



Art Workers Coalition join striking workers at the Museum of Modern Art, NYC, pictured here on the cover of Artforum Magazine, 1973.

# DARK MATTER

## Activist Art and the Counter-Public Sphere

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*After over a half of century of progressive abstraction from politics to ideology, from history to utopia, these images are dimming into irrelevancy before our own historical predicament. 2*

*There is perhaps no current problem of greater importance to astrophysics and cosmology than that of “dark matter.”*  
—The Center for Particle Astrophysics. 3

**A**t this moment, the heroic warfare once waged over the symbolic power of artistic practice appears to be finished. Like a scene out of a Russian novel the battlefield is heaped with the remnants of an astonishing array of artistic models, many once aligned with the Left and other progressive forces. The defeated in fact fill the museums



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of Twentieth Century art. Among the fallen are those who sought to represent working class life with compassion and candor as well as more cerebrally oriented practitioners who endeavored to reveal and subvert the ideological tropes of mass culture. Here and there are card-carrying modernist nobility and inscrutable formalists whose challenge to the decaying structures of bourgeois society were championed as an immanent critique by T. W. Adorno. Self-segregated in practice, mutual defeat conjoins this mélange of artistic modes. And while the loss of a strong, pervasive counter-hegemonic visual culture is as deep as the success of the consciousness industry is mountainous, this trope of failure must not be allowed to become the sole determination of historical and theoretical reflection. Should the reader seek yet another opportunity to grieve over the prosperity of bourgeois culture, please read no further. All of the lamentations and descriptions of defeat this paper contains begin and end in this paragraph. Nor will satisfaction be offered to those who desire another redemptive tract about the critical potential of avant-garde art. Instead, what this paper attempts is the production of, or perhaps the recovery of space. A space gathered from in-between other structures and methods and in which a counter-narrative about the mostly unseen, and sometimes oppositional creative practices already present in the shadows of the culture industry can be articulated.

Some will call this activity art and others will reject that classification, but for my purposes such proper labeling is less the issue than the process of articulating and mapping present coordinates. 4 To that end, this paper has three, more or less explicit aims. The first of these is as stated to provide a map of a dimly lit, creative realm largely excluded from the economic and discursive structures of the institutionalized art world. 5 Speculating on exactly why this shadow zone has not attracted serious, critical attention, and not even from many radical scholars, is the second goal of the paper. 6 Thirdly, by linking specific aspects of informal creative practice with forms of emerging and residual politicized art, my text calls on progressive scholars and artists to initiate their own critique of what I somewhat mischievously call the artistic “Dark Matter” of the art world. 7



Cover of collectively produced art journal Heresies #20, 1983

## I Shadows of Collectivism

Who built Thebes of the seven gates ?  
 In the books you will read the  
 names of kings.  
 Did the kings haul up the lumps  
 of rock ?  
 And Babylon, many times  
 demolished,  
 Who raised it up so many times? ...  
 Every page a victory.  
 Who cooked the feast for the

victors ?  
 Every 10 years a great man.  
 Who paid the bill ?  
 So many reports.  
 So many questions.  
 —*Question From A Worker Who Reads*  
 (excerpt), Bertolt Brecht 8

I begin with a riddle: What is invisible, has great mass, with an impact on the world that is everywhere in plain sight?

Brecht's frequently cited poem interrogates the portrayal of history as a string of accomplishments by a few remarkable men. The poet's fictive narrator reveals what Brecht knew from experience: any large-scale project, be it artistic, political or military is decidedly collaborative in nature. <sup>9</sup> At the same time, collective experience as well as the intimation of worker autonomy, poses a potential threat to centralized, capitalist management. Collectivism's imprint therefore on commodities and services, along with its trace of political and symbolic power, are attributes that must be managed through the imposition of clearly discerned, administrative hierarchies first during production and then through the pseudo-collective imprint of a corporate identity or brand following production. Any additional residue of collectivism is shuttled towards the seemingly autonomous realm of the bourgeois public sphere where it is re-configured within concepts such as community and nation or most notably today, patriotism. <sup>10</sup> Yet it is precisely the contour of labor's UN-represented collective experience that Brecht's literate worker begins to trace for himself. At the same time the poem is itself a didactic lesson in so far as Brecht uses it to forge a necessary link between a materialist analysis of ideology and that which is not visible. <sup>11</sup> He as much as insists that before any dialectical or materialist analysis of ideology is initiated one must first perform a radical reversal of normative, authorial categories. Carrying this methodological inversion over to the realm of the arts, it would seem that any practice claiming to be radical must also take seriously the materiality and structural complexity of unseen creative labor. This includes collective and informal work largely relegated to the shadows of art history but also non-professional, cultural practices. To do anything less means reducing materialist art history to a mere social history of art that, as Andrew Hemingway asserts, "takes the bourgeois category of art too much for granted, and turns itself into an appendage of that it supposedly seeks to critique." <sup>12</sup>

Imagine we were to re-cast the protagonist of Brecht's poem as a class-conscious, radical art historian? What sort of questions might she ask of the art historical cannon and its succession of male geniuses? Was the painting of the *Demoiselles d'Avignon* truly the result of one man's virile talents? Did Picasso, Matisse or even Bertolt Brett not draw ideas and material support from an invisible entourage of mistresses,

amateur actors and non-western artists? What percentage of their historic importance owes itself to the skills as well as the creativity of artisans who prepared pigments, brushes, engravings or props, sets and stage lighting? Did these other men and women not have talent and ambition of their own? So few great artists: who paid the bills?

Nonetheless, we must go even further than this initial line of questioning because it is not sufficient for a radical scholarship to simply provide conventional art history with a more complete “background” to creative labor and then leave it at that. Instead, a radical art scholarship and theory must by necessity seek to revise the very notion of artistic value as it is defined by bourgeois ideology. Besides finding new ways to account for collective artistic authorship it must also theorize the many occasions in which no object is produced or where the artistic practice is a form of creative engagement focused on the process of organization itself. And it needs to theorize concepts of expenditure including the notion of artistic gift giving as well as the shadowy forms of production and distribution while simultaneously challenging the

emerging rhetoric of artistic administration as evinced by the de-politicized use of the term cultural capital.<sup>13</sup> This amounts to a radical re-zoning of art world real estate. This re-mapping also requires the placing of brackets around concepts such as taste or connoisseurship. Nevertheless, it is the appetite of the art world itself, with its continuous striving to incorporate prudent examples of the very practices that attempt to resist its influence, which has paradoxically opened a door onto what might become a far more radical redistribution of creative value. It is an opening away from high culture and towards the dark matter beyond.



