Community Art
The Politics of Trespassing

Paul De Bruyne
& Pascal Gielen (eds.)

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Introduction Between the Individual and the Common

Paul De Bruyne
& Pascal Gielen

Community Art is part of a series of books made by the research group Arts *in* Society (at the Netherlands-based Fontys College for the Arts), which examines the relation between societal transformations and artistic creation. In our previous publications, *The Murmuring of the Artistic Multitude* (Gielen 2009) and *Being an Artist in Post-Fordist Times* (Gielen and De Bruyne eds. 2009), we explored the contemporary art scene in relation to the parallel development of the new capitalist economy and neoliberal politics. During the course of a number of book launches, we noticed that, perhaps surprisingly, many artists and art mediators (especially younger ones), largely accepted the description of our modern society and art world as 'post-Fordist'. By this, we mean a working environment ruled by economic flexibility, mental and physical mobility, project work, informality and 'adaptivity', such as that whipped up by the creative and cultural industries. Some of the people we spoke to felt quite oppressed by this situation; others even spoke of a 'totalitarian regime' and, in that context, we were asked about possible ways out of this impasse. Is there still a place for subversion, or are there other art practices that can elude the *dispositif* of post-Fordism? This book is a response to these frequently asked questions. We wondered whether the recent worldwide boom in community art might be part of the answer. By offering theoretical viewpoints, historical and geographical contextualization and artists' testimonies, this book provides an overview of, and insight into, contemporary community art practice and context. In attempting this, however, we are explicitly disinterested in mounting a defence of, or offensive against, community art. In the first place, we wanted to make resources accessible which allow community art (and thus art in general) to be understood in its societal context.

The social artistic 'genre' — with its roots in the 1920s and 1930s (Proletarian Art and New Deal Art) and the 1960s and 1970s (countercultural art) — became dormant in the 1980s and 1990s only to be revived strongly over the past decade. Even artists who enjoy a lot of recognition in official art circles have begun to demonstrate considerably more interest in the community around them. This results in a colourful artistic palette, encompassing relational aesthetics, new social commitment and radical political art.

Community Art attempts to explain this third upsurge in artistic concern for society. The various essays and interviews included here are not restricted to attempts to explain this revival;

they also offer critical reflection, posing such questions as: does the new generation of committed artists really possess the same sincerity and naivety as the previous ones or are we now dealing with a smarter, more strategic, but perhaps also more opportunistic, specimen? Is the revival of community art merely a perverted side effect of ongoing neoliberalization and the dismantling of the welfare state, or does the community now offer a powerful alternative to hyper-individualization and endless flexibility? Will art always remain a fiction, or can it, in fact, generate societal change?

In keeping with the logic of the series of books, *Arts in Society*, this publication assembles a variety of artists, sociologists, cultural critics and philosophers. Following on from *Being an Artist in Post-Fordist Times*, we confront dominant concepts by offering the insights of a number of thinkers who, in our eyes, have shifted or broadened discourse in relation to the subject at hand. While Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt fulfilled this function in *Being an Artist...*, it is Carol Martin, Antonio Negri, Richard Schechner and Zhang Changcheng who assume the role in this book.

Common

In 2009, the Italian philosopher, Antonio Negri, published the book *Commonwealth* which he co-authored with the American literary scientist Michael Hardt. This book concludes a trilogy, begun with *Empire* and *Multitude*, of radical political philosophy that attempts to reinvigorate communism. Ideology aside, both supporters and detractors of Negri and Hardt acknowledge the importance of their critical analyses of global capitalism and neoliberalism. Whether or not the solutions and strategies they propose make sense remains open for debate. What is important here, however, is the way in which Negri and Hardt breathed life into forgotten, supplanted and sometimes denounced concepts to offer different ways of looking at the world. Obsolete notions such as 'multitude', 'general intellect', 'bio-power' and also 'love' are re-actualized and refined for up-to-date societal analysis.

For our book, the concept of 'common' is of essential relevance; in *Being an Artist in Post-Fordist Times*, Michael Hardt explains that this notion is already centuries old. When, in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, first in England and then all over Europe, the meadows, where animals grazed, and the forests, where everyone could gather wood, were privatized, the conflict about common ground was born. From the Christian side came the argument that

God had given the earth and its beauty to all of humankind and that it should, therefore, be used in common.

Since the 1980s, the battle over the common has re-emerged, in a new guise and without transcendental allure, in a bid to oppose the advancing neoliberalization of government, which seeks to contract out national resources — such as water, soil and oil — to private enterprise. Some say that the state has conducted a full-scale clearance sale over the past thirty years, thus forfeiting its political grip on society. In cyber culture, a similar debate over 'information commons', 'creative' and 'cultural commons' has been going on for almost a decade. With these examples in mind, Hardt and Negri argue that the common is not limited to natural resources, but that man continually contributes to the production of language, knowledge, codes, information, emotion, affect, etc., which exist solely by virtue of social interactions and are easily shared. Forms of expression, creativity and art would lose their potency and dynamics if they could no longer draw on that common. Therefore, Hardt and Negri fervently resist the privatization of cultural products such as information, ideas and species of animals and plants. For them, open access to the natural and cultural common, the life source of community, is a prerequisite for a free and egalitarian society. By contrast, our times increasingly seem to deny that open access to the common.

As an antidote to the general trend, initiatives like community art — which, defined very broadly, thrives on the creation of affection and the nurturing of a practice of community between sponsor, artist, artwork and public — has an affiliation with the common. This approach stands diametrically opposed to the equally strong desire for the individualization of artistry in modern times, especially in the arts influenced by the avant-garde movement. Any community art project is catapulted back and forth between the poles of the common and the individual, and any theory about community art that doesn't take this observation as its starting point is doomed not to understand the complexity of the dynamics involved.

