/instructions which are critical elements in making the work exist.'[299] Randolph articulates her plan for the work by personally handing envelopes to participants, in addition to giving them voyagers' notebooks that would document the small representation of the experience of the participant and proposing the opportunity for what she describes as a 'temporary displacement'[300] and the 'opportunity to have lunch someplace new.'[301] Without Randolph's specific intention for the work, the project would appear to be an everyday activity; however, Randolph's design for the participation process contextualises the project 'as art'.

Fig. 155

Fig. 156

Fig. 157

Randolph's *The Library of Art: Expanding Universe*, 2014 (Fig. 158), shown at RAYGUN Projects, again reveals the importance of a process or plan that is in place in order for participation to occur. This project is both an artwork and a system to create an artwork. The project is a library that contains thirteen books, titled: *Material, Process, Structure, Action, Situation, Duration, Social, Colour, Subject, Style, Antagonism, Post, Rules.* Randolph refers to these books as a system to create 'a statement object', which is created by the following process: the participant chooses which categories that they require, for example, they might choose *material, structure and subject*. Each of those books is opened and a word is chosen at random. The randomness of the selections creates, for example, a statement, e.g. 'paint Styrofoam flowers'. Through the participation and selection by an individual, the various volumes of books that make up the work act as both a library, as container of

[298] S Randolph, accessed May 13, 2014, http://salrandolph.com/art/100/the-bureau-of-unknown-destinations
[299] S Randolph, Appendix, 2014, p.243
[300] S Randolph, accessed September 20, 2014, http://salrandolph.com/art/100/the-bureau-of-unknown-destinations
[301] *ibid.*

information, as well as a material to facilitate an artwork, the randomness and personalisation of the words from participant to participant. A plan is fundamental in this type of work, because without the volumes of books and the rules associated with their use within the project, the act of participation would not be possible.

Fig. 158

Fig. 159

Fig. 160

The third component of the model is the *participation* in the social art project. This is an outcome of the first two components of the model, the artist's intention and the facilitation of participation in a social art project. The 'participation' (or the object, if the artist was making an object-based work) is shown in Rubin's participatory project *Thinking about Flying* 2012 (Fig. 159, Fig. 160), hosted by the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver, USA. Rubin uses the museum as a platform (as discussed in Chapter 3), as a ready-made framework for his work. He constructs a system for participating by using a group of young homing pigeons to be cared for by the museum and trained by its visitors. The intention for the work has allowed the work to be experienced by the museum visitors. Rubin explains that:

> a lot of the people I have spoken with have said that it's a really wonderful miraculous feeling to let this bird go, see it fly into the sky and disappear, and to know that its going back to the museum, or to hope that its going back to the museum, that moment is the most poetic and conventionally artistic moment, the release of the bird. But what makes that interesting is its relationship to all of the really ordinary and unordinary moments that precede it.[302]

[302] J Rubin, Interview, Appendix, E p.193.

Museum visitors were invited to participate in the project by taking home a pigeon in a carry case, and then upon their arrival at home, releasing the pigeon to fly back to its loft on the museum's roof. As the training process progressed the pigeons travelled distances increasing from a few blocks to over 400 miles. Over the duration of the project more than 1000 people took and then released pigeons from their homes. Rubin states, 'I find thinking about context as an operative principle to be much more fluid. I've always been interested in context or systems in general as materials for artwork.'[303]

Rubin's project facilitated a social or experiential artwork by using pre-existing structures, or 'systems' as he put it, that were in this case the training of homing pigeons, and the museum as a basis or platform for the creation of the work. This refers to the point made above about Rubin 'always making a work within a pre-existing system,'[304], which explains that the viewer has an expectation when they enter a museum, insofar as museums have certain guidelines and rules, which leads to them as a visitor existing in a certain way, to be a visitor. The visitor is

> presented with this pigeon loft, which is an obvious frame… someone who is working for the project would let you know that you're allowed to take a pigeon home, so all of a sudden you were thinking about art, and now you're thinking about pigeons, and then you might go back and think about art again, but now you're [thinking about art] through the portal of pigeons. Then you might take the pigeon home, there is obviously a structure for how that happens, there is someone at the museum who discusses it with you, they map where you live and where the museum is, and they tell you which pigeons have flown far enough and they give you instructions, so you go through this whole process that gives you a type of comfort, or a type of experience that is not specifically usual to an art museum, then you go home, and you've got this pigeon in a box and then it becomes… ordinary.[305]

Rubin's description of the frame shows that his conceptual intention for the work frames it as an artwork, while working within the frame of the museum, which is the broader context for the reception of the work. The museum context, however, is not the primary frame for the art experience; it is the artist's intentional frame. The project references the multiple structures that the work exists within: the work's placement in the museum, the artist's intention being prevalent in the construction of the work, and the system that the participant is engaged in. Rubin's structure was able to exist due to the artist's intention and plan for the work. However, in order to facilitate participation for this everyday activity, the museum acted as a platform for participants to become involved by assisting with the training of the pigeons as well as the explanation of the project. The facilitation of this activity by the artist through the

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[303] J Rubin, 'More like working with gases than solids: A conversation with Jon Rubin', James Voorhies, *the New Administration of a Fine Arts Education by Bureau for Open Culture,* published by Bureau of Open Culture, 2011, p.45
[304] J Rubin, Interview, Appendix E p.193
[305] *ibid.*

design and implementation of the concepts allows for each participant to have a unique experience within the construction of the artwork.

The fourth component of the model that is used to demonstrate the value and role that the artist has in social art is the *documentation/trace* object. Documentation of a social art project is vital in order for an understanding of the project to live on, past the completion of the work. Most social art projects are ephemeral in nature, as they incorporate time-based activities that are predicted by the experiences of the viewer in that moment. As such, the only way to view such work is through documentation. For example, the use of documentation is imperative in Walton's project *Father and Daughter View the Exhibition* 2013 (Fig. 161), which was a part of an exhibition titled 'More Love' 2013 at the Ackland Museum of Art, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Walton's contribution to the exhibition included a series of performances in which a father and daughter viewed the exhibition from 4-4.30 pm each day. Walton requested the father and daughter to enter the museum at precisely 4 pm and view the works for 30 minutes. He intended the performance to appear to be a natural everyday activity that occurred because of the frame that enabled the work to be created in. Walton stated, 'I am an artist and a father. Often, my daughter and I will visit an art exhibition, I want to frame this experience as an artwork. My daughter is seven. Going to a museum together is always an unforgettable (and unpredictable) event.'[306] By framing the 'actual' experience of visiting a gallery, Walton establishes the artwork through the experience of the participant. 'Each performance will be as life-like as possible and blur the lines between everyday life… simultaneously, this performance provides an "actual" art experience for a Father and Daughter, carved out from daily life and taking place inside the museum.'[307]

Due to the work existing as an everyday activity, documentation of the project, the fourth component of the model, is essential in order to demonstrate the visual outcomes that occurred from the artist's conceptual framework. This is displayed through yet another of Walton's accompanying videos explaining the project to the participants. The video instructs each participant to take a photograph (Fig. 162) as a form of self-documentation that becomes a material outcome of the final project. This work shows the importance that Walton places on the documentation of his social art projects, as it allows the work to continue to exist beyond the initial period of activity and experience of the participants and be engaged with, past the initial reception of the work.

[306] L Walton, accessed July 5, 2014, http://www.leewalton.com/work/index_father_daughter.html
[307] *ibid.*

Fig. 161

Fig. 162

American artist and theorist Pablo Helguera demonstrates this, stating that, 'documentation, often taking the place of an end product, helps reinforce the presence of an authorial hand.'[308] Helguera's point refers to the authorial hand being important, because the writing, instructions and images from the event create the documentary evidence that can be used by the artist to disseminate and articulate the project. Without such documentation and information the work would not be able to be reviewed, as there is no evidence of its existence. However, it is important to recognise that the documentation of a project can never replicate the experience of the participant.

Claire Bishop in her book *Artificial Hells* 2012 states, 'visual analyses fall short when confronted with the documentary material through which we are given to understand many of these practices. To grasp participatory art from images alone is almost impossible: casual photographs of people talking, eating, attending a workshop or screening or seminar tell us very little, almost nothing, about the concept and context of a given project. They rarely provide more than fragmentary evidence, and convey nothing of the effective dynamic that propels artists to make these projects and people to participate in them.'[309] Bishop believes that documentation is unable to capture the artist's intention, or the experience that is engaged in through the project. Documentation is, however, important in order to assist in the understanding of the project when it is discussed beyond the initial participation/perception.

Helguera also believes that 'documentation should be regarded as an inextricable component of an action, one which, ideally, becomes a quotidian and evolving component of the event, not an element of postproduction… Multiple witness accounts, different modes of documentation, and, most importantly, a public record of the evolution of the project in real time are ways to present an event in its multiple angles and allow for multiple interpretations.'[310] Bishop in her reader P*articipation* 2006 explains that there are a variety of proposals for recording process-based participation including: the manifesto format, the project description, the detailed log of events, reflections after the event, dialogues in the form of correspondence, and a retrospective survey in the form of a third person narrative.[311]

Documentation is therefore crucial in order for the work to continue to be understood and read past the period of time when it has originally occurred. Without such

[308] P Helguera, Education for Socially Engaged Art, Jorge Pinto Books, New York, 2011, p.73
[309] C Bishop, Artificial Hells, Verso, London/New York, 2012, p.5
[310] P Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art*, Jorge Pinto, New York, 2011, p.77
[311] C Bishop, Participation, MIT Press, 2006, p.15

documentation, facilitating a continued discussion of the work becomes difficult because without a record of the artwork's existence, the work is unable to be discussed accurately past the initial point of reception. The value of documentation is therefore integral in order for the work to live on, and be engaged in further, by what Claire Bishop defines as a 'secondary viewer', which will be discussed under the fifth and final component of the model.

Walton's project *Experiential Declarations* 2013 (Fig. 163) at RAYGUN Projects (as briefly mentioned in Chapter 3), places another perspective on documentation. Participants were asked to propose an activity that they would undertake on November 1st 2013 and to send a statement explaining the activity as well as a photograph documenting where this would occur. Walton inverted the role of documentation by creating a set of baseball cards with all of the participant's proposed activities and images on them which were then sent to each of the participants prior to November 1st. In a conversation via Facebook Messenger at the opening of *Experiential Declarations*, Walton explains that through *Experiential Declarations* he is questioning the role of documentation, stating that, 'we always share documentation after we do things – I wanted to reverse that. This way, when you are actually doing the thing – you don't need to fuss with cameras or anything. You can just "walk to work" or "have tea" I think sometimes that ART can get in our way… I want art to take or push me somewhere. Hopefully somewhere new.'[312]

On November 1, 2012

I will walk down by the Mississippi River, even though I'm not dressed appropriately. I will skip stones, and put one in my pocket to keep.

Fig. 163

Walton's statement suggests that by inverting the documentation of a project to occur, before the experience or activity occurs, that documentation can be used as a tool to create an alternative account of multiple people's actions or activities before they happen. 'I like the idea of creating a situation. Giving something some formality, something that normally would not have it. So, we make a conscious effort to "define" or "declare" something that otherwise would be just everyday life. I think a lot of "art" already has this declared form.' [313] Walton's concept of declarations demonstrates a foundation for transporting an everyday activity into an artwork. By documenting the everyday event, it too both communicates to the other participants the disparate

[312] L Walton, Appendix, Facebook messenger conversation at the exhibition opening, Nov 2, 2012, p.
[313] L Walton, Appendix, Facebook messenger conversation at the exhibition opening, Nov 2, 2012, p.263

activities taking place, and documents the project as one finished artwork. This final part allows the finished artwork to be engaged in by a secondary viewer and brings all the various outcomes from the project together as one finished artwork.

The fifth component of the model is the *secondary viewing* of the project, in which both traditional and social artists engage. Secondary viewing refers to the viewing of the documentation of a project (or artwork) in order to perceive the work (as mentioned above in this chapter). This process is necessary in order to understand social art projects, due to the nature of the works being ephemeral, as opposed to an object-based work that is still able to be physically seen, engaged with and experienced consistently as 'the original artefact'. For example, a sculpture by American Minimalist Donald Judd *Untitled* 1973 (Fig. 164) can be acknowledged, understood and repositioned over time, through a lexicon of various theories and critical debates; however, the actual physicality of the object has not changed since its original moment of construction. However, for a social artwork that is based within an activity, once the moment of activation of the work through participation subsides, the work ceases to exist in its actual original form. That form 'as a moment in time' is gone, and the work now exists as documentation to be viewed secondarily from its origin.

Fig. 164

Fig. 165

Fig. 166

Social art projects rely upon documentation to facilitate a secondary viewing[314] of the work, and this can occur in a variety of ways. For example, Thai/American artist Rirkrit Tiravanija's script titled *No Ghosts in the Wall* 2004 (Fig. 165, Fig. 166) is an audio guide to accompany his retrospective at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 2004. The audio guide presents a discussion of Tiravanija's works in the third person. Bishop discusses Tiravanija's tour, stating that, 'the narrative offers insights into his motivations for working with "lots of people", and represents an

innovative solution of presenting a retrospective of participatory art. The museum did not show any of his past works, just empty spaces that related to the original venues.'[315]

The documentation of Fletcher's project *The Best Things in Museums are the Windows* 2013 (Fig. 167, Fig. 168) is another example of a secondary viewing of a project. *The Best Things in Museums are the Window*s was the outcome of Fletcher's residency at the Exploratorium in San Francisco. Fletcher speaks about the work, stating that, 'the title of the piece is a quote from the painter Pierre Bonnard… You go to a museum and look at the paintings – which is great but then you look out the windows and see how you can apply what you've learned in the museum to the world outside. You can see things anew because of the framework that's been established in your mind.'[316] Fletcher coordinated a four-day trek that followed one's line of sight from the Exploratorium's new home at Pier 15 on San Francisco's waterfront across the bay to the summit of Mt. Diablo, 40 miles away. Twelve people undertook the exploration, made up of Exploratorium staff, scientists and members of the public. The walk included presentations along the way, engagement with local stores, and centres that the walkers travelled past.

Fig. 167

Fig. 168

The project was so complex that the documentation of the project involves a 24 minute video[317] that outlined the four-day experience in addition to images on Fletcher's website. The video involves footage of the walkers as well as documentation of activities that the walkers engaged in, and interviews with the walkers who discussed their experiences and touched on how their relationship with Diablo changed after the trip. These interviews, in addition to Fletcher's conceptual intention of the work, were

[315] C Bishop, *Participation*, MIT Press, London, 2006, p.149
[316] H Fletcher, e-flux, July 12, 2013 accessed November 15, 201,4, http://www.e-flux.com/announcements/harrell-fletcher/
[317] H Fletcher, Exploratorium Documentary Video, http://bcove.me/uj703fj3 accessed September 21, 2014

included in the final footage that comprises the final documentation/outcome of the project. This documentation allows the 'secondary viewer' to perceive the project without participating in the actual event.