Fantasy garden outside housing project in Harlem, NYC

Cosmologists describe dark matter, and more recently dark energy, as large, invisible entities predicted by the Big Band theory. So far, dark matter has been perceived only indirectly, by observing the motions of visible, astronomical objects such as stars and galaxies. Despite its invisibility and unknown constitution however, most of the universe, perhaps as much as ninety six percent of it consists of dark matter. This is a phenomenon sometimes called the “missing mass problem”.<sup>14</sup> Like its astronomical cousin, creative dark matter also makes up the bulk of the artistic activity produced in our post-industrial society. However, this type of Dark matter is invisible primarily to those who lay claim to the management and interpretation of culture- the critics, art historians, collectors, dealers, curators and arts administrators. It includes informal practices such as home-crafts, makeshift memorials, Internet art galleries, amateur photography and pornography, Sunday-

painters, self-published newsletters and fan-zines. Yet, just as the physical universe is dependent on its dark matter and energy, so too is the art world dependent on its shadow creativity. It needs this shadow activity in much the same way certain developing countries secretly depend on their dark or informal economies. 15

Contemplate for a moment the destabilizing effect on professional artists if hobbyists and amateurs were to stop purchasing art supplies. Consider also the structural “darkness” within which most professionally trained artists actually exist. In the United States alone, several million MFA graduates have been produced since the initiation of the MFA degree in 1944. 16 Assuming even a graduation rate of only sixty percent at the time of this writing the total number of academically trained professional artists holding Master of Fine Arts degrees must hover around twenty four thousand individuals. If trained artists from non-degree programs and those who stopped their education at the BFA level are added to the pool this number spikes considerably upwards. Yet, given the proportionally few individuals who achieve visibility within the formalized institutions of the art world, are there really any significant structural differences between an earnest amateur and a professional artist made invisible by her “failure” within the art market? Except that perhaps against all real odds she still hopes to be discovered? Nonetheless, these shadow-practitioners are essential for the functioning of the institutional and elite art world. For one thing, this dark army makes up the education providers of the next generation of artists. They also work as arts administrators and art fabricators: two increasingly valuable resources given the complexity of producing and managing contemporary, global art. By purchasing journals and books, visiting museums and belonging to professional organizations these “invisibles” are an essential component of the elite art world whose pyramidal structure looms over them despite the fact that its upper levels remain eternally out of reach. 17 Finally, without an army of allegedly lesser talents to serve as ballast, the privileged treatment of a small number of highly successful artists would be impossible to justify. A class conscious and materialist analysis begins by turning this equation on its head. New question: what becomes of the economic and ideological foundations of the bourgeois art world if this larger mass of excluded practices were to be given equal consideration as art? This question is now largely in the domain of sociologists and anthropologists. But radical scholars and artists must take that inversion as a starting point and move to the next stage of analysis: the linking of dark matter to those artists who self-consciously work outside and/or against the parameters of the mainstream art world for reasons of political and social critique.

These informal, politicized micro-institutions are proliferating today. 18 They create work that infiltrates high schools, flea markets, public squares, corporate Web Sites, city streets, housing projects, and local political machines in ways that do not set out to recover a specific



"Nobby" by Sarah Lucas, 2002

meaning or use-value for art world discourse or private interests. This is due to the fact that many of these activities operate through economies based on pleasure, generosity and the free dispersal of goods and services, rather than the construction of a false scarcity required by the value structure of art world institutions. What can be said of dark matter in general is that either by choice or circumstance it displays a degree of autonomy from the critical and economic structures of the art world and moves instead within, or in-between, the meshes of the consciousness industry. <sup>19</sup> But this independence is not risk free. Increasingly inexpensive technologies of communication, replication, display and transmission that allow informal and activist artists to network with each other have also made the denizens of this shadowy world ever more conspicuous to the very institutions that once sought to exclude them. In short, dark matter is no longer as dark as it once was. Yet, neither the art world, nor global capital, can do little more than immobilize specific, often superficial aspects of this shadow activity by converting it into a fixed consumable or brand. However, even this cultural taxidermy comes at a cost to the elite, contemporary art world because it forces into view the latter's arbitrary value structure. In terms of combat therefore, the double-edged hazards brought on by increasing and decreasing visibility are essential to comprehend.

## II The Amateurization of Contemporary Art

Not only does the amateur status of hobby art dispel the need for costly art lessons, but it subverts the intimidation process that takes place when the male domain of "high" art is approached. As it stands, women--and especially women--can make hobby art in a relaxed manner, isolated from the "real" world of commerce and the pressures of professional aestheticism. <sup>20</sup>

Evidence that dark matter has affected the world of high art is easy to locate. I will focus on just three examples starting with the 2002 Whitney Biennial. As curator Larry Rinder explained in the exhibition catalog the goal of this Biennial was to feature those "creative

practices" operating "without concern for the art market or art world accolades." Rinder's claims were sardonically commented upon by New York Times art reporter Roberta Smith, who suggested that if this exhibition "signal s a new openness, [then] the outskirts look very much like the center of town." <sup>21</sup> Among the alleged art world outsiders included in the Whitney's high profile, art roundup was Forcefield: a Rhode Island based art group whose installation of hyper-colorful, hand knit costumes and wigs came with its own

"K48-3: Teenage Rebel-The Bedroom Show," 2003



reverberating, industrial soundtrack. Yet this ubiquitous, outsider aesthetic Smith alludes to is perhaps more aptly labeled “slack art,” by historian Brandon Taylor.<sup>22</sup> Self-consciously amateurish and informal and at the same time the product of a bona-fide MFA degree, this slacker aesthetic was perfectly expressed in a second, very slackly entitled exhibition called “K48-3: Teenage Rebel-The Bedroom Show”. Organized by Scott Hug for a commercial gallery in the Chelsea district of Manhattan, it boasted work by fifty artists, fashion designers, musicians and graphic designers all haphazardly displayed on and around an automobile-shaped bed parked on a lime-green shag rug. Snapshots of gun-toting teens, hand-painted sneakers, scrappy pages of doodles, black-light posters, Ken dolls and distressed T-shirts were crammed into every corner of this fictional domestic space. And no less than three of the art writers for the city’s major weekly publications deemed “Rebel Teen Bedroom...” as essential viewing during the first few weeks of 2003.<sup>23</sup>

