Educational Aesthetics

SUBJECTIVITY
Become one, become many, I and I

SUBJEKTIVITET
Bli til en, bli til mange, jeg og jeg.

MASS INTELLECTUALITY
With The Copenhagen Free University we have opened a discussion about who and what defines knowledge today and the relationship between knowledge and life. Our work is based on the understanding that knowledge is social and that all forms of human activity carry a level of knowledge. As Anthony Giddens wrote in his prison diaries in 1992: “All are intellectuals [... but not all have the function of the intellectual in society.”

MASS-INTELEKULTUALITET
På Det Frie Universitet i København har vi indledt en diskussion om hvem og hvad der definerer viden i dag og forholdet mellem viden og liv. Vi graver arbejdet og udgangspunktet i den overbevisning af viden er social, og at alle parter for menneskelig aktivitet indebærer en niveau af viden. Samt Anthony Giddens skrev i sine fængselsdagebøger i 1992: ”Alle er intellektuelle [... ikke alle mennesker fungere som intellektuelle i samfundet.”

Image: Copenhagen Free University #4, 2006

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How does the “aestheticisation” of education alter the relationship between art and pedagogy and what are the implications for education itself? What motivates the “turn” towards education in contemporary art practice?

Introduction

Art as education: education as art. Neither of these associations sits entirely comfortably within a discourse. In museums and galleries, symposia and exhibitions, Art Fairs and Biennials, education programmes, artist-led-projects, universities, schools and even playgrounds, such discourses are in the process of being mapped out. This is a process that necessitates both an interrogation of art practice - its arbiters, audiences and territories of operation – and the production of new or revised languages with which to question the practice of education.

To better locate these dialogues, it is important to account for a series of recent developments in Contemporary Art and Education, many of which create a platform of visibility for this discourse but also reflect current desires to navigate a theoretical (and historical) terrain for rethinking the increasingly complex relationship between art and pedagogy. Included in the scope of this research is the apparent proliferation of projects and exhibitions seeking to appropriate pedagogy as a curatorial or artistic strategy. While Manifesta 6 failed to materialise, the proposed curatorial programme for an ‘Exhibition as School’\(^1\) established a recent high profile legacy for the discussion

\(^1\) Anton Vidokle, ‘Exhibition as School in a Divided City’, in Notes for an Art School,
of education across the globalised landscape of the biennial and the art market. Programmes oriented towards discursivity and learning within the museum are themselves evidence for the continuing symbiosis of education and the art institution however theorists, artists, curators and critics are beginning to identify ways in which the pedagogical is becoming reformed, contextualized and translated as an aesthetic experience or spectacle. Rather than existing as an isolated movement, this so-called “turn” towards an educational aesthetic operates as a manifestation of a set of circumstances that allows me to weave my research through different fields of theoretical enquiry that cut across history, social science and philosophy, and that approach education both as a system of structures (whether institutional, self-organised or relational) and as a system of unresolved questions and tensions. This dissertation will work to unpack the sense of urgency driving these new currents of practice and thinking and will address the implications of these shifts for the practice and theorisation of education itself.

Central to many of these projects and to the subsequent debates in circulation throughout the art press and museum or gallery-based salons and conferences, are the politics surrounding a climate of resistance in art education and concerns that the museum and the art school might be simultaneously under threat. Academy, a project jointly initiated by the Siemens Arts Program in cooperation with the Kunstverein in Hamburg, the Visual Cultures Department at Goldsmiths College in London, the Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst in Antwerp, and the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, offers one such example - driven initially by resistance to the Bologna Declaration, which saw European Universities agree to provide ‘internationally comparable’ education by 2010.

http://www.manifesta.org/docs/02.pdf, p.1 05/05/08
What then is the relationship between the conditions (perceived or otherwise) of art education as an institutional model and the curatorial movement towards a notion of “schooling”? What is the nature of the productivity that surrounds contemporary dialogues about education and art practice? The art school in particular plays a major role in the sphere of this debate, and its historical position as a site of contestation re-enters and informs current anxieties surrounding art education - providing stimulus for several of the projects I will seek to examine.

Michel Foucault’s use of “the school” as an exemplary model of the ‘disciplinary institution’ positions “schooling” as one of the central subjects of his analysis of societal control. Plotting the spatial distinctions, bureaucratic structures, modes of assessment and power relations that make up the infrastructure of the “school”, during this paper I will seek to use Foucault’s concepts of control and Governmentality as tools for understanding the perception of instrumentalisation in formal and informal education and in the museum. While this dissertation will focus upon some key projects that have evolved out of the context of “new” dialogues between art and education, this research is set against a backdrop of activity across a range of sectors that has accelerated a surge of interest in the topic and brought these dialogues into the public fore. This activity includes the government’s announcement of a £135 million funding boost for creative schemes in 2008, with the objective of encouraging schools to offer students five hours of culture a week; the Arts Council’s agenda to put education at the heart of its funding priorities, and the insertion of art education as a major feature of regeneration programmes across the UK. Criticism leveled against the implementation of government-led ‘‘teaching and learning’ initiatives’ in art schools and the ‘politicisation of higher education and the public

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5 Michel Foucault, quoted in Graham Burchell, *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, University of Chicago Press, 1991, front cover
sector in general’ has focused attention on the practice and performance of education and pulls Foucault’s theory of control societies into a contemporary debate.7

Both outside and within a specifically arts based context, commentators have acknowledged the onset of an ‘educational turn’ in everyday culture. During a Salon discussion held in July 2008 at the ICA entitled ‘You Talkin’ to me? Why art is turning to education’ artist Dave Beech suggested the twenty-first century has witnessed a widespread popularization of education through television programmes such as ‘What not to Wear, Grand Designs and Don’t Get Done, Get Dom’ - identifying ‘education as entertainment and education as a form of consumerism’.8

Focusing on an exhibition current at the time of writing, Games and Theory at South London Gallery, I will attempt to explore the ways in which art is reflecting the cultural consumption of education as it extends beyond the institution and into business, travel, play, leisure and particularly urban experience.

While the examples listed above point to the generation of knowledge economies on a culturally expansive scale, the pedagogical aesthetic has also cultivated – or thrown into prominence – discourse on the emergence of a set of relationships that rotate around the notion of knowledge transfer. These relationships include that of the Master and Student, Client and Service provider, Performer and Spectator, Artist and Participant. One might also question under these terms, the agency of the learner and the ethical position of the educator within the teaching relationship. Jacques Ranciere’s seminal text The Emancipated Spectator (2007) provides a contemporary link to a number of other important texts (from Paulo Friere to Michel Foucault) that interrogate the mediated conditions by which we exchange and obtain knowledge in relation to distributions of power. The hybridization of these roles through artistic or curatorial practice has created a space for deconstructing and reconstructing the

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7 Graham Crowley, ‘Can’t get no satisfaction’, from the letters page, Art Monthly, April 2008, www.artmonthly.co.uk/letterGC.htm
8 Dave Beech, speaker in ‘You Talkin’ to me? Why art is turning to Education’, Salon Discussion as part of Nought to Sixty, ICA, London, 14 July 2008
process of “teaching” but has also simultaneously complicated the role of the participant or audience member of the art “event”. As a consequence of these complications and the languages used to define an emerging set of circumstances, the so-called ‘educational turn’ is frequently seen as politically suspect, and issues of categorization, popularisation or fixation on this topic can cause discomfort for educationalists. I want to examine to what extent the spectacularisation of education questions the educator’s responsibility to teach and whether this question creates a perpetually unsettled dynamic between the artist/curator and the educator. I want to ask in what formats this responsibility exists within the art space, and will look for instance at the work of Thomas Hirschhorn, whose work is often characterized by the accumulation and dissemination of knowledge and the production of a collective audience. The gathering together of people in a participatory context – as witnessed during Hirshhorn’s 24H Foucault, 2004, at the Palais de Tokyo – troubles the role of the participant, researcher, spectator, learner and educator through the aestheticisation of participation – the genesis of which education claims some ownership. The Serpentine Gallery’s 24 Hour Experiment Marathon, 2007, will also provide an important example of current curatorial adaptations of the academic workshop or seminar and present a critical space within which to question the role of the participants as passive/docile actors or active learners. Under this scenario of contestation, I aim to identify what compels artists and curators to co-opt the material and discursive language of education and yet often refuse learning (or the production of the “life-long learner”) as an outcome. What does this say about education as a means of subject-formation and emancipation?

While the gallery’s appropriation of the pedagogical creates situations of reflexivity for processes of interactivity and exchange in the practice of art-making as well as education, formal art education itself is searching for revised models of teaching – asking what an alternative education might be and historising radical versions of education in order to revisit these models for a contemporary moment. As texts on the protests of 1968 are being published and genealogies of experimental art academies are developed, broader questions need to be asked about the productive nature of
nostalgia in art and education, and perhaps the impact of a growing economy of self-institutionalisation driving a number of projects that present voices of opposition to the current education system and to the format of education on wider scale.

How do we interpret a perceived moment of “crisis” as a productive tool for rethinking education? While the main body of my dissertation is preoccupied by the artist, curator or art school as agents of disruption and as the arbiters of change, the final stages of my research will reflect on education as a field of action – focusing specifically on Museum and Gallery Education as a mode of intervention across both spheres of interest, whilst also taking into account coinciding shifts in academic contexts towards practice driven research. Is it possible to draw theoretical parallels between the spectacularisation of education in the museum, gallery or biennial for instance and a logic of radicalisation in education itself? Or is gallery education becoming submerged under new curatorial rhetoric? I aim not only to address these questions but also to interrogate the value in developing a discourse that encompasses an expanding diversity of aesthetic and educative endeavors and crosses a deeply contrasting set of institutional and non-institutional values and politics. How does the theorization of the so-called “turn” to education in contemporary art practice contribute to the practice of education and in what ways is this being made visible?
Power, Visibility and the Knowledge Economy

It is no coincidence that the University and the museum are under threat in the same way – these initiatives emerge from a desire to reinvent both. The instrumentalisation of both institutions demands a political response and they are becoming sites of resistance.

- Sally Tallant, Head of Public Programmes, Serpentine Gallery, 2008

Something systemic is wrong with the way in which the education of fine artists is managed. Art education is under attack and has been for over 20 years. We now certificate rather than educate.

- Graham Crowley, 2008

Why is it so interesting right now to speak about art and education? And why are so many curators and artists becoming so active within the educational spheres and transforming exhibitions and other projects by emphasising their educational capacity?

- Anton Vidokle, 2007

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If we are to think “education” both in terms of a rupture and as a codification of society, it is first necessary to consider the historical formations of this system and its imbued characteristics of operation. Michel Foucault equates the emergence of ‘Government as a general problem’ in the sixteenth century with the rise of ‘the great problematic of pedagogy’ – therefore establishing a correlative role between the practice of education and the ‘art of government’.¹² While the practice of educating in a primal sense is arguably a culturally timeless phenomenon, in Discipline and Punish Foucault outlines how, with increasing governmentalisation, education became a tangible infrastructure invested in buildings, methodologies, regulative criteria and administration. With the breakdown of the domination of sovereignty in the eighteenth century, Foucault describes the widespread implementation of disciplinary mechanisms and institutions, developed at a time when a new awareness of population made it essential to cultivate a scheme of management.¹³ During these formative centuries then, education relied on these definable structures of discipline as a means to make visible the management of the population. Within these few ideas offered by Foucault it is possible to recognise the emergence of a constellation of factors that lead us to scrutinise the role of visibility in relation to government, population and education, and in turn, to reflect upon the aesthetic.