The Individual as Protagonist

Since the modernist era, the professional art world has thrived on such myths as individual creative genius, which deny or supplant the importance of a common. In their classic study, *Canvasses and Careers* (1965), Harrison and Cynthia White implicitly demonstrate the source of this individualization. Their study predictably begins with the rupture of the academic visual arts system and proceeds to outline some important shifts in the conception of the artist. When, due to morphological pressure, the Académie des Peinture et Sculpture in Paris and the annual Salon began to fall apart, it signified the birth of what the Whites refer to as the 'dealer-critic' system. In this system, not only does the immaterial principle of language play an important role — with the emergence of art criticism — but the role of the artist also undergoes a profound change, with personal style becoming more important than conforming to a uniform system of rules. While the long-awaited masterpiece no longer mattered, what was needed was a coherent oeuvre that guaranteed the lasting reputation of the artist. In other words, when the *Académie* lost its monopoly, one no longer bet on masterpieces, but the pedigree of the artist became prominent. Or, as the title of White and White's study clearly underscores, in a post-academic art system, the focus is less on the canvas and more on the career of the artist. Behind this shift, however, lurks simple market logic as the potential buyer needs to be convinced of the quality of the work of art; the most important arguments dealers use nowadays are, on the one hand, the aforementioned critiques of the work and, on the other, the positive perception of previous works. In other words, within an artist's oeuvre, already-delivered quality functions as a promise of future quality. This kind of mechanism may be read as the 'retro-prospective' character of an artistic career. Our contemporary understanding of the individual artist, their authorship and oeuvre, is as much a product of democratization as of the marketing of the art world, which got off to a flying start in the nineteenth century.

Indeed, when craftsmanship and academic rules disappeared as the hallmark of art, only the maker remained as binding agent and reliable point of reference. In other words, only the signature, which connects a work to an individual artist, determines the market value of a work of art. It is, perhaps, no coincidence that liberalism, with its strong belief in the beneficence of the market, embraces the individual as protagonist. Moreover, from an historical perspective, the development of liberal ideology and the invention of the artist as individual run remarkably parallel to one another. In short, the myth of the individual artist is a product of the mental space of free market capitalism, with works and signature often functioning as a brand.

While White and White illustrate their argument with examples from the visual arts, we can observe the same phenomenon in other artistic disciplines, where individualization is often even more evident as group processes and creations are traced back and attributed to individual authors. So, although dance companies, theatre groups and orchestras are collectives, attention is drawn to a single creator, who then ranks most highly in the symbolic hierarchy. This 'authorizing' of collective creative processes reduces them to the (genius) work of an individual, despite a more generalized acceptance that new creations imply shared responsibility and thus a common achievement.

From the tendency towards individualization outlined here, it follows that, within the modern (and Western) concept of art and the artist, the notion of community art constitutes a contradiction in terms. The demand for singularity on the part of the artist is hard to reconcile with social consciousness and the commitment to a community. This is perhaps one of the reasons why part of the professional art world still struggles to accept community art as a positive development. In return, community workers in all forms and formats have trouble accepting the arts as a possible means for creating the common.

The Power of Trespassing

Returning to the questions posed by young artists at the launch events for *Being an Artist...*, our answers in relation to community art can only ever be tentative and partial. There is no prevailing way out of the contradictions that the post-Fordist context imposes on the art world. Neither is there a way out of the tension between the will and desire to strive for an (artistic) common and the deeply rooted exigencies of the autonomy of contemporary art. Every community art project needs to be evaluated in relation to its concrete environment and its potentially therapeutic, subversive, critical, aesthetic or political impact. However, the readers of *Being an Artist...* ensured that questions regarding the activist and revelatory potential of the arts in general and community art in particular, are continuously present in this book.

The paradoxical position of community art is a leitmotif within this book. On the one hand, various articles and testimonies point towards the potency of art in influencing a community or, at least, allowing it to view itself in a different way. For example, different forms of community art reclaim the streets, in

the broadest sense of the term, salvaging a public and democratic space, sometimes even literally laying claim to a 'common'. Other artistic projects direct our attention to the loss of common space and make the effects of this loss felt, sometimes personally. Whenever art leaves its own individualistic boundaries and trespasses into the forbidden terrain of community bonding, it becomes de facto politics.

On the other hand, some contributions, from the artistic as well as from the societal perspective, testify to considerable distrust. That there are governmental authorities willing to support a dose of subversion (albeit in a controllable way) casts suspicion over any kind of subsidized artistic activism. That 'community art for sale' is particularly pre-eminent in neoliberal regimes raises further questions about whose politics community art is serving. Living in post-Fordist times might imply that the correct political thing to do for the arts is to celebrate its autonomy and retreat into an artistic exile, which (just like its counterpart) is increasingly becoming forbidden terrain because it is anti-social in tendency.

By bringing both ways of trespassing together in this book (and, of course, the shades of grey in between), we attempt to create a nuanced image of the phenomenon. This image can never be objective, but it will take shape precisely because of the many subjective positions and interpretations that constitute it.

Four Parts and an Epilogue

Community Art is divided into four sections. In the first part, 'Definitions', we undertake a number of attempts to define the concept of community art beyond the rather unrevealing supposition that community art has something to do with searching in and through the arts for the creation of a community based on place, interest or curiosity.

In 'Mapping Community Art', Pascal Gielen develops, amongst other things, a cartography of community art through which concrete projects can be mapped, in terms of their subversive or digestive nature or in terms of the orientation of participating artists towards individualism or towards other people. The result is a compass rose which enables the full diversity of possible community art projects to be visualized in a single image. This serves as a prelude to Gielen's extensive consideration of the subversive possibilities of various practices.

In 'Community Art as a Contested Artistic Practice', Paul

De Bruyne analyzes one of the longest-running community art projects in Europe, the Brussels-based multicultural music production organization, MET-X, in an attempt to define community art as a constellation of positions on a scale of diverse dynamics in the process of producing, distributing and consuming artworks. He concludes that community art cannot be regarded as an artistic genre nor can it be understood from the perspective of only one actor involved in the construction of a network. Rather, the concepts of 'community' and 'art' can only be understood in the context of specific projects.

In 'Community Art is What We Say and Write it is', An De bisschop defines community art as a discourse that is being developed by, amongst others, the government and the press. She compares the policy and press discourses in the community art contexts of the Western Cape (South Africa) and Flanders (Belgium), outlining disparate interpretative frameworks and discovering similarities and differences between the situation in the West and that in South Africa.

Concluding this section, Quirijn Lennert van den Hoogen and Hans van Maanen define community art from the starting point of the specific values that can make art (in general) effective in society. To this theoretical analysis, they add a description of an intriguing community art project in Groningen (The Netherlands).

In the second part of the book, 'The Artist's Voice', several artists join the debate by drawing on their own projects and experiences. In their own words, they prove that 'believers' in community art are not naive puppets who think that their work will save the world. As it turns out, artists are capable of critically evaluating their own practice, both defending it and acknowledging its limitations. The Belgian director, Bart Van Nuffelen, describes how his group leaves the safety of the rehearsal room and takes the step towards a specific public square with its defeated and addicted residents. It is there that their work affects the social fabric, making people become more articulate and leading to new insights on the part of the artists, which publicly exposes the reality of the square. Alida Neslo, from Surinam, describes her artistic and educational development, which has led her to a youth prison in Paramaribo where she is developing a project with imprisoned children.