My final example of institutionally secure high art influenced by the informality of what I call dark matter is the work of Sarah Lucas; a young, British artist featured in the controversial Sensation Show several years ago. The Tate Modern dedicates a room to Lucas’s art that consists of objects and installations made from such off-hand materials as stockings and soiled mattresses. Lucas Tate room also includes work made from a ripe melon, a toilet bowl cast in yellow resin and a cluster of snap shots arranged with that careful indifference to formal, aesthetic schema now typical of slack, or amateurized high art.<sup>24</sup> However it was the Lucas piece entitled Nobby that most clearly testified to the sway of dark matter over younger artists. Nobby consists of a meter high, plastic “gnome,” pushing a wheelbarrow. In all but one respect it is identical to the figures of dwarfs that suburban homeowners place on their lawns. The one difference is that both Nobby and his wheelbarrow are entirely covered in a “skin“ of cigarettes.<sup>25</sup> Because contemporary artistic products are not required to be the work of the presenting artist we must consider the possibility that Lucas purchased this butt-covered dwarf at a flea market or perhaps on an Internet auction site such as ebay. In fact, Nobby might just as easily be the work of an anonymous and obsessive smoker or it might be the tedious output of the artist’s assistant, or it may be her own handiwork. The answer is irrelevant. However, while this apathy regarding authorship sweeps away several previously valued artistic qualities, including personal expression and the uniqueness of a particular object, it also eliminates from the process of artistic valorization any measurement of the artist’s technical capabilities. This raises an obvious question regarding dark matter and in particular the practice of amateur artists and “Sunday” painters. Just what is it that prevents this sort of non-professional creative activity from directly entering the value structure of the elite art world? Or, to ask this question in reverse, how is it that the products of art remain “high” or “elite,” when cigarette covered lawn gnomes are




Jeff Kelly's Zine he started as a temp-worker for an insurance company in 1993

scrupulously placed on display by leading, metropolitan art museums? The same question might be posed of artistic authorship. However, in order to answer these questions we first need a working model of the way artistic value is normally produced within the contemporary art world, one that can explain why not just any tobacco encrusted dwarf gets to enter such an elite domain.

One way to explain why it is that a few artistic producers are rewarded, often quite handsomely, by the art world, while others loose absolutely, is to compare the way value is produced in that arena with value production in competitive sports. The economic anthropologist Stuart Plattner does this by employing a Tournament Model in which the winning athlete may be a mere fraction of a second faster than one or more of her rivals, yet she is designated the sole winner regardless of the outstanding athletic ability of her competition. According to Plattner, "this model is relevant to the art market because it describes a situation of workers receiving payments that don't seem related to their input of effort."<sup>26</sup> In a close, art world competition however, it is not physical prowess that differentiates the winners from losers, but the quality of consumption capital available to the judges. This includes knowing which artist is highly sought after by a prestigious museum or private collector or what influential critic or curator will soon feature her work in a review or exhibition.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, what stabilizes the borders of the elite art market is the routine production of relatively minor differences. These differences may have to do with the context surrounding a particular artwork or the authorship of a given piece, but what is important, and Nobby offers concrete evidence of this fact, is

<http://www.prole.info/pamphletsrecent.html> advice for counter-activity in the workplace




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The following are pamphlets on current events, and working class history since 1950. They are PDFs and are meant to be printed out and photocopied.



**SABOTAGE IN THE WORKPLACE**  
 "As we began to feel our collective power, people got more obvious and flippant. We started doing little things like sending things to the wrong place and deliberately shutting things down. But as we got to be more organized, one of the games we played when we were bored was to deliberately break the machinery and make a bet on how long it would take the mechanic to figure out what was wrong."

In this pamphlet:

- selections from *Sabotage in the American Workplace* — by Martin Sprouse
- *Counter Planning on the Shop Floor* — by Bill Watson
- *Sabotage and Striking on the Job* — chapter 32 of "Dynamite: The Story of Class Violence in America" by Louis Adamic (1930)



that art world valuation has little to do with the formal characteristics of the artwork in itself. Instead, it has everything to do with the way consumption capital --accumulated knowledge about art--is produced, circulated and accumulated. This also helps to explain how seemingly identical art products generate artistic value in radically unequal ways.<sup>28</sup> Our re-mapping and ultimate deconstruction of artistic value hinges on this insight.

Look again at the art world and the dark matter it occludes. The lines separating dark and “light” creativity appear almost arbitrary even from the standpoint of qualities such as talent, vision and other, similar, mystifying attributes typically assigned to “high art.” If indeed the struggle over representational power is reduced to skirmishes and fleeting advancements and retreats, then the reality of this new combat requires a turning away from the realm of the exclusively visual and towards creative practices focused on organizational structures, communicative networks and economies of giving and dissemination. It is an activity that necessarily points to the articulation of what theorists Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge call the proletarian or counter-public sphere.<sup>29</sup>

### III The Counter-Public Sphere

Federal elections, Olympic ceremonies, the actions of a commando unit, a theater premiere--all are considered public events. Other events of overwhelming public significance, such as childbearing, factory work, and watching television within one’s own four walls, are considered private. The real experiences of human beings, produced in everyday life and work, cut across such divisions...the weakness characteristic of virtually all forms of the bourgeois public sphere derives from this contradiction: namely, that [it].... excludes substantial life interests and nevertheless claims to represent society as a whole.<sup>30</sup>

It is beyond the scope of this paper to present the full complexity of Negt and Kluge’s theories regarding the inherently conflicted constitution of contemporary public spheres, except to say that their polemical displacement of Jürgen Habermas’s concept pivots on the actual, life experience of workers and others wholly or partially excluded from that idealized realm of citizenship and public opinion. It also seeks to account for the influence that relatively new modes of communication and deception, famously termed the Culture Industry by Adorno and Horkheimer, continue to have on both worker acquiescence and resistance to capitalist totality. What I will attempt however is introduce two key aspects of their work that are especially relevant to my arguments about dark matter. These include: 1.) The subversive potential of working class fantasy as a counter-productive

activity hidden within the capitalist labor process, and 2.) Negt and Kluge's insistence that it is politically and theoretically necessary to weave together the fragmented history of resistance to capital into a larger whole or a counter-public sphere. Much like dark matter that is itself often composed of fantastic and libidinous forms of expression, working class fantasy is never fully absorbed by the antagonistic structures of capitalism. As Negt and Kluge assert, "Throughout history, living labor has, along with the surplus value extracted from it, carried on its own production-within fantasy." 31