Categorised amongst ‘armies’ and ‘manufactories’,¹⁴ the school in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries existed, according to Foucault, as a ‘mechanism of training’ and helped to systematise and make apparent the practice of training as a modality of learning.¹⁵ Foucault’s analysis of eighteenth century models of social organisation centres upon the disciplinary manipulation of the body towards a state of ‘docility’, observing: ‘a body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved’.¹⁶ The formation of the disciplined, obedient subject, or as Foucault describes it, ‘this

¹² Michel Foucault, The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality, 1991, pp.87,89
¹³ Foucault, The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality., p.101
¹⁴ Foucault, The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality., p.101
¹⁵ Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, p.172
¹⁶ Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, p.136
new political anatomy’, is said to have evolved through methodologies exercised in primary and secondary education, and through the conditions of ‘enclosure’, ‘division’ and ‘distribution’ as functions of disciplinary space.\textsuperscript{17} Importantly, for an understanding of contemporary parallels, this space acted to ‘locate individuals, to set up useful communications…to be able at each moment to supervise the conduct of each individual, to assess it, to judge it, to calculate its qualities or merits’.\textsuperscript{18} The conditions under which the “political anatomy” of the learner is said to have been conceived allows us to understand the construction of the \textit{passive} learner (and educator) – both of which have been subjects of accusation in current dialogues on art education. Equally, this concept gives rise to the political make-up of the “active” learner/educator. The changing formations of this “political anatomy” produce a series of markers for reading the mechanisms and agendas at work in contemporary education.

Alongside the concretisation of the ‘educational space’, as is defined in the later eighteenth century, Foucault’s analysis is equally preoccupied by the formation of an ‘analytical pedagogy’, which organises the pedagogical process through the distribution of ‘rank’ by examination and regular performance and behavioural review.\textsuperscript{19} A fitting relation to the art school, Foucault provides the example of the manufactory of the Gobelins (a guild of tapestry makers) and the school organised for the instruction, apprenticeship and examination of selected scholarship students.\textsuperscript{20} The development of a school of drawing in 1737 is said to have involved the division of the student body by drawing prowess and a system of progression and reward from practices of simple model copying to theory and dyeing.\textsuperscript{21} Foucault uses the Gobelins school as an ‘example of an important phenomenon: the development, in the classical period, of a new technique for taking charge of the time of individual

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{17} Foucault, \textit{Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison}, pp.138, 141,143
  \item \textsuperscript{18} Foucault, \textit{Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison}, p.143
  \item \textsuperscript{19} Foucault, \textit{Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison}, pp.147,159
  \item \textsuperscript{20} Foucault, \textit{Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison}, pp.156
  \item \textsuperscript{21} Foucault, \textit{Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison}, pp.157
\end{itemize}
existences; for regulating the relations of time, bodies and forces; for assuring the accumulation of duration; and for turning to ever-increased profit or use the movement of passing time’. 22 The link here between time and profitability plays a significant role in contemporary debates on the future of formal art education. This outcome-driven, market-oriented, hierarchized structure serves to signal the exercise of governance in ways that could be said to parallel circumstances in twenty-first century education. Without reverting to utopian ideals of artistic liberalism then, from an operational and ideological perspective it is possible to identify fundamental causalities of friction between the politics invested in education and those invested in art practice.

The intention of this opening chapter is not however to establish an essentially oppositional dialogue between art and education based upon the machinery of government, rather it seeks to identify a series of frictions, manifested in an art context, that may help to define and situate a pedagogical turn within contemporary visual discourse. There are two key overlapping strands of interest here. The first relates to dialogues of anxiety and resistance framed around the perceived “instrumentalisation” of education in Universities, art schools and art institutions. The second aspect of interest is the format through which these frictions or dialogues are literally materialised, and in particular, the visuality of these formats.

Regarding the playing out of these frictions, the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), London, is active in claiming its association with resistant discourses emerging out of art education. If one were to trace the public facing (British) lineage of the aesthetic or discursive activity surrounding art and education, the ICA would feature frequently as a not-insignificant platform for talks, demonstrations, performances and art pieces converging on the pedagogical. While the ICA’s initial motives for staging such events may, as Lisa Tickner suggests, have included a desire to retain the ICA’s ‘radical credentials' on its movement to the Mall Galleries in 1968, the exhibition

22 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, pp.157
Hornsey Strikes Again, 1968, described as ‘part installation, part teach-in, part mobile canteen’, established an activist link between the gallery space as a site of resistance and education as an aesthetic language.\(^{23}\) The timely forty-year anniversary of the 1968 student unrest, as well as recent attempts to draw parallels between sources of discontent in art schools “then and now”\(^{24}\) have this year contributed to the rise in documentation of the period. Lisa Tickner’s publication *Hornsey 1968: The Art School Revolution* (2008) is one such example. Tickner tracks the shifts that occurred in the decade leading up to the revolt led by students at Hornsey College of Art, which saw many art schools incorporated into newly established Polytechnics, against the advice of The National Advisory Council on Art Education and in spite of cries of resistance from ‘most leading artists and educationalists’.\(^{25}\) The government’s plan to concentrate provision ‘in ‘large and comprehensive’ institutions’ under the control of local education authorities’ corresponded with its agenda to integrate smaller independent education facilities into the public sector.\(^{26}\) After battling their own merger threat, students leading the Hornsey revolution focused their protest primarily upon local issues including organizational and administrative reform in the college - calling for the ‘democratisation of the college academic structure’.\(^{27}\) Documents produced during the Hornsey sit-in reveal the national implications of these arguments for the education system - as reflected in the ICA exhibition and subsequent conference.

Lisa Tickner recalls the exhibition as a series of oppressive rooms and corridors, intended, through a succession of mock-didactic exercises, to imitate the bureaucratic structure of the (degree equivalent) Diploma in Art and Design.\(^{28}\) Narrow pathways, repeating sound recordings of interview questions and a slide-test were installed in the exhibition spaces as if to replicate the restricted curriculum, streaming processes and

\(^{24}\) *Frieze*, Issue 101, September 2006, front cover
laborious assessment procedures attributed to art education at the time.\textsuperscript{29} An open area at the end of the exhibition acted as an area for conversation and debate, and displayed projections of the Hornsey sit-in as well as posters and general information.\textsuperscript{30} Through its failings as well as its successes, \textit{Hornsey Strikes Again} addresses the two key strands of interest earlier stated. The overtly critical content of the exhibition, which represented one aspect of a wider set of radicalised activities, movements and conferences, coheres with some of the principle lines of analysis in Foucault’s reading of “Governmentality”. While resistance to the internal administrative structures of assessment, “ranking” and curriculum control clearly evidences a link with Foucauldian theories of supervision and distribution, the drive to incorporate art education into a larger educative scheme under the direct management of local authority refers to broader ideological and political shifts and to Foucault’s work on “Control societies”. In his course of lectures: \textit{Security, Territory and Population}, (1977-1978) Foucault unravels the ‘great economies of power in the West’, which he interprets as evolving from a ‘state of justice’ - articulated through law, to the ‘administrative state’ - relating to the ‘society of regulations and disciplines’, through to the ‘state of government’ - a phenomenon ‘grounded in its population and which refers…to the instrumentality of economic knowledge’.\textsuperscript{31} Specifically, these phases track the development of a collective consciousness of knowledge as an economy – as a systematic structure of power relations mobilized through the simultaneous emergence of “population” as a social and political entity. In the state of government then, authorities must devise ways to articulate this economy of knowledge. The restructuring of further and higher education in Britain via the establishment of Polytechnics is considered one such manifestation of this process. In 2008, schemes to amalgamate institutions into conglomerate “umbrella” bodies (the most high profile being those of the University of Arts London and the University College for the Creative Arts) have moved critics to cast parallels with the Polytechnic issue of 1966-67 and can also be used as further evidence for the government’s

\textsuperscript{29} Lisa Tickner, \textit{Hornsey 1968: The Art School Revolution}, p.56,57
ongoing refinement of the knowledge economy. Correspondingly, a lengthy debate has surfaced throughout the letters pages of *Art Monthly* in which criticisms are directed towards other symptoms of change across education – mainly focused upon the perceived ‘corporatisation of education since New Labour came to power in 1997’.

The following extracts illustrate the tone of this debate:

Ironically, Thatcher's plans for factory-style education were only to be truly achieved under New Labour. It was the setting up of the dreaded inquisition, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), by the first New Labour government in 1998, which made the institutionalisation of … 'educational Taylorism' possible. The QAA, and its spawn, the Teaching Quality Assurance (TQA), became the means by which the product, broken down into bite-sized pieces as a result of the imposition of American-style modularisation, could be tested. Since the government had already begun to refer to the arts as the 'creative industries', … this must have seemed like a perfect fit between the so-called 'aims' and 'outcomes' of an art education.

- *Editorial, Art Monthly*

It isn’t just the University of the Arts that reeks of over-commercialisation; the whole education system has become obsessed with financial success, marketing and administration.

- *Peter Suchin, Art Monthly*

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The fact that schoolteachers have been striking appears as no coincidence: the troubles are fundamental to changing attitudes towards teaching and learning throughout the system.\textsuperscript{36}

- \textit{William Gaver, Art Monthly}

There is not enough teaching; classes are too large and so on … and that is to say nothing about the marketing and commodification of education. With university status, the colleges were faced with an obligation to do research to maximise their funding, despite the fact that art and design are not sciences.\textsuperscript{37}

- \textit{Colin Maughan, Art Monthly}

These comments signal the continued realization of Foucault’s concept of “economic knowledge”. The alleged rise of “management culture” and business-like administration and concern over profitability and productivity reflects the further extension of this programme of instrumentalisation. The birth of the conglomerate University, alongside processes of branding and marketing these new superpower institutions created a new level of visibility for the knowledge economy. The rising numbers of participants in this economy are both a catalyst for and product of these processes, which allows us to understand the visualisation of this economy as a process of remaking and recontextualising these participants as a population, and the practices of learning, educating or consuming as an exercise of membership. Adding volume to the climate of discontent and suspicion building up around the British art education system, in September 2008 the ICA is to play host once again to a symposia addressing ‘The Future of Art Education’. Divided into three sessions, the conference will bring together course leaders, students, policy makers and magazine editors to cast scrutiny over ‘Institutions’, ‘Teaching’ and ‘Policy making’ in relation

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item William Gaver, Professor of Design, Goldsmiths College, University of London, ‘The RAE is one obvious sign of the problem’, in \textit{Art Monthly}, May, 2008, http://www.artmonthly.co.uk/letterWG.htm 03/08/08
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
to current conditions affecting British art schools and the questions this raises for education.  

This prospect leads on to a discussion of the second (connected) area of focus - that of the entry of these debates into an aesthetic discourse and into an exhibitory context. As with the student protests of 1968, the criticisms currently in circulation are not reducible only to art education, however the debate is becoming amplified in this sphere arguably because of its ability to spectacularise and due to the emergence of a discursive aesthetic or aesthetic discursivity. This argument is fraught with complexities nonetheless. The exhibition *Hornsey Strikes Again* used the gallery as a space in which to launch a direct attack upon the Diploma in Art and Design. Descriptions of the exhibition suggest the installation was to be encountered as an exaggerated pedagogic journey, designed to act as a protest and point of debate. An important dimension to this protest was its framing within a context of spectacle and participation. The restaging of the issue as an art experience, including the construction of a miniature model of the Hornsey canteen (the location of the sit-in) and display of documentary images and film of this event not only intended to motivate change but revealed the organisers’ awareness of the aesthetic potential marking this tension between art and pedagogy.  