A completely different point of view is offered by the American choreographer, Lionel Popkin, who regards artists themselves

as a community that has to be created, which is partly a response to the new distribution circumstances in the US, where the free market is more dominant than ever. The Brazilian visual artist, Ricky Seabra, situates his activist projects within the framework of developments in visual art to ask the core question: under which circumstances can art and activism be combined? Bertus Borgers, artistic director of the Dutch Fontys Rockacademy, describes how his rock institute contributes to restoring peace in the war-torn Serbian/Albanian city of Mitrovica.

The third part of the book, 'Rethinking Basic Concepts', provides room for a more conceptual discussion on the basic terms that frame community art: what is art? In which political-economic-cultural constellation do we live and how do art and the social relate to each other? In an interview by Pascal Gielen and Sonja Lavaert, Antonio Negri addresses the nature of art, of capitalist society since the 1970s and of the relationship between labour and art, the art market and the common in an attempt to elaborate the potency of art as a tool of resistance. This conversation with the critical (but marginalized) communist is followed by an interview with the Chinese Communist Party member, Zhang Changcheng, grandson of one of the leaders of Mao's Long March and one of the most influential forces behind the renewal of art policy in China. In conversation with Alison Friedman, Zhang describes the ways in which arts policy and thinking around art have evolved from Mao until now. Expressing ideas infused with the spirit of Confucius, the concepts of critical art, communism and politics are interpreted from a Chinese perspective.

A final interview, with Richard Schechner and Carol Martin, completes this section. This conversation, conducted by Karel Vanhaesebrouck and Klaas Tindemans, once again plunges us deep into the history of the Western avant-garde and the relationship between art, economics and politics over the past half-century.

In the fourth part of this book, 'Public Sphere and Activism', a number of community art projects are analyzed in relation to their subversive power in public space. In 'From Community Art to Communal Art', Paul De Bruyne analyzes various forms of art that consolidate or contest the prevalent definitions and practices of public space. Between a conformist and a revolutionary attitude towards the public space, a 'third way' is introduced. From

the contribution of Hein Schoer, about art in societies that have preserved a part of their pre-modern roots, it becomes clear that community art could only arise once the idea of community had largely been lost in modernity. From this moment on, art becomes not only an agent for social integration and cultural stabilization, but also a factor within disorientation. Only then could it be charged with the artistic (and ethical) duty for change, renewal and being different. As the 'natural' tie to community was lost, it had to be reconstructed.

As an example of this process at work, Luigi Coppola takes the artist, Michelangelo Pistoletto, whose practice has attempted to create a communal situation over several decades. Meanwhile, the Dutch visual artist, Jonas Staal, points in his work and his essay to the everyday certainties that we take for granted, such as freedom and democracy, especially in public space. In considering that freedom takes shape within strict conditions and that democracy is not a natural state but merely an ideology that is maintained by force, Staal discusses the idea of 'democratism' as a prelude to pointing towards an ever-changing possible reality. In considering how video-makers in Indonesia can only work in relation to the dominant characteristics of their televisual landscape, Miguel Escobar Varela argues that artistic and activist expressions of the margin are always determined by the dominant forms in relation to which they are marginalized. In the final contribution to this section, Tessa Overbeek introduces and interviews Tilde Björfors, the founding mother of the contemporary Swedish circus movement. This encounter describes the practice of circus as a critique of the dominant values of the Swedish political and cultural mentality (moderation, modesty and the avoidance of risk).

Community Art concludes with an epilogue that goes against the grain, taken from the diaries of the visual artist, Jan Fabre, which demonstrates that artistic self-creation can be understood as a political act. 'The Revolution in My Own Flesh' might be considered to be diametrically opposed to community art, but, in our view, it isn't. Every specific artistic and socio-economic situation demands from the artist an attitude of truth towards himself, his art and the relevant community. Sometimes, as is the case for Fabre, self-revolution is on the agenda; at other times, bonding and commonality are at stake. Each situation asks for an answer to the question of how community and art should relate to each other, there and then.

There are no universal answers.

We trust that the four parts of this book combine to stimulate discussion on the role of the arts *in* a globalizing society beyond easy glorification or revulsion. Anyone who wishes to comment on the book and the issues raised in it are welcome to do so through the different channels that are listed at the end. The research group will take up the thoughts and critique of the readers in its next projects. Let's inspire each other.

Mapping Community Art

Pascal Gielen

The Impotence of Art

An illegal immigrant hesitantly expresses his criticism of an artist in front of a television camera. The man had promised to co-operate in a public intervention by the Belgian artist, Benjamin Verdonck. The project focused attention on the problems of refugees, illegal immigrants and other stateless people. The socially engaged artist had put up a cardboard house in the middle of the street on which he had written familiar advertising slogans, such as 'Nokia, connecting people' and 'My home is where my Stella is' (Stella Artois is a Belgian brand of beer). In the framework of Verdonck's artistic action, these slogans suddenly acquired a rather ambivalent, even bitter, undertone. Nobody missed the point. Apart from this fragile abode, the artist had also drawn up a pamphlet, in which he solicited understanding of the precarious condition in which these people who have turned nomads — often not of their own choosing — find themselves. During the artistic manifestation, illegal immigrants distributed this pamphlet. However, the man in front of the camera was slightly displeased with the form in which the artist had formulated his message. The childish handwriting, in which the leaflet was written, was not very convincing, according to him. This immigrant thought that his cause, and that of his companions, was not being taken seriously. Verdonck defended himself, in front of the same camera, with the argument that this childlike writing was simply part of his own particular artistic style ...

The short circuit which occurred between the illegal immigrant and the artist could well be considered symptomatic of all art venturing beyond the boundaries of its own world. Whenever art leaves the familiar surroundings of the museum or theatre, it falls prey to different opinions, perspectives and comments. It does not even have to flirt with social engagement or political activism for that matter. Even an aesthetically sound and 'nice' image in public space can provoke a storm of protest, if only because of the simple fact that it stands in the way of pedestrians and others. In the afore-mentioned account, however, something more is going on. With his artistic intervention, Verdonck chooses not only to break free from his preordained place, but he also ventures to make a statement about society which is addressed to a specific part of that society.