This final chapter has discussed and established through an intentional model (consisting of five components) why a place for the artist in social art is necessary in order for the social artist to be understood and acknowledged with the same esteem as an object-based artist. The intentional model-based analysis identified similar roles in both object-based artwork and the ephemeral participation that occurs in social art. The importance of the artist in social art projects can be seen to mirror the positioning of the artist within historical and contemporary fields of art, e.g. painting, sculpture, etc. This position was established through a discussion (primarily) of the work of key American artists Harrell Fetcher, Lee Walton, Sal Randolph and Jon Rubin which allowed for the five components of the model to be expanded by discussion of the components through various artworks: the artist's intent, the making/facilitating process, the participation/ object-based outcome (which is not always the documentation or trace object), and finally the viewing of the documentation by a secondary individual.

The intentional model defines the intention of the artist in social art projects, showing that the social artist is as important, if not more important, in contemporary social art practices as the creative individual is in modern art practices. Therefore, a *place* for the social artist is vital as social art projects do not visually represent themselves 'as art' as easily as object-based practices such as painting and sculpture do, thus arguably is more important to the reception of the event or experience as art. The general historical understanding of traditional artworks instantly allows them to be positioned and acknowledged 'as art'.

Due to the momentary nature of such artwork, it is essential to understand social art projects through the intentional model to create an understanding and acknowledgement of the concepts social artists are engaged in, and how that intentional frame allows for the ephemeral to have duration. This is a fundamental aspect of this chapter and more importantly the entire research, because without such articulation the identification of the place for the social artist in visual art will not occur. Therefore, without this form of recognition, social-based arts practices will continue to be misrepresented theoretically and their position in relevant contemporary art debates. Social art's fragile state positioned within everyday life suggests the importance of creating a place in which to acknowledge and understand social art. Without such a place the work will be lost into the ether of alternative misrepresented theories, disciplines and practices. The establishment of a place is important because, in an important sense, social art is no different to any other form of art. It needs to be read through the overall practice and methodology of the artist as a way of positioning such activity within its art context.

The key contribution of the research throughout this chapter and thesis has been to create a new place for the artist in social art; to expand the under-developed arguments of Bishop and others; and to create a model in order to identify the role and value of the social artist in a visual art field. Without such a model a slippage in the understanding and acknowledgement of the work takes place where the artwork falls into everyday activities that are read as common occurrences, instead of strategic and

conceptual artistic intentions. In social art the place becomes an aid in the dissemination of the ideological intention and interests of the artist.

Part of the reason that the artists discussed in this chapter have chosen to work within a social art field rather than with traditional materials (such as painting and sculpture, etc.) is because the outcome of the work is conceptually connected more closely to everyday life. Removing the distance between the artist and the outcome of the project (which has traditionally occurred in the presentation of art objects) allows for a more strategic and accurate reading of the artwork to occur. Despite the work being positioned within everyday life, social art projects, like traditional art projects, use a model which identifies the intention of the artist 'as essential' in allowing for a clearer exploration and presentation of social artwork to occur.

Conclusion
These Monsters We Call Artists

> A return to the object versus an emphasis on "practices"… are signs of a failure to find a suitable position for these monsters our civilization has nurtured, these monsters we call artists.[318]

This thesis has demonstrated that in the field of social art, the artist is crucial in setting the parameters from which the work must be acknowledged and understood as visual art. This position has been established in the thesis by arguing that the artist is a 'primary agent' in social art, rather than a secondary bystander or collaborator, a common misconception developed by several prominent contemporary writers and theorists in the field, e.g. Grant Kester, Nato Thompson and Tom Finkelpearl. Through the research it has become evident that the critique and discussion of social art projects must occur through the intention and practice of the artist, rather than through a complete focus on the participation by members of the public. As such, the social artist needs to be recognised and acknowledged as important, and must be designated a place within visual art.

Without such a place the social artist and their work cannot be viewed correctly in visual art as the work can fall into a conceptual slippage because of the use of everyday activities and events to facilitate participation. The social artist must be discussed, positioned and acknowledged in their own place in order to allow social art to be recognised and valued within visual art. Such recognition would allow a subsequent critique to transpire that maintains the integrity of the artist's conceptual intentions and the outcomes that occur from this field of inquiry. The thesis has formulated this position through a discussion of four artists in particular, Harrell Fletcher, Lee Walton, Sal Randolph, and Jon Rubin, in order to describe and outline social art practices.

This conclusion will summarise the key issues that were discussed in the thesis, reiterating the argument that has been developed. What has become evident through the research is that the crisis of the artist in social art exists in parallel to French critic Donatien Grau's crisis of the artist, in his essay 'Another Quarrel' which proposes that the artist is a monster, created by culture, without a position or place to exist and be acknowledged within. By creating a place for the social artist in visual art, the artist, and subsequently social art projects, can be identified, acknowledged and valued as art, instead of being misunderstood through alternative theories related to theatre, politics and community engagement, as is currently the situation facing the social artist.

The thesis has likened Grau's positioning of the displaced artist, to the displacement of the social artist in visual art. The thesis has created a place for the social artist by outlining how such practitioners approach a social art project in addition to identifying a model in which the artist's intentions (in both traditional art practices and social art practices) can be acknowledged similarly. This confirms that the artist in social art is as relevant and essential to the existence of a social art project, as the artist is in traditional object-based art practices, such as painting or sculpture, as the creator of the work. Just like traditional forms of art, without the artist and their conceptual intentions the social artwork would not be created and thus could not be participated

[318] D Grau, 'Another Quarrel' *The Age of Creation,* Lukas & Sternberg, Berlin, 2013, p.28

in. The social artist therefore deserves a place to be recognised just as the traditional object-based artist is acknowledged in visual art.

The thesis argued that a *place* for the artist in visual art is vital in order for this practice to be identified and acknowledged in an art context. This is vital (as discussed in Chapter 4 *Four common approaches that social artists use to facilitate participation in their work*) because social artworks exist as a 'project' facilitated by everyday activities and are therefore in many circumstances unable to 'self-identify' as art and thus fall into a slippage between art and life. This slippage occurs because the projects are often recognised as everyday objects, activities, situations and environments, which are utilised as a material/vehicle by the artist in the facilitation of the artwork.

Throughout the research a central reoccurring argument has been established, identifying that the social artist is crucial within this art form and deserves a place in which to be acknowledged within a wider visual art context. This was done throughout the five chapters of the thesis and the related debates researched and discussed. The five chapters will be briefly outlined here with an extended overview provided below. The first chapter, Literature Review, outlined the current literature in the field, focusing on the historical and current ideological placement of the social artist. The second chapter, *The Artist of the Social Turn: A History of Social Art Practices*, dealt with the history of the field of social art, outlining how historical practices have become a platform on which contemporary social art practices are based. This is important because it proves that social artists should be contextualised and read within a visual art context rather than a political, social work, or 'community work' context. This reveals that social artists have developed their practices on a visual art theory and history basis, and therefore need a place in which to be read from within a visual art.

The third chapter, *Four Platforms for Social Art*, discussed four platforms or contexts that social art projects are positioned in: institutional, ideological, public and artist-run contexts. The chapter discussed platforms that social artists regularly use to position their social projects such as a museum, a public space, a social space and an artist-run space. Such platforms allow the projects to be more easily identified in order to assist in creating an understanding of social art, and acknowledging social artists. The fourth chapter, *Four common approaches that social artists use as a bridge to facilitate their work*, analysed artists' approaches, discussing everyday objects, activities and social structures through four key approaches: economic, event, food and community-based approaches; these were used in order to create a bridge to facilitate an experience for the participant.

The fifth and final chapter, *More Like Working With Gases than Solids: A Place for the Artist in Social Art*, discussed key artists in the field through the development of a model in which the value of the artist could be gauged in relationship to both traditional object-based and social art practices and projects. The model established five components with which to analyse the role of the artist: artist's intent, making/facilitating process, participation/object-based outcome, documentation/trace object, and secondary viewing. This model was discussed through traditional and social artworks. Social art projects were then analysed in light of these components. The practices of American artists Jon Rubin, Lee Walton, Sal Randolph and Harrell Fletcher were focussed on, as these four practitioners and their artistic concerns represent important examples of how social artists have expanded from a traditional object-based outcome to a social art practice. This chapter proved that the social artist

is as vital or central to art practice as a traditional object-based artist in the conceptual development and facilitation of an artwork.

Collectively the research undertaken and detailed in the thesis forms the central argument that a place for the social artist in visual art is important and essential. By doing this it allows social art to be acknowledged 'as art' and will allow such artwork to be understood and debated through appropriate fields of inquiry, rather than, as stated throughout the thesis, being understood primarily through ideologies and methodologies that do not closely relate to the work, e.g. theatre, politics and community activities, or at best, should be considered as supplementary to the central role of the artist. American critics such as Pablo Helguera, Grant Kester, Tom Finkelpearl and English critic Claire Bishop have each developed a framework that draws on other disciplines such as politics, pedagogy, theatre and performance, in order to discuss and critique social art projects. This thesis, however, has argued that such critical debate is misplaced if the conceptual intentions of the social artist are not central to the meaning of the work in order to identify it as a work of art, or social experience as art. As such social-based artists require their own place in order to be contextualised within visual art, rather than through a remote context to which the social art project only appears to relate.

The thesis has demonstrated that it is vital to understand the role of the artist in social art within a visual art context. This is because the artist establishes the conceptual intention for the work to exist as art, as well as the context for the work to be read as 'social art', thus positioning the experience overall within visual art. The research methodologies employed in the thesis were qualitative, including 'both documentary evidence (where the researcher has no contact with the person who provided the evidence) and investigational evidence (where the researcher talks with those who can provide information).'[319] As the project was underpinned by a critical relationship between theoretical and practice-led research, the following combination of research methodologies was employed in the exegesis and studio research: historical, case study, empirical method, qualitative and practice-led. This combination of research methodologies was chosen as it enabled a wide variety of sources to be utilised, ensuring that the research approaches were generated through both primary and secondary sources. This combination of research methodologies was particularly important as the project required analysis of both historical and contemporary material. Current original knowledge was collated from qualitative research interviews and case studies (see Appendix) with artists relevant to the field of study undertaken specifically for this study.

Historical sources were viewed as a way of positioning and gauging the value of the social artist, providing the critical contextual link of the past to the present.[320] A historical methodology assisted in the examination of movements and events that positioned social art practices from the 1950s through the analysis of Modernist art movements such as Happenings, Situationist International and historical artists, such as Brazilian artists Lygia Clark and Helio Oiticica, American artists Allan Kaprow and Gordon Matta-Clark, and German artist Joseph Beuys. The research enabled

[319] H Smith and R Dean, *Practice Led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts,* Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2009 p.4
[320] K Lundy, *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks, 2008, p. 396

collection, identification and correlations between the most pertinent historical references through the analysis of art movements and individual practices. This established the foundation from which to analyse contemporary social artists.

The Case Study approach was employed through the curation (as co-director) of one exhibition per month, with a total of over 40 exhibitions, at an artist-run initiative called RAYGUN Projects from 2011-2014. Curating enabled a dialogue with contemporary social artists from various parts of the world such as Australia, the USA, Denmark and France, who were key to the PhD research. For example, Americans Lee Walton (2012, 2013), Harrell Fletcher (2013), Sal Randolph (2014) and Jon Rubin (2015) have all exhibited at RAYGUN. These exhibitions contribute to forming a key body of knowledge regarding social artwork in a regional context. Engaging in a dialogue with these artists facilitates an opportunity to analyse their working methods, to gain an understanding of their art practices, and to establish knowledge of their roles as social artists within a wider historical and contemporary context.

Empirical research was used 'to observe phenomena in the social world so as to generate knowledge about these phenomena.'[321] This method of research included observation, interviews, analysis of cultural and archival records, visual methods, data management and analysis techniques (including the collecting and surveying of data), conversation and cultural analyses. Social artworks were witnessed/viewed and museums and galleries examined that have curated seminal exhibitions relating to social art. Researching museums and galleries involved the viewing of relevant works and the examining of key artists' studio practices, which contributed to relevant knowledge of current social art practices.

The qualitative research also included examination of key blogs and online publications such as *eflux*, *Six Degrees* (New Museum Blog, New York), and *Hyperallergic* (an art blog produced by *going off script*, New York). The blogs gave current information about developments and occurrences in the art world that relate to social art practices. This offered another avenue to understand an alternative voice that critiques social art projects today. Key publications such as *Frieze* (a contemporary art and culture magazine), *Elephant* (a visual art and culture magazine), *Art and America* and other contemporary journals were integral, providing current information about artists, in addition to documenting exhibitions and events that were fundamental to the field. In 2012, research was undertaken through attendance of the *18th Biennale of Sydney: All Our Relations* that was focused on participatory-based art practices internationally. This included a symposium, artist talks and lectures, as well as the viewing of relevant Australian and International participatory artwork.

Qualitative research in the form of interviews engaged a 'conversational practice where knowledge is produced through the interaction between an interviewer and an interviewee… Unlike everyday conversations, the research interview is most often carried out to serve the researcher's…[area of inquiry] which are external to the conversation itself.' Interviews were undertaken with American artists Harrell Fletcher, Jon Rubin and Sal Randolph, and American curator Mary Jane Jacob, all of whom represent seminal intellectual property and are involved actively in the field. Other secondary interviews featuring historical artists, such as Gordon Matta-Clark,

[321] L Given, *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks, 2008, p.254

Allan Kaprow, Joseph Beuys, Lygia Clark and Helio Oiticica, were accessed through publications, and used to position the argument that established a place for the artist in visual art. These interviews with historical and contemporary artists were analysed and contributed to the development of ideas and original research for the thesis, creating a clear definition of why a place in which to value the social artists needs to be acknowledged for such artwork to be understood correctly within the context of visual art.