Ironically, it is documented that the endorsement of the ICA did little to incite a dialogue between governing bodies and protesters – one organiser admitting ‘it preached to the converted’. Nevertheless, the construction of the spectacle as an attempt to make visible mechanisms of control in education has an important lineage in Foucault’s reading of power relations. The title of the second chapter in *Discipline and Punish*, ‘The Spectacle of the Scaffold’, communicates the explicitly public nature of early governance as an exhibition of control via punishment. To extend upon this notion, Gilles Deleuze refers to ‘the form of the visible’ as ‘the form that haunted the whole of Foucault’s work’. For

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38 [http://www.ica.org.uk/The20Future20of20Art20Education+17658.twl](http://www.ica.org.uk/The20Future20of20Art20Education+17658.twl) 21/08/08
41 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p.32
Deleuze, Foucault’s prison not only ‘constitutes a visibility…defined by ‘Panopticism’: by a visual assemblage and a luminous environment’, but also serves to make an ‘object’ of delinquency’. From the scaffold to the disciplinary institution, to the introduction of knowledge economies through which governance could be diffused, Foucault implies the gradual reduction of the spectacularisation or visibility of control. In reference to the ICA exhibition, situating the pedagogic within a display context therefore appeals to the format of the spectacle as a vehicle for deconstructing the knowledge economy as an economy of control.

Accounts of the didactic arrangement of the main installation and the conversely open forum for discussion and exchange at its end seem to articulate closure and control as being fundamental to the education system and the gallery as a space for an alternative pedagogy. To draw from a contemporary scenario, Camden Arts Centre recently hosted a “Ranter’s Café” session, organised by the Micropolitics Research group, entitled ‘Education, Activism, Radicalism’ which sought to address the radical pedagogy of museum and gallery education. Lead organiser of the informal discussion Janna Graham connected contemporary shifts towards this field with a notion that ‘the gallery has become a site to occupy because the University is not possible’. In 2008, with formal and informal learning programmes well established within galleries and the continuing formation of the museum as a knowledge economy in itself, the idea of the museum as an alternative pedagogical space remains and is reinterpreted by curators, artists and educationalists. Reflecting upon the 1968 ICA exhibition is useful in terms of a politicised understanding of a pedagogical aesthetic, however the content of the exhibition was clearly and unapologetically a simulation and extension of protest and a call for reform rather than principally an art piece. This is an important distinction for thinking about the critical engagement between aesthetic production and education in contemporary art projects. For instance Academy, 2005-2006, as previously mentioned in the introduction, reaches for a complex engagement

43 Gilles Deleuze, Foucault, p.32
44 Janna Graham, speaking in ‘Education, Activism, Radicalism, for Ranter’s Café at Camden Arts Centre, 25 June, 2008
with the process of learning that, while still politicised, uses real tensions in the education system as a context for making new work and for theorising education as a site of “possibility”. The opening text in the publication *Academy* establishes the nature of this interface between government policy, resistance and creative activity.

The initial impetus for the exhibitions and projects that came to form “Academy” was a dissatisfaction with the present political situation in which both educational academies and art institutions find themselves. Driven by the neo-liberal economic credo, western European governments are increasingly instrumentalising public sector support of art, rejecting its speculative potential for more secure and measurable outcomes.\(^{45}\)

The text elaborates upon fears surrounding the signing of the Bologna Declaration by European Universities, which anticipates the development of a ‘modular system of teaching’ whereby ‘Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees are standardised across all institutions’.\(^{46}\) Contributors imply that the implementation of this standardising process - intended to allow students to move from institution to institution – not only encourages a constant flow of capital in a wider education economy but imposes upon students a homogenised curriculum and teaching structure. The text continues to expand upon these concerns:

This has massive centralising implications on the current system. In particular, concepts such as “liberal” (as in liberal arts) or “free” (as in *freie Kunst*) are in danger of being sacrificed on the altar of productivism.

Partly from similar motivations but also with a strong dose of populism, art institutions such as museums and other exhibition venues such as Kunsthallen are also subject to new political expectations. Measurements of the


contributions made to tourism or economic development are used to gauge the success of institutions that were founded to cultivate bourgeois taste or to instil cultural aspiration in working class visitors.\textsuperscript{47}

In both instances of instrumentalisation, the emergence of “population” as a transnational, constantly mobile phenomenon is seen to have excited the development of cultural capital, and consequently prompted the exploitation of education both as a commodity and as an apparatus of social measurement. The editors admit these predictions affect education across disciplines, however arrive at a consensus that art institutions are affected at an intrinsic level, due to the conditions of liberalism they define as a pre-requisite for a “meaningful” art education. In its exhibitory format, \textit{Academy} materialised as three exhibitions, each comprising a different curated series of installations, workshops, research-based interventions, lectures, video works, interviews, symposia, round-tables and talks within their respective locations of Hamburg, Antwerp and Eindhoven. Importantly however, the museum does not act as a platform for representation, rather it is incorporated into the problem space. The museum and academy are allied under the ‘context of an economic hegemony that controls much of the space where art has to reside’ and in this context must re-evaluate those ‘value systems’ inherent to art institutions which share a legacy of privileging ‘not only learning but speculation for its own sake’.\textsuperscript{48} The recognition of the shared ‘educational mission’ of the academy and museum is an essential component of this alliance - expanding and complicating the interrogation of the pedagogical model across territories and potentially beyond the model of the learner ‘already initiated’ into the sphere of formal education.\textsuperscript{49}

While \textit{Academy} appears to have developed out of networks of anxiety derived from the world of education, it is to the world of art and curatorial practice and to the space of display that education turns in order to communicate, explore and investigate ‘open

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{49} Bart De Baere et al. ‘ACADEMY’, in Angelika Nollert & Irit Rogoff (eds.), \textit{A.C.A.D.E.M.Y.}, p.8
\end{footnotesize}
fields of learning’ elsewhere. While I will return to Academy in later chapters, I here want to draw attention to the aesthetic sensibility of the project. This chapter began with Foucault’s definition of education as an arm of governance, nevertheless the frictions I have and further intend to trace do not refuse education as a modality; conversely education is perceived as a compelling, persuasive and potentially radical space of action. Irit Rogoff suggests: ‘were education not imbued with some sense of possibility, we would not have so many exhibition initiatives that take up notions of research, of laboratory, of learning and of teaching as a format’. Following suit, the artists, theorists, researchers and curators contributing to Academy in its various states each employ the paraphernalia of education as a kind of aesthetic strategy. From the school cloakroom (Mark Dion & Jackie McAllister, Thirst for Knowledge, 2003), to the video lecture (Uli Aigner, ghost Akademie, 2005), interventions in the library (Liam Gillick & Edgar Schmitz, Inverted Research Tools, 2006) to Life classes (Workshop: Drawing Lessons, 2005), the project collapsed all media into an indiscriminate sum of pedagogic enquiry. Rogoff expands on this directive in her paper for Academy, explaining that throughout the text she has ‘collapsed notions of learning spaces and exhibiting spaces’. It is perhaps interesting that, when seeking “open fields of learning”, the materiality and discursive structures of education are seemingly framed as progressive models of working in the museum.

Positioning this discourse within a museum or gallery is not an arbitrary move; rather it creates a number of bases from which to question the relational systems invested in the pedagogic. While projects such as Academy act to produce a manifesto of resistance in visual, textual and discursive formations, contemporary art has also witnessed a different form of vested interest in the logic of pedagogy that does not hold at its centre a dialogue with the art school or University. From a Foucauldian perspective, the projects I have mentioned produce tensions tied specifically to the machinery of the institution (including that of the borderless “academy”). However, as Gilles Deleuze emphasises, it is important not to treat Foucault as ‘the theorist of disciplinary societies and of their principal technology, confinement’ - fundamentally anchored to the institution - but rather to recognise Foucault’s movement towards ‘control societies’: societies ‘that no longer operate by confining people but through continuous control and instant communication’. Deleuze points to the ‘breaking down’ of the institution and the gradual infiltration of ‘education’, ‘health care’ and ‘new kinds of punishment’ into everyday life. Describing these shifts as a sinister indication of a much less definable ‘free-floating control’ at large in contemporary society, Deleuze predicts a scenario where the education system gives way to ‘frightful continual training, to continual monitoring or worker-school kids or bureaucrat students’. It is perhaps under the premise of this generalised shift towards the control society that it becomes possible to locate, and to some extent explain a pattern in contemporary art and curatorial practice for addressing the

55 Gilles Deleuze, Negotiations, p.174
56 Gilles Deleuze, Negotiations, pp.174,178
pedagogic as an habitual, pervasive code of the human condition. A current example of this emergent aesthetic lies in the curatorial motive behind the exhibition *Games and Theory* (11 July – 7 September, 2008) on show at the South London Gallery. Focusing upon theories of “play”, curator Kit Hammonds draws together artists working in a range of media to explore the practice of play as a critical force or ethic for navigating contemporary experience. As Hammonds describes, an elemental feature of many of the artists’ works is this reference to education. Artists Gustavo Artigas and Lottie Child for instance both call upon the format of the instructional video as a means to train the viewer to participate in carefully organised semi-playful activities. Artigas’ *Mierda de artista*, 2002, presents a short annotated film demonstrating a technique for bending a tin can, while Child’s *Urban Napping* video, 2008, having developed from her *Street Training Manuals* narrates the viewer around Sao Paulo, Brazil where the participant is instructed on how to sleep in potentially hostile public spaces. Concerned with ‘structures for learning and demonstration’, George Henry Longly’s *Floor Games* comprises segments of Tri-staging, brightly painted to resemble a child’s building structure, said to be inspired by HG Wells’s novel of the same title, ‘in which a father creates a series of games to teach and control his son’. Dominating the exhibition space however, Nils Norman’s *Educational Facility No.2*, 2008, amasses a series of wooden platforms, towers and tunnels - designed in collaboration with children at the Charlie Chaplin Adventure Playground – that work to address the increasing regulation of public space and the insertion of education into play, as part of the government’s effort to find ‘useful education’ and learning objectives in the activity of play.

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57 Kit Hammonds, ‘Curator’s Talk’, South London Gallery, 03/08/2008
59 Kit Hammonds, *Games and Theory Exhibition Guide*, p.14
60 Kit Hammonds, ‘Curator’s Talk’, South London Gallery, 03/08/2008
Just as education is no longer restricted to the institution nor even ascribed to a set of pre-determined value systems, it is no longer possible, as Deleuze defines, to ‘locate the origin of power in a privileged place’; rather power is diffused into a newly realised ‘social space’.\textsuperscript{61} Education represents therefore the engine of this diffusion. Deleuze deduces that ‘school is being replaced by continuing education and exams by

\textsuperscript{61} Gilles Deleuze, \textit{Foucault}, p.26
continuous assessment’ – ensuring that education can be reproduced and reconstituted as a ‘business’. Deleuze identifies that ‘In disciplinary societies you were always starting all over again (as you went from school to barracks, from barracks to factory), while in control societies you never finish anything – business, training, and military services being coexisting metastable states of a single modulation, a sort of universal transmutation’. Education thus assumes cultural authority not through the distribution of the population via institutions but through the persistent functionality of education in the everyday - in mainstream media, play, business, consumer experience and recreation, and paradoxically, through this cultural saturation, by occupying various states of invisibility. The insertion of this idea into art practice (both as content and as a methodology of working) provides a critical visuality to an otherwise given social mechanism. Rather than acting simply as a critique however, these works are symptoms of a cultural desire attached to the educational model. As Deleuze implies, in contemporary society, Education (Capital E) is not imposed continuously upon the individual as a visible mechanism of control and discipline, however the individual is conditioned from childhood to seek out and engage with the educational model throughout his or her life, which further explains the widespread insatiable appetite for continued (structured) education across populations.