All art — exhibited or performed inside or outside the confines of a museum, a concert hall or a theatre — makes a statement about society to a particular part of society. In other words, all art is *relational*. Even the artistic work of the most idiosyncratic hermit needs to be seen or heard — or there is always a relationship with a public

necessary — in order to pass for art as such. Even the most abstract art, shown in a highly exclusive environment to which only a select group of insiders has access, makes a statement *about* society, *in* society and *to* society. French curator and art theoretician, Nicolas Bourriaud, made a rather poor choice when he used the word 'relational' to shed light on a specific segment and tendency in the art world, for art is *de facto* relational or it is not art.[1] Nevertheless, Bourriaud uses the concept *esthétique relationnelle* for a particular form of art, though his examples seem only to indicate a specific attitude held by certain artists. In Bourriaud's terms, the attitude of the relational artist may be described as consciously seeking communication with their public. Moreover, he actively includes this aspect in his work. The kind of art he applies to this purpose does not stand entirely apart from this endeavour, but may be considered as secondary to it. In fact, it does not matter so much what his art has to say about society and in which context it takes place. As long as the artist actively seeks a relationship with the public and attempts to engage it in a dialogue, a relational aesthetic is at work, according to the French curator. This does not imply that the relational artist makes critical, let alone subversive, work. The only criticism one might detect in his artistic work is rather indirect, with his explicit hunger for communication and dialogue perhaps expressing a lack of sociability in contemporary society.

The example of Verdonck and the illegal immigrant, given in the opening paragraph, goes beyond that, however, for Verdonck explicitly denounces a social problem. With his action, the artist not only seeks a relationship with a public, but he also serves this public a critical message. The playful packaging of the artistic statement barely covers its clear, political, perhaps slightly subversive, character. It goes without saying that this particular artist clearly chooses the side of illegal immigrants. His action is explicitly aimed at denouncing their situation. Yet, why was one particular illegal immigrant not completely satisfied? The answer has already been given: He takes offence at a particular aesthetic form. So, Verdonck's authentic artistic signature does not really seem to serve the good cause. The credibility of his action, with its real political claims, gets lost in an impotent world of fiction because, in the first place, the artist aims to realize an artistic project rather than a political statement with serious societal consequences. No matter how well-intentioned his engagement may be, his civil action always comes second. While what matters for the

1 Nicolas Bourriaud, Relational Aesthetics (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 1998).

illegal immigrant is that his social appeal might not be taken seriously, for the artist, the possible loss of his artistic prerogative seems scary. First and foremost, his childish touch keeps him rooted within the art world, and it is this which distinguishes the artist from the activist and distinguishes the artistic world from the political and artistic work from social work. The question as to whether the illegal immigrant is better served or becomes happier is an entirely different matter.

Meanwhile, it is quite certain that Verdonck counts himself lucky because, a year after his intervention, the material traces of his action can be admired in a museum for contemporary art. The work on display stimulated the imagination; it was poetic and, at times, even critical of society. It will come as no surprise that the unanimous public nodded approvingly when it ascertained that the political message it had deciphered was the correct one. The very same project which, in the street, enjoyed a certain degree of subversion, dissolved into common sense in the museum. Indeed, the significance and especially the effect of art depend very much on its context. Inside the museum, Verdonck's work met the strict criteria of contemporary art. One thing seems certain: with or without Stella, the artist has come home. Meanwhile, the question as to whether the illegal immigrant is able to enjoy a home rather than drowning himself in Stella, is somewhat more difficult to answer. From an artistic point of view, it is also completely irrelevant; aesthetics and ethics are two different things.

Aesthetics without Art

The lesson of Verdonck teaches us that an engaged artist, who sincerely wishes to make a political statement, forces himself into a particularly complex role. This is especially the case when he tries to substantiate this social claim from an artistic position. Building on the insights of Bourriaud, Verdonck's position — or at least the artistic project described here — could be described as *auto-relational*. In the long run, the relational bond with a public, including the political evocation of the fight for the rights of illegal immigrants, serves the identity of the artist. In this case, illegal immigrants involved are made complicit in a project which, in the end, will disembark safely in the art world.

The notion of auto-relational aesthetics, however, presupposes the existence of something called *allo-relational* art. Is it possible to detect projects or manifestations in the history of modern art which do not serve the identity of the artist or the artistic collective, but rather that of another person or the Other? Do forms of expression exist which ultimately emphasize the relational more than the

artistic? A modest quest in modern art history leads us to the case of the Situationists. At the end of the 1960s, their artistic happenings and social provocations completely dissolved into society. Their art simply became politics. In the words of the Italian philosopher, Paolo Virno,

> The Situationists were very important when they became a political movement, but from that moment on they were no longer avant-garde art: it's about two modes of existence. They clearly illustrate this double take. Before 1960 they were an artistic movement rooted in Dadaism and Surrealism, afterwards they participated in social resistance, making the same mistakes or gaining the same merits as other political activists'.[2]

Allo-relational art can, then, lead to artistic suicide. However, it does not preclude the fact that the happenings of the Situationists inspired many activists following in their footsteps. In the feminist movement and the gay movement, among environmental activists and anti-globalizationists, one can find Situationist-inspired costume plays, theatrical expressions and other aesthetic forms which seek to highlight (at times literally) a certain social subversion. Especially within so-called identity politics, artistic forms of expression seem to be a favoured way of reinforcing one's social claims. People literarily colour their own cultural subjectivity. Moreover, in the artistic act of a costume play, for example, new subjectivities are generated. In other words, the pleasure of the play and the aesthetics are a substantial, constituent part of subversive movements. In an analysis of Baruch Spinoza, philosophers, Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, claim that:

> The path of joy is constantly to open new possibilities, to expand our field of imagination, our abilities to feel and be affected, our capacities for action and passion. In Spinoza's thought, in fact, there is a correspondence between our

2 Sonja Lavaert and Pascal Gielen, 'The Dismeasure of Art: An Interview with Paolo Virno,' Being an Artist in Post-Fordist Times, eds. Pascal Gielen and Paul De Bruyne (Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 2009).

> power to affect and our power to be affected. The greater our mind's ability to think, the greater its capacity to be affected by the ideas of others; the greater our body's ability to act, the greater its capacity to be affected by other bodies.[3]

Contrary to Negri and Hardt's allusion, however, the relational power of aesthetic expression need not necessarily have subversive intention. In her article on community art, Jan Cohen-Cruz points out that not all strains within the community art movement have a progressive, political character.[4] She reinforces her argument by suggesting that the Nuremberg party rallies of Adolf Hitler were an aesthetic, communal ritual. During those rallies, not only blond, athletic workers paraded, but there were also women in traditional Teutonic attire performing folk dances. Cohen-Cruz's example leads us to a next point. Without necessarily subscribing to Nazi ideology, folk art is often intended to bring people together. This target beyond art binds the late Situationists to clog dancers and farce. Both make allo-relational art — in both cases, the artistic aspect is subsumed by other goals — the political (in the case of the Situationists) or the communal (in the case of folk art). Making a public complicit, therefore, may serve goals beyond merely artistic ones. It is this which distinguishes the political faction of the Situationists from those of Benjamin Verdonck. The latter is auto-relational because, in the end, his political act is instrumentalized for his own individual artistic career, whereas some of the Situationists allowed their art to become political.