The author's further define fantasy as a multilayered defense mechanism providing, "necessary compensation for the experience of alienated labor process."32 This does not mean that fantasy, any more than dark matter, represents an inherently progressive force. Instead,

In its unsublated form, as a mere libidinal counterweight to unbearable, alienated relations, fantasy is itself merely an expression of this alienation. Its contents are therefore inverted consciousness. Yet by virtue of its mode of production, fantasy constitutes an unconscious practical critique of alienation. 33

Working class fantasy therefore appears to offer a twofold, critical function. At its most basic level it is a counter-productive surplus that constitutes a de-facto mode of resistance to alienation. This is not merely a metaphysical limit, but a material force generated by the "residue of unfulfilled wishes, ideas, of the brain's own laws of movement..." 34 However, at the same time, the content of fantasy does occasionally represent specific instances of anti-capitalist or at least anti-authoritarian sentiment. Negt and Kluge approach this repressed content as "...promises of meaning and totality--promises that reproduce, in a highly sensitive manner, actual wishes, some of which remain uncensored by the ruling interest..."35

Examples of work place fantasies that were turned into action include the convenience store clerk who adjusted his pricing gun to create spontaneous discounts for customers; the model maker who added fantastic machinery to elaborately fabricated coal and nuclear power plant models; the assembly line date pitter who inserted her own messages into the fruit proclaiming such things as, "Hi, I'm your pitter" or simply "stuff it" and "Aaagghhh!!!"; the Heritage Foundation mailroom attendant who shredded fundraising letters meant to raise cash for her employer's conservative agenda; the low paid, white collar stock broker who used his access to a Wall Street phone system to create actual fluctuations in market shares; and the professional muralist who rendered Nazi storm troopers in the background of a painting made for a Walt Disney hotel and worked images of severed heads into another mural for a restaurant in Las Vegas. 36 However, in so far as these fragmented acts suggest the need for some greater "meaning and totality" yet nevertheless remain unarticulated as such,

they are little more than isolated and ultimately impotent moments of a distorted wish fulfillment. Then again, both dark matter and working class fantasy do occasionally resist bourgeois ideology in ways that are especially unapologetic and irredeemable. First, because they interrupt normative structures of production and appropriation, and second because they present at least a taste of opposition at the level of content even if in an undeveloped form. What must take place before this fragmented experience can be transformed into something more political?

According to Negt and Kluge this requires that the “political left must first of all reorganize fantasies in order to make them capable of self-organization.”<sup>37</sup>

This brings me to the second aspect of Negt and Kluge’s work that directly concerns my argument: the importance of connecting these “unblocked” moments of working class fantasy with the history, or histories of actual resistance to capital, patriarchy, racism and nationalism. Rather than a smooth, linear narrative however, this process is one of assembling a montage of, “Historical fissures--crises, war, capitulation, revolution, counterrevolution.” This is because the proletarian public sphere, “...has no existences as a ruling public sphere, it has to be reconstructed from such rifts, marginal cases, isolated initiatives.”<sup>38</sup> Not unlike the historical re-mapping suggested in Brecht’s poem, this reconstruction is built upon acts of interruption, stoppage and skepticism. At the same time this process also seeks to block capital from appropriating these other histories and desires for its own interests. This is an essential point for Negt and Kluge who believe that with the emergence of the consciousness industry, capital gains the means to reach ever deeper into the shadows of working class fantasy and with greater sophistication. The same danger of appropriation holds true for dark matter. At the moment these shadows becomes capable of collectively focused activity, as the margins link up and become visible to themselves, in and for themselves, they simultaneously become discernible to the voracious gaze of capital with its siren call of “life style” and the joy of consuming.<sup>39</sup> Significantly, certain interventionist art groups have devised strategies that recognize this dilemma borrowing dark matter forms such as zines and a do-it-yourself approach to creativity. The final section begins with a description of zine aesthetics before sketching the varied activities of the Barcelona-based groups *Las Agencias* and *Yomango*

#### **IV From Zines to Interventionist Tactics**

We need to make ourselves visible without using the mainstream media...—Riot Grrrl Press. 40

Least available for appropriation by the culture industry is not the slack look of dark matter, but its semi-autonomous and do-it-yourself



mode of production and exchange. Zines for example are frequently belligerent, self-published newsletters that as cultural historian Stephen Duncombe argues do not offer,

“... just a message to be received, but a model of participatory cultural production and organization to be acted upon. The message you get from zines is that you should not just be getting messages, you should be producing them as well. This is not to say that the content of zines -- whether anti-capitalist polemics or individual expression -- is not important. But what is unique, and uniquely valuable, about the politics of zines and underground culture is their emphasis on the practice of doing it yourself.”<sup>41</sup>

Duncombe draws an explicit connection between this reflexivity of the zinester and Walter Benjamin’s concept of the author as a producer.

“Applying Benjamin’s analysis to the case of zines, it is exactly their position within the conditions of production of culture that constitutes an essential component of their politics. In an increasingly professionalized culture world, zine producers are decidedly amateur. In producing cheap, multiple-copy objects, they operate against the fetishistic archiving and exhibiting of the high art world and the for-profit spirit of the commercial world. And by their practice of eroding the lines between producer and consumer they challenge the dichotomy between active creator and passive spectator that characterizes our culture and society.”<sup>42</sup>

Indeed, with satiric titles such as *Temp Slave*; *Dishwasher*; *Welcome to the World of Insurance*; and simply *Work*, zines produced by service workers offer an instance of what Negt and Kluge term the “contradictory nature of the public horizon,” at least in so far as they represent a sporadic moment of resistance, rather than a means of sustained opposition.<sup>43</sup>

The zine aesthetic and its tactics of recycling and satire bear a certain resemblance to far more self consciously politicized art-related collectives including: *Temporary Services*, *Las Agencias*, *WochenKlausur*, *Collectivo Cambalache*, *The Center for Land Use*