62 Gilles Deleuze, Negotiations, pp.179
63 Gilles Deleuze, Negotiations, pp.179
Relational Pedagogies

Arriving at a moment of recognition, the ICA’s recently staged Salon Discussion, ‘You talkin’ to me? Why art is turning to education’, July 2008, was organised with the intention of addressing a series of questions currently orbiting around the apparent urgent appropriation of the ‘educational paradigm’ as a ‘basis for elaborating a cultural practice’. 64 Artist and tutor Dave Beech, speaking at the discussion attempted to connect this idea of the wider cultural adoption of education to a cultural affinity with the relational characteristics of the pedagogical model. Beech clarified the notion that while museums and galleries may be instigating (or showcasing) a turn towards pedagogy in art practice, they do so in within a society that is ‘using educational formats as a familiar semiotic code for talking to people’. 65 Beech elaborates: ‘If you address them as a Master in relation to a pupil – if you become an expert in relation to their amateurism then you know how to address them and they know how to address you’. 66 While this is a deliberately basic reading of the Master-student relationship,

64 Mick Wilson, speaker in ‘You Talkin’ to me? Why art is turning to Education’, Salon Discussion as part of Nought to Sixty, ICA, London, 14 July 2008
65 Dave Beech, speaker in ‘You Talkin’ to me? Why art is turning to Education’, Salon Discussion as part of Nought to Sixty, ICA, London, 14 July 2008
66 Dave Beech, speaker in ‘You Talkin’ to me? Why art is turning to Education’, Salon Discussion as part of Nought to Sixty, ICA, London, 14 July 2008
Beech continues to suggest that shifts in recent decades of contemporary art practice—namely towards relational art—have also allowed for the replication of another model aligned with education: that of the ‘collective viewer’, the collective subject’—most clearly played out in the ‘collective model of the classroom’. While Beech admits this is an insufficient model for addressing much relational art, it is important to acknowledge the intrinsic association between the collective public and the idea of the “class” as a body of learners. Much participation-based relational art also migrates into the territory of social engagement, which, particularly when involving groups of people who could be categorised as being culturally or politically defined, works to problematise the role of the artist and that of the participants in relation to the role of the educator and student. Claire Doherty, in the publication *From Studio to Situation* comments on the argument that the participatory has in some cases shifted the role of the artist from ‘object-maker to service provider’. While an exaggerated distinction, the service provider model in theory operates within a series of obligations akin to those more commonly attributed to education. When this model is aestheticised, it becomes possible to ask questions about the construction of pedagogical models and equally the implications involved in engaging with a public in an art context. Amongst the theoretical writing on the subject, education is burdened with a series of (sometimes conflicting) idealisms that must be negotiated in this circumstance.

The Master-Student relationship is a construct inextricably linked to a whole system of aspirations that centre upon the educational programme of the subject. Foucault identifies the earliest form of this programme as being driven by ‘the theme of a perfection towards which the exemplary master guides the pupil’, which evolved into ‘an authoritarian perfection of the pupils by the teacher’, as a result marking ‘the gradual acquisition of knowledge and good behaviour’. This idea that knowledge must be obtained alongside the cultivation of moral or social improvement charges the

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67 Dave Beech, speaker in ‘You Talkin’ to me? Why art is turning to Education’, Salon Discussion as part of *Nought to Sixty*, ICA, London, 14 July 2008
70 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, pp.161,162
pedagogical relationship with the responsibility of nurturing, training and governing simultaneously. According to Foucault, the production or exchange of knowledge is thoroughly dependent on the exercise of power relations, and vice-versa, to the extent that the process of teaching harbours an in-built mechanism of ‘supervision’ and ‘surveillance’. 

This deeply hierarchised relationship conceives knowledge exchange as being specifically unidirectional however also implies that to teach is to necessitate the production of knowledge on or about the governed student-subject.

Stephen J. Ball’s 1990 publication *Foucault and Education: Disciplines and Knowledge* – the first to address Foucault in relation to the subject of education, places at the centre of its Foucauldian analysis the concept of ‘discourse’.

Discourses, Ball suggests, are not only about what can be said, but also about ‘who can speak, when and with what authority’ – constituted by a series of ‘assumptions within which any speaker must operate in order to be heard as meaningful’. The production and dissemination of knowledge through the process of teaching appears in this reading only operative when the roles of the Master and Student are clearly differentiated.

Arguably since Paulo Friere’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, published in 1970, theory has attempted to find ways to overcome this prescriptive structure and deliver possible alternatives to the traditional pedagogical model. I will here try to draw together the work of Paulo Friere with the contemporary writing of theorist Jacques Rancière, both as a means of addressing Foucault, and also for analysing the role this theory plays in the practice of education and in contemporary art. Friere’s seminal text establishes the conditions under which pedagogy can be exerted potentially both as a means of oppression and of liberation. This work enables us to understand further the categories of the learner and educator – their supposed interdependence and divisiveness. Friere identifies several indicators that challenge the possibility of

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71 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p.175
74 Stephen J. Ball, *Foucault and Education: Disciplines and Knowledge*, pp.2,3
liberation – related particularly to the ‘fundamentally narrative character’ of the teacher-student relationship ‘at any level, inside or outside the school’. Connected to the Foucauldian idea that education may be used to inject a state of docility in the student, Friere condemns the ‘depositing’ or ‘banking’ concept of education as an inhibitory device, grounded in the perception that ‘knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing’. Friere advocates instead a ‘humanizing pedagogy’, or ‘liberation education’ predicated on a relationship of ‘dialogue’ and dynamism, and on the reconciliation of the ‘teacher-student contradiction’, ‘so that both are simultaneously teachers and students’. There are clear parallels with Friere’s thesis in Jacques Rancière’s celebrated publication The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation (1991). Rancière’s text recalls the story of exiled schoolteacher Joseph Jacotot whose endeavour in 1818 to teach French to Flemish students, faced by the predicament that he himself could not speak Flemish and his students could not speak French, allowed him to reform his understanding of the Master-student relationship. Rancière accounts for Jacotot’s previously held assumption that, based on the intellectual disparity between the Master and the Student, the process of teaching should be characterised by the transmission of knowledge from the expert to the ignorant, ‘according to an ordered progression’ and with the aspiration of elevating the student to the Master’s ‘own level of expertise’. The students’ ability to learn French through a book, without the aids of explanation, spelling or ‘conjugations’ from Jacotot, is said to have made the Professor consider the obsolescence of the Master figure and led him to identify his former method of teaching as belonging to a ‘principle of enforced stultification’. Like Friere, at the centre of Rancière’s analysis is the project of liberation through the pedagogical

76 Paulo Friere, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, pp.53,58
77 Paulo Friere, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, pp.50,51,53
process - exhuming Jacotot’s concept of ‘mutual teaching’ whereby ‘each ignorant person could become for another ignorant person the master who would reveal to him his intellectual power’.  

Throughout his writing Rancière espouses a non-hierarchical structure of learning that collapses the polarity between the Master and Student and that allows for the mobilization of an ‘intellectual adventure’.

What is established in both of these readings is the judgement that there might exist a “good” and a “bad” way of negotiating the process of knowledge exchange – that these might equal productivity and non-productivity, action and passivity, ‘emancipation’ and ‘stultification’. By engaging with pedagogy, contemporary art and curatorial practice finds itself caught up in a discourse that is preceded by a trajectory of sub-discourses concerned with the ethical and social quality of the pedagogic and invested in a notion of engagement. It is at this juncture that aesthetics and education have the potential to collide politically. Mick Wilson, speaking at the recent ICA Salon Discussion, appeared to reiterate this perceived tension when he suggested that what distinguishes many of the projects initiated by contemporary artists is that they are neither ‘predicated on the construction of the good subject’, nor are the participants ‘engaged in some never ending project of self-improvement’. In other words, concern for the outcome of learning or progress of the subject is not necessarily a precondition for artists interested in operating within a pedagogical context. From another perspective however, there are aspects of Rancière’s theorisation that exist as elemental features of much participatory art practice and in some cases Rancière’s concepts are only meaningfully realised through practices, events and projects attributed to art. It becomes important to question in this scenario whether or to what extent the structure of authority could be displaced to the artist and to ask about the constructions of power relations located in the visible.

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81 Jacques Rancière, The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation, p.17
84 Mick Wilson, speaker in ‘You Talkin’ to me? Why art is turning to Education’, Salon Discussion as part of Nought to Sixty, ICA, London, 14 July 2008
I want to draw attention to two works that traverse some of the issues that this analysis has so far touched upon and that navigate these difficult circumstances as their critical context. Both located at the ICA at different occasions between 2007 and 2008, they each convey a different interpretation of the ruptured Master-Student relationship and indicate contemporary efforts to destabilise the didactic model. The first is Tino Sehgal’s 2007 show of two possible titles: This Success or This Failure, a piece that saw a group of about twenty primary school children installed in the ICA’s lower gallery, all involved in the activity of ‘organised or anarchic’ play. Visitors to the show were greeted by a participant and informed of the work’s title – a decision left up to the child who subsequently invited the visitor to join in the game. The second piece I wish to approach is Artur Zmijewski’s Them, 2004, - a 27 minute-long video exhibited in Documenta 12 and again during the exhibition Double Agent (February – April 2008) at the ICA. Them documents a sequence of painting workshops organised by the artist that involve intergenerational groups of Christians, Jews, Young Socialists and Polish Nationals, asked to create a visual representation of their group’s beliefs and value systems, then to respond to each of the other group’s symbolic portrayal of its own ideologies. Building hostilities and tensions between the groups escalates into scenes of defacement and destruction, culminating in the burning of the painted banners. We can talk about these works within the context of education not only because they involve members of the public from specific demographics in a semi-collaborative exercise with the artist (therefore representing the types of groups on whom education might typically be imposed) but similarly the activities in which they are engaged are like those assigned as informal learning practices for group education.

Communicated via different media and involving very distinct conditions of viewship or interactivity, the two pieces can still be considered together in terms of their roles as performance. Rancière, in his 2004 paper *The Emancipated Spectator*, uses performance – or the relation between the actor and spectator – as a means of elaborating upon the ‘pedagogical scheme’ – a scheme that involves the closing-down and paradoxical opening up of the distances between master and student, between knowledge and ignorance. On a basic level, it is possible to read Seghal’s performance as an active inversion of the role of the Master and Student. The young child, whose very being is largely marked by the assumption of the role of the pupil, effectively instructs the visitor who, if we suppose has adult-status would, through the presumed separation that is created by age and experience, in a conventional situation adopt the position of authority. Nevertheless, Rancière’s theory does not advocate the re-positioning of authority from the possession of the Master to the Student, and the reversal of expertise and ignorance, rather Rancière suggests that pedagogy must acclimatise to the notion that ‘there is no gap between two forms of intelligence’, stating that ‘emancipation is the process of verification of the equality of intelligence’. The game in Sehgal’s piece could be framed therefore as the equalising space: both parties of participants may contribute a body of knowledge to the exercise. Rancière further works to explain the theory of the equality of intelligence through deconstructing the process of learning and “becoming” as a process of experiential and evolutionary actions and observations, whereby the learner/teacher takes responsibility for his or her own education:

> The human animal learns everything as he has learned his mother tongue, as he has learned to venture through the forest of things and signs that surrounds him, in order to take his place among his fellow humans - by observing, comparing one thing with another thing, one sign with one fact, one sign with

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another sign, and repeating the experiences he has first encountered by chance.\(^89\)

We are reminded in *This Success or This Failure*, of the relational and social function of play as the earliest form of learning and mutual education. In a similar way, in watching Zmijewski’s *Them*, we are not only encouraged to think about painting - or mark making - as an equalising venture (none of the participants are “artists”), but we can also understand the activity of “painting” as the earliest form of visual and written expression, and as a component of child development and human development more generally. Whether an individual is instructed on how to read or write, and whether or not they are able to comprehend the language of another, they harbour the intellectual capacity to participate in and initiate their own processes of cognition and creation. Within the video, the formation of group identity around signs, the primitive use of symbols and eventual fire connect these expressions to a pre-history of learning. In many respects the task posed by the artist is itself both loaded and deliberately primitive from the outset. By engaging representatives from conflicting social groups and establishing the task of visualising their own identity as well as observing and engaging with those of other groups, the artist is requesting that participants somehow replicate the processes of knowledge exchange that take place over centuries and across societies. Condensed into the timescale of the workshops, the response to this request is to reproduce stereotypical symbols and wording, which in their second meeting are reconfigured, amended and in some cases destroyed by the other intervening groups. One review claims: ‘Their actions are a battle of representations, a war of images, symbols and gestures, which gain their intensity from being simple, direct and most importantly – not always adequate’.\(^90\) Compressed and inevitable in its expression, the workshop nonetheless represents the way in which individuals learn from and about each other through the exchange of signs, communications and incoherencies - how populations develop value systems associated with these signs,

\(^{89}\) Jacques Rancière, ‘The Emancipated Spectator’, p.5
\(^{90}\) Bartek Kraciuk, ‘Artur Zmijewski, Them @ Documenta 12’, in White Hot Magazine, [http://whitehotmagazine.com/whitehot_articles.cfm?id=719 30/08/08]
how other populations produce their own knowledge about these systems and signifiers and how behavioral strategies might be configured through the experience of collective action.