Mapping Community Art

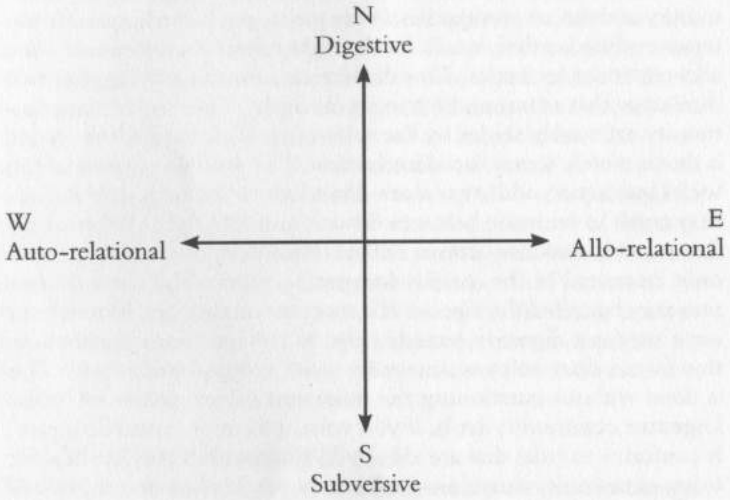
Gradually, gropingly, the vectors of community art start to emerge in the account above. Yet, before going into greater detail, it seems sensible to attempt a possible definition of these artistic acts. The relationship with people is at the centre of this type of cultural practice. All community art is, therefore, at the very least relational art. In order for a work to be considered community art, the bottom line is that it actively involves people in an artistic process or in the production of a work of art. With this in mind, is a director who engages professional actors for a theatre production also making community art? The earlier-quoted Cohen-Cruz would probably answer that the process of involving people in a work of art should at least be as important as any artistic process or project. In short, the community is at least as crucial as the art. The fact that the people participating are often not professionals, not even art connoisseurs per se, only serves

to further delineate the territory concerned. Certainly, a community art project has only 'succeeded' when it realizes an interaction between participants and the artist and wider community at which it was aimed. The purpose of such interactions may be political or subversive, social, identity-forming or therapeutic, but the aesthetic aspect will only ever serve as a formal tool. Only when symmetry has been achieved between the community and the art does the expressive form have a claim within the professional art world. In other words, a relational work may well be aesthetic, but it is not necessarily a successful work of art. By the same token, an artistic project involving a community is not necessarily a successful community project.

The story of Verdonck teaches us that serving both the community and the art presupposes a very precarious balancing act. In the terms outlined earlier, it calls for the right balance between auto- and allo-relational aesthetics. This distinction immediately suggests two directions that community art may navigate. The first is that community art mostly abides by the rules of professional art; the second is that it merely serves social interaction. The possible purpose of this social interaction adds two more directions to the map, as a distinction needs to be made between Situationists and farce. Whereas the first possible direction aims at radical subversion, the second group is only interested in the socially integrating effect. The latter dimension may be called the *digestive* effect of community art. In much the same way as a digestive remedy helps to enhance one's metabolism, this form of art helps to integrate social groups into society. This is done without questioning the dominant values, norms or habits. Digestive community art is, if you wish, a form of 'naturalizing art'. It conforms to rules that are already in place within society. In some cases, community artists are deliberately put in place and subsidized — by companies, governments, or other official agencies — to bring about integration. Conformity and non-obstruction are at the centre of this way of working, which makes digestive art the opposite of the subversive artistic act. However, the division between both poles is not insurmountable, as integration may lead to emancipation — for example becoming conscious of one's own rights and of the possible injustice one is suffering — which subsequently elicits (more) effective subversive strategies.

3 Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, Commonwealth (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).
4 Jan Cohen-Cruz, 'An Introduction to Community Art and Activism' (2002), www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2002/02/an_introduction.php

When the poles of auto- and allo-relational, digestive and subversive art cross one another, a wind-flower with four directions comes into being, as should be the case in any cartography worthy of the name. In this configuration, the North stands for what is reasoned and slightly hypothermic, as opposed to the warm and sanguineous South. The clichés the wind directions evoke serve as ideal metaphors to contrast digestion with subversion. In the West, the cult of the individual dominates, with his own identity at its centre, whereas Oriental philosophy — in particular Buddhism — regards the self or the ego (*atman*) as an illusion. The West and the East, therefore, form ideal regions to which auto- and allo-relational art can come home.



However, in the same way that only a few inhabitants of this globe actually live in the far North or South, community art will mostly be located in 'impure' places. The distinction between auto- and allo-relational art should, therefore, also be understood as the distinction between digestive and subversive, in other words as a gradation rather than an end point. Moreover, there is also a North-West or a South-East, at which interesting hybrids thrive. In this cartography, it is only possible to locate oneself in relation to another point of reference. Inter-relations are always relative; x lies more to the South of y and more to the West but more to the South of x, and so on. Over

time, artistic trajectories may also transmute or change directions. This means that the development of an artistic idea may at first be merely an auto-relational matter, which opens up into a digestive allo-relational (repetitive) process, after which the final product is again summarized auto-relationally (though it may be highly offensive for the artistic in-crowd confronted with it). The afore-mentioned shift undergone by Verdonck, from a public intervention with illegal immigrants on the street to an exhibition with the remaining artefacts in a museum, illustrates that, on the map of community art, different itineraries are possible. Whereas an intervention on the street fluctuates between slightly subversive auto- and allo-relational art, the museum exhibition has a far more digestive auto-relational character, which has nothing to do with the artistic quality and persuasive power of that particular exhibition. The context and an amenable public together decide on the place at which an artistic project may be located on the community map. To illustrate this, we will use our compass to navigate a number of concrete examples.