The practice-led research component of the PhD involved an accumulation of research and knowledge through the construction of artwork. Practice-led research is described by Australian theorists Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean, referring to Barbara Bolt, who 'distinguishes between practice and praxical knowledge'. Using Heidegger's examination of 'the particular form of knowledge that arises from our handling of materials and processes… [Out of creative practice can arise] a very specific sort of knowing, a knowing that arises through handling materials in practice [this praxical knowledge can induce] "a shift in thought"'.[322] Bolt's statement demonstrates the importance of practice-led research, through an accumulation of knowledge through the making or facilitating of artwork and projects. Practice-led research was particularly instrumental in this research because it established the importance of creating a place for the social artist in visual art as it shows how social artworks can be misunderstood as a variety of other activities. Australian theorists Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt in *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* 2007 'draw on Michel Foucault's essay 'What is an Author' to explore how we might move away from art criticism to the notion of a critical discourse of practice led inquiry that involves viewing the artist as a researcher and the artist/critic as a scholar who comments on the value of artistic process as the production of knowledge.'[323]

UK-based theorists Gray and Malins in *Visualizing Research* 2004 emphasise the importance of practice-led research, stating that, 'we learn through practice, through research, and through reflection on both. This active and reflective learning makes a dynamic relationship between practice and research. Practice raises questions that can be investigated through research, which in turn impacts on practice.'[324] Practice-led research is important to the overall research approach because it allowed a direct experience through the facilitation of projects and engagement with the role of the social artist. Australian artist and art theorist Graeme Sullivan states that, 'the thesis presented in *Art Practice as Research* is that visual research methods can be grounded within the practices of the studio and that these are robust enough to satisfy rigorous institutional benchmarks and demanding art world expectations.'[325] Smith, Dean, Bolt, Gray, Malins and Sullivan all verify that practice-led research is a relevant and important research methodology that is an important means of establishing research outcomes. The formation of a research outcome through the creation of social art projects establishes a rightful place for the acknowledgement and discussion of social art in a visual art context, rather than through its current criticism which draws on a

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[322] H Smith and R Dean, *Practice Led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts,* Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2009 p.6
[323] B Barrett and E Bolt, *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, I.B.Tauris, London, 2007, p.135
[324] C Gray and J Malins, *Visualizing Research*, Ashgate, England, 2004, p. 1
[325] G Sullivan, 'Art Practice as Research', *Inquiry in Visual Art*, SAGE Publications, Los Angeles, 2010 p.xxii

variety of other genres including politics, social work, community activities and theatre.

Drawing on this research the thesis has presented a primary argument, showing that the social artist is disenfranchised within this process of understanding and positioning of social art, as the majority of literature and debate surrounding social art is focussed upon the participant and the other disciplines to which the work appears to relate. The thesis has developed key points and arguments that together formulate the importance of a place for the social artist in visual art.

Chapter 1 *Literature Review* provided an overview of the topic, researching key texts that position the discussion both historically and within contemporary debates. Donatien Grau's essay 'Another Quarrel' 2013 has formed a literary basis for this position; key writers who have positioned the current discussion in the field include Miwon Know, Shannon Jackson, Claire Bishop, Pablo Helguera, Tom Finkelpearl, Nato Thompson, Grant Kester, Lars Bang Larsen and others. The texts discussed in the *Literature Review* identified gaps in the literature, where artists were not discussed within an ideological place or discussion of the social artist in relation to visual art but instead within alternative fields. Each of the writers discussed has assisted in the positioning of the debate in the field historically, theoretically and practically, contributing to a wide discussion surrounding social art.

UK critic Claire Bishop's text *Artificial Hells* 2012 touches on the value of the artist, explaining that in participatory art, the notion of the collaborative artist is good and the singular artist is bad. This is a commonly held position by theorists regarding the artist as facilitator, social worker or collaborator, rather than the artist having an intention for the work, and the project existing within the artist's wider practice. The artist is seen in many discussions (as shown throughout the thesis) as a collaborator, rather than as a maker or creator of intentional frames. The model that is established in the final chapter of the thesis, however, insists that the artist's role is essential in a social art project, and therefore requires a place in visual art in order for the artwork to be correctly acknowledged 'as art'.

The position taken in this thesis expands Bishop's observation, articulating the disenfranchised position of the social artist, which, as she states, 'needs to be taken to task.' [326] Bishop makes this observation because she believes that 'the lack of equivalent terminology in contemporary visual art has led to a reductive critical framework, underpinned by moral indignation.'[327] Bishop notes the current position of the status of the artist, but does not expand upon this in the way the thesis has done, but instead focuses on 'accounting for participatory art that focus[es] on the meaning of what it produces, rather than attending solely to process.'[328] Bishop articulates that she does not focus on the social artist, but states that, 'while a number of edited anthologies and exhibition catalogues around this subject already exist, few of them make a sustained argument.'[329] Bishops' statement establishes the importance of the position argued for in this thesis that a renewed model of inquiry needs to be

[326] C Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, Verso, London, New York, 2012, p.8
[327] *ibid.,* p.9
[328] *ibid.*
[329] *ibid.*

implemented to allow social-based art to be debated and positioned correctly within contemporary visual art and culture.

American critic and artist Pablo Helguera's text *Education for Socially Engaged Art* 2011 also briefly discusses the authority of the artist, explaining that the artwork is positioned within the practice and concepts of the artist. However, Helguera's text is an outline of social art practices, providing a brief summery or technical guide surrounding 'socially engaged art' but at no time does he go into any great depth regarding the situation of the artist within social art. Korean/American critic Miwon Kwon in her book *One Place After Another* 2004 argues that authorship lies in the artist's sanction of the work. Kwon states that, 'the intricate orchestration of literal and discursive sites that make up a nomadic narrative *requires* the artist as a narrator-protagonist.' [330] Kwon's statement certainly identifies the artist as crucial in the existence of social art projects but her focus is on expanding site-specific art to incorporate the artist as site. Kwon proposes that the presence of the artist is vital to the existence of the work, which is important; however, the social artist also requires a place within visual art as social artists, in order to be acknowledged and valued in a position of authority within this field of practice.

The key texts that acknowledge the role of the artist while raising the question of the importance of the artist do not pursue it in any depth or breadth. The location of social art within art history and contemporary art, however, is seminal, and therefore the focus of this thesis. The importance of the artist is established through the intention that the artist conceptually gives to an artwork, allowing it to exist as art rather than, for example, social work or community work. In establishing this point, the thesis has revealed that the creation of a place for the artist will enable social art to be read and acknowledged within visual art rather than within other disciplines. For the continued existence of social art practices and the artists involved, a discussion acknowledging 'these monsters we call artists' needs to be implemented since otherwise such arts practices fall into the associated fields of theatre, politics, community and everyday activities, and when this happens they cease to exist as art.

Chapter 2 *The Social Turn and the Artist* developed a historical background and theoretical basis, providing a context in which to position the social artist in visual art. The chapter provided a basis for understanding the changes in the role, value and authority of the artist, both practically and theoretically, from the 1920s to the 1980s. It examined events, writers, artists, critics and collectives that formed the basis for 'The Death of the Author' debate, from Modernism and in particular, Post-Modernism where quotation, appropriation and collaboration were said to replace the artist as individual authority. The chapter examined the changing role of the artist, and specifically the position and value of the artist in participatory practices from the 1920s onwards, examining how the role of the artist changed from an individual maker of objects in a studio to collaborator, and finally to the artist as facilitator and authority. A shift in the role of the artist was discussed in relation to the individual practices of American artists Allan Kaprow and Gordon Matta Clark, Brazilian artists Lygia Clark and Helio Oiticica, French artist Guy Debord and German artist Joseph Beuys.

Following this, an analysis of singular artists' practices showed how artists have worked in groups to facilitate participatory artworks; this was discussed through the

[330] M Kwon, *One Place After Another,* The MIT Press, Cambridge, London, 2002, p.51

Situationist International (France) (1950s-1960s), Neo-Concretism (Brazil) (1950s) and Collective Actions (Moscow) (1976-current). The artists listed above who were discussed in *The Social Turn and the Artist* often dealt with political or sociological topics; however, they were still discussed and critiqued within a visual art context. This establishes one of the main difficulties of artists working in social art now, who have positioned their projects within numerous other 'platforms' or environments such as social spaces, institutional spaces, etc., that puts their project at risk of being analysed and critiqued within various other contexts, such as pedagogy, sociology, politics, etc., which are not visual art contexts, when in fact, we are discussing the art of artists, not social works by social workers or anthropology by anthropologists.

The artists discussed historically therefore provide a basis for a discussion of the importance of social artists possessing a place within a visual art context rather than other context with marginal or oblique links to visual art. This historical discussion is essential to the repositioning of the artist to a position of authority after being continually classified in various other fields such as politics, sociology, pedagogy, etc. The creation of a place for the contemporary social artist in which to be acknowledged as essential in visual art therefore allows social art projects to be read and located within a context that facilitates an accurate reading of the work in visual arts.

Chapter 3 *Four Platforms for Social Art* dealt with a discussion of the social artist's intention through analysing the physical position or platform within which the social artist chooses to position their work. A discussion of the place that has been established for the artist includes a discussion of four platforms in which social artists primarily position their work. The platforms discussed included the ideological platform which dealt with the theoretical and historical context for the exhibition space. The institutional platform established that social art projects that are located in the museum or gallery are impacted upon by the tradition of a distanced or removed viewing that occurs in a gallery space, inhibiting the viewer's experience of a work. The Public Space platform was divided into three parts: virtual spaces, conferences/festival spaces and social spaces. These three elements of the 'public' platform were developed in order to establish a broad discussion of the placement of the social art project by the artist.

The fourth and final platform, artist-run initiative, showed an alternative gallery space system that enabled an experimental space for the social artist. The social artist, who rarely has a commercial output, is therefore able to experiment. Artist-run spaces support social art projects as they allow them to exist away from a traditional commercial system. The platforms in this chapter were chosen in the service of the artist, in order to contribute to establishing a place for the artist in visual art, through a discussion and examples of how a social artist positions their work within each platform.

Each platform outlined how the artist related to the space and the limitations that occurred depending upon the artist's choice of platform for their work. The four platforms demonstrated how and why the artist is vital to the existence of various artworks within that platform. This discussion of the platform that is chosen by the artist in which to position their work is integral to acknowledging both their position within the work but also how the work should be understood and considered within a visual art context. The chapter established a suitable/viable position for the artist in terms of contributing to a debate that proposes that the artist in social art must be

acknowledged, and read within a specific ideology, which gave an understanding of the artist's role and importance in social art.

Chapter 4 *Four Common Approaches that artists use as a bridge to facilitate their work* expanded on the issues developed in Chapter 3 by analysing not only the place in which the social artist positions their work, but the approach that they use, which is often an everyday activity, to facilitate participation. The approaches discussed are not the only approaches but they are the most prevalent vehicles used in order to facilitate social art; they were economic, event, food and community activities. A discussion of how artists use these approaches and employ these systems in order to create their work identified the social artist's intention as crucial. This discussion forms a key contribution in creating a new way to perceive the social artist in visual art. It is essential to recognise that the artist's intention is imperative in order to create the work as social experience, and for social artwork to be defined in relation to, but not continuous with, the everyday activities that social artists often use to facilitate their work.

This chapter argued that the social artist is paramount through their planning and development of social art projects, and explains why and how the artist uses everyday activities in order to provide a familiar framework for the participant to engage in the work. The artist therefore requires a place to be read in visual art as an authority, because if not positioned within this 'place' their practice can be misconstrued as another activity, e.g. theatre, politics, community engagement, etc. As a result the debates surrounding this work become abstracted by alternative methodologies, theories and pedagogies related to the previous examples.

Chapter 5 *More like Working with Gases than Solids: A Place for the Social Artist in Visual Art* verified the supreme role of the artist in social art through a discussion focussing on the key contemporary practices of American artists Jon Rubin, Lee Walton, Sal Randolph and Harrell Fletcher. The chapter developed a model with which to identify the value of the artist in social art projects as well as demonstrating that the social artist has the same value as a traditional object-based artist in the establishment of their respective artworks. The identification of the intention of the artist is therefore crucial to both identify the work and to establish the conceptual premise of the work.

Social artists create projects that are ephemeral in nature – as the metaphor "more like gases than solids" in the title of Chapter 5 suggests – has led to such artwork being misrepresented in discussions surrounding social art within both historical and contemporary art debates. The thesis has identified the failure of critics in the field to find a position for social artists as shown in the texts of American critics Shannon Jackson, Nato Thompson and Pablo Helguera and English critic Claire Bishop. Collectively these theorists and writers propose, to varying degrees, that social art projects relate to, and ought to be analysed through, the disciplines that they refer to, such as politics, theatre, performance, etc. Such a method of collection and analysis creates what Thompson refers to as a 'cattle call' system. That system does not truly articulate with any form of resonance or intellectual criticality the conceptual intentions of the various artists actively pursuing and engaged in social art.

The original research for the thesis has established the argument that a place for the artist in social art must be established for social art practices to be understood

correctly. The majority of discussion regarding the artist in social-based art is of the artist 'as collaborator', and the artist is disregarded almost entirely in the theoretical discussions that position the work. To understand social art and the concepts inherent within such work, the intention of the artist is essential in order to identify social projects as works of art. Throughout the current thesis it has been made evident that the critique and discussion of social art projects must occur through the intention and practice of the artist within a visual arts context, not through related disciplines sometime drawn on by the artist. Without such a positioning, social artwork falls into a cultural slippage that results in the work being read and misrepresented within other fields of inquiry.

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[2] The term *place* refers to an ideological context for the social artist to be acknowledged and valued in visual art.

[3] The social artist is an individual who engages in 'social art' (definition – footnote 4)

[4] The term 'social art' has been coined by American artist Sal Randolph, referring to participatory art practices that are created by artists whose ideologies are located within visual art theory and history. The term was adopted for this thesis because it positions the activity of the artist (facilitating a participatory experience for an individual) within visual art ideologies, histories and debates. Social art is also known as participatory art, socially engaged art, social practice, new genre public art and live art. However each of these terms involves differing contexts, in which they are located, understood and read as artworks.

[5] 'Experiential' refers to an experience that is had by an individual as a result of participating in a social artwork.

[6] There are a number of theoretical positions that question the role of the artist such as hermeneutics, intentionality, reception theory and context theory. I am aware of collaboration and post author arguments but they will not be discussed in this thesis. Instead the role and importance of the social artist will be primarily discussed.

[7] These misrepresentation fields' include theatre, dance, education, politics, community projects etc.

[8] An *ideological place* for the social artist in visual art is developed from the discussion of the social artist and the *ideological model* developed in the chapter 5.

[9] The strategic model is made up of five components (*artist's intent, design/plan, participation, documentation, secondary viewing*) that will be discussed in length in the fifth chapter.

[10] The 'viewer' in this discussion will refer to an individual who has a distanced experience with an artwork, in which the individual looks, but does not engage in a physical or relational experience with the work.

[11] A 'participant' is referred to as an individual who actively engages with the artwork by participating in a situation or structure that the artist has created for the participant's experience.

[12] These alternative disciplines and contexts are embedded within alternative terms for participatory practices such as: 'Socially Engaged Art' which is used by the American critic Pablo Helguera with a focus on a pedagogical framework for the work and is widely used to refer to a group of social/political artists in the borough of Queens, New York. 'Social Practice' invented by a group of west coast Californian artists in the United States, who invite collaboration among individuals, and are often positioned in a community setting that involves social commentary. 'Littoral' and 'Community Art' are highly community orientated with a focus on creating a change in a specific neighbourhood. 'Live art' developed in the UK (and adopted in Australia) and is often funded and made by people whose overall art practices are highly influenced by fields such as theatre and dance. 'Collaborative art' referred to by American critic Grant Kester focussing upon the relationship between the artist and participant as collaboration. These genres have different names because they have been established in different environments and contexts, and incorporate different conceptual outcomes. Artists who are working within participation have come from different fields, which is why participatory practices have developed so many sub-genres under the umbrella of participatory art. Each of these sub genres requires a separate context or place to be read within, as each of the sub genres is located within a different conceptual premise.