Jorella Andrews, in her essay for *Academy*: ‘Critical Materialities’, uses the work of Merleau-Ponty and Giorgio Agamben to refer to ‘forms of bodily knowledge’ or ‘knowledge-through-contact’ – and specifically in the case of Agamben, likening knowledge exchange to ‘experiences of rubbing and being rubbed’.\(^1\) Both *This Success... and Them* stage a reminder of the ‘intercorporeal’ nature of these transfers and exchanges through the ritualistic interaction of play – an approach not associated with academic or intellectual knowledge but one that functions on ‘pre-linguistic, pre-rational and pre-objective’ registers.\(^2\) Andrews also considers a second dimension of knowledge exchange that both contrasts and complements the first, as indicated by ‘becoming radically conscious of one's own concrete relationships to other people, things, information and ideas’, which can be used as a basis for ‘further thought, research and action’.\(^3\) During *Them* in particular the viewer is made aware of the participants’ own consciousness of one another, the information they communicate and the preexisting knowledge they have developed. The physicality that is common to both works operates in tandem with complex structures of human interaction, borne of politics, prejudice, materials, histories and personal associations.

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Artur Zmijewski, *Them*, 2004

These works do not represent social experiments or exercises in experimental learning techniques however, but are performances reserved for the gallery space involving a high volume of spectators. It is crucial to reflect then, on their constitution as art pieces and the tensions involved in contextualising these discourses as an aesthetic experience. While both of these performances are interested in challenging the role of the Master in their content, our own knowledge of the intervention or instruction from the artist creates a layer of relations not visible to the audience of the work, and so we are left to question the genuine expression of an ‘intellectual adventure’ verses the scripted act. Audiences to either piece are also forced to contend with a complicated set of emergent dilemmas to do with further assemblages of knowledge that are brought to the activity of viewing or participating. Artur Zmijewski’s *Them*, through its unravelling scenario of hostility brings to the fore pre-existing histories of racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, religious hatred and war, made more uncomfortable for the viewer by the evident pleasure taken by participants in the activity of destruction. Sehgal’s *This Success*... presents other difficult issues connected to this notion of relational knowledge. Reviewing the piece, critic Tom Morton suggested that the interaction between the visitor and child playing in the gallery was affected by ‘adult’s complicated feelings towards children’: claiming: ‘In a country in which tabloid campaigns against paedophilia have led to a paediatrician’s surgery being attacked by

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an angry mob, there’s something a little unsettling about being invited to play with a stranger’s kid’. Like the politics integrated into the relations between participants taking part in Them, this comment itself relates to the way in which groups and individuals produce their own versions of knowledge to generate their own configurations of feeling upon which they act and further distribute knowledge. In the gallery space or laboratory/workshop these experiences of “rubbing” knowledges are not played out under primal, equalising conditions however they somehow provide microcosmic structures for how relational education does take place elsewhere and everywhere.

It would be dismissive however to portray the gallery or museum simply as a stage for the aesthetic experience and to negate the complex knowledge exchanges that operate in these spaces, most obviously evidenced by the expectation for education in the gallery or museum. The Academy project, originally initiated in 2004, was conceived out of a desire to approach the museum as a ‘space for unexpected learning’. In her paper for the project Jorella Andrews uses the installation Kiosk Modes of Multiplication & Liam Gillick: Edgar Schmitz, (December 2005 – January 2006) a travelling archive of artist publications and other media, as a basis for discussing the ‘pedagogical implications of ‘critical materialities’ in the gallery. I want to take parts of this analysis to inform a reading of an earlier work: Thomas Hirschhorn’s 24H Foucault, held at Palais de Tokyo in 2004 as an example of how an art work might inhabit the physical and temporal boundaries of the gallery to somehow reflect the physical and temporal process of learning and knowing. Also significant to this discussion is an essay by Clementine Deliss entitled Explore or Educate, which asks how art works that engage the public (such as Hirschhorn’s 24H

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Foucault) either avoid or become complicit with notions of instruction and didacticism arguably inherent in the relationship between the gallery and the visitor.\textsuperscript{98}

Hirschhorn’s monument to Michel Foucault, lasting only 24 hours, guided visitors around an extensive archive of rare materials, audio tapes, images, texts, and videos by, of and about the philosopher, framed within hand constructed spaces acting as libraries, auditoriums, classrooms and a souvenir shop displayed together in what Deliss calls a ‘transient pedagogical exercise’. The overwhelming discursive and material content of the exhibition (leading to Deliss’ reaction of feeling ‘caught between a sense of knowing and a feeling of blanking out’) corresponds to the chaotic aesthetic of 24H Foucault, which incorporated arm chairs, shelves of publications, banners and Hirschhorn’s trademark cardboard brick walls and parcel taped signs.

Jorella Andrews comments upon concerns for how the ‘increasingly democratised, technologised, and thus accelerated conditions of information production and circulation’ has generated a culture of ‘stuff’ - material accumulation that both aids and inhibits processes of knowing. From one angle, 24H Foucault could be read as an effort to de-tecnologise the information industry. In offering ‘too much’ and ‘too little’ simultaneously, the visitor was made to experience feelings of deprivation – of time, materials, languages etc. – creating and perpetuating the desire to learn, read and consume. From another perspective, 24H Foucault acts not exclusively as a monument to Foucault but as a eulogy to knowledge itself. The architecture, resources and furniture included in the exhibition, such as a Foucault bar, photocopiers and settees in which to listen to the all night conferences, facilitated a necessary collaborative and relational orientation to the knowledge exchange that was presumably taking place. Andrews, when talking about the relational qualities of Gillick’s Kiosk however is skeptical that ‘personal and participatory forms of engagement are not sufficient in themselves to enable genuine shifts in understanding’. Hirschhorn’s own response to the monument nevertheless is to deny the authority of this accumulated knowledge: ‘I don’t know Foucault’s philosophy, but I see his work of art. It permits me to approach it, to not understand

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99 Clementine Deliss, ‘Explore or Educate’, in Paul O’Neill (Ed.) Curating Subjects, p.89
it but to seize it, to see it, to be active with it’. Hirschhorn declares that the public’s ‘most important participation is activity, the participation of reflexion, questioning, making your brain work’, - an exercise predicated not on comprehending but on experiencing, creating and disseminating.

How does the status of this event as an art work allow for the possibility of “unexpected learning”? Deliss proposes it is ‘the artist’s ex-centric position as an intermediary and editor that enables him to emphasise the idiosyncrasies that characterize the very process through which one acquires knowledge between disciplines’. The pedagogical litter that constitutes the materiality of *24H Foucault*, the intensive time-scale and excess of information conveys the process of knowledge exchange as an urgent, visceral and insatiable experience. Drawing the three works that I have examined together, it is possible to identify a series of privileges inhabited by the artist or the art work that not only permit education to become a space of “liberation” (to use a Frierian term) but also illuminate and undo the mechanisms we must negotiate to acquire and produce knowledge beyond the infrastructure of the knowledge economy. These privileges include: the authority to set up antagonistic dialogues, the license to step over social taboos or boundaries, the freedom to not read or understand everything and the ability to invent playgrounds in the institution. This encounter with education as art is a process of un-learning stripped bare and made vulnerable in the privileged space of the gallery.

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104 Clementine Deliss, ‘Explore or Educate’, in Paul O’Neill (Ed.) *Curating Subjects*, p.89
The New School: Self-Institutionalisation

When we talk about the instrumentalisation of the art school and University, the cultural diffusion of the knowledge economy and aspirations for a pedagogy of liberation, one might conclude that the aestheticisation of education is a symptom of contemporary ambitions to separate art from the physical and theoretical system of Education as configured in Fouault’s account of the birth of education as a socio-political economic infrastructure. Throughout the previous two chapters I have tried to connect concern for education - both as an apparatus and as a construct of relations between subjects - with an emergent set of aesthetic practices and discourses that somehow find a collaborator and a space of critical analysis and experimentation in the museum. The final brief chapters will work to question how these cross-conversations have mobilised or borne witness to the operation and self-theorisation of what are supposedly more sustainable and concrete schemes of operation that approach the
difficult territories of education and art as two simultaneously independent and integrated practices.

The idea that art practice might function in opposition to the structures of formal education broadly defined by disciplines, curriculums, regulations and didacticism is fundamentally flawed by the converse movement in contemporary art towards the compositions of the “University” or “School” as alternative, radicalised systems of working and collaborating. The notorious Manifesta 6, due to be held in Nicosia, Cyprus, despite its cancellation acted to produce a critical argument for ‘going back to school’, in a collection of texts that both develops a discourse of attack on the art school and a manifesto for an art school itself. Co-curator and artist Anton Vidolke, who surfaces as the protagonist in a number of subsequent ventures connected to the ideology of the art school, establishes in these texts a timeline of experimental art schools, from such institutions as the École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts (Paris, 1671) to the Mountain School of Art (Los Angeles, 2005). This admittedly incomplete chronology appears to reveal a significant influx of self-organised academies emerging after the turn of the twenty-first century. Having researched some of these artist-led projects, I have compiled a (not exhaustive) list of characteristics common to some of the most well known contemporary initiatives. These characteristics include: The promotion of “free” access, the absence of any determined location, the use of new media as an alternative campus, a focus on discursivity, the production of a manifesto or “instructions for use”, the deterritorialisation of disciplines and specialisms and an appeal to work within an economy of means.