Digestive Auto-Relational Art

Art in public space which has to mark a district or the history of a region and confirm its identity is often a form of digestive art. The artistic work at least has the goal of 'livening up' public space, without questioning it and certainly without sabotaging it. When the artist who took on the assignment (for it is often commissioned art) actively involves the community of the place where the work will be realized in the development and possibly the execution of his project, as we have seen this qualifies as community art. When the artist is able to channel all the involved social powers — often including the government commissioning agency, companies or businesses and local inhabitants — so he can seal them with his own particular artistic signature, we are dealing with auto-relational work. Organizations such as Les Nouveaux Commanditaires (the New Sponsors) in France and Belgium or de Stichting Kunst in de Openbare Ruimte (the Foundation for Art in Public Space) in the Netherlands often act as intermediaries in realizing such digestive auto-relational art. On the one hand, they explore the wishes of the sponsors and look for a 'matching artist', whereas, on the other hand, they also guard the singular identity of the latter. Through consultation, any frictions between artist and community are smoothed out beforehand.

Art-scientist, Simone Kleinhout, for example, describes a project by Les Nouveaux Commanditaires in the small French

village of Blessey.[5] In this village with only twenty-three inhabitants, a laundry was being restored and the mayor and inhabitants wanted a work of art to be included in this project. The artist, Rémy Zaugg, was willing to take on the job. He was confronted with a population of mainly farmers who barely knew anything about contemporary art but who knew very well which requirements the work of art had to meet. It had to be in harmony with the sensitivity of the location and have favourable economic consequences. They even had an idea as to which material should be used to realize the work, which should include the characteristics of the environment such as water, stone and plants. And, as the sponsors thought his work also had to have favourable social consequences, in the end Zaugg was reluctantly forced to realize his work in the framework of a social integration project. The realization of Zaugg's work would take almost ten years, a period during which he had to go through the trial of many negotiations. For example, he chose to work with concrete, a material that did not immediately fit with the rustic image the inhabitants had in mind. The artist did finally manage to carry his decision through in this matter and, in doing so, to leave his mark on the work of art. Anyone who goes to look at the work in the French Bourgogne region has to admit that this is a real 'Zaugg'. Meanwhile, *Le Lavoir de Blessey* (2007), as the work is retrospectively called, blends in almost perfectly with the natural slopes and the heritage of the area, confirming the history and identity of the village. In other words, through the intervention of himself and Les Nouveaux Commanditaires, Zaugg succeeded in making a perfectly digestive auto-relational work of art, to which the inhabitants even relinquished part of their private premises. Let us be clear once and for all, then, that the word 'digestive' is certainly not synonymous with 'bad' art.

Digestive Allo-Relational Art

In the United States, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration and the National Endowment for the Arts joined forces in 1977 to inaugurate a programme in which artists realized projects in prisons. With this in mind, the Federal Bureau of Prisons kindly organized 'arts-in-corrections' training. The purpose of artistic interventions was to facilitate the transformation of criminals into economically productive citizens.[6] Although this federal initiative eventually disappeared, several state governments (including those of California and Mississippi) continued to develop similar projects. In the case of

California, several millions of dollars were invested in such projects, which demonstrates that belief in the healing effects of the arts is remarkably strong in certain regions. Grady Hillman defends the project by saying that

> The evolving arts-in-corrections model is more than the intervention model of an arts residency in a penitentiary or juvenile detention center. It is a prevention, intervention and after-care model. [...] The benefit of this criminal-justice community is that it brings coherency to a system that is largely incoherent... .[7]

It goes without saying that this kind of community art programme primarily aims at social integration, with the artistic signature of the artist coming second. On the map, such programmes clearly orientate themselves in a North-Easterly direction, where digestion and allo-relatedness meet each other.

Subversive Auto-Relational Art

Let us remain awhile in the United States where, in 1989, the republican senator, Jesse Helms, was appalled by the 'distasteful' catalogue for *The Perfect Moment*, which showed the explicitly homoerotic and sadomasochistic work of photographer, Robert Mapplethorpe. In the meantime, the affair has become world famous, so it does not make much sense to further elaborate on it. Even twenty years after the incident, few people doubt that Mapplethorpe's act may be interpreted as subversive. Yet, whether the exuberant artist's work can be simply categorized as community art may well be contested. Certainly, his art is relational, for, as was mentioned earlier, all art seeks a relationship with a public. Few people would contradict the fact that the artist managed to capitalize on his own artistic signature — though perhaps quite a few people, including Helms, would venture to question the work's status as 'art'. But whether the artist was actively seeking

5 **Simone Kleinhout**, Kunst projecten in de openbare ruimte: Waarde(n)volle ondernemingen, **Masters Thesis, Art Culture and Media (Groningen: Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 2010).**

6 **Grady Hillman, 'A Journey of Discouragement and Hope: An Introduction to Arts and Corrections' (2001), www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/corrections_all2/index.php.**

7 **Ibid.**

communication with a public, in the sense that Bourriaud intends, is very much in question. Apart from the group of homosexual friends who posed for the photographs, it is difficult to find any traces pointing at a community. Yet, one could defend the position that Mapplethorpe makes auto-relational art. His *esthétique relationnelle* is not so much to be found in the social attitude of the artist, but in his photographs. Whether consciously intended or not, his work fits perfectly with the kind of identity politics in which a community finds expression. In any case, the work of Mapplethorpe may not only be read as a manifestation for the right to artistic freedom, but also as an expression of the right to make the (often socially suppressed) culture of a specific community visible. Mapplethorpe proceeds as an anthropologist in his own country, confronting American society with its own fantasies, self-indulgence or 'alterity'. By launching evidence of an extravagant lifestyle into public space, the photographer makes a case for its legitimacy, which may well be understood to be a political act. In this respect, the work of this individual is perhaps far more community-forming and community-affirming than much deliberately community-orientated artistic fieldwork. The hypothesis is defended that it is perfectly possible for an artist to make community art without addressing his work to a particular community. However, Mapplethorpe does explicitly embed the gay community in order to shape it in his oeuvre. Exactly this aspect makes him an extremely *auto*-relational artist.

Subversive Allo-Relational Art

Let us linger a bit longer in homosexual circles. Gay Pride is a relevant example of exuberant aesthetics shaping a community. The parades which are organized in an increasing number of cities often remind one of the 'carnivalesque', as the Russian philosopher and literary critic, Mikhail Bakhtin, understood it. Bakhtin attributes a specific social function to the carnival — a temporary reversal of the existing hierarchy of power relations.[8] It is by now well known that he called that mechanism 'symbolic inversion'. This inversion is, indeed, only symbolic; after the temporary costume play, one returns to the social order of the day. And, although a carnival may well offer space to 'vent' one's criticism, it is the very existence of a *ventil* (air valve) which prevents a certain kind of atmosphere from turning into an actual revolution. Only when Gay Pride transcends the temporality of the feast to point to the political rights of homosexuals does the manifestation find itself in the field of subversion. The aesthetics

are invested, however, in serving the rights of the community rather than an individual artistic identity. Therefore, on the map, this type of practice navigates a South-Easterly direction as subversive allo-relational art.