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[277] A Pasternak, *Forward*, LIVING AS FORM: Socially Engaged Art From 1991-2011, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2012, pg. 8

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview: Harrell Fletcher (via email)

What has influenced you to incorporate participation in your work?

I think I felt awkward about suggesting that people should appreciate my own solo work, it felt self-centred and embarrassing. I found that I felt much more comfortable about suggesting that people should appreciate something I did collaboratively or even just the work or some aspect of other people.

Would you describe your work as being mediated by an object, a structure, or a set of rules/instructions? If so, is this mediation essential in the facilitation of the work?

Could be any of those things depending on the circumstances.

Do you believe your role as the artist is integral to the creation and facilitation of the work?

Yes.

Do you, as the artist need to be present to facilitate your work? If not, how is the work facilitated?

That also varies based on circumstance, it can happen a number of ways, but no I don't need to be physically present.

How do you think the role of the artist is different in participatory art to object-based art?

That is also variable, but in general I think there are just a lot more possibilities, object-based art is pretty firmly rooted in the commercial system and the structures of that system.

Does the physical positioning of your work within a certain location impact your work?

For sure, that's very important to me.

Do you think your role as the facilitator of the work is important in people's experience of your work?

Yes, not so much in a sense that it is better because of it, just that anyone in that role will affect the situation in significant ways.

Do you think that an artist needs background knowledge of the field to operate as an artist?

No, but it can be helpful, then again it can also make things more difficult in that it can determine how the artist thinks they need to function.

Do you think the individual experiencing a participatory work needs background knowledge of the field?

No.

Do you believe people need background knowledge of your previous work and ideas to understand your work?

No.

Are there occasions where your artwork exists closely to everyday life? If so, how do you think the participant recognises the work to be artwork and not life as such?

Yes, that happens, and in some situations there is no need for a participant to recognize what's happening as an artwork.

Is documentation important in the continued existence/survival of your work?

Yes.

How do you feel about the value of the artist historically?

Variable. Some good, some bad. I use or don't use the term art or artist depending on the situation, depending on if I think there is any value to those terms in a given situation.

How do you feel about the value of the artist in contemporary art?

Variable based on context and situation. In general in the US there is suspicion about contemporary art.

Are there any concepts that are inherent within your work which are important to understanding your practice?

Not for a general audience, but since art audiences have built in understandings of how art is supposed to work for them they need to refigure their expectations in regards to my work. For instance it is important to understand that I'm not thinking about traditional commercial applications in regard to my work, and instead am valuing participation, education, appreciation of the everyday, etc.

How are the ideas within your work communicated to the viewer/participant?

Hopefully in very direct ways.

Do you believe the environment the work is situated in changes the experience of the work?

For sure.

Is the process of making your work important in understanding it?

Yes.

Do you believe your work is governed by historical rules and methodologies that you take into account when making artwork?

Yes.

Appendix B: Harrell Fletcher interview with RAYGUN via Skype

RAYGUN (Alexandra Lawson and Tarn McLean) – What is it that drives your practice? Is it the structure that you set up for the exhibition or is it an interaction or outcome?

I don't distinguish it so much, for me it's the whole process. I guess for me there is hope for outcomes along the way. I think for me, creating a structure that then allows for a meaningful interaction is the trick, and the thing that I have been working on, for various kinds of projects that I have done. Either ones where it is me personally, interacting with someone and then coming up with a structure for that to happen within, either an individual or a group of people or a set of different people, or coming up with these more assignment-based things… assignments and projects that I've done with students in various places and some projects that I've done like this with you guys where I'm giving an assignment to an institution, sometimes in a place where I've never been too. Trying to figure out how to do that in a way that's going to give enough structure and direct it in a way that has the experience and the outcome that I'm hoping for, which isn't a specific one, as far as the content of it, but that type of interaction, a significant meaningful interaction. I especially like when boundaries are crossed between art world and non art world and people who get to participate and don't participate.

It doesn't bother you that you're not necessarily there?

It would have been nice if I was there, but because it wasn't possible, I am always dealing with the limitations, and resources… and so if I can have an interesting experience I'll try and set that up for myself, but if I can't then I also like the idea of facilitating that for other people. It's like somebody who is into cooking. They like to cook and share that with people if they can directly, but they also like the idea of sharing a recipe with someone who they don't have any interaction with. Knowing that they tried this soup that I think is really good; and they did it a little differently with whatever ingredients that were available, but they did it, and they liked it too, and there's a satisfaction. For me it's completely different than making the soup yourself and sharing it with someone, but there is a kindof satisfaction in that they had a similar experience and it was positive. So its kindof like that, I don't like to set up a situation where I feel like it's got to be all or nothing, like it's always got to be me doing something, I think in broader ways than that, in all sort of ways. The idea of growing up and going to college and being told, oh, you like art, you have to pick something, you have to become a painter or a photographer or whatever it is, and then you've got to come up with a signature style and you've got to then do that over and over again. That idea was incredibly unappealing to me, I just didn't want to do it like that. It's the same with this work to, I don't just want to do the same thing over and over again. Maybe in a general realm of similar things, but I also want there to be lots of variation in it to keep it interesting.

Do you think of people as your medium?

I don't really think in terms of a medium, because people have too much agency for that. You can't manipulate them the way you can paint, and I don't want to manipulate them the way I can paint. It's different. It's kindof this hybrid between subject/ collaborator/ audience/ participant. I shy away from saying/using the medium thing, for some reason that always made me feel uncomfortable. I don't really have a medium at this point. I don't really make art like that any more. I think its great for people who do that and who like doing that. It's not like I have a problem with working that way. In the past I have done those things I've painted and done lithographs and photography and drawing and thing. I have piles of them here from years ago, but now I don't really have that anymore. The medium stuff, I don't really think about people like that.

I read somewhere, that you started in photography and you moved outside of the studio. When did your way of making or creating work change?

It was a slow evolution. If I'm really looking back on it, I can go back all the way. I can see things that are related to what happened to my practice going back to childhood. Because I was always engaged in making art, and I was always interested in collaboration. And I started doing a variety of different kinds of art activity pretty early on. It was partly because I had friends of the family who were photographers or painters or printmakers or musicians, so I was kind of exposed to a lot of that. At the same time I was having that experience, that was appealing to me in my understanding to what I thought an artist was when I was young which was very broad or expansive, but then as I started to become educated you start to get carolled into a place, where they're like well, at least when I went to graduate school. You have to pick one of the majors, the majors are medium specific, except for sculpture, which is a bit broader. So I picked photography, even though I'd done lots of other things, but I liked photography a lot, and I'd been doing that since I was a teenager. One of the things I liked about it was that it took me out into the world. I'm a fairly introverted reclusive type person. So sitting around doing drawings by myself was fine or writing or reading, all those things were easy and natural to me, and going out and interacting with people was much harder. But I found that when I used a camera and then I walked around it was a device that gave me licence and made me more comfortable in the world. There was something also just about knowing that was my intention to make photographs then I would look at things differently, I would go into this weird zone it was meditative and engaged with the world. At first it was not really with people. Or if it was with people it was incidental, street photography. Then I started having more interaction or focussing it on friends and family with people I had relationships to already, or using it to form a relationship with somebody. That part was going well and was interesting to me, but I didn't know how to then get that material to an audience, so I started making books, because then I could hand the book to someone and they would get the idea the whole idea in the book, because I didn't have access to doing a show, often times. So then that got me thinking about this distribution of audience. So that was pre graduate school, at the end of undergraduate I took a couple of years off and I was making all these books and things and then when I got into graduate school then I started putting together what it was that I was doing, to what I wanted to do, and this frustration with what I was starting to learn about the artworld; feeling like it was too exclusive and too commercial, and so then at that point I started to really explore these ideas in a bigger kind of way. From there everything has kept going, so I was doing that kind of work in graduate school when I was about 24/25 years old and now I'm 45 so I've been doing it for 20 years, and it's now continued on from there, but pretty similar basic ideas that were going on at that time that I've just played out and added too since then. Back then it was focussed very specifically around the neighbourhood in Oakland, but now it is wherever I'm doing work.

You were in Australia in 2010, I was wondering if the cultural climate made a difference?

Not so much with Australia, Australia feels like the United States for me, except with cars driving on the other side of the road and people talking funny… so that didn't happen so much there. I've experienced that, I did a project in China this summer, there were language issues, for some reason it was more difficult trying to get things happening in China than any place I've worked in before. I did a little project that I gave kind of quickly, and that went really well, it was super direct. I just went and did this thing with people, so that worked. So maybe it wasn't really the people, it was the institution or the situation that was the problem. Often times when I go to places the organiser of the place says, oh, you wont be able to do the kindof work that you do here, for whatever reason, the people aren't friendly, or they're not receptive to that kind of thing, whether it be New York or Kentucky or France or something… It's never been true. There's always been someone that I've been able to work with. It's never happened that an entire culture or an entire society has been opposed to working on a project with me.

So you work with master's students?

Right now at Portland state that's the primary thing I do, I always teach an undergraduate class also, but I have a group of about 20 graduate students who are both in Portland and remote, we use google classes, we'll have 10 people and video chat in a class. We've got a student in New York, one in San Francisco, one in San Antonio, one in Pittsburgh, one in Sana Fae, one in Berlin, one in Ireland (he's moved to Portland since then to teach). The way the program works, is it's a three year program, and the students can be in Portland or away at any point during the three years, so they don't have to stay… everybody has to be in Portland for three weeks in May, and we do a bunch of intensives, and have a conference and do a project at the Portland Art Museum. It's interesting, its definitely not like any other Masters program that I've experienced in a bunch of different ways, one of them being the use of this technology, which we just use consumer grade stuff, it's nothing fancy, but it's also allowing us to have adjunct faculty that are not in Portland, so we'll have somebody whose teaching in Berkley teaching a class, and someone from New York teaching a class, so we're able to have both people who are teaching at other universities and artists and museum people, someone who runs the education program at Moma has taught classes in the program so we're able to have a wide variety of different kinds of people who aren't in Portland.

Did you initiate that course?

Yes, I've been teaching here for 9 years and we started the program 6 years ago. I got hired to teach sculpture/new media, I really didn't know what that was, I said to them, I don't really know how to weld or anything like that. But they gave me just regular sculpture lessons, and I taught them in really weird ways. Some of the students were really interested and other students wanted to be in the wood shop, and I was getting them to make things out of tape. It was a very traditional art department when I started there. I had been saying all along that I wanted to teach this other thing.

Appendix C: Interview: Sal Randolph

What has influenced you to incorporate participation into your work?

Here's part of the story, from a piece of writing (book?) that's still in progress:

"I came to visual art from years as a poet. What I loved about the visual at first, what propelled me, was the sheer speed at which people could take it in. As a poet, I'd give a slender sheaf of my newest work to a friend and it would sit, placed on their desk, waiting for a good moment, a time of complete attention. Sometimes it took months for that good moment to come around. Frankly I envied the ease with which visual artists could invite people into their studios. No one was afraid to step inside. Seeing was almost effortless. You open the door and bang! you've seen it, it's inside you already.

Eventually, it was precisely that speed that betrayed me. Art was wonderful in the beginning. I worked hard in my studio, hijacked some education here and there, had ideas, made things, got a gallery and soon I was showing regularly. At that time I lived and worked in Provincetown, Massachusetts, an artists' town from way back. Eugene O'Neil had been a playwright there, Hans Hoffman had taught color and abstraction, Robert Motherwell and Helen Frankenthaler escaped the New York summers in their big houses on the water (I once, thrilled, shook Motherwell's hand at an opening).

In time I discovered what was, for me, the thorn. All winter I would make and make, like a fairy tale girl spinning straw into gold. Summer would come, and the work would go up on the white gallery walls. An opening! It's packed! Compliments and enthusiasms. As good a party as you could hope for. But in all that mingling and chatting I couldn't help, out of the corner of my eye, watching people look at the art.

They weren't doing anything wrong, they weren't even disliking it. The way the looked at my work was the same as the way they looked at anyone else's. A bit of strolling, then a pause of a second or two in front of something, then a few more steps, and another pause. Stroll, pause, stroll, pause. Eventually I started to compare that full winter of making with that tiny moment of looking. Months, even a year of work; a second or two of polite attention.

You can see here the seeds of my preoccupation: how does a work of art reach someone? what makes them decide to take it in? and how does it come alive (or not) inside them?"

That moment of looking just wasn't enough for me. I began a series of experiments trying to prolong the encounter of the viewer and the work (what I might now think of as their participation in the work). At first I had the idea that if people actually lived with the works, if they went home with them, there would be at least the potential for a kind of lived experience. I started a series (influenced in part by the artist Allan McCollum) called "Make as Many as You Want," in which I made large numbers of modular units of each piece. The idea was that the piece would be a single distributed sculpture, residing in multiple places. I sold the modules fairly cheaply, one where the units were origami boxes made of wax paper for as little as 10 cents a piece. What I discovered is that making the pieces inexpensive didn't result in more sales – I sold a few but not enough for the concept to really come alive.

Some time later, still thinking of this problem, I had a show of photographs and related installation elements, and in the back of the show I made a table with a free raffle of some related pieces (photo snow globes). The show opened to some nice critical attention, but for most viewers the excitement was all in the raffle. People jammed the raffle box with entries, tore up gallery checklists when they ran out of paper, got angry with me that they couldn't buy the snow globes, and in general displayed a level of intense emotion and desire I had never seen. I realized that "free" had a kind of social energy that was completely different from cheap, and I decided to work directly with that energy, which I've been doing ever since.

After that I made a "Utopia Free Store" in the gallery, and then later curated a "Free Show" in which 25 artists contributed work that could be taken down directly from the walls and

carried away by viewers (which indeed, it was). This led to a project called "Free Words and Beautiful Money." Free Words was a book that belonged to whoever found it. The first 500 or so copies were given away in a gallery show, where the "Beautiful Money" (digital prints of some of the same words) was also sold. After the show I began the more situational phase of the project which was to leave copies of the books in bookstores and libraries for people to find. This was in 2001 when the internet was becoming very lively but social media were not yet ubiquitous. I made a website for the project and invited people who found the book to become distributors in their own cities and towns. A few wrote to me, but more surprisingly one woman, Lisa, found a copy and told the story of it on her LiveJournal blog, which spread it through her network, and I began to get requests for the book from all over the world. I spent the next three years sending out as many books as I could. Through this experience I became interested in a different kind of participation, via internet mediated communities.

I could go on through various other stories and projects, but basically the art object gradually fell away in favor of direct experience and direct participation.