There are obviously major exceptions to these characteristics, however the interesting aspect that unites all projects is not the varying degrees of resistance they might pose to the formal institution, but rather that they would even adopt a pedagogic

105 Anton Vidokle, ‘Exhibition as School in a Divided City’, in Notes for an Art School, http://www.manifesta.org/docs/02.pdf, 07/06/08, p.1
106 Anton Vidokle, ‘Exhibition as School in a Divided City’, in Notes for an Art School, http://www.manifesta.org/docs/02.pdf, 07/06/08, p.6
framework as a vehicle for a collective practice. I will use as an example of this seemingly incongruous model, the work of Lottie Child - as mentioned in the opening chapter in reference to her contribution to the exhibition Games and Theory. Child’s practice takes place largely outside the gallery in public space and centres upon ‘Urban Street Training’ – a participatory art form that encourages people of all ages and abilities to ‘creatively engage’ with their urban environment using both body and mind. Over the course of weekly two hour sessions street trainers learn (and teach) such activities as ‘Guerilla gardening, urban climbing, hanging from ledges, trespassing, chalking, psychogeographising, hiding and finding things, eating bananas, doing nothing, cartwheels and jumping over, building up, pissing on, nurturing or sidestepping barriers physical, social and psychological’. Participants can take part in an entire course or drop in for one session and activities are documented through photographs, mobile phone videos and Street Training Manuals and further pasted on My Space, You Tube, Lottie Child’s Wiki and other Internet sites. Speaking at a recent public talk as part of commission by Peckham Space, Child described Street Training as an ‘emergent martial art’ - a ‘serious practice that involves the everyday’. According to the artist, the programme’s methodology is rooted in a series of questions that Child formulated around a desire to know ‘how we want to teach and how we want to learn valuable knowledge’. Child’s involvement in co-founding the University of Openness (UO) – inspired by such enterprises as the Copenhagen Free University – represents an attempt to activate these questions (and possible solutions) through the structure of the University. The UO acts as a ‘framework’ in which different users can self-organise research, create their own faculties and embark upon courses of study - activities that are linked together by the

109 Lottie Child, speaking at ‘Participation and Contemporary Art?’ , organized by Peckham Space, South London Gallery, 4 September 2008
110 Lottie Child, speaking at ‘Participation and Contemporary Art?’ , organized by Peckham Space, South London Gallery, 4 September 2008
111 Lottie Child, speaking at ‘Participation and Contemporary Art?’ , organized by Peckham Space, South London Gallery, 4 September 2008
UO Wiki page http://uo.twenteenthcentury.com, through classes held at ‘temporary physical campuses’ and via ‘many online presences’.\textsuperscript{112}

Lottie Child’s self-initiated and self-certified MA at The University of Openness was used as a format for exploring the questions: How do I want to learn? How do I want to teach? These are questions vitally aligned with Jacques Rancière’s theory of ‘The Emancipated Spectator’. Seeking out street teachers from chance (and organised) encounters with children, street drinkers and other occupants of public space, and encouraging the street trainers to pass their knowledge back and forth and through the manuals, Child manages to conceive of an institutional framework with which to exercise Rancière’s pedagogy of the ignorant master.\textsuperscript{113} Rancière proposes: ‘The student of the ignorant master learns what his master does not know, since his master commands him to look for something and to recount everything he discovers along the way while the master verifies that he is actually looking for it’.\textsuperscript{114} The agency of the artist is important in this scenario - her task is to mobilize, facilitate and assist in the dissemination of produced knowledge. Relating the ‘inherent distance’ between the master and student to that of performer and spectator, Rancière further suggests ‘there is also the distance inherent in the performance itself, inasmuch as it is a mediating "spectacle" that stands between the artist's idea and the spectator's feeling and interpretation’.\textsuperscript{115} Rancière calls this ‘spectacle’ a ‘third term’, an essential mediation between master and student that will ‘prevent stultification’ and make way for the process of ‘intellectual emancipation’.\textsuperscript{116} As Jacotot, recounted in ‘The Ignorant Schoolmaster’, had used a book as this mediating device - as a tangible verification of the students’ knowledge and his own reflexive process on the experience - so we could define Child’s mediating “spectacle” as being urban space: bollards, floors, escalators,

\textsuperscript{112} http://uo.twenteenthcentury.com/index.php/AboutUo, 04/09/08
\textsuperscript{113} Lottie Child, speaking at ‘Participation and Contemporary Art?’, organized by Peckham Space, South London Gallery, 4 September 2008
\textsuperscript{114} Jacques Rancière, ‘The Emancipated Spectator’, p.8
\textsuperscript{115} Jacques Rancière, ‘The Emancipated Spectator’, p.8
\textsuperscript{116} Jacques Rancière, ‘The Emancipated Spectator’, p.8
tube station platforms and so on.\textsuperscript{117} From another perspective it might be interesting to consider the self-imposed framework of the institution as Child’s strategy of mediation. Child is forthcoming in explaining the highly structured nature of Urban Street Training – despite the fact that we could more readily identify the practice with free-floating processes of bodily knowledge exchange. When questioned over the structured formality of Urban Street Training, which operates within specific codes of behaviour, follows instructional guides and requires constant documentation, Child responded that to engage people in rebellious play it became necessary to adopt a didactic approach, whatever direction this flowed.\textsuperscript{118} According to Child, by ‘giving people options’ so they can ‘understand what the agenda is’, participation becomes possible.\textsuperscript{119} The educational infrastructure is made visible to the participating public and to the artist who otherwise together would feel disempowered and unable to act. Rancière asserts: ‘Spectatorship is not a passivity that must be turned into an activity. It is our normal situation. We learn and teach, we act and know, as spectators who link what they see with what they have seen and told, done and dreamed’.\textsuperscript{120} The roles of the spectator and actor are here collapsed into one another and no hierarchy or distances can remain. Emphasising the critical implications of this scenario, Rancière states: ‘This is what emancipation means: the blurring of the opposition between those who look and those who act, between those who are individuals and those who are members of a collective body’.\textsuperscript{121} Child has to negotiate difficult territory as an individual collaborating with a collective body, whose trust and agency depend on the relationship set up between them and the artist. It appears therefore that a way of reconciling this is to establish a multi-directional pedagogical interface that extends

\textsuperscript{118} Lottie Child, speaking at ‘Participation and Contemporary Art?’, organized by Peckham Space, South London Gallery, 4 September 2008
\textsuperscript{119} Lottie Child, speaking at ‘Participation and Contemporary Art?’, organized by Peckham Space, South London Gallery, 4 September 2008
\textsuperscript{120} Jacques Rancière, ‘The Emancipated Spectator’, p.10
\textsuperscript{121} Jacques Rancière, ‘The Emancipated Spectator’, p.10
beyond physical contact, into dialogue, onto paper, through visual and audio media and onto online space.

The “school” is recontextualised as a set of relational boundaries and freedoms designed to activate and engage and as a means of being inclusive and transparent.

When we talk about the “recontextualisation” of the school, especially in relation to a fixed public or collective body, it is crucial to acknowledge the changing technological conditions in which artists, curators and educationalists are working in the twenty-first century. In light of Anton Vidokle’s chronology it may be plausible to claim that those more contemporary projects listed, conceived in the so-called “Information Age” and with the availability of the Internet, are capable of further dimensions of abstraction and refraction and are able to communicate with a more sprawling and potentially heterogeneous public. The public lies at the centre of the organism of the school as a kind of constant problematic. Foucault refers to this general state of fear surrounding the public in reference to the function of the disciplinary space: ‘One must eliminate the effects of imprecise distributions, the uncontrolled disappearance of individuals, their diffuse circulation, their unusable and dangerous coagulation’.122 Lottie Child herself raises the point that were the participants of Urban Street Training not taking part in a system of ‘training’, their behavior would not be deemed legitimate and could potentially be criminalized.123 If the school has always represented a visible order of overarching management, we might similarly regard the Internet as an ordering space, able to deconstruct and make visible the mechanisms of the school. The Wiki for The University of Openness for instance divides its curriculum into Faculties, each listed as links on the Wiki’s homepage which themselves contain further hundreds of links. Those presented include the ‘Faculty of Problem Solving’, the ‘Faculty of Love’ and the ‘Faculty of De-Colonisation’, while additional links direct the user to the ‘UO Library’, the ‘UO Climbing Club’, forums

\[122\] Foucault, Discipline and Punish, the Birth of the Prison, 1975, p.143
\[123\] Lottie Child, speaking at ‘Participation and Contemporary Art?’ organized by Peckham Space, South London Gallery, 4 September 2008
and other resources. The work of philosopher Ivan Illich is an important reference point here. Claimed as the ‘Intellectual father’ of Wikipedia, Illich produced a critical argument for ‘Deschooling Society’ and utilizing new media to reform the education system. In his 1971 text Deschooling Society, Illich contends that ‘Universal education through schooling is not feasible’ – extending the idea that to “school” is to collapse the differentiation between ‘process and substance’, whereby the student learns to ‘confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new’. In accordance with the idea that most learning occurs relationally, outside of the school, Illich calls for the development of an “‘opportunity web’” or ‘new networks’ that neither force learners to subscribe to an ‘obligatory curriculum’, nor impose a financial burden on students to support the material infrastructure of the institution. Illich proposes the adoption of a new technique of self-led learning using ‘modern technology to make free speech, free assembly, and a free press truly universal and, therefore, fully educational’. The utopian aspirations of the Internet are thus framed in Illich’s demand for an open, democratic, ‘readily available’ educational space.

As the Internet became realised as global online matter, this facility held the potential to be both complicit with and counter-to the production of the knowledge economy. Faced with this new terrain of apparent mobility it became even more imperative to question the very terms on which contemporary institutions rested. Florian Walvogel’s contribution to the Manifesta 6 Notes for an Art School ‘Each One Teach One’ reflects on Jacques Derrida’s conception of the University as a ‘post-hierarchical space, a university without rank’ - comprehending the ‘direct university’ as ‘not

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124 http://uo.twentiethcentury.com/index.php/Main_Page, 04/09/08
125 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ivan_Illich, 04/09/08
126 Ivan Illich, Deschooling Society, 1971,
http://ournature.org/~novembre/illich/1970_deschooling.html#chapter1, 04/09/08
127 Ivan Illich, Deschooling Society, 1971,
http://ournature.org/~novembre/illich/1970_deschooling.html#chapter6,04/09/08
128 Ivan Illich, Deschooling Society, 1971,
http://ournature.org/~novembre/illich/1970_deschooling.html#chapter6,04/09/08
129 Ivan Illich, Deschooling Society, 1971,
http://ournature.org/~novembre/illich/1970_deschooling.html#chapter6,04/09/08
necessarily located within the walls of today’s universities’. Manifesta 6 was intended to be ‘wireless enabled’ where all course material would be available to download and students would ‘be able to work wherever they wish – on the lawn, in a café, or at home’ as a means to emulate this notion of a free-floating institution and to allow students to devise their own private and public universities in personal contexts. An important model to consider under this premise is the *Copenhagen Free University* – a self-initiated institution based within the co-organisers’ flat that, while now disbanded, still resides in web space and in the University’s publications that continue to be distributed. Formulated as a refusal to signs of growing state control over cultural production and the growing visibility of the ‘new knowledge economy’, the *Copenhagen Free University* sought to work with forms of knowledge ‘that are fleeting, fluid, schizophrenic, uncompromising, subjective, uneconomic, acapitalist, produced in the kitchen, produced when asleep or arisen on a social excursion – collectively’. While these categories of knowledge are not produced through a ‘superstructure’ but rather emerge sporadically through ‘mumbles’ and processes of ‘drifting through various social relations’, the organisers are emphatic that the University be perceived as operating within the membrane of an (albeit self-organised) institution. This declaration of self-institutionalisation is justified in *The ABZ of the Copenhagen University* as a desire to ‘get involved with the social processes which deal with the valorisation of knowledge in a society’. The *Copenhagen Free University* is an attempt to rework these social processes to represent new systems of value and to create new communities both locally and through virtual online discourse.