Brochure for DSLR, Chicago, 2003

Interpretation, The Stockyard Institute, Ne Pas Plier, Take Back the Streets, Mejor Vida, (r)RTMark, the Critical Art Ensemble, Ultra Red, The Center for Tactical Magic, Radical Software Group and the Institute for Applied Autonomy. All work within some aspect of public space, and many ascribe their approach as that of tactical media, an activist deployment of new media technology. Yet, the groups mentioned here are difficult to categorize within most definitions of art because their engagement extends well into the public sphere and involves issues of fair housing; the treatment of unemployed people, guest labourers and prisoners as well as global politics; biotechnology and even access to public space itself.<sup>44</sup> Groups such as Temporary Services, Las Agencias, Wolkenclausure, Take Back the Street, Ne Pas Plier s, The Surveillance Camera Players, The Stockyard Institute and Mejor Vida design participatory projects in which objects and services are made to be given away or used up in public settings or street actions. Other groups, including most notably (r)RTmark, use



Yomango action in Barcelona, May Day 2004

technology to encourage, “...the intelligent sabotage of mass-produced items..”<sup>45</sup> (r)RTmark exists entirely on-line and its web site invites workers, students and other disenfranchised individuals to collaborate with them by purchasing “shares” of (r)RTMark stock. Because the group is a legally registered corporation it has successfully used limited liability rules to shield its members from personal lawsuits. The list of those who have sought to censor the group because of its “intelligent sabotage” includes major record companies, toy manufacturers and even the World Trade Organization.<sup>46</sup> And unlike the lone, disaffected rebel worker (r)RTmark’s collective approach raises sabotage to the level of ideological critique, much in the manner proposed by Negt and Kluge.<sup>47</sup>

This same typically humorous re-appropriation and do-it-yourself, zine aesthetic is also evident in the work of Las Agencias, an informally structured collective of artists and activists based in Barcelona in the late 1990s.<sup>48</sup> Similarly to (r)RTmark, Yes Men, Critical Art Ensemble and other “tactical media” activists, Las Agencias appropriated both the technology and appearance of the consciousness industry but not for museum or gallery installations. The group worked directly in streets and barrios with the aim of unsettling normative ideological structures and to reveal the contradictions and false tranquility of the bourgeois public sphere. Carefully planned actions supported local squatters and migratory “guest” workers as well as campaigns against gentrification and militarism. Still, the work most crucial to my argument is Las Agencias creative subversion of riot police through the group’s Pret a Revolter (Ready to Revolt) line of apparel. Designed for use in demonstrations and street actions these colorful, “ready to revolt” outfits and accessories contain hidden pockets that allow the wearer to conceal materials for buffering the blows of police batons or to conceal cameras for documenting abuse by the constabulary.<sup>49</sup> For a time, all of Las Agencias tactics including counter-couture, anti-war graphics, strategy lessons, street actions and communication systems came together in the Show Bus: a brightly painted, motor coach equipped with display and networking technologies and topped off by a rooftop platform for public speaking and live performances. With its windows refitted for rear-view projecting of live Internet feed, the Show Bus was a combination mobile organizing space and self-contained, agitation apparatus. It also made for a conspicuous target to reactionary forces. Show Bus was demolished and set alight one night by unknown forces thus forcing the group to reconsider the conspicuity of this approach. Nevertheless, Show Bus was a concrete manifestation of counter-public space in so far it brought together numerous, otherwise fragmented forms of resistance while remaining networked to street culture and yet relatively autonomous with regard to the high art world.

Similarly, the spin-off organization Yomango expands upon Las Agencia’s intervention into the couture industry. Yomango: is a slang expression for shoplifting that mockingly plays off of the retailing

strategy of the Mango clothing label, a line of clothes and accessories marketed to young, European professionals. Yomango has developed its own “lifestyle” campaign that integrates a range of “anti-consumer” products and services with everyday acts of sabotage. Specially adapted clothing and shopping bags are available on the Yomango label designed for “disappearing” products out of the retail outlets of global emporiums. Yomango also provides workshops on how to defeat security systems through orchestrated teamwork that on one occasion, to mark the Argentinean riots of December 2001, took the form of a choreographed dance where champagne was lifted from a grocery store to the accompaniment of accordion music and fully in view of customers and staff. Later the group entered a bank in downtown Barcelona known for its role in the collapse of the South American nation whereupon they popped corks and flamboyantly drank and splashed champagne before a stunned group of employees. For Yomango shoplifting is a type of civil disobedience in which reflexive kleptomania is understood as a tactical assault upon lifestyle marketing directed against the homogenizing and instrumentalization effect of global capital. 50

The cunning of Yomango in relationship to the art industry is apparent from a 2002 invitation the group received from a politically sympathetic curator asking them to participate in the Torino Art Biennial. The members met and agreed to bring their Yomango campaign into the “white box” of the institutional art museum. But they elected to do so in the form of an “installation” that replicated an actual retail franchise. Within this simulated storefront the audience would be invited to practice shoplifting as well as attend workshops on civil disobedience and activism. Furthermore, all of the shopliftable practice products were themselves to be procured from nearby retail chains prior to the exhibition’s opening. The organizers of the



ShowBus before it was destroyed in a mysterious fire



Pret à Revolter demonstration-action fashions by Las Agencias



Las Agencias street shields

Biennial, upon hearing about the group's plans to essentially "squat" their exhibition, acted to evict the group. However, on other occasions, the group has managed to "leverage" art world funds provided by a museum and use this money to carry out political actions in non-art related public spaces.

Nevertheless, this catty interplay between art activists and art institutions underscores the opportunities as well as potential risks of moving this type of dark matter into greater visibility within the public sphere. And to the extent that Las Agencias and Yomango have focused on the process and organization of creative work itself, rather than the production of objects, their "art" is difficult for the art world to appropriate, or at least to fully absorb in the form of a discreet signature commodity. With group activity divided between theorizing, creating posters, designing clothes, organizing and carrying out actions and giving workshops as well as networking with other activists and artists, it is simply not possible for the formal institutions of the art to represent the full extent of Las Agencias or of Yomango's "work." No art objects exist that could summarize group identity and unlike individual artists such as Joseph Beuys, the group has so far avoided making fossils and souvenirs of their work for museums and collectors. In addition, because the audience for these groups also participates in the making of the work and its meaning, it is difficult to imagine what aspect of their work would appeal to conventional art collectors. Finally, groups such as Las Agencias, Yomango, Temporary Services, Critical Art Ensemble, Yes Men and (r)TMark to name only a few, have all adopted forms of creative expenditure and gift giving more typically found within the informal arts that are fundamentally hostile to the functioning of the formal art industry economy. It is my contention that such acts of expenditure that take place without the expectation of a specific return and when carried out in a context not framed by the art



world, are actually an investment aimed at building egalitarian social relations rather than optimizing one's position within a market. And it is this adaptation, rather than any formal resemblance to dark matter, that draw these oppositional practices into dark matter's gravitational field and away from the hegemony of the elite art world. 51