From another angle, I'm always doing reading and research, and during that time I was actively reading many things that influenced my ideas, including a self administered crash course in postmodern theory, the writings of the situationists, writings about and by John Cage and Alan Kaprow, research on early conceptual artists, and I learned about the work of some 90s artists working in what we might now call relational aesthetics (Ben Kinmont, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Felix Gonzales-Torres), all of which seemed related to the matrix of ideas I was working on.

Would you describe your work as being mediated by an object, a structure, or a set of rules/instructions? If so, is this mediation essential in the facilitation of your work?

I think my participatory work is indeed mediated by structures or instructions (less so objects, but sometimes they have a role). I like to think of social architectures as invisible structures, and in my earlier work I was very interested in how these work in ordinary life and how they can be created deliberately when making social artworks. It seemed to me that social structures are made of expectations, and by creating sets of expectations (by rules, modeling, adapting existing social forms etc.) you could sculpt or build these structures.

I was thinking in this way particularly when making the Free Biennial (2002), Free Manifesta (2002), Opsound (2003 – ongoing), and Free Press (2005) projects, all of which involved several hundred people.

Later my work evolved toward a more direct interest in instructions. I have a collection of what I call "statement objects," works whose title or description is an instruction for creating the work. Lawrence Weiner, Yoko Ono, Robert Barry, and many of the Fluxus artists made these, but there are also contemporary examples. I became interested in the curious reversibility of this sort of language: a work could be described, the description as a recipe, and then the work remade from the recipe in an ongoing loop. The "Library of Art" project is an ongoing attempt to make a kind of meta-artwork that could potentially become a set of instructions for any known or knowable work (impossible of course, but nevertheless in progress). Alongside my various social and participatory projects is an ongoing investigation of some of these questions of language and its relation to past and future, action and description, etc. The ongoing Money Actions project for instance has some linguistic offshoots of this type.

In addition, the Free Money and Bureau of Unknown Destinations projects both use simple sets of rules/instructions that are critical elements in making the work exist at all.

Do you believe your role as an artist is integral to the creation and facilitation of the work.

In practice, yes, or why make the work? In principle, however, no. I've become more and more interested in the creative act of encountering a work of art and the way in which all forms

of art are essentially participatory. And I think that this kind of making (by the viewer/audience/experiencer/participant) can happen in relation to objects and situations that were not actually created as artworks (our contemporary relation to African tribal masks might be an example, or Chinese Scholar's rocks which are found "natural" rocks with artlike or evocative qualities, but also I think people commonly do this with natural objects and places that are important to them). I'm currently working on a book about all this, so there's lots more to say if you're curious.

Do you, as an artist, need to be present to facilitate your work? If not, how is the work facilitated?

One of the things I like best, personally, is doing work where I am face to face with a single participant (say, in the Free Money meetings). I love being present, and seeing the work begin to unfold in the experience of the participant.

However, since I believe the work happens primarily in the participant (rather than in me, or the situation, or the object when there is one), there is a sense in which I am never present to the making of the work.

The work often happens through constructed situations (giving someone a free train ticket for a day's journey in the Bureau of Unknown Destinations, leaving a book for a stranger to find in Free Words, leaving plates of money in the street in Free Money) where I never quite see what happens (and I like that absence or loss – I would never hide in the bushes to watch, or have a secret camera).

How do you think the role of the artist is different in participatory art to object-based art.

I've come to feel that these are basically the same. The object is also a kind of constructed situation, and in encountering it the viewer becomes a participant.

Does the physical positioning of your work within a certain location impact your work?

The entire situation in which the work is encountered becomes a part of the work. I believe this is as true for a 15th century painting in a museum as it is for a contemporary social or performance work. This situation is not merely physical location, it also includes the overall *habitus* (as Pierre Bourdieu would call it) that we bring to the encounter – the whole field of socially constructed expectations, ways of moving and being, etc. It also includes ephemeral things entirely outside of the artist's control like weather, sore feet, moods, and memories.

I do think that a more visceral and experiential appreciation of factors like these is one thing that social and participatory artists may have to offer artist who make objects.

Do you think your role as facilitator of the work is important in people's experience of your work.

Perhaps ovular? Just kidding.

I'm actually not quite sure how to take this question. In the larger social projects I've done the facilitation has been critical to the "success" of the work. By this I mean a couple of things. One, in these projects the main thing I've created is the social architecture, the set of expectations about what's going to happen and why that make participation possible. For instance, a system of rules and instructions for participation, but also more subtle levels of style, design, writing, etc. that give people a sense of the project on an affective level. Two, since in all of these projects people have interacted with me, directly or indirectly, as facilitator, I'm very aware that my manner of being affects their participation in the project very intimately. For instance, in these sorts of projects I've tried hard to follow through on promises and demonstrate sincerity in various ways. Ultimately that need to be constantly sincere has come to seem like an aesthetic limitation, which is one reason I've moved away from doing that kind of work.

In other sorts of work I do my facilitation may not be that different from any other kind of artistic making.

Do you think that an artist needs background knowledge of the field to operate as an artist?

Well, there is certainly some absolute minimum, ie an idea about what "art" is and what "artists" are. Beyond that, I don't think any further training or knowledge is essential -- there's plenty of interesting "outsider" art for instance. However, on a practical level for artists who want to work in the contemporary art community, in any one of the various art worlds, enormous amounts of knowledge, historical, philosophical, conceptual, practical, tacit, social etc. are needed. Very subtle markers, codes, relations between works and social networks are all part of what makes contemporary works "successful."

Do you think the individual experiencing a participatory work needs background knowledge of the field?

This would entirely depend on the work. A very large portion of participatory projects are made primarily for members of the general public, and these are structured precisely not to require background knowledge. Examples from my own projects might be the various Free Money and Money Actions works, or The Bureau of Unknown Destinations.

But of course it's easy to imagine participatory works that do depend on various kinds of audience sophistication to be "read." In a way I think much of the early participatory work from the 60s was much more like this. In part I think this is because the participants were mostly very closely tied to a community of practitioners. Art audiences at that time, including participatory ones, seem to have been much more tolerant of boredom, absurdity, confusion, and abstraction than those cultivated by the current generation of participatory and social artists.

Do you believe people need background knowledge of your previous work and ideas to understand your work?

My work is typically constructed so that it can be understood or made use of in a variety of ways. One of those ways might be simply as direct experience with no further knowledge of me than is found in the actual situation (for instance, when I leave money in the street, I don't leave my name or any information about how to find me). Another person might read about the work and imagine it rather than experience it directly (many of the artworks that have most influenced me are ones I've only read about). I always enjoy it when people become interested in the ideas I'm playing around with, but I avoid making that a necessity for an interesting experience of the work.

Are there occasions where your artwork exists closely to everyday life? If so, how do you think the participant recognizes the work to be an artwork and not life as such?

Yes! Very often.

First, I should say that I don't mind if the participant doesn't perceive the work as art, or if they know but that doesn't matter to them at all. I generally think of successful social artworks as functional artworks, meaning that people need a reason to participate other than that they are participating in an artwork. For many participants this may mean that the importance of the project being a work of art is minimal or nonexistent.

That being said, I always do things to make clear that the projects, situations, or actions are created or intended as works of art. Sometimes that might simply mean that there is an "about" page on the website that makes this declaration, and there may be some further context offered. Sometimes the work exists at least loosely in the framework of a gallery exhibition or performance festival, and the context itself makes that art declaration. There are also more subtle design or aesthetic choices that I use. For instance, when I leave money in the street I always make it clear in some way that it is left there deliberately, that it isn't accidentally lost

money. Just that minimal designation of deliberateness is enough to raise the question of why, which in turn suggests the possibility of an artwork. In some of the money actions, a short self-descriptive statement is stamped or typed on the money (eg "$5 left between the pages of a book.") – to some audiences this would make it very clear that the action is art, though of course not to all.

Appendix D: Sal Randolph

What do you think about the terms argued over right now by artists and by writers?

Basically each theorist picks their own, its hard to know which ones are going to survive. I call it social art, because that's what I think I make, and I talk about participation a lot, but to me participation is an activity.

Not a genre?

There is a genre of participatory art which I also talk about, sometimes I say participatory and interactive art, but I like the word art, some people don't. Because for me the questions and art historical arguments about what art is are very alive for me, so they are important to why I make work and what I'm interested in, I read a tonne of art theory, and I read a lot of anthropology, but I don't read much about how to make communities better. I'm mildly interested and I'm glad people do it, but it's not what drives me. Social practice was invented by a certain group of west coast artists who do that stuff, and it has a certain flavour. I don't mean as just a term, but the people who strongly identify with that term have a certain flavour. I don't think there's a similar group of artists who strongly identify with the term participatory art in this moment, which is interesting. There are some people who still identify with relational aesthetics although probably not those people from the 1990, but some people now, some people talk about socially engaged art, Pablo Helguera, and I think the new MFA program in Queens in New York, they're a more political group of people who run it, and are more like political artists.

Do you say social art practice? or social art?

I say social art, but I'm aware that I'm alone, back in the beginning of time, when there weren't many people talking about this, and I'd read the Bourriaud book, to me social architecture was a really nice term, but it's totally not, other people were coining other terms in other places who wrote more…. European artists all do this without a name at all, they don't care, they just call it art, it's been going on more consistently in Europe. They don't have special MFA programs to do it, they just do it. I remember in 2007, I was in Sweden and there was a show at the museum of Socially something art, I can't remember what they call it, but the person who I was with, was in art school at the time there, said, I don't see what the theme of the show is, and I said, yes you do, it's a theme of social art, and she said, but everybody does that. I can't imagine going to a big European biennale or show without some art that has a social dimension It's like some people paint, some people do video. It's being done, but it's not being argued about. Where as here, (bring the US), and also in you're here, Australia) and also in England

In Australia they call it live art, and they identify with the ideology from the UK.

It takes one influential person to change the language or the conversation. When people ask what I do, say at a party with non artists… I say I'm in artist, I very often say 'I make things happen' instead of making things. Sometimes I say I do interventions, or interactions. There's a nice book on interventionist art, which Nato Thompson did a while back. The interventionist stuff is politically valanced but often humorous. It was a show, it's not theoretically meaty, I think of them as a group of artists, it is one of the first contemporary books that there was about this… Back to defining terms

Yes, I think I need to refer to the term artist

It depends if you mean artist

I think I do mean artist, but I mean artist within a specific context

Do you have Australian people that you're interested on focussing on?

Not really, its not very strong, there a couple of people who have strong practices or who are dancers, or musicians, their primary practice isn't visual art, so it's hard to talk about their practices (within a visual art context).

That's a thing you should point out, you should make some comment, you should say it's happening here, you might say it's not very strong… It's doesn't have a lot of formal properties of art, it's in art, but not of art, in a way.

In Nato Thompson's book 'Living as Form' he included projects as art that weren't necessarily

That didn't self identify as art

Do you think that's problematic?

I think this is the state of things. This is not particular to art to this field, like, that documenta that I went too, so, here's the situation of the famous international art curator today. There situation (this is the high end art world) is that they can not mount an interesting show with the same 200 artist's that everybody already knows about, they can't make their name, they can't do it, so there is no scope there. They have to include four of them or ten of them but they can't do anything with that body of people. For some reason increasingly right now what they're doing to be interesting is finding practices outside of the artworld, and plucking them… like one of those machines with the claw in it, that chooses the candy bars or the teddy bears. In the Documenta I went too there was a famous anthropologist who was set up as a curator… that documenta had 1 main curator and 19 mini curators, and there were all kinds of things in it that were not self identified as art. Lots of things…

Were people referring to them and talking about them 'as art'

Well no, because now there is this thing, the project. The project does not self-identify as either art or non-art, the project doesn't care about these distinctions any more. So there were some interesting examples of how that played out in that show. I thought that was a super interesting show for all these questions.

There was this artist Mark Dion, who is a well known artist who does these sort of vaguely institutional critiques but in a kind of naturalistic history kind of way. I know about his work for various reasons and I'm kind of connected to him. His project for that documenta was to build a physical structure to house a collection in a natural history museum of these very interesting objects. They looked like books, but they were samples of wood, from trees, they were botanical samples. But they were shaped like a book, so it was a little bit like a library, so he made a beautiful housing for that library. But what he actually did, and this documenta was full of things like this, meaning that there was a visible thing that you could go see, but that wasn't the actual project, The project was that he added two books to the library by going on lengthy expeditions to Amazonia to find, maybe it was a book that had been lost… why he picked these two types of tree, but he collected these samples from these very difficult trees from these very far difficult places, he went on these expeditions and so even though the result of that was three objects in the library, that was his actual documenta project. It's not exactly art or non-art, it was an activity, it wasn't participatory or social, it was an activity. Another example is Claire Pentacost, her project was all about soil. The value of soil, what was going on in the room was a modestly interesting installation, there were ingots of soil, she made these bricks like you would make of gold and the value of soil, and there were soil drawings, what she had actually been doing was she'd spent several months at a local university doing soil research with soil people there so, so was just engaged in the biology of soil doing a project with them, there was a museum outcome, but the real project was the research project. There was lots of that there. In that artworld, the artworld of curators trying to make names for themselves, which is not the commercial artworld, In that artworld there is no interest in the distinction between art and non art.

What happens to the role of the artist then? In the soil project for example. Is it only art because it ended up in an art context? Or because the person doing it was is an artist? Or because this project sits within her whole body of work.

That's why, it's because an artist was doing it, and it fits within her whole body of work. It's the real answer I think. That would be the answer to her. Her whole body of work is like that. It is shown in Museums. She shows, she has a career. She has a whole practice, and a lot of her practice is learning about things, and learning and teaching about things.

… The claw is only interested in these outsiders because they're outside. I mean you could then maybe become a part of the artworld. But the 'claw' is only interested in these outsiders because they're outside, and as soon as they're inside, or a little bit inside the 'claw' is like, I don't know, you're too familiar.. there's a danger in the 'claw' situation. One of the things that the 'claw' likes is artist-run spaces, or artist-run projects. One of the things that was there [documenta] was 16 Beaver, that has been in New York for a long time. They run this super political little space, that's upstairs, where they have all kinds of people sitting around eating bagels and talking about the most heavy European sensibility politics, they've been doing it for years, it's a very sincere projects, they were plucked up by this documenta, and they were given a space where they could run, under a different name, a version of their project, for the full four months run of the show. They had speakers come in, a symposia and conferences and publications. They did their whole smear within documenta, and they had a big space and they could do what they wanted. It's not at all impossible that something like RAYGUN could be plucked up by the claw, and you might enjoy it, and you might say yes because it gave you a ticket to go some place fun, and you might take the ride while you were on it, and some times people are transformed into central people in that way… its an interesting phenomenon in that way.. Is RAYGUN an artwork?

We were talking about this the other day. Because RAYGUN is present at this conference, we were talking about how RAYGUN exists in this in-between space between the social art world and the wall painting art world and it works so well because it's not about one thing. I don't know if it is [an artwork [it might be] we have a specific set of rules for it.