It is possible to draw out clear parallels between these objectives and those laid down by Ivan Illich in his effort to “deschool” society. Conceding that ‘inventive and creative behaviour can be aided by institutional arrangement’ Illich argues: ‘We need

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130 Florian Walvogel, ‘Each One, Teach One’, in *Notes for an Art School*, http://www.manifesta.org/docs/03.pdf, 12/06/08, pp.4,9
131 http://www.copenhagenfreeuniversity.dk/infouk.html, 4/09/08
133 Copenhagen Free University #4, *The ABZ of the Copenhagen Free University*, p.17
research on the possible use of technology to create institutions which serve personal, creative, and autonomous interaction and the emergence of values which cannot be substantially controlled by technocrats’. With the possible exception of Manifesta 6, the examples I have examined here, while initiated by artists do not represent ambitions to reform the art school, nor do they seek to resist institutional structure. They instead congregate around a complex aim to question what it is to know, learn and teach, to interrogate how knowledge is produced and distributed, to make visible the populations and conversations invested in these interactions and to inhabit differently the organizing structures of power embedded in social relations so as to incite real change.

The Elephant in the Room: Museum and Gallery Education

Where do we draw the line? I ask this question in the recognition that my analysis has predominantly focused upon productive tensions between contemporary art and education under the assumption that the two practices might harbour separate value systems. I am also aware that in discussing the emergence of an educational “aesthetic” I am positioning this “turn” in a contemporary moment and negating the frictions and debates that might already exist ‘between the cracks’ of these monolithic categories of Art and Education. For the final part of this dissertation I wish to draw attention to Museum and Gallery Education as a practice that works to negotiate (daily) the often-conflicting motives and strategies that characterise the relationship between art and education.

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Through my research into artist or curator-led projects that explore education either as the subject or substance of their practice, I am yet to find a substantial amount of commentary that does not in some way disassociate itself with gallery education as a ‘seemingly benevolent’ ‘tokenistic’ practice that acts chiefly to replicate the dominant discourses of the art institution. In April 2008 the conference *Situating Gallery Education* was held at Tate Britain to address the appearance of a moment of urgency in the field of gallery education, brought to bear in part by the apparent ‘paucity of critical investigations in the development of gallery education in Britain’, and the need to plot a theoretical terrain with which to formulate an argument for validating this practice and asking questions about its relationship to art. One of the emerging themes of this conference was the acknowledgement of the growth in recent examples of artists and curators ‘adopting pedagogic frameworks of education and public programming’ and the conscious use of the gallery space as ‘a laboratory for learning and experimentation’, and the potential implications this holds for the practice of gallery education.

Artist Sarah Pierce, founder and co-founder of *The Metropolitan Complex* (Dublin) and *Paraeducation Department* (Rotterdam) (projects concerned with models of education and collective discursivity) provides in her contextual writing a useful set of references for understanding why educationalists may feel wary of these new curatorial enterprises. From an artist’s perspective Pierce (writing with Curator Annie Fletcher) is sensitive to the new demands placed upon artists wishing to engage in the process of “education”, due to the ‘politically loaded’ content of the educational model and the ‘notion of invested responsibility in, and critical reflection on the contemporary and the local’. While their notion of ‘local knowledge’ is concentrated on the ‘artistic community’, Pierce and Fletcher are aware of the trajectory of

136 Mai Abu ElDahab, ‘On How to Fall With Grace – or Fall Flat on Your Face’, in *Notes for and Art School*, http://www.manifesta.org/docs/01.pdf, 12/06/08
discursive contact developed by gallery education work and the various arguments levelled against the artist-as-social-worker model that gallery education must contend with as it seeks to facilitate encounters between artists and different types of communities. Pierce’s recent week long exhibition at the ICA for the programme

_Nought to Sixty_, based on a number of ‘conversational formats’ has also drawn her into the wider public debate on the “educational turn” within which she offers an important critique on the potentially apolitical content of the pedagogical aesthetic. Reflecting on her participation in the ICA Salon Discussion ‘You Talkin’ to Me? Why art is turning to education’, Pierce’s recently composed essay for the ICA website takes issue with the principle of an educational “aesthetic” – claiming this sweeping system of associations could better be described as a ‘curatorial ‘trope’’, rather than a critical enquiry into the practice of learning. Articulating a reaction that would likely find support amongst some academics, Pierce criticises those projects where ‘education appears on display’, stressing the importance of casting ‘distinction between projects where education is a motif in an exhibition and those where the mechanisms of engagement are less easily recuperated as ‘art’. Included in this attack is _Documenta 12_, 2007, which used ‘Education’ as one of its three overarching leitmotifs. Pierce contends that while the curators of _Documenta 12_ ‘identified education as a concern, it remained for the most part a thematic subordinated within the formalised structures of the exhibition’.

It would be true to suggest that the majority of the projects I have chosen to focus on up until this point do not fall within this category of aestheticisation, nevertheless while Pierce suggests we exclude these projects from the discourse of the “educational

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“turn”, I want to look further into the potential for internal (and external) tensions driven by the propagation of the educational “aesthetic” in the institution. Sally Tallant, Head of Programmes at the Serpentine Gallery (a new role integrated across education and curatorial departments), in her paper for the conference Situating Gallery Education mobilized a number of these questions in reference to the Serpentine’s latest mega-project: the 24-Hour Experiment Marathon, curated and presented by Hans Ulrich Obrist. Following on from the 2006 24 Hour Interview Marathon, the 2007 counterpart in the series brought together prominent artists, architects, scientists and other major figures to participate in a live series of research-based experiments exploring ‘ideas of time, space and of reality through models, vibrations and perception’.145 Members of the public were admitted on a first come, first serve basis.

Tallant sees the Marathon belonging to a loose group of curatorial efforts to spectacularise education – citing in this group Anton Vidokle’s project for the New Museum in New York: Night School, an ‘artist commission in the form of a temporary school’ for which Vidokle has devised a year-long programme of monthly seminars and workshops with major artists and accepted applicants.146 Tallant observes: ‘These projects belie a curatorial approach that claims to create an environment of apparent engagement, but could be said to produce an event rather than an educational experience. Whereas the participant might be the key in the reason behind an educational project, in this context they are an audience’.147 Tallant builds her argument around the notion that the relationship is the education, and the idea that engagement cannot occur unless the artist has sought to question the role of the public or audience as a politicized unit. Jacques Rancière’s theory of the spectator can be revisited here, through his concept of the ‘paradox of the spectator’ and ‘paradox of the actor’ – a diagnosis of theatrical relations wherein the theatre depends on

spectators, despite the knowledge that ‘spectatorship is a bad thing’. According to Rancière, ‘Being a spectator means looking at a spectacle. And looking is a bad thing, for two reasons. First, looking is deemed the opposite of knowing. Second, looking is deemed the opposite of acting’. Rancière’s call for the eradication of passive spectatorship is reflected in Tallant’s appeal for a new format – one that doesn’t prioritise theatre and performance over the relational potential of the exercise. This negative visibility was given an even more spectacular profile in the publication of the ‘now legendary’ 24-Hour Interview Marathon flip book, which was criticised in the art press for its deliberate misinterpretation of the event articulating ‘kooky soundbites’, and smatterings of ‘uncontextualised’ quotes rather than offering transcripts of the interviews themselves. Instead of producing and disseminating knowledge, this format tries to emulate and pictorialise concepts of relational knowledge to the extent that it becomes virtually useless.

Paul O’Neill speaking at the ICA conference in August commented on an important outcome of this ‘curatorial gesture’: that within the ‘curatorialisation’ of education and through the visibility of the ‘authored space’, existing educational practices in museum and gallery contexts are ‘submerged’ and conversely made ‘invisible’. O’Neill finally poses the question: “why is this happening in art discourse and not within educational discourse?”

While it is true that Museum and Gallery Education is commonly misrepresented and devalued throughout many of the discourses that are produced alongside these curatorial endeavours, it would be dangerous to assume that education (particularly in art contexts) is not undergoing processes of self-reform and reflexivity. Practices involving co-investigation, collaboration, peer-leadership and radical pedagogy have been at work for decades in Museum and Gallery Education,

150 http://www.serpentinegallery.org/2007/09/24hour_interview_marathonlondo.html, 05/06/08
152 Paul O’Neill, speaker in ‘You Talkin’ to me? Why art is turning to Education’, Salon Discussion as part of Nought to Sixty, ICA, London, 14 July 2008
153 Paul O’Neill, speaker in ‘You Talkin’ to me? Why art is turning to Education’, Salon Discussion as part of Nought to Sixty, ICA, London, 14 July 2008
and in institutions such as The Whitechapel Gallery - with its current project *The Street* - high profile artist commissions embedded in the community education department are maintaining a crucial balance between visibility and engagement.

I want to argue that in gallery education it may be possible to perceive many of the major theoretical and practical issues that I have traced throughout my research being worked through via lived out negotiations with different publics inside and outside the space of the gallery. As mentioned previously, often charged with representing the “dominant discourses” of the institution, and government-led cultural agendas, critics fail to acknowledge the complex transdisciplinary debates that are generated through a practice that both relies on support from the public sector but is simultaneously at pains to occupy a state of independent criticality. Commenting upon widespread ‘hostility towards recent government instrumentalisation’ in the practice, Felicity Allen, Head of Tate Britain’s Learning Department outlines the frequently unacknowledged terms by which gallery education ‘like other artistic practices, questions or negotiates a route around government objectives, as opposed to simply implementing them’.

At the South London Gallery the education department recently launched a three-year project called *Making Play: Adventures in Creative Play Through Contemporary Art*. Its launch coinciding with the opening of the exhibition *Games and Theory*, I was interested to see how this curatorial moment of inquiry into play and learning would sit with the activities and discourses being produced by the gallery’s Education Department. Based at the neighbouring Sceaux Gardens Estate, the gallery, and at the Charlie Chaplin Adventure Playground, this project facilitates six artist residencies and involves the collaboration of children, parents, educators and artists as well as young people looked after by Southwark Social Services. The project’s launch was marked by a panel discussion bringing together *Games and Theory* Curator Kit Hammonds, lead artist for the initial residency Andrea Mason, author of *The Play*

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Ethic Pat Kane and the South London Gallery’s Education and Outreach Manager Frances Williams. This event seemed to establish cohesive concerns across departments for ‘[neo-] liberalised assumptions of play as an educative force’. 155 Williams for instance mentioned the recent consultation paper published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families called Fair Play, which set out the plan to invest £235 million on play initiatives over the next three years. 156

It was apparent that this project (as is the task of much gallery-led education work) was interested in addressing the need to inhabit those terms and objectives laid out by government-led schemes (the project itself is funded by the Big Lottery Fund Playful Ideas) but by doing so differently - by subverting its language and in doing so questioning its power. At the Camden Arts Centre’s “Ranter’s Café” session Education Activism and Radicalism, one educator suggested “we have to use those demands for evaluation and turn them into a manifesto”. 157 It was in this spirit of ‘resistance’ and ‘political subversion’ that Andrea Mason approached play as a practice ‘virally seeping into society as a dominant ethos’. 158 Inviting residents to act as ‘development professionals in order to consider the future of life on their estate’ in relation to climate change, Mason ran free weekly workshops from the estate which included tree house designing, a ‘Really Free Bring & Tate Flea Market’, a Dog-Off, artist games and gardening. 159 I attended the event Manifesto for Change that marked the end of Mason’s residency on the estate – a public event attended by artists, residents, local authority workers, educators and other members of the public.