## V Conclusions

Despite the ideologies of resignation, despite the dense reality of governmental structures in our "control societies," nothing prevents the sophisticated forms of critical knowledge, elaborated in the peculiar temporality of the university, from connecting directly with the new and also complex, highly sophisticated forms of dissent appearing on the streets. This type of crossover is exactly what we have seen in the wide range of movements opposing the agenda of neoliberal globalization. 52

To paraphrase the cosmologists: there is perhaps no current problem of greater importance to cultural radicals than that of "dark matter." "Collectives that operate within the contradictions of the bourgeois public sphere, openly and playfully expose its imaginary fault-lines dividing private from public, individual from collective, and the light from the dark matter. But while such groups offer a important models for cultural resistance, it would be disingenuous of me to suggest that the art collectives and dark activities touched upon in this paper provide a totally satisfactory solution to the radicalization of creativity now or in the future. Instead, these groups and practices are characterized by their overdetermined and discontinuous nature, by repetitions and instability. Their politics privilege spontaneity. Some favor anarchic forms of direct action over sustained organizational models. What is effective in the short term remains untested on a larger scale. And that is the point we appear to be approaching rapidly. Again, Duncombe neatly summarizes this problem in relation to zine production stating that,

Tales of sabotage and theft are not just represented in zines, but often by them. Stealing the materials and "borrowing" the technology necessary to produce zines is considered part and parcel of making zines...roommates copy zines on midnight shifts at Kinkos and others use postage meters on their job s. ...[Yet ] with no memories of pre-industrial labor patterns to sustain them, and little in the way of alternative models of labor organization to guide them, these individuals have little hope of taking control of the production process in their workplace, never mind society at large. 53

Where then are the historians of darkness? What tools will they require to move beyond a mere description of these shadows and dark

practices and towards the construction of a counter-public sphere? In this short text I have, as always, attempted too much. Clearly, more research is needed on how alternative or counter economic forms link up with collective patterns of engaged art making as well as how one measures the relative autonomy of critical art practices in relation to the culture industry. One thing is clear however; the construction of a counter-public sphere will necessitate that we move away from the longstanding preoccupation with representation and towards an articulation of the invisible.<sup>54</sup> To be seen, seeable, embodied, to block something from another's view, to take as well as give away the very means of seeing, these are the new terms of battle. With it comes a new horizon filled with possibilities as well as risks. ■

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1. This essay will be published in the forthcoming book *(Image)ning Resistance* edited by Keri Cronin and Kirsty Robertson and expands upon a paper first given at the conference *Marxism and Visual Art Now (MAVN)*, organized by Andrew F. Hemingway, Esther Leslie and John Roberts and hosted by the University College London between April 8th and 10th 2002. It is also the second installment of a series of texts about the concept of creative dark matter and follows upon the essay "Heart of Darkness: A Journey into the Dark Matter of the Art World," that appears in the collection *Visual Worlds*, John R. Hall, Blake Stimson & Lisa T. Becker editors, (NY & London: Routledge, 2005), Pages, 116 - 138.

2. Otto Karl Werckmeister, *Icons of the Left: Benjamin, Eisenstein, Picasso and Kafka after the Fall of Communism*. (University of Chicago Press: Chicago and London, 1999), p. 153. For more on the issue of post, avant-garde art and politics see my essay, "Some Call It Art From Imaginary Autonomy to Autonomous Collectivity," available on the website of The European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies at: [http://www.eipcp.net/diskurs/d07/text/sholette\\_en.html](http://www.eipcp.net/diskurs/d07/text/sholette_en.html)

3. CMB (Cosmic Microwave Background) Astrophysics Research Program out of US Berkeley <http://aether.lbl.gov/www/science/DarkMatter.html>4. Sholette, "Some Call It Art..." op cit

5. By the term art world I mean the integrated, trans-national economy of auction houses, dealers, collectors, international biennials and trade publications that, together with curators, artists and critics, reproduce the market, as well as the discourse that influences the appreciation and demand for highly valuable artworks.

6. The handful of art writers who have systematically addressed this work include most notably Lucy R. Lippard but also Nina Felshin, Suzanne Lacy, Julie Ault, Carol Becker, Grant Kester, Patricia Phillips, Arlene Raven, Brian Holmes, Alan Moore, Yasmine Ramirez, Beverly Naidus, Suzi Gablik, Richard Meyer and David Trend. I am indented to their contributions. Furthermore, it is heartening to see that a new generation of scholars is already beginning to take activist, collective and public art seriously. They will no doubt significantly alter many commonly held perceptions and misunderstanding about these practices.

7. See my essay, "Heart of Darkness: A Journey into the Dark Matter of the art World," in the book *Visual Worlds*, edited by Blake Stimson and John R. Hall. (Forthcoming from Routledge.)

8. Also translated more suitably as "A Worker Reads History," in Bertolt Brecht: *Selected Poems*, translated by H. R. Hays, (Grove Press: New York, 1959), p. 108.

9. Brecht's practice of appropriating the ideas of others and claiming these for his own, while a deplorable, if all too typical form of intellectual theft, merely serves here to underscore my point.

10. For more on the problem of representing positive forms of collectivism in the art world as well as in popular culture see my essay "Counting On Your Collective Silence: Notes on Activist Art as Collaborative Practice," *Afterimage*, *The Journal of Media and Cultural Criticism*, (Rochester NY, Nov., 1999), p. 18-20.

11. This insight made is possible because of the worker's proximity to the forces of production, as well as thanks to his literacy. The volatile mixture of critical thinking applied to actual working conditions is taken up in part IV on the counter-public sphere.

12. Andrew Hemingway, *Artists on the Left: American Artists and the Communist Movement, 1926-1956*, (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 2002), p. 2.

13. First used by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, the term Cultural Capital can now be widely found in the literature of cultural policy think tanks and even economists albeit stripped of its original, class conscious social critique.