It seems to be that you guys conceived it as something else, which is an artist-run space, a thing that exists in the world.

It's about a dialogue, we conceived it to create a dialogue, to bring people in.

You've done a very nice job of that. It's something about you existing in a regional city that makes that whole thing happen. It wouldn't feel the same thing at all if we were in Sydney.

I have been doing a lot of reading which often does not position the artist as a primary

Agent

But instead discusses the artist as collaborator, and the artist says, this is not about me, it's about the community

Right, I think there's a certain self removal

…of the artist… I'm almost taking it back to the ideas about the artist that are present in an object-based work. I am arguing that it argues in the same way as an object-based artwork but it includes other people.

To me, the important thing is why you would argue one way or the other, and to me the kind of why that would be satisfying probably to the reader, the kind of why that would be urgent and satisfying is a why that would want you to make work of a certain kind, and not work of another kind. This is a practice-based PhD, and that means to be that practice questions should be the central questions. If you're going to argue that the artist is important in creating the work that would be because you as an artist wanted to make work in which the artist was

important, and that work would be different from the kind of work that you would make should you feel otherwise. Grant Kester and Claire Bishop and Shannon Jackson are not in the trenches…

What I think is interesting about all of these things, is that these are live questions, which means, if you got 5 practitioners together, 5 artist together from different parts of this room, and you gave them a few glasses of wine, and they were being frank, they would actually have an argument. They would disagree, which I think would be much more interesting than if they were all being polite….

<u>It is hard because people who are working in a 'similar' field to you are doing this community practice.</u>

This is of course a conversation that is being had a lot, whether it's effective, and so at open engagement there was this panel on this questions, which somehow I was accidentally at, because it's not my favourite topic. The panel was on the evaluation. This teacher was there, and somebody in the audience asked somewhat contentiously a version of this questions, (I think the question was about this artist who was teaching art classes in the Portland school system to kids who don't have any art classes) 'why is that different from teaching art class A, and isn't that in a way taking away something from the teacher who is there all the time. The teacher answered the question, and she said, 'you have no idea how grateful we are with other people experimenting with the forms of the thing that we do. We're working so hard, so flat out we can't think playfully about the structures and forms of what we're doing, and I am grateful that somebody is doing that… and I thought, huh, ok, this could be useful. I see that somebody coming in with different ideas and different motivations might do something that helps that world. Not just helps those 5 students or 25 students or 100 students but helps the people that see what they're doing think differently about what they do.

Appendix E: Jon Rubin Interview

What has influenced you to incorporate participation in your work as opposed to any other medium?

I started doing work like this when I was in graduate school a little over 20 years ago. My initial interest was, I was really interested in telling true stories and trying to tell true stories in new ways. Pretty quickly that brought me into a very documentary process… I think that process might be similar for anyone researching biographies or a non fiction book, someone who might be filming a documentary, process that are based on discussion and interview of whoever was the topic or subject.

And recognising that I was also interested in work being presented very early on, a lot of this work was developed with Harrell [Fletcher] when we were both in Graduate School together… we were doing works that were presented back to the audience that were the subject of a work, so there was a very tight loop where the subject was the audience, and we created a project called gallery here where all the work we did was about people in the neighbourhood where the gallery was in. If you make it about people they are fundamentally going to be interested in coming to see it. It's like making a card for your mum, she's fundamentally going to love it because its about her and its by you, and you have a relationship. So the fact that we were living in a relationship and making work about it was a really close loop of who was the subject, and who was the audience and those people were pretty much often the same, and so, I cant say all of those were really participatory, some in a broader sense, we certainly requested people to do a lot of things, which we do to this day, both he and I in different ways, so for me it developed out of wanting to tell true stories, and initially telling them to audiences who had already experienced them or telling stories that they had told us. I think that was an unusual situation where Harrell and I ran this space, where we would put up a show, and we would sit in the gallery, when people from the neighbourhood would come in, they would tell us their story of the man who owns the rug store, and we would naturally, organically incorporate that into the installation, the next person who came in could be told the story that we heard from the previous person who came in, so I guess in a way we were functioning as a performative conduits for what was passing through. Maybe this is no different from a barber shop, the guy who owns the barber shop, knows all the gossip. He's always in the middle of stories, he tells stories, other people tell him stories, it's more like a local news paper or something a very intimate way of having relations. So by default it was participatory, there was never really a moment where we said, lets make participatory art.

At that time the terms being used in the US at least were community arts, which we never felt really comfortable about because it had a very low brow connotation in relationship to art making. It was really about people who would make murals on buildings with kids, which frankly we did as well, but there wasn't any social engaged or social practice or participatory… not a lot of people were working in participatory ways. Harrell and I were influenced by a lot of photographers or film makers, and I think those practices were pretty much based around participating with the subject in a very intimate way.

I'd given up traditional mediums in graduate school, before that I'd worked my way through traditional materials and I felt for me it felt very limited, I spent a lot of time and had all of these ideas in relation to my painting. Number 1, the paintings I felt never expressed all of the process that went into them, which was always a frustration to me, and then it was an isolated practice and I realised that I worked better when I'm in discussion with other people. I learnt that I'm more creative in that environment so when I was in graduate school I must have collaborated with more than 10 artists at different times, I thought I would try that out, and work with people as a way of expanding my limitations and way of being more courageous, and to try and work in ways that I don't know, so I systematically decided that I wanted to do that, and the by-product of that was I got to expand the way I thought about art making really quite quickly.

From collaborating with artists to collaborating with people who aren't necessarily connected with art?

That happened pretty quickly, and in collaborating with Harrell he had a short history doing books with people, so that was the start of an interesting practice.

A frame that you create as an artist?

Definitely, I think a lot about internally and externally, internal frames are things that you use in the process of work that gives you the criteria for your decision making as you go along. But those aren't always made external – my paintings had internal frames, except for the obvious frame, that this is a painting, but apart from that, the internal frames were lost. I am also very conscious of how things are framed externally, and obviously a lot of the work is in public situations. It's very important that the entry point for people is articulated, and there could be multiple entry points for a project, so I'm conscious of that some frames are fairly invisible to a public, they might not know a superstructure of a work, or they might have one way of entering it. I guess a frame for me, I'm describing as a door or an opening, or a portal or a bridge; something that is very clearly allowing you to enter whatever this is and has various cues in it, that might relate to other elements of your life as a viewer or participant. One of the cues might be that you're walking into a museum, and I'm doing a work in a museum. So, one of the processes might be that you have a certain expectation of a museum, and there's a certain psychology that you bring to it. So I have a piece that works in the context of that pre-existing entry point but also gives you a slightly different way of thinking about. I did this project where museum visitors were able to take homing pigeons home for several days and then release them from there home back to the museum. The frame is, a fame within a frame, which is always the case. I'm always making a work within a pre-existing system, so you have an expectation of, I'm coming to a museum, I'm going to see art, museums behave in certain ways. I as a visitor behave as a certain way, then you are presented with this pigeon loft, which is an obvious frame, it references things that you may or may not have seen, but things that you know about; and then someone who is working for the project would let you know that you're allowed to take a pigeon home. So, all of a sudden you were thinking about art, and not your thinking about pigeons, and then you might go back and think about art again, but now you're through the portal as pigeons. Then you might take the pigeon home, there is obviously a structure for how that happens, there is someone at the museum who discusses it with you, they map where you live and where the museum is and they tell you which pigeons have flown far enough and they give you instructions. So you go through this whole process that gives you a type of comfort, or a type of experience who is not specifically usual to an art museum, then you go home; and you've got this pigeon in a box and then it becomes kind of ordinary, and then maybe its weird that you still have this pigeon, you have this responsibility now. Any time someone has this animal that you have to take care of there's another being in your world. So I like that kind of poking, or reminding that consciousness, when you let it go, well a lot of the people I have spoken with have said that it's a really wonderful miraculous feeling to let this bird go, see it fly into the sky and disappear, and to know that its going back to the museum, or to hope that its going back to the museum, that moment is the most poetic and artistic moment, is the release of the bird. But what makes that interesting is it's relationship to all of the really ordinary and unordinary moments that precede it, where this thing is both art or it's not art, your really taking care of something, or your thinking that it belongs to the museum, or at that an artist produced it, and then maybe the art part of it disappears and then you're in this slightly absurd little system or performance that you're participating in. So there's that, and the larger frames around it, is when the press writes about it, or when the story is told by someone who participated in it. There were 1000 people who took home a pigeon, so they're going to run into someone else in Denver that did it maybe, that's one frame of reference or frame of entry, so I'm conscious that I can't plan all of them perfectly, and some of them surprise me.

This project that I did called the conflict kitchen, is one big frame for people in that there's this restaurant and they have really great Venezuelan food now. So, it's just, I'm hungry, I hear they have good food, is the first doorway or portal they do through, then the next one might be, you arrive and you recognise, ah, they change all the time, and they just serve food from counties that we're in conflict with, and there's all this information and they want to talk to me, is a different frame. Or you might come in and say that you've heard about this political project, and had to check it out, or they may have heard about this artwork, which frankly in this project is the last frame that post people enter it through, or think of it through, but it exists; so there's simultaneous ways in which you can come to understand something and they're not neutrally exclusive of each other. I think I like projects when they function like that ,and its not so incredibly straight forward as to what it is, or how you're supposed to refer to it when you talk to other people about it. That's a kind of nice thing.

<u>This is a different frame than the museum context, existing in an everyday context?</u>

That's one thing that I really did learn early on, the idea of site specificity was a big thing, it was more a sculpture-based idea, but I really think of system-based specificity. I'm interested in all the variables that define a system or a place, primarily the psychological ones that you bring to a situation and then thinking of that as a material within your work that you can utilise. I don't do a lot of stuff in art spaces or art museums, I do occasionally, but when I do, I'm conscious of them as a very specific types of systems that have psychologies that people bring to them, and you can work with those things. I don't know if I could continually do that, I might run into dead end, but that's why the public space is always more interesting because there is always more interesting psychological states, if you're in your car stuck in traffic, there's one, there are a million, but by and large museums and galleries have a fairly set circumscribed set or rules and ideologies ion which people think about them, and use them.

<u>When positioning the work in the public space, do you think it is important that the audience knows that it is an artwork?</u>

No, it doesn't matter, I think there are lots of audiences; there are definitely people who know the big picture of conflict kitchen down to the minute details of it. Some of them are our customers, some of them learned it from not knowing anything, they ate some food, then they asked some questions, then they checked out the website then they came to an event, then they came to the next thing then they became a fan, and then they really knew it… they take pride in it, which is really awesome, it's amazing for us to have that, then most people who have never been to Pittsburgh know it through food or politics or through news organisations, a lot of news organisations cover it. The people who know it through art from outside of Pittsburgh, know a lot about it, because they've seen me do a presentation, or Dawn do a presentation on it, but often times they really don't know, it doesn't ever match their fantasy of it, it's probably both more in depth and less in depth than what they imagine, so to me that's fine though, I think it's great to have a fantasty experience with any artwork, and I also think it's fine to have an experience with a project that's just an increment of it, I think the capacity for works to allow all of those things to occur. I think ideally all of those things are occurring, I think it's problematic for an artwork if it's never perceived as art, or is never perceived for the truth depth of its actual experience. So there's many cool ideas that artists do, myself included that are never really that great in actuality, ideally they're both. It really has some teeth to it in actuality, where people can engage with it in various points, and that its really interesting on a fantasy level we've had people for that project specifically where people have said, is this art? Or why is this art? I have different answers but roughly, especially talking to the general public I say, does it allow you to see the world in a way that you haven't seen it before? Does it encourage a type of curiosity that you didn't have before you were in it, sometimes that is very fleeting, and people say, yeah, that was kind of cool, it was definitely weird.

I have a billboard that I run, I took an old billboard and converted it into this sign system, and its quite beautiful and simple. I curate it, people create text for it. It's in the middle of the city,

Pittsburgh and it has no signage on it. There's no website on the sign, there's no way of telling what this damn thing is, if people google billboard, Pittsburgh and the address my website for the project might come up, the billboard might come up. There wasn't internet when I was first starting, but now days there is a capacity to create a secondary archive that people can easily find about your work that gives people the depth of the larger art intention of your project. That was always a tough thing in the early pre internet days, you either had to spell it out, or have a publication there, it was difficult, and you didn't want to get in the way of the work by saying, 'hey! That is an artwork, check it out'. I've been trying to raise money for the project and I've been talking to this lady, and she said, oh that project, I never knew what the fuck that was, and thought, that was crazy, it was always changing and I never knew what it was? I think that other people felt more or less people moved by it, but I don't think that she recognised it as an artwork and I don't think that that is necessarily a bad thing.

What makes an artwork an artwork, the intention of the artist – the practice of the artist?

I think that for an audience member these things are irrelevant, unless your within a context that says here comes art, it's made by an artist I think that a lot of people in the public who see me work do not care if I'm a famous or unfamous, or if I'm educated, but that I'm an artist who has a strong ideology or any of that stuff, I think that they're taking the work on its own terms, most of the time. In the art world people care about that plenty, perhaps, too much, within the public realm, whether its someone participating or someone perceiving something… I see things in my life that I don't know if someone's made it or not, if there is a genius behind it, they are remarkable occurrences of objects or actions, I think people take them on those terms, and like I said, sometimes the frame as 'this is an artwork' is a very powerful and important frame to put in front of something for someone. The pigeon work was framed as an artwork because you have to enter into the museum to see it. For me, I wanted you to think about the nature of art in relationship to that piece. It was important that it was art, and that they allowed me to do it and that people felt its validated as being presented in a museum as art, even before you have the experience, all the psychology of place tells you that this is valid this is art, give it the benefit of a doubt, this is significant. It is very challenging, in the public, with a public who never goes to an art gallery, or who would never think that what you are doing is an artwork. It is challenging to get them to the stage/same trust, because you trust by and large people whether its good or bad, hey there's an artist, the museum has decided that it's good enough, lets give him a chance. In the public you have to compete against everything else in the world. You have to compete against a kid on a skateboard who might be amazing, or the rest of the world who might be amazing.

When I teach some socially engaged stuff to my students I have them bring in a bunch of stuff that you look at in the world that is not art, that blows your mind. That you've seen or a story you've heard or a story you've heard. They bring in all these things… I say these things that are blowing your mind in the world, that's your competition, this shit that's blowing your mind out in the world, that might not be art, but there's your bar can you make it as good as that.. that's the stuff.. most of the time I don't tell them about other artworks, the things that are super exciting to us are other things that we come across in the world, sometimes it's artworks, for sure. That's the way I feel. I want the work I make to be a true story that you can't quite believe is really true. You can't quite believe that's really happening?

I construct true stories, they're fictions, I'm recognising and constructing these things, playing and producing these things that are really not always true in the world, I'm making them up, sometimes they happen, but they're filled with fantasty around them.