Before the event I had come across a recording of a talk held at Frieze Art Fair in which artist Anton Vidokle spoke about the formal situations we impose ‘when it comes to this oral transmission of knowledge – that it’s either a panel or a lecture’ – a format that was developed ‘hundreds of years ago’ and that has ‘hardly evolved’ -

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157 Audience member speaking at Education, Activism and Radicalism, for “Ranter’s Café, Camden Arts Centre, 25 June 2008
158 Andrea Mason, speaker at ‘Making Play Launch: The State of Play, Sunday 27 July 2008
159 Andrea Mason, speaker at ‘Making Play Launch: The State of Play, Sunday 27 July 2008
proposing the need to develop new models of exchange.\textsuperscript{160} I asked Frances Williams how this ‘panel’ as it was publicised, would be different from the panel of “experts” that comprised the initial launch event. Williams told me she is ‘interested in experimenting with new ways of having conversations’, and what it means to have ‘public conversations as opposed to private ones’.\textsuperscript{161} \textit{Manifesto for Change} would hope to engage different people in a debate about the estate, and would use this site as a ‘new context for having a talk away from the gallery’.\textsuperscript{162}

\textsuperscript{160} Anton Vidokle, speaker in ‘Theory and Practice: Art Education Today’, Frieze, 2007
\textsuperscript{161} Frances Williams, email correspondence, August 2008
\textsuperscript{162} Frances Williams, email correspondence, August 2008

In several respects the whole event was organised around the elaboration of discursive formats. Hay bales were arranged in a circle in the gardens and a megaphone was passed around which children used to shout up to their friends in the estate to “COME DOWN”! A microphone was circulated to encourage everyone to take part in a Talkaoke, using a microphone powered by participants peddling energy generating bikes under a small tented area. Colourful signs were positioned in various areas of the garden, which bore such slogans as “TREES ARE FOR CLIMBING!” “ALL WASHING SHALL BE HUNG OUT!” “GROW YOUR OWN DAMN VEGETABLES!” and “ALL COMPLAINTS SHALL BE LISTENED TO”. Issues such as “dog poop”, unsightly gardens, poor attendance at residents’ meetings and fines for hanging washing were covered alongside questions such as “Can art create change?” “How is this sustainable?” “What did you get out of it?” and “How can we pass this knowledge on?” Some people sat around the hay bales, others played football, some were climbing trees and passers by joined in throughout the informal event. By producing and swapping these knowledges through talking, shouting, climbing, playing, planting, protesting and peddling, the conversations were dependent on (to use Jorella Andrews’ term) ‘intercorporeal’ conceptions of knowledge exchange. Having taken an issue like climate change, which is arguably itself embedded in a culture-wide educative scheme, the project worked to repossess and localise these discourses by revealing the micropolitics at play in the estate.

One interesting point that arose was that in order to have these exploratory, visceral, non-hierarchical, transient conversations, an initial promise of “Education” had to be established. Frances Williams explained to me that in the gallery’s research leading up to the project, the mothers they spoke to (and particularly the single immigrant parents) were ‘very keen that their children should acquire a good education’.163

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163 Frances Williams, email correspondence, August 2008
Education - in the sense that bears more relationship to the formal knowledge economy – was the means by which it became possible to have these smaller conversations and to sensitise the participants (educators, residents and artists) to the sub-economies of knowledge that manifest themselves in the everyday. At the Manifesto for Change event it was also discussed how the project’s status as “Art” allowed it to by-pass regulations set out by the local authority about building allotments and “defacing” public space.¹⁶⁴ Both art and education in their rhetorical formations have a critical currency that opens up new ways of working that might not have to do with adhering to policy-makers’ objectives.

I think it is perhaps under the auspices of “education” that we can understand better the criticism that was levelled at the Serpentine’s 24Hour Marathon. Education is this inherently political ground that has the potential to be both limiting and liberating, communicative and non-communicative. It has some responsibility to ask questions about the publics with which it engages and in doing this has the potential to push the boundaries of what education might mean and to explore the liberating power of transient knowledge.

Sarah Pierce’s dismissal of documenta 12’s usage of ‘Education’ as cultural tropism neglects to delve further into the parallel activities of the Art Education programme at documenta 12 which was framed as a model of ‘critical practice’.¹⁶⁵ It was arguably the curatorial interest in the ‘Education’ leitmotif that elevated the public profile of this programme, helping to invert the ‘traditional semi-visibility’ of art education in art institutions.¹⁶⁶ Moving away from a ‘service and gain-oriented approach’ to art education perhaps epitomised by the guided tour, this programme sought to work with an Advisory board to create ‘platforms for interaction’ and to extend invitations to ‘special interest groups’ to develop a self-reflexive, critical engagement with the


¹⁶⁶ Carmen Mörsch, ‘Special Invitation: Art Education at documenta 12 as Critical Practice’, p.661
education question. Researcher and educator at *documenta 12* Carmen Mörsch sees it as Gallery Education’s role to develop a ‘constructive meta-discourse’ – centred upon ‘negotiation’ and communication, and claims *documenta 12’s* curatorial approach acted to multiply rather than submerge the meanings and debates generated by the concept and activity of education at the Kassel exhibition. One aspect of the art education programme at *documenta 12* was the staging of dialogic tours in venues ‘integrated into the exhibition architecture’, intended to allow gallery education to ‘become an exhibit in itself’. The education team at *documenta 12* did not understand the “display” of education as a damaging misrecognition of the principles invested in education or the potential for critical investigation, but instead sought to play with the format of the exhibition as a way of ‘using the actual practice and reflecting on it with the public’ both through ‘uncontrolled dissemination’ of knowledge and a parallel project of team-based action research. While the results of this research are yet to be published, it is clear that the *documenta 12* Education team came to a decision to make use of this new curatorial stage for rethinking their theoretical and practical strategies and looked at the performativity of education as a medium to activate collective and dialogic enquiry. Sarah Pierce’s notion that in taking about the educational turn we should disregard those projects that appear to thematise or display education denies us the opportunity for uncovering the questions, movements and dialogues that are shifting the parameters of education and art practice both inside, outside and between these terms.

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167 Carmen Mörsch, ‘Special Invitation: Art Education at documenta 12 as Critical Practice’, p.661
169 Carmen Mörsch, ‘Gallery Education as Critical Practice and Research at documenta 12’, p.36
170 Carmen Mörsch, ‘Gallery Education as Critical Practice and Research at documenta 12’, pp.36,38
Conclusion

I opened up the critical space of this research with a discussion of what, on paper, sounds like a somewhat poor attempt to transport a war of words into the visual context of the gallery. I did this not because the exhibition *Hornsey Strikes Again* sets into motion any form of easily traceable historicity between art and pedagogy, but rather because it represents a moment of possibility and failure in making visible (through a number of aesthetic strategies) the systems that permit education to govern our lives. A number of theories are being banded about the salon circuit as to why this “educational turn” might be taking place today. One of the strongest theories is the perception of a generalised feeling of nostalgia for a moment that is perhaps immortalised by 1968 and the culture of student-led resistance that denoted some form of active enquiry with the pedagogical process. We know that Foucault himself found this moment of crisis and radicalism a productive and thrilling period of
‘creative gaiety’.

As Gilles Deleuze continues to explain: ‘Discipline and Punish bears its mark, and that’s where he moves from knowledge to power….’68 stripped bare all power relations wherever they were operating, that is, everywhere’.172 It is through the popular urge to deconstruct the dominant models of power that Foucault was able to further illuminate the mechanisms of control operating in institutional contexts.

The work of Friere, Illich and Rancière has been taken up extensively and explicitly both by artists and educationalists, and cannot be separated from the emergence of contemporary practices operating under the terms of the pedagogic. Their theories read as manuals, guides and manifestos for negotiating contested social relationships and it is this aspect of discourse that we see characterising many of the projects that come to the fore. I was interested to hear that Rancière’s work has materialised as core reading for student curators at Goldsmiths College this year who have, according to the course Director Andrea Phillips ‘used the notion of a gathering space (or an equalising space, to use Rancière’s term) as a kind of aesthetic for making work’.173

One might want to reflect, when assuming the incongruous relationship between education and notions of an aesthetic or spectacle, that Rancière’s theory develops out of the territory of theatre, and so implies that education is somehow also rooted in display and performance – features that might also help to explain the curatorial interest in the pedagogic.

While I have looked at the art school largely in reference to its role in leading and amplifying current debates surrounding the growing prevalence of the so-called knowledge economy, it is important to remain aware of other forms of conversations that are happening in, around and outside of the art school that not only try to reformulate what education might be, but work to consider the practices of deschooling and reschooling as a possible manifesto for life. ‘Mass Intellectuality’ is

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171 Gilles Deleuze, Negotiations, p.105
172 Gilles Deleuze, Negotiations, p.105
173 Andrea Phillips, speaker in ‘You Talkin’ to me? Why art is turning to Education’, Salon Discussion as part of Nought to Sixty, ICA, London, 14 July 2008
the term used by the Copenhagen Free University to describe knowledge as a constant language of the social, and the basis for the understanding that ‘all forms of human activity carry a level of knowledge’. Like many of the projects I have traced, the Copenhagen Free University issues an invitation to self-institutionalise – to regard the institution as a flexible system of power to be harnessed by the individual, by the collective and in the everyday. Sarah Pierce suggests these ‘counter-publics’ operate not as a ‘performance’ (a term we had earlier associated with the aesthetic) but as an ‘assemblage’. Compared to the commercialised sphere of the creative economy, Pierce comments that the self-institutionalised network is in contrast relatively ‘boring’ and ‘unspectacular’. The basic argument stands that the public of the free-floating discursive network is inherently active and necessarily engaged, while the public of the spectacularised knowledge economy is docile and passive. Nevertheless the argument is complicated by the fact that it may be possible to approach both categories as manifestations of an emerging “aesthetic”. The title question is thus unanswerable unless one takes into account the diverse and frequently contrasting ways by which we can discuss this “aesthetic” – especially where it is often the case that education is the origin of the practice as opposed to art.

Perhaps slightly unconsciously, I chose not to focus on those major projects that probably best articulate the perceived “educational turn” (I am here thinking of The United Nations Plaza and the various “academies” that have emerged since the turn of the Millennium) but have instead focused on practices that are smaller, less spectacular but essentially relational. These are practices that are invested in new levels of human contact and exchange, often precarious, sometimes self-annihilating but always yielding the potential to be remade and reconstituted. They are also practices where it becomes possible to make visible the systems of power at work amongst publics or between individuals. These it seems are the tools of play for the future. I have held on to this difficult and partially redundant term “aesthetic”

174 The Copenhagen Free University, The ABZ of the Copenhagen Free University, p.4
throughout my research because I am also certain that there is a cultural seduction at play in the “educational turn” – not only in wilful everyday practices of self-institutionalisation but in the projection of the pedagogic as an attractive visual and experiential format. Interestingly, “play” continually runs parallel to this discussion, a concept that in itself reveals something about the tensions and contradictions inherent in the practice of play and the practice of education that make both amenable to the field of aesthetics. There is a passage written by J Huizinga in *Homo Ludens: A study of the Play-element in Culture*, from 1944 that can be used to make this link:

Inside the play-ground an absolute and peculiar order reigns. Here we come across another, very positive feature of play: it creates order, *is* order. The profound affinity between play and order is perhaps the reason why play, as we noted in passing, seems to lie to such a large extent in the field of aesthetics. Play has a tendency to be beautiful. It may be that this aesthetic factor is identical with the impulse to create orderly form, which animates play in all its aspects…. Play casts a spell over us; it is “enchanting”, “captivating”.176

Education is not however a system of operations that can be simply utilised in aesthetic form, but as Foucault suggests, education deals with the ‘political anatomy’ of the individual. It is the meeting of these two properties – this aesthetic translation of educational strategies and simultaneous engagement with the politics of knowledge and learning that appears to excite debate across disciplines and fields of practice. The individual’s investment in education refuses to sever education and its attributes from the politics of the personal and the idea of the construction of the subject. It is arguably due to this localising condition that education is so fraught with debates over ownership, exclusivity and inclusivity, methodology, ethics, authorship and power,

and so we must understand the emergence of new visual discourses that articulate an educational “aesthetic” as necessarily involved in the often incongruous dialogues that operate across the critical field of education.

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