14. The Scientific American website has a fine introduction on this subject, see: "Dark Matter in the Universe" by Vera Rubin at: <http://www.sciam.com/specialissues/0398cosmos/0398rubin.html> ; see also an excellent primer on dark matter from the University of Tennessee Department of Physics and Astronomy at: <http://csep10.phys.utk.edu/guidry/violence/darkmatter.html>

15. According to the International Labor Organization , eighty percent of new jobs created between 1990-94 in Latin America were in the informal sector. Furthermore as many as half of all jobs in Italy are also part of an informal economy that is defined as economic activity taking place outside of government accounting and also goes by the name shadow, informal, hidden, black, underground, gray, clandestine, illegal and parallel economy. "The Shadow Economy," by Matthew H. Fleming, John Roman & Graham Farrell in *The Journal of International Affairs*, Spring 2000, 53, no. 2. (c) The Trustees of Columbia University in the City of New York at: [http://www.britannica.com/magazine/article?content\\_id=171785&query=currency](http://www.britannica.com/magazine/article?content_id=171785&query=currency)

16. An estimated ten thousand students entered graduate level art programs within the United States in 1998 alone, see: Andrew Hultkrans and Jef Burton's report, "Surf and Turf," *Artforum*, (Summer 1998), p. 106-9.

17. According to the Nationwide Craft & Hobby Consumer Usage and Purchase Study, 2000, seventy percent of US households reports that at least one member participates in a craft or hobby. Meanwhile, the total sales hobby supplies was twenty three billion dollars in 2000. Hobby Industry Association: [www.hobby.org](http://www.hobby.org). And for an enlightening report detailing the massive "cultural capital" of amateur arts in the US see: Research Report to the Chicago Center for Arts Policy at Columbia College entitled, *Informal Arts: Finding Cohesion, Capacity and other Cultural Benefits in Unexpected Places* by Alaka Wali, Rebecca Severson, and Mario Tongoni (June, 2002.)

18. In separate papers and published essays cited above, I have addressed this subject by discussing the work of such past and present artists' collectives as: Temporary Services, REPOhistory, Group Material, Colab, Guerilla Girls, (r)RTmark, Critical Art Ensemble, Ultra Red and Political Art Documentation and Distribution among others. See also: "Doing Their Own Thing, Making Art Together," By Holland Cotter, *New York Times*, Sunday Arts & Leisure, January 19, 2003, p.1.

19. The digital thievery of mash-ups and the fan cuts are perfect examples of this tendency. Mash-ups are made by pop music fans who illegally copy the vocal track of one pop song and graft it onto the instrumental track of another. The fan cut is similar to the mash-up, but involves a digitally re-edited version of a Hollywood film that is re-cut to please a specific group of fans. An example of the latter is the Phantom Edit, a reconstructed, fan-friendly version of *The Empire Strikes Back*, a George Lucas Star Wars episode. Ignoring issues of copyright infringement, the anonymous editor of this fan cut initially made the Phantom Edit available as a free Internet download. On Mash-Ups see Norris writing in the *NY Times Magazine* "Year in Ideas" issue, December 15, 2002, p.102. Not all this work revolves around computer technology however. The Church of Craft for example is an informally organized, national, "religion" that aims to create "an environment where any and all acts of making have value to our humanness. When we find moments of creation in our everyday activities, we also find simple satisfaction." See: <http://www.churchofcraft.org/index4.html> Meanwhile, Elfwood is a massive, online art gallery featuring the "worlds biggest" amateur fantasy and Science Fiction art gallery. See: <http://elfwood.lysator.liu.se/>

20. Lucy R. Lippard, "Making Something from Nothing (Toward a Definition of Women's "Hobby Art")," first published in *Heresies* #4, Winter 1978, and cited here from Lippard's book, *Get The Message: A Decade of Art for Social Change*, (E.P. Dutton Inc.: NY, 1984), pp 97-105..

21. "Bad News for Art However You Define It" Roberta Smith, *New York Times*, March 31, 2002, p. 33.

22. Brandon Taylor, *Avant-garde and After: Rethinking Art Now*, (H. N. Abrams: New York, 1995), p. 153.

23. Among the art writers who endorsed this exhibition included F Paul Laster in *Time Out New York* (1-9, 03 2003 p. 59); Kim Levin in the *Village Voice* (*Voice Choice* for 1-7-03 p. 60.) and ironically Roberta Smith, in the *New York Times* (1-31-03 p. 36).

24. In the Tate Modern's Still Life /Object room devoted to Lucas work in April of 2002.

25. Nobby, 2000 cast plastic garden gnome, cigarettes 70 x 34 x 68.5 cm / 27 1/2 x 13 3/8 x 27 in: courtesy Sara Coles HQ art gallery, London.

26. Plattner adds that "this model is relevant to the art market because it describes a situation of workers receiving payments that don't seem related to their input of effort." Stuart Plattner, *High Art Down Home: An Economic Ethnography of a Local Art Market*, (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1996), pp 12, 13.

27. The significance of such consumption capital is made clear when one considers the odds of an artist without dealer representation ever being chosen for a major art biennial or even getting reviewed in a contemporary art publication.

28. Not surprisingly, the non-art world observer views this phenomenon as entirely arbitrary. Take for example a gestural painting by Yves Kline displayed in a major art museum compared with a well painted, but generic version of abstract expressionism hanging above a sofa in the window of a department store. The viewer with enough accumulated, cultural capital to know which painting is the more valuable will succeed in stabilizing a potentially confusing state of affairs, even if the actual, visual differences between the two paintings are negligible.

29. First published in Frankfurt Germany in 1972, my citations are from the English translation of Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge's book *Public Sphere and Experience: Toward an Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere*, (University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 1993.) The English volume was translated by P. Labanyi, J. O. Daniel and A. Oksiloff and contains a forward by Miriam Hansen. Note that the authors use the term plebian or proletarian public sphere to differentiate it from that of the bourgeois public sphere. In later writings Kluge came to substitute

the terms oppositional or counter-public sphere for this formulation. I prefer the latter term because it privileges a broader, more heterogeneous conception of resistance that includes not only manual and service oriented workers, but also artistic and mental labourers. I would also include sub-proletariat and sub-cultural identity positions. For more on Negt and Kluge's definition however, see Miriam Hansen's introduction, especially page xxxv.