Is it is problem that social artwork is read through other disciplines

No, I think it makes the artist more relevant. The more disciplines that an artist can relate too, the more relevant it makes the artist in the world. I mean that if it's only relating to art, that's one pretty damn tiny discipline in the world. In a more networked culture you see this happening now, you see artists artworks popping up on websites that would never really have

artists projects in the past, whether its science, or politics, or design, or fashion, sometimes it's the awfulness of the internet dumbing everything down. For me I'm happy when my projects are certainly appreciated by art audiences, but I'm really happy when they are appreciated by audiences that I usually don't engage with or who are additional to the realm of art. It's been fun on various projects, like the waffle shop project people are really interested re urban renewal. It wasn't where my heart was with the project but I'm interested in it being part of that context. That way it's not just relevant to my friends who are artists and curators.

Do you think the recognition and expertise of the artist is important?

I do believe that even thought the audience doesn't need to know that there's an expert artist back there, I do believe that in all fields of art there's a lot of really bad art, a lot of it is made by people who are just figuring it out, or who aren't really able to figure it out at the moment or whatever but I do think that its important to have really good artists making this kind of work. I think that the work is only as good as the artist who is making the work behind it. I don't think the work is only as good as the audiences capacity to see the artist behind it. I think you do need really strong artists behind these works, otherwise it's just like hugs in the public. There is a genre of socially engaged art, and for whatever reason, people make bad paintings, people make bad sculptures, there's a capacity for people to do a very low level of art, and for it to be, I guess it is part of the ecosystem, I think oftentimes, a lot of folks from the outside, who are making object-based art, who think this social engagement stuff, seems pretty easy, it's pretty light weight, and they're right much of the time. But probably if you examine any other field, you could find light weight painters galore, but I think because its [social art] new, or newish in people's mind, its easy to critique, and because some of the work doesn't look like art, it's like some of the paintings by the abstract expressionists were hard to critique because they didn't look like other painting, and some people said that they didn't look like art but they're paintings, they are art, and we don't have any trouble with them now. This stuff now is similar to abstract expressionism, there is a mastery, there is a craft, there is an intelligent, there's a strategy there's all these things, and sometimes what comes off of all those things is something that seems like abstract expressionism, and something that seems like something that's gestural, or visceral, or something that's relatively simple on the surface, and then the other point that we left off was the disappearance of the artist.

That sort of follows the previous logic I was just saying about abstract expressionism, where if it doesn't look like art, then the artist is going to disappear. Art disappears, because it doesn't seem arty, and thus, do we need the artist to do it. Do you need an artist to do it, and obviously the artist could disappear but what you would have is either a very amateur version of these things or what you do see a lot online, the everyone is an artist mentality, and I have to say, that everyone is not an artist, I don't really agree, I don't know if Beuys meant it the way its been taken, I mean with the internet, buzfeed, its one of those aggregating trend/websites, it's a silly site… They did a piece on the billboard that I run, and they made up their own headline and said, this billboard is entirely run by internet strangers. Up to this point I have only selected people to participate, I have this little section on my website, that invites people to submit, it says, I can't promise I'll get back to you, but I'll take a look at a submission if you send one, so I got 500 submissions, most of them were in 3 days. From people all over the world, they were uniformly really bad. The sentiments were wonderful, but the sophistication, the nuance, was not wonderful. They were just people almost saying things that you'd see on inspirational posters, or in self help books. But for some reason a lot of people felt that that was a thing that people could do! All you had to do was send 4 lines of text, and I'd put it up, people are crazy, and yet it doesn't mean that 500 people could come up with one interesting thing to say, of course it is my personal criteria of what is interesting or not… I think we're in a culture that, for good, and bad, we're in a culture that says, I can participate in everything and I can produce anything, that is good and bad… on the same scale and level as anyone else. And on one scale I'm completely for that, crowd sourcing and Wikipedia, and sharing… there are so many mechanisms that are created for people to participate and produce that are great and our one

of the best things that's happened in the lest several centuries, and the other component is that there is so much more noise now.

In relation to your question does the artist or any cultural producer, designers, musicians, film makers, do they become less relevant? I don't know if they are, I read some article somewhere about librarians in the future, so there was this period in the last 20 years where books are obsolete and libraries are obsolete, and librarians are obsolete because and you can look up everything online and browse a collection online, this person was stating that in the future, and maybe right now. That the librarian is going to be more valuable than ever, and maybe they were also equating it to the notion of a curator. So in a world where everyone is producing and there is so much information, you need a guide, someone who you know who is going to take you to somewhere of quality, the producer, we used to need more producers, but now we need someone to sift, to act as a search engine, who are functioning as our librarians, but they are often driven by commercial ventures etc. as someone who is not part of a very very large group of producers I do see my role differently than I did 20 years ago, 20 years ago I felt like I was part of a smaller group. I not feel that I am still part of a way larger group, but more visible, a lot of this is because of how we are socially networked.

Appendix F: Conversation with Lee Walton via Facebook Messenger at the Experiential Declaration Opening

Facebook Messaging with Lee Walton at Raygun

6:33pm **Raygun Lab** morning
6:33pm **Lee Walton** MORNING
6:34pm **Raygun Lab** nice to have you on board. we are doing some drinking and have watched your video. xx
6:35pm **Lee Walton** Ok great. I have been looking forward to this all night.
6:36pm **Raygun Lab** Mornin' from Australia. Ash here. Thanks for waking up for us. About 15 people here. We love your concept. Thanks for sharing!
6:37pm **Lee Walton** Your so welcome. I have enjoyed all of this
6:37pm **Raygun Lab** Hi Lee – Grace here – just wondering why you didn't have anything to declare?
6:37pm **Lee Walton** I wish I could be there to raise a glass with you all I would be raising a coffee!@ Hi Grace. That is a great question. Its so funny you ask that. This same question crossed my mind when I first held the deck of declarations in my hand. It kinda hit me… that I had nothing to do on Nov. 1 I sort of laughed to myself, because that is the kind of thing I would do. I guess I was just putting my anticipation towards the orchestration of the entire piece. Its like a chef that sort of nibbles all night long but never really gets to try the soup! He just sort of watches everybody else eat.
6:43pm **Raygun Lab** I like that. holding the cards in my hand I wish I had something to declare as well.
6:44pm **Lee Walton** Yesterday, I did make an effort to have biscuits and gravy with a cup of coffee at a diner I like.
6:44pm **Raygun Lab** it's a very beautiful idea biscuits and gravy?
6:44pm **Lee Walton** Thank you. Yes, holding the cards make you want to declare and experience something! biscuits, gravy, sausage hot coffee with tabasco. That is my favorite. Its a bit more spectacular than necessary! But it works for me. Is anyone there that declared an experience?
6:46pm **Raygun Lab** several.
6:46pm **Lee Walton** Super.
6:47pm **Raygun Lab** it's interesting knowing some of the people that have declared and imagining them doing whatever act they have said they would do. and the people you don't know as well.
6:47pm **Lee Walton** Yeah. a feel the same way. With this project I am questioning documentation a bit. We always share documentation after we do things - I wanted to reverse that. This way, when you are actually doing the thing – you don't need to fuss with cameras or anything. You can just "walk to work" or "have tea" I think sometimes that ART can get in our way.
6:49pm **Raygun Lab** yes exactly. it all had such an instancy about it. really beautiful but even though art can get in the way, we still were able to share a visual. a global language
6:50pm **Lee Walton** Yes. I don't mean to sound cynical with the art getting in the way bit. Its just something I have been thinking about a lot lately.
6:51pm **Raygun Lab** no I understand what you're saying
6:51pm **Lee Walton** I want art to take or push me somewhere. Hopefully somewhere new.
6:51pm **Raygun Lab** what do you mean by reversing how it was done? like staging the event for the purpose of taking a photo?
6:51pm **Lee Walton** to do that – I wonder if it needs to be behind you? Staging is a nice idea. Staging seems to connect with artificial.
6:52pm **Raygun Lab** well it's like that saying ' "every time I've not done something, nothing gets done." Maybe?
6:53pm **Lee Walton** I don't mind artificial.

6:53pm **Raygun Lab** I think the idea of staging changes the purpose of doing the act though, do you think?
6:53pm **Lee Walton** ”Not done something nothing gets done!” I like the idea of creating a situation, giving something some formality, something that normally would not have it. So, we make a conscious effort to “define” or “declare” something that otherwise would be just everyday life. I think a lot of “art” already has this declared form.
6:55pm **Raygun Lab** sorry to cut this short Lee – lovely to chat to you. Thanks for taking the time at such a odd hour for you.
6:56pm **Lee Walton** Ali, Tarn and Raygun and all of the participants THANK YOU! this has been a real blast. … Again, enjoy the night. I wish you all well and am very thankful.
6:57pm **Raygun Lab** it has been!! loved it! thanks for waking up.. we’re all heading to the next opening…. it was perfect timing. no worries at all. thanks Lee, speak soon!
6:57pm **Lee Walton** Yes, speak soon!
6:57pm **Raygun Lab** people loved the project
6:57pm **Lee Walton** awesome. my pleasure. I was so thrilled with everybody’s enthusiasm and declaration. beautiful people! have fun!
6:58pm **Raygun Lab** xx A & T thank you Lee xx
6:59pm **Lee Walton** XX! bye for now. have some laughs. Talk soon :)

Appendix G: Mary Jane Jacob – Excerpts from an Interview February 2014 via Skype

Do you believe the creation and facilitation of social artworks challenge the role of the artist?

I think the whole language… in general in the field is backwards… who's saying there's a limited role of the artist? How about starting from where the artist is first? That's a huge part of the problem. Because, the artist isn't writing, we're not in that kind of authoritarian voice, it's the critics that are writing. On the one hand if artist's feel like this is where they want to realise their artwork then it is not challenging their role it is realising their role

On the other hand I would also add to that it is not about changing an artist's role in some way that would be avant garde or new, because these are not new dimensions of the artist's role to be involved in social discourse to have a social effect, to make a social change, to be thinking about society, so this is a kind of an age old thing, what kind of got away there was about 250 years of museum practice that put art and artists' in boxes. I have written about expanding the role of the artist, that expanding came about because of the limitations of institutional practice.

Does the artist in social practice need to be present to facilitate their work? If not, how is the work facilitated?

I mean now we're talking about how the thing happens, it depends upon the work, if we're talking about it in the social community sense… it depends upon how the artist sets it up. It might be Felix Gonzales Torres and a stack of paper… the artist is dead and it can still happen. But if it's a social project that is happening in a community then I think there are many ways that the process evolves, and it's about investment, but investment doesn't always equal time, and presence doesn't always mean your body is there. We can be present in the process, we can have presence, we can have created a sense of presence and a kind of co-cognises with a group that we're working with, but it doesn't mean that you have to be the one there doing x, y, z.. I think people try to be very reductive about this work and say, oh well, the artist wasn't in the community long enough. Is it that the work didn't have that presence? Is it that there wasn't enough investment or that where the artist is coming from didn't hit close enough to home, to where people were already to seize upon an idea that connected to where they were at, there are lots of reasons but, you know one of the ways in which this work has been critiqued is in a sense of quantifiable .. oh they weren't there enough days, or enough months of the year.

How does the artist create a sense of presence within the sense of social art, what does it mean for an artist to be present, what does it mean for viewers or participants or be present in a project and what do we mean when a painting has presence? This is part of understanding how it is all art. It comes down to a basic understanding of what it is art… What's a project that has meaning? A work that had great meaning 100 years ago, still might have great meaning now, but not related to any of that context that the artist made in; or a social art project down the street might have meaning for me, but not what the artist intended. But if the artist is a smart artist, that person is also not limited by what something can be. I think people have lost the basic things about 'what is art' and 'what does art do'… in the field.

Does the role of the artist change dependent on the contextual positioning of the work – for example if the artwork is outside of an art context?

A work which exists in place and time, which all work does but not all work builds it into it's being. But lets say social practices does, or social artworks do, but then, the, place and time are part of the work or contribute to the work, or maybe gave rise to the work, contextually, but dependent (-interrogate the word dependent- dependent sounds like restricted too, does that become an opening up for? Or one way of looking at it, or an entry point for certain visitors or viewers. For example if art artwork is outside of an art context, I hate art contexts, but contextual positioning I never took to be just an art context, isn't that kind of where social

practice came from? And I think that to me, if the work only works in an art context, and by that I am reading you to be saying 'professional', art discourse art history art criticism art school, are degrees, if it only works in that, I mean that's one context and we obviously spend time working on that, so we must give it some value, but that's only one context, if it only works in an art context then to me, its not very titillating art because I think that art is about something beyond an art context, and an art use.

So, do I think the role of the artist as a facilitator of the work changes peoples experiences of the artwork? I think an artwork is dependent upon artists, I think artists take in lots of input from different places because they are able to make from their experience and the value of what they're making is to afford experience for others. So yes, I think that we need artists for artwork, but I also think that we can have art experiences without the artist and without even artworks, and I that is what I think that artwork teaches us. How to breathe in fully the everyday in some thoughtful way, that is conscious and critical, and helps us live, and by that I don't mean necessarily feed you or give you something, or solves your social problem, but [create] some sense of agency in the world.

Is it essential for the artist to be historically aware of their field?

First of all, I think the field is older than the field of social practice. I think social practices is invented by some people who needed some shtick in the last… years, I think social practice brings us back to some central things about art, so that's the reason why I like it. So first of all the field is bigger than the field, but, we're dealing in the 21st century we're in an era where artists are educated. We all value that knowing something about an art world context is necessary or just kind of the way we live, but being hung up on it, or playing too that context can make a lot of self conscious art is a not interesting life conscious way. And that's where we start seeing the difference between good artists and bad artists and that goes for within any field that you pick, or ay aspect of making anything… people who go and study something that's there, and they don't have their independent ideas or their invested way of being, I could make all kinds of art personally, but its another version of forgery in a sense.

Does a participant need background knowledge of their field?

You're looking at the field for what? To watch your back? To make sure that somebody doesn't steal your idea, to get the gallery or museum show first, to make sure some critic writes about you or are you doing it because you're involved in a dialogue with other colleagues, whether you talk to them personally or not. So, yes, we often work within a field because we have to… how do you use it? It can give you a lot of anxiety, it can make you crazy, especially when you're trying to finish a phd, right?

Could you speak to the relevance of documentation in social practice in relation to how the work is perceived?

Documentation helps you get famous, documentation helps you get into a book, documentation gets you the PR, it also lets you talk about the work, it lets you reflect on the work, it lets you share it and be part of that discourse. I take exception that it's even documentation, I think that just in the way that we tell stories or share experiences. I am not that worried about whether the thing that is a power point presentation, a book, a film, whether its artful or not, because I'm not really concerned about whether its an art object that's going to be sold for money or collected… for me those were irrelevant questions when I was working in a museum with painting and sculpture, hence I was in the wrong place, because that's all people thought about, but I think that it is also still a thing to be experienced.