Nowadays, many (municipal) governments vie with each other for their own Gay Pride. Politicians hope that the colourful parade will highlight the openness of their city and, at the same time, attract a new type of tourism. According to the work of the American social geographer Richard Florida, in the rush to form creative cities, a solid population of homosexuals is synonymous with a proportionately high creative potential.[9] By this rationale, Gay Pride simply serves to tap into a new economy, as 'alter-sexuals' constitute a substantial part of the creative class. Given the generally established belief in the potency of this class and its industry, each homophobic policy demonstrates economic irresponsibility. Conversely, the tolerance of the administration, whether feigned or not, raises questions as to whether Gay Pride and other alternative manifestations have lost their subversive feathers. In a wider context, it opens up a discussion on the social position of any form of community art.

Repressive Tolerance and Pastoral Art

In 2007, the Belgian independent research group, BAVO, made an important contribution to this discussion. In their analysis, concerning the recent revival of politically engaged art, they denounce problematic forms of art such as so-called NGO[10]-art, putting forth the following proposition concerning this new type of political engagement:

> It is noble and necessary that artists proceed to take direct action against the often harrowing abuses typical of these times. However, when it comes to judging the effectiveness of these politically engaged practices in tackling the current problems in a more fundamental way, they often leave much to be desired. [...] They tend to reason and operate in the same manner

8 **Mikhail Bakhtin,** Rabelais and his World **(Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1968).**
9 **Richard Florida,** The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life **(New York: Basic Books, 2002).**
10 **i.e. non-governmental organization.**

> as humanitarian organizations or NGOs: rather than tackling large-scale, political problems, they focus on what they can do immediately, here and now, within the confines of what is obtainable [...]. In the same way as is the case with humanitarian organizations one may detect self-censorship in this so-called NGO-art. Humanitarian organizations consciously do not make statements about political questions, because this could interfere with their relief operations, [...]. NGO-art is in fact characterized by a denial of politics: above all it has to do with the practicability of a given action. These artists deliberately avoid confrontation with governments or sponsors, because the concessions or funding which they need to execute their actions, may be compromised by such politics. The question as to what can be done, here and now, and how this can be realized in the most efficient manner, is more important than exposing and fighting deeper lying structures - which is in fact the quintessence of politics.[11]

In the Netherlands — where quite a few community art projects are currently being financed by municipal administrations — one often feels the limits of this form of artistic engagement. For example, artists are often approached by policy makers to liven up the social life of one or other disadvantaged neighbourhood. When the politically engaged artist discovers, half way through the execution of such a project, that the problem of structural disadvantage does not rest on the individual shoulders of a few 'anti-social' residents, but that the negligent policy of a housing organization is to blame, the civil servants who commissioned the project suddenly become slightly nervous. The artist might well publicly expose the fact that the putative 'win-win situation' of private-public co-operation between the housing organization and the administration leads to little gain for the inhabitants. With such a threat hanging over them, the bureaucrats would rather halt this once much-welcomed community project.

When social engagement turns into political engagement, administrations prefer to withdraw their financial engagement. Considered in terms of the cartography outlined above, be it auto-relational or allo-relational, once the border between digestion and subversion is crossed, politicians and civil servants would rather rid themselves of such art. Therefore, it is very much a question of what a municipal administration would do with Gay Pride which would expose the embedded homophobia that lurks behind the façade of verbal tolerance.

The peculiar relationship between potentially subversive art and established power also emerges in the story of Verdonck. His public action, described earlier, formed part of a series of interventions by the artist in the Belgian city of Antwerp which took place over an entire year. These were included in a controversial documentary, in which the story of the critical illegal immigrant was also represented. At the beginning of the documentary, we see how Verdonck enthusiastically introduces his not-always-uncritical actions during a meeting with the cultural and political actors of Antwerp, including the mayor. At the end of the meeting, the mayor gives Verdonck a verbal pat on the shoulder and wishes him success, after which the mayor leaves the meeting with a benign smile on his face. In other words, the artist receives the green light from the incumbent power to demonstrate some subversive behaviour. This conforms to Herbert Marcuse's understanding of repressive tolerance,[12] a hegemonic strategy which neutralizes undesirable ideas by granting them a place. The possibility of such a mechanism inevitably raises questions about whether subsidized community art can acquire any sort of subversive power.

Moreover, it is striking that (often digestive) community art frequently surfaces in countries with pronounced neoliberal regimes, such as in Great Britain, Australia, the United States and nowadays also the Netherlands. An attempt seems to be made to compensate for the absence or imminent breakdown of a strong social infrastructure, typical of the welfare state, through artistic operations. Perhaps that is the very reason why community art is currently experiencing a comeback. It is generally accepted that, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, neoliberalism spread rapidly to become a hegemonic

11 BAVO, Cultural Activism Today: The Art of Over-Identification (Rotterdam: Episode Publishers, 2007).
12 Herbert Marcuse, 'Repressive Tolerance,' A Critique of Pure Tolerance, Robert Paul Wolff, Barrington Moore Jr. and Herbert Marcuse (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965).

ideology. What is striking, in the Netherlands for example, is that the government stimulates community art in precisely those areas from which it withdrew crucial social services ten years ago. Community art becomes a cheaper form of social work, especially as it is usually offered on a project basis, whereas social services, including local schools and hospitals, call for a more serious, structural investment. It is very doubtful whether one can effectively tackle serious issues, such as social deprivation and disintegration, with temporary projects and similarly temporary responsibilities. Who will take responsibility when the artist — who lives in the neighbourhood for anything from a couple of months to a year to set up a nice piece of art — leaves the neighbourhood?