30. Negt & Kluge, p. xliii & xlvi. Curiously, T. W. Adorno also comments on the necessary link between work and fantasy but strictly with regard to artistic labour stating, "That labour and fantasy are entwined in each other--their divergence is always an index of failure--is evidenced by the sense artists have of fantasy being subject to their command. What they feel sets them off from the dilettantes is the ability deliberately to set in motion the spontaneous, i.e. fantasy...Works of art are placed in relation to a set of problems. This gives rise to a possible definition of fantasy as being an aptitude which invents approaches and solutions to the work of art, carving out a sphere of freedom in the midst of determination. " Yet, Adorno appears to hold little hope that the working class person trapped within the determining coils of production could ever experience this "sphere of freedom." P249 T. W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, translated by C. Lenhardt, Edited by Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann,. Routledge & Kegan Paul London, Boston:1984,. First published in German in 1970.

31. Negt & Kluge, p. 32.

32. *Ibid*, p. 33.

33. *Ibid*, p. 33

34. *Ibid*, p 37. This position regarding the materiality of mental functions is similar to that Sebastiano Timpanaro raises in his book, *The Freudian Slip: Psychoanalysis and Textual Criticism* (new edition on Verso, due March 2003). See also Timpanaro *On Materialism*, *op cit*.

35. Negt & Kluge, p. 174

36. These examples are taken from the book, *Sabotage in the American Workplace: Anecdotes of Dissatisfaction, Mischief and Revenge*, edited by Martin Sprouse and illustrated by Tracy Cox, Pressure Drop Press, (San Francisco & Ak Press: Edinburgh, 1992), pp 5, 86, 21, 92, 137, and 30-31.

37. Negt & Kluge, *op cit*. p. 176. See also page 296 in which the authors describe the leisure and cultural interests of workers including hobbies, ideals as "linked with one another only in a naturally rooted, random way, at a lower level of production." The introduction of apparent hierarchies between types of resistant actions suggests either a standard of efficacy on one hand, or taste on the other. Yet it is also possible to apply the idea of practice to this problem, that is, practice as the work one does to improve an idea, activity or craft. Curiously, while this drive for self-betterment is found among both professionals and amateurs, the emergence of slack art leaves the amateur artist defending older notions of artistic craft.

38. *Ibid*, p xliii. See also the work of the artists' collective REPOhistory (of which I was a founding member,) at: [www.repohistory.org](http://www.repohistory.org)

39. This new "visibility" also risks attracting the attention of the newly constituted state surveillance institutions in the US. At the same time the fashion industry already understands the cash potential of dark matter. Worn out blue jeans and threadbare hooded sweaters with faded screen printed designs hint at the swap-shop aesthetic of anti-global demonstrators. Ironically, this ersatz "street" aesthetic is produced in volume by sweat shop labour. Indeed, even Nike advertisements for high-end running shoes have mimicked the hand-made style of the fanzine and the street stencil graffiti.

40. From a 1994 issue of the zine *Riot Grrrl*, cited in the book by Stephen Duncombe, *Notes From Underground: Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture*, (Verso: London, NY, 1997 & 2001), p. 123.

41. Duncombe, p.129.

42. Ibid, p. 127.

43. Negt & Kluge, op cit., 171.

44. "Tactical media are what happens when the cheap "do it yourself media" made possible by the revolution in consumer electronics and the expanded forms of distribution (cable, satellite and internet) are exploited by groups and individuals who feel aggrieved or excluded by the wider culture," David Garcia, activist artist, 03.2002. See: [http://www.nyu.edu/fas/projects/vcb/definingTM\\_list.html](http://www.nyu.edu/fas/projects/vcb/definingTM_list.html)

45. (r)RTMark website, March, 1997. See: <http://www.rtmark.com/> By contrast, Temporary Services projects have dispersed free clothes and informational materials at prisons, schools and even on commercial airplanes. See: <http://www.temporarieservices.org/> The Austrian based group WochenKlausur also creates social interventions with city councils, prostitutes and guest workers using art world resources. See: [http://wochenklausur.t0.or.at/projekte\\_e.htm](http://wochenklausur.t0.or.at/projekte_e.htm). Many of the groups mentioned in this paper are cataloged at: <http://www.groupsandspaces.net/intro.html>

46. The WTO even attempted to prosecute the group over a website the group created parodying the global juridical agency that not only sowed confusion, but spread detailed information about the WTO's neo-liberal brand of global profiteering. See: <http://www.rtmark.com/>

47. For a keen analysis of activist public art using the theories of Negt and Kluge see: Philip Glahn's essay, "Public Art: Avant-Garde Practice & the Possibilities of Critical Articulation," *Afterimage*: Dec. 2000.

48. More about Las Agencias can be found at: <http://www.sindominio.net/fiambrera/web-agencias/>

49. It is worth comparing Las Agencias Ready to Revolt demonstration attire to the more self-interested approach taken by the group Forcefield whose clothing designs are used to make videos and performances for art world consumption.

50. Information on Yomango can be found at: <http://www.yomango.net>

51. Georges Bataille, "The Notion of Expenditure," in *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings 1927-1939*, (University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 1985.) See also Bruce Barber and Jeff Dayton-Johnson, "Marking the Limit: Re-Framing a Micro-Economy for the Arts," in the journal *Parachute*, no. 106, April, May, June 2002, pp 27, 39 as well as the writings of Charles Esche. Several, recent art exhibitions have also taken up the concept of exchange and gift giving as artistic practice, if however in a politically limited fashion. See: *The Gift: Generous Offerings, Threatening Hospitality*, at the Bronx Museum from Nov. 27-March 2, 02/03 organized by Independent Curators International in collaboration with the Centro Arte Contemporanea Palazzo delle Papesse, Sienna, Italy, (catalog by Charta, Siena, Italy, 2002); and *Mexico City: An Exhibition about the Exchange Rate of Bodies and Values*, June 30 - Sept 2, 2002 at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Lone Island City. Catalog by Distributed Art Publishers, NYC.

52. Brian Holmes, "The Flexible Personality: For a New Cultural Critique", at [www.noemalab.com/sections/ideas/ideas\\_articles/holmes\\_personality.html](http://www.noemalab.com/sections/ideas/ideas_articles/holmes_personality.html) and forthcoming in an anthology by the author, *Hieroglyphs of the Future* (Zagreb, Arkzin Press).

53. Duncombe, op cit., p. 81.

54. The act of covering over the copy of Picasso's *Guernica* during Secretary of State Colin Powell's televised call for war against the nation of Iraq at the United Nations on February 5th, 2003 suggests that the forces of Empire fully comprehend the nature of this next, theater of cultural battle.