Can one experience a work of art through it's documentation? Some people are going to say no, because its not really artful, its not the first viewing, we don't have the artist there, all these other kinds of things are embedded in your question…

Can we have the experience of the work through that secondary documentation? And I would say yes, because it is about an experience, and it is about what you experienced and we can have an experience of other peoples experience, we do it all the time. But if you're hung up on its materiality, or art value then rather than the experience of the experience then you don't get that documentation part, but I don't think that's the point of the work. It comes down to an art business question, an art business sale question. Artists who make art that is easily understood in an art context, that is easily understood as art.

What is the role of the curator in social practice?

Curators do different things. Personally, I'm more interested in the making of things, even when I was working in museums I was more interested in the process of the making of something, rather than the caretaking of an object in and out of storage. Some people are really into that because they are very much about owning things, I'm not. But in terms of the process of social practice to me it is very much a dialogic process with the artist and one in which its about being something like a sounding board, I would say you're facilitator word comes into it, also an active discussant. Some times to challenge, which becomes interesting for artists to talk or to test out ideas. But I've also done things with artists in this field that wasn't what I was imaging it was going to, but where they ended up being committed for it to go to, I'm often surprised and happy in where it ends up because the artist is invested and commits to it and that's what matters, and there are other things that happen to you with actual logistics, what's affordable, what's possible, what's safe.. it's not like anything goes, but the artists that I end up working with engage that conversation, and the curating field has changed a great deal not just because of social practice but because of… a different way that art comes about, that artists really connect to that and really see that role of a curator within realising a work. So for instance where I work at the 'Art Institute' [Chicago], it's a way that we are able to demonstrate that kind of curating for people to test out that ambition to be a curator as well as the many artists who are also going to school there … they have some dialogue with each another and work with one another on the realisation of their ultimate projects. The students thesis exhibition and making their final work for their graduation, the curatorial students help them to realise that massive show…

What is the artist's relationship to the curator?

People who are really involved in the making of it, rather than for instance another curatorial program that I taught was about curators sitting in a room coming up with an idea and coming up with a theme, with the theoretical, and then coming out with the artist's that they will work with… that was not my way of working, so in whatever shows that I do, I end up in a very different place than I started in, because I started in a very propositional place to begin with because I don't think there is anything to go on until you start engaging artists. I mean there's a place to start, but not to end up.

With the curatorial students that I deal with and the artists. There are 12 curatorial students and over 120 artist's who graduate in our MFA show, in the beginning when we started this system years ago people …[thought] somebody is going to curate me or what does this mean, the culture changes because people know when it migrates from one year to the next. In that scenario or in a major show, in a 'grown up' artwork scenario, I think that artist's have come to realise that curators play a real role and do a real job, and, they're asking for curators. Because they know they need a partner. And when that partner is not conceptual in the sense of asking the work… Because I don't go for the curator is the artist thing, the mid 90s… The curator is the curator… The curator doesn't control but takes care, and there is care in conversation… it can be a great relationship and the reason I do it is because it's with artists.

Appendix H: Interview with Liam Gillick

What type of work do you make?

I don't approach art from this perspective. I work on various ideas and am drawn to some recurrent material choices. But I would not talk about my work in terms of "type".

What is your process for making work?

It depends on the ideas I am thinking about. There is no consistent process. I am not a process oriented artist who has habits or ways to work. I start every day from an empty desk or hotel room and try and think about what to do that day.

Are there any concepts that are inherent within your work which are important to understanding your practice?

There are many. These are too numerous to document here. I would refer you to the following interviews: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MD6s2oQCXYQ and http://moussemagazine.it/articolo.mm?id=838

Do you think your work could exist without the ideas behind the work being understood?

I am not sure I understand the question. There is no gap between the work and "understanding". The work is a series of material and intellectual decisions and is not a logic system that requires understanding – it is a series of "facts". Lawrence Weiner articulates such a position more clearly than I do.

How are the ideas within your work communicated to the viewer?

You would have to ask a viewer. I would prefer the term "user".

Are you interested in how the viewer perceives the work?

Yes. But I am not interested in trying to control that viewer/user. I am interested in the idea of the distracted user of the work. The idea that someone encounters work in relation to all other art, in relation to the place of art and in relation to some other activity. I did a seminar at St. Martin's College in London years ago where I would have movies running on a large monitor during the crits to create a distracted atmosphere. At some level it worked – I am convinced that the critical input to the work was more effective when the work was considered in "concentration gaps" between the moments of cinema. A lot of my work is done for specialist sites of art such as galleries or museums but much of it sits outside the gallery in the form of books, graphics and other output that is piled or filed. Other work such as in Anyang Korea, Guadalajara Mexico and other places has a functional role as a place to wait or meet. Other "public" works function as a backdrop to other activity. So you see that I am interested in various forms of engagement. There is no one way. I trust the intelligence of the viewer rather than hoping to push forward the insights of the artist.

Do you have a specific intention for how your work should be read or viewed?

It depends on the specific work in question.

Do you believe your work changes each time it is viewed depending on who the viewer is and what experiences they bring to the work?

It feels wrong to write it but you are probably correct.

Do you believe the environment the work is situated in changes the experience of the work?

Of course. The environment is part of the work. We assume this with the gallery or museum space but it is also true with any work – a book or structure or decision to do nothing at all.

But I am not interested in site-specificity. I always do something with "a place in mind". I do not produce any ideas in a vacuum. All work has somewhere in mind rather than someone. This means that I am trying to produce things that are conscious of a place but not dependent on any place. I often choose locations for work that are apparently peripheral or just alongside. I have always been interested in the secondary role – the secondary person, the notion of passive engagement etc. This is also true for the placement of work in the culture. I like to look for spaces that are at the intersection of meaning production. Good examples might be the project I did for the central library in Cambridge MA. where I placed the work on the ramp leading down to the carpark rather than in front of the library or the work I proposed last year for the new Bordeaux tram system where I designed a deconstructed kiosk to be placed in grassland stranded between an existing railway and the new tram lines.

What are some recent projects you have done, or are currently working on? How do these relate to past works?

There is plenty of information about this in the public domain. I am not sure how to answer this question.

Each time you make new work do you think it questions previous work you have made?

No.

Where do you make work? Do you have a studio or work space?

No.

Do you believe the environment you make the work within effects the work?

Of course.

What is your process for making work?

I don't understand the question. It would depend on what needed to be made.

Do you have an affinity with specific materials?

I like cats but I wouldn't make art with that kind of attitude.

Do you believe the conceptual integrity of your work is more important than the physicality of it?

There is no difference. The ideas and the form are always in a dynamic relation to each other. They are never balanced. But they constantly flow in and out of focus in relation to each other. There is no way to escape from the interpretation of work as there is no way to escape from the physical fact of the work. We are not really dealing with a binary here but a set of semi-autonomous structures that move closer and further apart depending on circumstances. I was never interested in the resolution of form and content – so this is another way to understand my approach. The classic teaching technique for contemporary art still tries to look at finding ways for the artist to resolve their work in relation to their ideas. I have never been that interested in this process. I am much more drawn to art where the physical (even a piece of paper carrying an idea) aspect of the work is a problem in relation to the conceptual structure of the work. Hence my enduring interest in Lawrence Weiner's work for example.

Is the process of making your work important in understanding it?

Only if the viewer/user feels that to be necessary for their own experience.

Do you believe the architecture of the exhibition space that your work is installed within is important?

Of course.

Do you think architects who design exhibition spaces are interested in how artwork is exhibited in such spaces?

Sometimes. Generally they just want to make what they feel would represent a place for art.

What would your ideal exhibition space look like?

Radically inconsistent.

Are you interested in making the same work more than once?

No. This might be a problem though…

Do the boundaries of your practice continually shift?

I am not interested in boundaries and I am at the same time but I cannot shift any boundaries – in a philosophical sense… see Wittgenstein… Logic pervades the world: the limits of the world are also its limits. So we cannot say in logic, "The world has this in it, and this, but not that." For that would appear to presuppose that we were excluding certain possibilities, and this cannot be the case, since it would require that logic should go beyond the limits of the world; for only in that way could it view those limits from the other side as well. We cannot think what we cannot think; so what we cannot think we cannot say either.

Do you believe your work is governed by historical rules and methodologies that you take into account when making artwork?

Yes and no at the same time…

Is your artwork adaptable, and therefore constantly re-contextualized in the evolution of art practice and culture?

Yes if it can find a use value. And I think that art finds many different functions over time as long as it has a use value in the culture. My work means something completely different than it did when I did my first exhibition in 1989. It is not the same work even when the ideas and the realisation is the same. This is not to do with the accumulation of history but shifts in the use value of the work. The context changes, times change, values change. The way people look at things change. What is happening here is that the analytical context around the work moves in and out of moments of flexibility as much as the work moves in and out of moments of clarity. It is not that the work itself is particularly adaptable but it is made with an awareness of certain shifts. As a result there are aspects of the work that have a very functional purpose in relation to human beings and other aspects of the work which are intended to point forwards and backwards in terms of ideas. A good example would be my recent work for an exhibition at Eva Presenhuber in Zurich (2012)

Is the relationship of the artist to object and object to viewer important to you?

Of course.

Do you think each new work you create, forms a platform that allows for a new viewing of your artistic practice overall?

I don't know. It is certainly not the main issue.

Appendix I: Interview with Lawrence Weiner

What kind of work do you make?

SCULPTURE*

What is your process for making work?

AN INTEREST IN MATERIALS & THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO EACH OTHER & HUMAN BEINGS PLACED WITHIN A CONFIGURATION

Are there any concepts that are inherent within your work which are important to understanding your practice? If so, why? If not, why not?

NO THEY ARE EMPIRICAL REALITIES WHEN THEY ARE PRESENTED & NO ONE NEEDS TO HAVE ANY PREPARATION IN ORDER TO CONFRONT THEM

Do you think your work could exist without the ideas behind the work being understood? If so, how so? If not, why not?

YES QUITE COMFORTABLY

I PARTICIPATE IN ALL MANNERS OF PUBLIC PRESENTATION & THE PUBLIC SEEMS TO BE AWARE THAT THEY ARE DEALING WITH A WORK OF ART THAT IS EITHER ACCEPTED REJECTED USED ETC.

IF IT WALKS LIKE A DUCK & IF IT TALKS LIKE A DUCK IT IS PROBABLY A DUCK

How are the ideas within your work communicated to the viewer/participant?

AS A GENERAL RULE WITHIN A COMPREHENSIBLE LANGUAGE IN THE CULTURAL SITUATION

Are you interested in how the viewer/participant perceives the work? If so, how so? If not, why not?

I AM NOT CONCERNED WITH HOW THE VIEWER PERCEIVES IT AS IT IS DIRECTLY UPON THE TABLE & THE PUBLIC IS QUITE CAPABLE OF USING THINGS FOR WHATEVER PURPOSES NECESSARY

ONE ATTEMPTS TO BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO PRESENT INFORMATION THAT CAN BE USED AGAINST ONES OWN MORAL STRUCTURE

Do you have a specific intention for how your work should be read or viewed? If so, what is it? If not, why not?

I AM NOT CONCERNED WITH HOW THE VIEWER PERCEIVES IT AS IT IS DIRECTLY UPON THE TABLE & THE PUBLIC IS QUITE CAPABLE OF USING THINGS FOR WHATEVER PURPOSES NECESSARY

ONE ATTEMPTS TO BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO PRESENT INFORMATION THAT CAN BE USED AGAINST ONES OWN MORAL STRUCTURE

Do you believe your work changes each time it is viewed depending on who the viewer/participant is and what experiences they bring to the work? If so, how? If not, why not?

THE WORK IS NON METAPHORICAL THEREFORE EACH VIEWER USER RECEIVER BRINGS THEIR NEEDS & DESIRES TO THE WORK & DEVELOPS THEIR OWN METAPHOR

Each time you make new work do you think it questions previous work you have made? If so, how so? If not, why not?

NOT EACH TIME BUT OFTEN

Where do you make work? Do you have a studio or work space? Is this work place important to the way you construct or conceptualise work?

I UTILIZE THE STUDIO FACILITY UNLESS THE STUDIO CANNOT ACCOMMODATE THE SCOPE OR THE DENSITY OF THE MATERIALS BEING USED

Do you believe the environment you make the work within effects the work? If so, how so? If not, why not?

ENVIRONMENT IS A NON OPERATIVE WORD AS EACH SITUATION OFFERS DIFFERENT POSSIBILITIES FOR THE MANIPULATION OF WHATEVER CONFIGURATION IS PRESENTED

What is your process for making work?

NEED TO KNOW ONE TWO THREE …

Do you have an affinity with specific materials? If so, why do you think that is? If not, why not?

SOME PEOPLE LIKE CHOCOLATE SOME PEOPLE DO NOT

IN THE END IF THE TART CARRIES WITH IT SOME FLAVOR IT IS FINE

Do you believe the conceptual integrity of your work is more important than the physicality of it? If so, how so? If not, why not?

THEY ARE ONE IN THE SAME

Is the process of making your work important in understanding it? If so, how so? If not, why not?

NO HOW A PERSON ENDED UP WALKING HAND IN HAND WITH YOU HAS NOTHING WHATEVER TO DO WITH WALKING DOWN THE ROAD TOGETHER

Do you believe the architecture of the exhibition space that your work is installed within is important? If so, how so? If not, why not?

INTERESTING BUT NOT PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT

Do you think architects who design exhibition spaces are interested in how artwork is exhibited in such spaces? If so, why? If not, why not?

HAVE NO IDEA ASK AN ARCHITECT

What would your ideal exhibition space look like?

SOMETHING WITH GOOD PUBLIC TOILETS

Are you interested in making the same work more than once? Why? Or, why not?

NOT INTENTIONALLY

Do the boundaries of your practice continually shift? If so, please explain.

THE NEEDS OF THE SOCIETY CHANGE THE WORLD TURNS I WOULD HOPE SO

Do you believe your work is governed by historical rules and methodologies that you take into account when making artwork? If so, how so?

NO I AM NOT REALLY IN THE HABIT OF TALKING TO DEAD PEOPLE

Is your artwork adaptable, and therefore constantly re-contextualized in the evolution of art practice and culture? If so, how so? If not, why not?

YES AGAIN THE WORLD TURNS THE TOP SPINS BE THAT AS IT MAY

Is the relationship of the artist to object and object to viewer/participant important to you? If so, how so? If not, why is that so?

I WAS UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT IS THE ENTIRE POINT OF THE OPERATION

Do you think each new work you create, forms a platform that allows for a new viewing of your artistic practice overall? How does it do this?

NOT MY PRACTICE BUT THE WORLD AS A WHOLE & HOW IT DOES YOU WOULD HAVE TO ASK THOSE WHO CHOOSE TO PARTICIPATE IN IT

**Note:* The artist answered all questions in upper case.