Now that a connection has been made between government, social work and community art, one final point of discussion remains. This trinity suggests a specific ongoing form of power and disciplinary practice, which is further affirmed by the afore-mentioned example of the 'arts-in-corrections' programmes in the United States, leading as it does to the work of Michel Foucault, the French philosopher who was particularly interested in prisons. In his world-famous work, *Discipline and Punish*, dating from 1975, Foucault describes the birth of the prison. He goes on to show how punishments gradually acquire an increasingly 'humane' character. Public torture and executions recede into the background, to be replaced by confinement and an expanding army of nurses, psychologists and social workers. The crux of Foucault's theorem is that this model of discipline is disseminated throughout society, through institutions such as hospitals and schools. This research into the execution of power was continued in Foucault's lectures at the Collège de France, delivered during the 1977-1978 academic year, in which he unravelled the notion of 'pastoral power'. This is based on an idea of the shepherd who 'manages' his herd in a particular manner, which allows him to pay attention to the needs of an individual animal without losing sight of the rest of his herd. Subsequently, the church has applied this method of herding to human beings and institutionalized it, according to Foucault. The central point of pastoral power is that human life is shepherded from the cradle to the grave. The art of the shepherd, or pastor, consists of addressing the members of one's parish as individually as possible, penetrating their private lives and taking note of their deepest secrets through confession. The pastor performs a sort of micro-politics, through which he is able to continuously evaluate and correct the members of his herd, in order to keep them on, or lead them onto, the right path.

Distinct from the sovereign power of the nation state, pastoral power does not deal with geographically delineated territory, but is aimed at people of flesh and blood. For this reason, pastoral power is also a form of 'bio-power' — administration directed at life itself. On the basis of in-depth interviews, French sociologist, Maurizio Lazzarato, demonstrates how this pastoral power is part of an official 'system of correction'.[13] In doing so, the inspecting civil servant constantly oversteps the dividing line between public and private territory, in order to get through to the deepest intimacy of the 'client'. Wielding the threat of possible sanctions (the withdrawal of social benefits), he checks toothbrush usage and whether beds have been slept in. Conversely, the inspector of the unemployment office hopes to help the person who is eligible to receive social benefits on the right — productive — path. Via elaborate registration and records in individual dossiers, the life of the person eligible for social benefits 'doubles' in a paper or digital register in which each personal step is carefully followed. Though the client is constantly reminded of his own freedom and individual responsibility, he is, in fact, placed in an asymmetrical power game in which he is constantly shown 'the right path'. Within the welfare state, not only the inspection services, but also a large group of psychologists and social workers form an extension of 'police power' of which pastoral power is just one strategy. In a subtle way, they infiltrate the daily private sphere to register, correct and make economically productive (again) the most intimate parts of life. The point has now been reached whereby quite a few community art projects — especially when orchestrated by the government — are at the service of this police power. In the afore-mentioned 'arts-in-corrections' programme in the United States, this was all too obvious, where a community art project was explicitly launched to turn detained people into 'productive citizens'. Yet, even artists who enter into disadvantaged neighbourhoods with the best of intentions are often unaware of the fact that they are stepping into this 'correctional' logic. So, for example, quite a few artists would consider themselves exceedingly original to distribute photo or video cameras to socially disadvantaged families, asking them to record their lives and those of their neighbours. While the social worker on a house visit records their intimate details on paper and in files, the community artist goes a step further, as the confidential document is traded in

13 Maurizio Lazzarato, 'Pastoral Power: Beyond Public and Private,' Open No. 19: Cahier on Art and the Public Domain, 2010, pp. 18-33.

for a registration which may become public at any given moment. In other words, the artist enthusiastically encourages residents to participate in a 'public confession' of their own misery. Like religious confession, this is one of the pastoral power techniques for keeping the herd under control. In the case of the priest, the psychologist and the social worker, such confession still takes place in relative confidentiality; for the artist, however, precarious social misery has an expressive character. While the socially engaged artist, with all his good intentions, thought he was fighting against injustice in the world, he finds himself at the service of the power which maintains the injustice.

Beyond Community Art

Many a community artist might grow weary when reading the above discussion. Others might treat the arguments with disbelief and attempt to neutralize them with as many counterexamples as possible. A mapping of community art shows us that this world is full of good intentions, sometimes even revolutionary thoughts, but also that great naivety, and even incompetence, exists. This discussion is not, therefore, intended to discourage community art, but to permit some self-reflection. Hopefully, this will help to better clarify the position of the socially engaged artist, allowing her or him to develop effective strategies in the future. Whoever thinks that the above analysis demonstrates that community art is best carried to its grave has missed the point. Firstly, let it be clear that the digestive, integrating power of some artistic projects is particularly useful when counting the growing number of diaspora and homeless people in a globalized world. Apart from that, it should also be noted that the notion of community art nowadays carries with it a remarkably subversive potency, which is hidden in the very word 'community'. Within a neoliberal world, in which individuality, personal gain, competition and speculation have become the prevailing strategies of the day, exerting their influence over the social fabric, the community gives rise to associations which may sound naive but which are no less revolutionary within the current hegemony. When the community does not retreat into itself, but consequently uses its principles to the defence of an unknown other and the other, it might well offer an unexpected ideological counterforce to neoliberal hyper-individualism. In short, nowadays the community still stands for an alternative way of life. According to the American philosopher, Richard Sennett, it even provides the most important architecture against the current, hostile economic order.[14]

In contemporary network society, the community can no

longer be understood as a closed social form with mere face-to-face relations, as the romantic *Gemeinschaft*, Ferdinand Tönnies, once described it.[15] The new or alter-community does, however, evoke associations with 'the common', and the possibility of property to which everybody has an unalienable right. It also points in the direction of lasting solidarity across generations, inside and between neighbourhoods or (world) regions. Finally, it indicates a form of love which reaches beyond the walls of private family life. These new communities operate as neo-tribal groups in an alter-modern network world. The latter group implies, amongst other things, that it does not stick to its own identity, but is continuously transforming and having it transformed through new meetings. These worlds of stateless communities develop their own economies of leisure, pleasure, love and knowledge, as islands within neoliberal hegemony.

'Keep on dreaming, baby', sounds like a sober yet ironic voice, very near. Dreams probably do contain a sense of reality; perhaps it is the role of art to transform them into concrete forms — it will certainly take a lot of imaginative power to shape new communities. To move beyond community art presupposes, first of all, an art of communities, in which artistic reflection is not at the service of the evident questions posed by the mass media and neoliberalism, in which the aesthetic does not serve to slavishly patch up the holes a blind capitalism leaves behind. The art of communities knows how to occupy these holes in a meaningful way and to tactically manage them by constantly generating ways of escape. In short, community art only makes sense when it refuses to be used as an instrument of a uniform, homogenizing, calculating logic, and when it produces the most divergent communities through the confrontation of many singular and dissonant forms of imaginative power.

14 **Richard Sennett,** The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism **(London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998).**
15 **Ferdinand Tönnies,** Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft **(Fues's Verlag: Leipzig, 1887).**